



St Mary
Magdalene
Academy



Letter from the Principal

Dear Parents / Carers

Thank you for showing interest in St Mary Magdalene Academy (SMMA).

As Principal I believe St Mary Magdalene Academy will provide a first class education for your child and prepare them for the challenges of living, working and participating fully in our global society.

Newly opened in September 2007 with 180 Year 7 students and 210 primary students the Academy is building on success. St Mary Magdalene Primary School, which was integrated into the Academy, had a long tradition of educational excellence in serving the community. In recent years it had been a leader in academic, sporting and artistic excellence. In July 2007 Ofsted judged it to be "Outstanding."

As an all-through school from 4-18 years, we aim to take the best of classroom practice from both primary and secondary phases. Innovative teaching approaches at SMMA will ease the sometimes daunting transition to secondary education (see p2).

The Academy admits 180 Year 7 students each September. It is growing slowly to accommodate a total of 1350 students by 2013. In the meantime, in addition to the Reception and Year 7 annual entry, we will have a small Sixth Form piloting the International Baccalaureate Diploma from September 2009.

The teaching staff will also increase as the school expands. The Academy has recruited highly qualified and experienced teachers with a track record of success in their former schools. In place already are five excellent Directors of Learning. Together with the Vice-Principal and all the Academy teachers and support staff we will strive to ensure your child has the opportunity to learn and achieve. You can find out more about the staff on our website www.smmacademy.org/staff.

The Curriculum, teaching and learning practices use state of the art ICT facilities to support the students' personalised learning. The Academy's remarkable design offers an exceptional space which enhances the students' experience of learning and community. Students are fortunate to learn within a brand new building designed to deliver 21st century education and equip our children with the technological skills needed for contemporary life.

This Academy is unique, not only as Islington's first Church of England secondary school, but one specializing in Humanities and Global Citizenship (see p12). The education we provide takes place within a global context. International partnerships with schools in China, Australia, Finland, Mexico, Palestine and Spain have already been established offering students the opportunity to engage with the lives and culture of others.

For all these reasons, St Mary Magdalene Academy is an exciting place to work and learn!

The Questions and Answers that follow are those I have been asked by parents/carers. I hope they answer your questions too. Information about Year 7 Admissions is in the insert at the back. Additional information about years Reception Class – Year 6 and the Sixth Form IBD is available from the Academy Office.



Paul Hollingum
Principal



1

Who leads this Academy?

Paul Hollingum

Principal
An experienced Headteacher, previously head of Raine's Foundation School in Tower Hamlets. Consultant for London Leadership Strategy and facilitator of the British Council NCSL IPH programme.

John Stewart

Vice Principal
Responsible for the Primary and Secondary Departments of the Academy from Reception Class to Year 8. Previously Head of St Mary Magdalene Primary School.

Joy Parke

Director of Learning: Head of Primary
Responsible for ensuring high standards in the primary years.

Chetna Patel

Director of Learning: Science and Technology
Responsible for Teaching and Learning.
Head of Americas House.

Marika Farrugia

Director of Learning: Humanities
Responsible for External Links. Head of Asia House.

Guy Brougham

Director of Learning: Communication
Responsible for Access and Inclusion at the Academy. Head of Europe House.

Elaine Kneller

Director of Learning: Mathematics and Enterprise
Responsible for Monitoring and Evaluation.
Head of Africa House.

Canon Lucy Winkett

Precentor at St Paul's Cathedral. Chair of the St Mary Magdalene Board of Governors.



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Details of how to apply are included in the pocket of this prospectus, or visit our website www.smmacademy.org.



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How is the Academy organised?

There are three learning departments at the Academy:

Primary Department	Reception – Year 6	30 children per year
Secondary Department	Year 7 – 11	180 students per year
Sixth Form	Year 12 – 13	A maximum of 250 students per year

The Primary Department is single form entry (30 children per year group) and self-contained within the Academy. Children have their own teachers, support staff, playground, hall and learning resources. However staff and students do benefit from a relationship with the secondary department, particularly through sharing the skills of specialist staff for Spanish, Music and PE.

