

St Mark's Academy in Mitcham scoops prize at the national Renaissance Lockdown Learning Awards

- St Mark's Academy in Mitcham has won the Going the Extra Mile Award at the Lockdown Learning Awards, hosted by Renaissance
 - The awards recognised and celebrated the achievements of schools and individual teachers across the country over the last year, but especially since the outbreak of the pandemic
 - Winners received a trophy and a book voucher prize from sponsor Laburnum House

St Mark's Academy in Mitcham has won the Going the Extra Mile Award at the Lockdown Learning Awards, hosted by Renaissance for their outstanding work supporting students during lockdown.

The awards, which took place on 27 November, recognised and celebrated the ingenuity, creativity and incredible resilience of individual teachers and schools over the last year, particularly since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Lockdown presented unique challenges for teachers, with wide ranging pressures from delivering for key workers' children to meeting demands from home schooling. Schools adapted quickly to overcome the barriers lockdown placed to ensure children's learning was not halted, and the whole event was designed to recognise these heroic efforts.

Acting Principal at St Mark's Academy, Hannah Fahey said, *"At St Mark's there is a spirit of service amongst all staff to transform the lives of our diverse and unique community. This is demonstrated in the school performing in the top 20% of all schools nationally academically, but also in care shown for our pupils' wellbeing and personal development. During lockdown, our Student Support Team truly went above and beyond by driving to pupils' homes in a minibus to make sure every child's mental health and wellbeing was supported. Our Head of PSHE (referred to as Lifeology at St Mark's), Dominique Giovannoni redesigned the curriculum based on the latest research that was released during the Covid-19 pandemic to help students take care of their mental health during a very unsettling time.*

"Vice Principal Rachel Sewell also led weekly, cutting edge CPD sessions via Teams to ensure that staff could master remote learning and continue to support academic progress during lockdown. Reverend Andrew Wignal shared daily reflections and prayers which uplifted the spirits of all staff and vulnerable children attending school irrespective of their faith. And our wonderful HR team and Director of School Business, Sherlyn Navalta supported teachers by ensuring mental health first aiders checked in with them once a week. I am so proud of our school and the empathy I've seen our community show one another over the last few months and I'm thrilled to have that recognised at these national awards. Our values of love, hope and trust permeate through the Academy and this award will be a constant reminder of their impact."

For the last four years the Renaissance Awards have celebrated best practice and outstanding achievements from customers and individuals across the country. Each year the awards have grown in terms of the number of entrants, awards and - of course - winners! However, given the

unprecedented events of 2020, the renamed 'Lockdown Learning Awards' were open for entries from all schools across the nation.

Sarah Haythornthwaite, Marketing Director at Renaissance, said: *"We're thrilled to be able to honour the brilliant work of St Mark's Academy with the Lockdown Learning Awards. It has been a beyond challenging year for the education sector as a whole but we continue to be amazed by the creativity, innovation and excellence we see from schools across the country - often in the most difficult circumstances. It has never been more important than now to recognise and reward the fantastic work being done by teachers everywhere to help accelerate learning for all."*

To read more about the awards and the winners please visit Renaissance's website:
<http://www.renlearn.co.uk/renaissance-blog/renaissance-awards-2020/>

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Notes to editors:

For more information and to arrange to speak to a spokesperson, please contact:

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Other awards winners:

- The Social Butterfly Award (Secondary School) - Beckfoot LRC Team
- The Pot of Gold Award+A7:J8 - Jacqui McIntyre, Sam Phillips and the whole Renaissance Accelerated Reader Team
- The Child's Best Friend Award - Marine Academy Primary
- The Keep Thriving Award - Oasis Academy Wintringham
- Save the Minibeast Award - Pirton Hill Primary School
- The Social Butterfly Award (Primary Word) - Dawn Molloy, KS2 HLTA and AR LEAD/Librarian
- The Umbrella Award - Mrs Carmel Perry
- Going the Extra Mile Award - St Mark's Academy
- The Wrapped Up in Reading Award - Tor Bridge Primary School Staff Team
- The Far Reaching Award - Invicta Academy

About the Renaissance Lockdown Learning Awards

- For the fifth year running, Renaissance hosted the Renaissance Awards to celebrate schools and individuals across the world who are using our products in the best possible ways.
- This year, it was a bit different as Renaissance not only celebrated the hard work teachers did in the classroom or the library, but also what they got up to from March until the summer holidays when the majority of students were learning from home.
- All shortlisted entries were invited to the virtual awards ceremony, which took place on Friday 27th November - for more details: www.renlearn.co.uk/lockdown-learning

About Renaissance Learning

- Renaissance exists to ensure all pupils reach their full potential and support teachers to help them do this
- Renaissance products are used by over 6,500 schools in the UK and 1.6 million pupils; its products have been used in the UK since 1999.
- Its products are rooted in research and best practices from education professionals, psychometricians and data scientists - all to help improve outcomes and accelerate learning
- Renaissance provides research-proven, rigorously developed data, learning and assessment products alongside world-class support and professional development for the teaching progression.
- To further support schools and trusts in providing students with uninterrupted access to a full suite of tried-and-tested practice and assessment solutions, Renaissance has created the **Continual Learning and Assessment Solution (CLAS) for MATs**. Find out more at www.renlearn.co.uk/clas-for-mats/
- Find out more at: <http://www.renlearn.co.uk/>