

3rd March 2026

Dear Parents/Carers and Pupils

RE: New Leadership arrangements for St Matthew's School

I hope you are well and that you enjoyed a restful February half-term break. I am writing to share some important and very positive news about leadership at St Matthew's School.

As you know, our school experienced a significant change when our previous partnership with St Barnabas Primary School came to an end and Mrs Maltese left. Since then, our Acting Headteacher, Ms Green, has worked tirelessly to ensure that pupils and families continue to thrive. Governors have been extremely grateful for her commitment and dedication during this period of transition and, in the time that I have been involved with St Matthew's School, I have come to value her loyalty and her care of our community as I have the rest of the school staff's.

Over recent months, governors have carefully considered the best long-term leadership structure for our school, learning from previous experience. The decision has not been simple. At the heart of our discussions has been one key question: how do we secure strong, sustainable leadership while preserving the warmth, individuality and Christian ethos that make St Matthew's School so special and which we know you value so much?

To support this process, Governors have worked closely with advisers from the Local Authority and the London Diocesan Board for Schools. With falling pupil numbers across London, particularly in Westminster, and a challenging recruitment market for headteachers, it was important that we explored every option to ensure the best future for St Matthew's School.

After careful consideration, we believe that entering into a partnership with another local Church of England school offers the strongest and most secure path forward, with practical benefits including shared costs and greater opportunities for pupils, families, staff and our wider community.

Following a meeting of the Governing Board of St Matthews School yesterday, governors agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding with Burdett-Coutts & Townshend Foundation CE Primary School for an initial period of one year. We are delighted to be partnering with Burdett-Coutts and to appoint Miss Yvonne Barnett as Executive Headteacher who will work across both schools from today. Miss Barnett will be responsible for the vision, implementation and strategy of both schools, and she will split her time each week between the two.

During discussions and visits to Burdett-Coutts, it was clear that Miss Barnett shares our passion for small, community-centred schools. She is genuinely excited by St Matthew's School ethos, our strong sense of community and our commitment to enabling every child to flourish and "live life in all its fullness." Like us, Burdett-Coutts places great value on the arts, particularly music, as a powerful way of building children's confidence and helping them discover their unique gifts and talents.

Ms Green, who generously stepped into the Acting Headteacher role, while governors took time to reflect carefully on next steps, is looking forward to the additional leadership support this arrangement brings. She is happy to resume her role as Head of School, focusing on teaching and learning and continuing to work closely with pupils, staff and families each day.

The SENDCo role will also be shared across both schools, with a new SENDCo appointed following Mrs Brown's move into her Local Authority SEND role. In the interim, Mrs Brown will continue to oversee SEND provision across both schools and will ensure a thorough handover and transition to the new SENDCo, providing continuity and stability for our pupils and families.

At present, the only roles formally shared across both schools on a weekly basis will be the Executive Headteacher and the SENDCo. Under the terms of the partnership agreement, each school will continue to operate as it does now, retaining its distinct identity, church, staff and community. As both are Church of England schools, similar in size (one form of entry), and located within a seven-minute walk of each other, we are confident that close collaboration is both practical and manageable, whilst allowing each school to maintain its day-to-day operations. St Matthew's School will retain its own Governing Board, finances, identity, staff team and community. Our distinct character and ethos will remain at the heart of all that we do.

Governors recognise that change can raise questions, but I want to reassure you that this partnership between our two schools, grounded in faith and with an openness and a shared willingness to learn from one another, is already permitting us to consider richer experiences for our children. This arrangement allows us to explore enhanced extracurricular activities for pupils, shared resources for our schools and wider professional development for staff.

Above all, our priority remains stability, high standards and the wellbeing of every child. We are committed to keeping families fully informed and supported as this new chapter begins.

In the following days, Miss Barnett will be with Ms Green at the school gates.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support and for the trust you place in St Matthew's School.

Yours faithfully



Mrs Amanda J Sayers
Chairman of the Governing Board