Established programmes such as buddies, heroes and playground friends, as well as reading and numeracy initiatives enable older students throughout the Academy to support the learning and social development of younger children.

More information about the Curriculum and OFSTED results is included in the Primary School Admissions insert.

The Secondary departments admits 180 Year 7 students each September. The buildings have been designed so that the teaching of Years 7 and 8 can be accommodated within one floor, with students only leaving for PE and Music lessons, break and lunch. We believe these arrangements enhance learning in the first two years of secondary education and offer children the best possible transition from primary school.

The Academy will grow to accommodate a total of 1350 students by Year 2013. Houses and mixed year Guardian Groups encourage a small school feel and create opportunities for students to experience teamwork, leadership, competition and responsibility for others.

More information about the Curriculum and Academy Day is included in the Year 7 Admissions insert.

In September 2009 the Sixth Form Department will open. Teachers and learning resources will be shared with the Secondary Department. Students will study the International Baccalaureate Diploma which is widely acknowledged as the premier academic qualification and recognised as the most balanced preparation for university.

We believe that this increasingly popular qualification equips students for Higher Education and the work place. The international dimension and the requirement for community action service also reflects SMMA's mission to educate the whole child in a global context.

"It is good that children in Islington have another secondary school, especially a new one with excellent facilities. And that those children who attended a Church of England primary school now have the chance to continue in a local C of E secondary school. I think the Year 7 and 8 Curriculum will definitely help students make the jump to secondary education without losing their way."

Dawn Ferdinand
Headteacher of Broadwater Farm Community School & Academy Governor



"I really enjoyed the year but the high light was being in a band and going to the 'Battle of the Bands' competition where we came second. I really love the musical opportunities in this school. I also love the people in it."

Year 7 Student





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Will SMMA ensure high academic standards?

We want every student at the Academy to have the opportunity to achieve their full potential and attain the highest possible SAT, GCSE and IBD results. As a new school we have no Key Stage 3 or GCSE results, but we do have ambitions for excellent attainment at the Academy.

Results for Church of England secondary schools in London on average exceed similar schools. We are also building on the tradition of the St Mary Magdalene Primary School which under the leadership of John Stewart, our

Academy's Vice Principal, had achieved outstanding exam results making it one of the best primary schools in the area.

Our Principal, Paul Hollingum, also has a fine track record in urban London, having led a very effective Church of England secondary school. Paul's leadership was judged by OFSTED to be "excellent."

We have concentrated our staff recruitment on experienced teachers to ensure that the students get the very best teaching throughout their school

career. The Academy is particularly committed to high standards of expression. Primary and Year 7 teachers focus on helping students to develop clarity and accuracy of written and spoken English as well as improving their reading skills. We believe that this approach equips students with the skills essential for academic success in all areas of the curriculum.

A computerised tracking and assessment system is used by teachers to monitor individuals' progress. Parents/carers are updated regularly

about their child's attainments, progress and targets. We are different from many other secondary schools in that it will be possible for students to sit external examinations – both SATs and GCSEs – when they are ready to do so.

Excellent facilities, in conjunction with high quality teaching, assessment and learning, will mean each student has the best opportunity to achieve his or her potential at every stage of their education.

4

How will you make sure my child can get on with learning – without distraction from other students?

Students at the Academy have the right to a positive learning environment so that they can concentrate effectively, achieve what they are capable of and genuinely learn to love learning. We have no qualms in underlining our belief that firm but fair discipline is essential from teachers, so that students

can achieve their potential. We recruit experienced teachers with proven records in achieving high standards in discipline.

As students get older, most achieve a high level of self-discipline, but if this does not happen, a student will not be allowed to disrupt the work

of others. All staff at St Mary Magdalene Academy work to maintain high standards of behaviour. As part of our behaviour policy, a series of sanctions are available for staff, alongside help and incentives for the student.



John Stewart Vice Principal

"Our expectations are very clear. Value your classmates, treat all with respect. Expect the best from yourself and others. Those who follow our policy and expectations earn the benefits. All of this, combined with our high expectations and the example we set, ensures that behaviour matches attainment."





