



A community of transformation founded on love, hope & trust

St Mark's Church of England Academy

Acacia Road, Mitcham, CR4 1SF

020 8648 6627

school@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk

www.stmarksacademy.com

Headteacher: Aimee Gallagher

9 September 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

RE: KEY STAGE 3 MATHS AT ST MARK'S ACADEMY

We are writing to you from the Maths Department to share some information about how we teach mathematics at St Mark's Academy. It's important that we work together to ensure your child thrives in this subject. Success in maths is vital for creating future opportunities for your child.

Teaching Groups in Maths

In maths, students are placed into groups based on their prior attainment. This allows us to provide the right level of pace and support for each child. We do not discuss 'sets' with students. We occasionally review these groupings, usually following end-of-term assessments, and consider classwork, homework, and a student's attitude to learning when making these decisions. Whatever group your child is in, our expectation is the same: every student will be suitably challenged and supported to achieve their full potential.

Equipment

It is expected that students bring a scientific calculator to every maths lesson. The preferred model is the **Casio FX-85GT**, but if your child already has a **Casio FX-83GTX**, there is no need to replace it. No other models should be purchased, as these are the only calculators we will be teaching from in class. Please ensure your child's calculator is clearly named and **let us know if there are any difficulties in obtaining one so that we can support you.**

Other equipment students need includes a pencil, ruler, protractor, and compasses. Pencils and rulers are required for every lesson, protractors from the summer term in Year 7 and Year 8, and compasses and protractors from the second half of the autumn term in Year 9. Teachers will tell students in advance when specific equipment is needed, and it will be provided in lessons if required.

Homework

We use Sparx Maths to set weekly homework. Students are set new tasks **every Thursday** and they have one week to complete it. **Homework will start on Thursday 18th September.** They will be provided with a homework book in which they must write down all of their calculations. Students without access to a device or the internet at home can complete their homework in the library at school.

Homework is considered complete only when 100% of the tasks are finished, which is achievable because tasks are personalised to each student's attainment level. Sparx allows students to watch accompanying videos or use the 'swap question' function if they struggle. Homework should not be left until the night before it is due, as this does not give students the opportunity to seek help. If further support is needed, they should speak to their teacher or attend our **Sparx drop-in sessions.**

Logging into Sparx:

1. Go to the [Sparx Maths website](#)
2. Select our school
3. 'Log in to Sparx using Microsoft'
4. Enter the student's school email address and the same password they use for the school computers
5. If they forget their password, they should reset it with their IT teacher



Homework completion is carefully monitored, and sanctions will be given in line with school policy where homework is missed or incomplete.

Support at school

In lessons, teachers live model examples and check understanding regularly to support all students' learning. Students are encouraged to ask questions whenever they need clarification, even outside of lesson time.

The Sparx drop-in sessions provide an additional opportunity for students to practise, ask questions about classwork, or get support with homework.

Support at Home

We encourage parents and carers to support their children at home in the following ways:

- Make sure they know their times tables. If they do not know their times tables up to 12 x 12 yet, recite them together regularly. They can also practise their times tables on Sparx.
- Discussing with your child when they will complete their homework each week.
- Speaking positively about mathematics, even if it wasn't your favourite subject at school. Ask your child to show you what they've been learning in maths and always be enthusiastic about it.
- If they need extra practice, encourage them to use the independent learning section on Sparx.
- If they prefer paper-based activities, please email Miss MacDonald or Miss Bozzard-Hill and they can guide you on suitable workbooks to purchase.

Thank you so much for your support. We look forward to working with you and your child over the coming year.

Yours sincerely,

Miss McDonald
Head of Maths

Miss Bozzard-Hill
Second in Charge of Maths