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Is the Academy a safe environment for my child?

St Mary Magdalene Academy offers both a secure and caring environment for your child.

At every point of transition from home to school, from Primary to Secondary and from Secondary to Sixth Form we aim to offer the best possible care and support to students.

In the Primary Department's reception class children join the Academy in a staggered transition with each small group having the chance to come to terms with their new environment.

In Year 7 transition is eased by grouping students in Homebase classes of 30 students with one teacher who delivers nearly half the lessons. This is based on excellent primary practice and students have commented on how this approach has helped them with their move to secondary education. In addition students are assigned an Academy Guardian with whom they meet regularly to monitor their academic and personal progress throughout their time at SMMA.

In the Sixth Form students will be assigned a tutor to support them throughout the two years. All Students will be expected to take a responsible role in the leadership of the Academy.

At the start and end of each school day, teachers are on duty in nearby streets and at bus stops to ensure good behaviour and a sense of security for students. The Academy has its own Safer Schools Police Officer who is an important part of our Pastoral Support Team. Inside the Academy, we ensure proper supervision of students and that intruders cannot gain access. 24-hour CCTV monitors the building internally and externally.

A staggered day, with different break and lunch times for different parts of the Academy, means that not all students are on break simultaneously. This creates a more manageable and relaxing environment for students.

Paul Hollingum Principal

"I feel strongly about bullying and have developed a strong anti-bullying policy. (www.smmacademy.org.uk/policies). All students have the right to attend school without fear of being picked on by others. The anti-bullying policy will help the victim to feel confident to report bullying, to overcome the effects of unkind words and actions and to become assertive in their own behaviour. The bullies will be sanctioned and counselled about their actions, in order to help prevent any further occurrences and to promote the safety of the whole community."



Tracey Jones
Year 8 Pastoral Manager

"As Pastoral Manager I work alongside teachers, support staff and parents/carers to ensure the emotional and social wellbeing of every student. We want them to be able to take full advantage of all the Academy has to offer. We aspire to nurture young people to become high achievers and to contribute and participate in the wider community."



What clubs are there?

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At St Mary Magdalene Academy, we are very proud of the fact that every student is offered opportunities to develop their own interests and skills.

The Primary Department offers 25 clubs a week. A breakfast club runs daily from 8am-8.55am. Activities include cooking, sewing, music and sports. In recent years children have achieved great sporting success at a local and national level.

In contrast to most other secondary schools we provide enrichment and

extension activities that benefit all students. A fundamental part of learning, these are incorporated into the school day rather than being offered as an optional extra.

Many of these activities are studied in mixed age groups, to help social development and foster the Academy's sense of community. Language specialists, sports coaches, artists in residence, dance teachers and other specialists supplement the Academy team.

Activities offered include:

Additional Languages: Community Languages, Chinese and Italian

Sports: Football, Basketball, Fencing, Athletics, Table Tennis, Fitness training and Netball

Community Activities: Community Service, United Nations Debating Society, and the Duke of Edinburgh Awards

Aesthetics & Creative: Art, Drama, Music, Choir, Dance, Technology and Cookery

Sciences: Technology, ICT and Astronomy



"I have really enjoyed meeting new people of different cultures. Being able to interact with different people and having the chance to do different sports."

Harry Hicks
Year 7 Student



Canon Lucy Winkett
Chair of Governors

"We believe that education framed by the wisdom of the Christian tradition provides a firm foundation for life. We aim to prepare young people for adulthood by drawing out their enthusiasm for life and learning, together with respect for the difference of others. All children at St Mary Magdalene's should have a sense of belonging to the Academy and share in its values and so we encourage our students to be self-confident, able to contribute to the community in which they live. We believe that this is reflected in the way they wear their uniform and how they conduct themselves both inside and outside school."



7

Is there a uniform?

Yes. Children who take a pride in their appearance are also likely to take a pride in their achievements and conduct. And we expect staff to dress smartly, illustrating that – while we aim for the Academy to be a friendly community – it is also a serious learning place where high standards are the norm.

The uniform for both Primary and Senior departments is simple, smart and – in order to keep costs down – easily available from the Academy. We expect the support of parents/carers in ensuring that their child is properly dressed and equipped for school.





Tom Peryer OBE
Director of Education at the London Diocese

"As the Director of Education for the Diocese of London and as a former resident of Islington for many years, helping to bring about the creation of a pioneering, new Church of England school has been a top priority for me and for the Church. It is a great thrill to see the Academy open and already a highly popular school, where the students are thriving and achieving high standards."



8

What do you mean by a Christian ethos?

This Academy is sponsored by the Church of England and our educational vision draws from the deep well of learning and personal development found in the Christian tradition.

Some senior staff are practising Christians and there are opportunities in our daily life for students to learn about and engage in worship. Within the Academy there is a chapel for prayer and small services. We also have close links with nearby clergy, and will visit local churches to celebrate the main festivals of the Christian calendar.

School Motto

Show by a good life that your works are done by gentleness born of wisdom
James 3:13

We aim to develop an inclusive atmosphere in which students of different faith traditions and world views learn to share their perspectives with confidence and respect. Students of all faiths and none who live in the local community will be just as much at home in the Academy as those from Christian backgrounds. We believe that a Christian Academy which encourages those of different faiths to learn about and from each other, will help to foster the mutual regard and tolerance we want to see in a modern multi-cultural society.



"I want to know how my child is getting on at school. The Academy gives regular and detailed feedback on progress and achievements. Teachers are friendly and approachable."

Beverley Langlais
Academy Parent and
Teaching Assistant

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Will I be told how my child is getting on?

Students do better in school when there are strong links with parents or carers. We want all parents/carers to feel connected to the Academy and involved in their child's education.

We will help you to support your child in their learning. There will be workshops looking at homework and the different curriculum areas to familiarise you with what your child is learning.

We will send you reports during the course of the academic year. These will tell you the standard that your child is currently working at, the standard we think they should be at and the standard they should achieve by the end of each year.

There are also opportunities for consultation when you will be invited to meet with those responsible for monitoring your son or daughter's progress through the school. In the Primary Department this is the class teacher and in the Senior Department your child's Academy Guardian. If we have any concerns, this staff member will invite you to the school to talk them through – and if you have any concerns, then they will be your point of contact.

To help build community spirit, there will also be a range of informal social events throughout the year for families of Academy students, some of which will showcase students' work.



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How does an Academy differ from a community school?

Academies are independent schools funded by the government, each with a sponsor and each with a specialism.

Our sponsor is the London Diocesan Board for Schools which is the Church of England's overseeing body for both primary and secondary schools in the London Diocese. It is currently involved in the management of 150 schools in London.

Our specialism is Humanities and Global Citizenship. A commitment to this specialism is at the heart of our

Academy and will influence greatly the school's development. We have already established relationships with schools internationally working with them on joint curriculum projects. Students are also encouraged to make links with their local community too, becoming better citizens through community service.

The Academy will strive to bring out the best in students equipping them with the skills necessary to play a significant part in a global society. They will be encouraged to recognise their responsibilities as citizens in a local,

national and international context. As an Academy we operate a longer school week than most community schools. We provide 28 hours of compulsory education as opposed to the normal 25. This allows us to offer an extended Curriculum with additional subjects and Curriculum opportunities.

Although we are the first Academy in Islington, we worked closely with the local authority and other secondary and primary schools in the area to ensure that we are firmly rooted in our community.

Mrs Chelsey Kouloumbri & son, Ben
Year 7 St Mary Magdalene Academy



Mrs Kouloumbri: "My son was at St Marks Primary School in Tollington Park. I am delighted that he is able to continue his education in a Church of England secondary school. He has settled in well and made great progress in his first year."

Ben: "Being part of the new Academy has been a great experience. All the new facilities have been the highlight of the school. Knowing I am going to be here for the rest of my school life, that's that best bit. Any child is lucky to come here."



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