

4th December 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

As we enter the final weeks before the Christmas holidays, I would like to thank you all for your support over this term, especially in the past week. After, quite possibly, the toughest term we have ever faced as an Academy, your children have shone in their care and support for one another, their positive attitudes, maturity, and commitment to their education. We will always do everything we can to support students through the challenges they face, but it is only with the support from you at home that we can be successful in achieving our goals. Positive home school relationships are of the utmost importance to us, and I thank you for working with us through this difficult time.

I am pleased to share with you some reminders of end of term arrangements and reminders for when we return in the spring term.

End of term arrangements

The last day of the Autumn term is **Wednesday 20th December**. Attendance up until the very end of term is important as teachers will continue to deliver important content right up to the last day.

Timings for the last day of term will be as follows:

8:25-8:30	Check in
8:30-8:50	Mentor Time
08:50-9:40	Period 1
9:40-10:30	Period 2
10:30-10:25	Break (<i>students should take the opportunity to purchase lunch items at break if required as the Diner will be closed at dismissal, this includes FSM students</i>)
10:25-11:45	Period 3
11:45-12:15	Mentor Time and end of term farewells
12:15-12:30	Check out

Beginning of spring term arrangements

Tuesday 2nd & Wednesday 3rd January are both INSET days and the Academy will be closed to students. Students are due to return on **Thursday 4th January** at the usual check in time of **8.25am**.



Principal – Ms Catrin Green

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Absence

We often notice a drop in attendance either side of the Christmas holidays. Please be aware that holidays are not authorised in term time; if we are aware of any students missing school due to a holiday, we will put in place actions to issue fines for unauthorised student absence. For children who miss school around the holidays for other reasons then evidence may be requested.

Snow Arrangements

The weather has taken a wintery turn in the past week, and although there is no snow currently forecast, we would like to remind you of the arrangements for closure due to inclement weather.

Closing the Academy due to inclement weather will never be a decision we make lightly. Throughout the week and day of expected weather difficulties, we monitor the snow forecasts regularly, but as you will be aware, they are not always accurate.

Closing the Academy due to inclement weather before the start of the day

A decision whether to open the school on a morning following snowfall is made at around 7am. This decision will be made dependant on the difficulties for staff, students, and parents travelling to the site, the condition of the school site as reported by the Site Manager at this time, and after discussion with the Headteachers of local schools.

In the event we make the decision to close the Academy for the day, you will be notified by 7.30am by text and email (please note: only priority contacts will receive these messages). If we decide to remain open then we will not contact you, therefore, in the event you do not receive a text and email from us then please send your child to the Academy as normal. We will also add a note to the Academy website if we are to close, and so if there is a delay in emails or texts reaching you then please check the Academy website too.

Closing the Academy due to inclement weather during the day

If during the day we feel that the weather will cause travel difficulties for both parents, students, and staff we contact local schools and monitor the conditions together. We will also liaise with the bus companies to assess their perceived impact on safe travel. A decision will then be made based on all information provided by third parties and our own judgements.

When this decision is made, we will send a text and an email to the priority contacts we hold on our system to notify you that we intend to close the Academy. For those parents who have ticked option 16 '**The student to leave unaccompanied in extreme circumstances**' on the parental consents section of MCAS, we will be able to dismiss these students immediately (unless otherwise indicated) meaning they can get home as quickly and safely as possible.

For all those who have not completed the Home Academy Agreement, we will then ask students to obtain parental permission to be dismissed early. If your child has a mobile phone please call or text them with your permission- student phones that have been checked –in will be returned as soon as the closure decision is made- as the Academy is unable to process high volumes of calls and text messages and ensure students are

dismissed promptly. The class teacher with your child will verify their permission before they are dismissed and those without permission will be taken to the Agora to await permission to leave. Students will have a staggered dismissal over the course of half an hour to ensure that everyone is able to leave the site safely, and avoid crowding at bus stops on the main road.

Please ensure that the Academy has your most up to date contact details so that we can contact you quickly and easily in the event of emergencies such as this.

You can check your contact details on the MCAS app and update them hassle free, (including your child's consents under the Parental Consent section). Alternatively, you can contact the Academy to update any phone numbers and email addresses.

Working from home in the event of snow closures

Should there be the need to close due to snow, we are pleased to have a strong home working system in place already. On the first full day of closure students should refer to the [Working from Home](#) page on our website as well as the Why Don't You... extension work options.

During that first day we will review how long we think it is likely for the Academy to be closed. On the first full day of closure students should refer to the extension work on the [Why Don't You...](#) page of the website. However, if we think closure will go on for longer than one full day then we will implement online lessons via Teams for some/all year groups, which may be a combination of live and pre-recorded lessons.

I do understand that school closures cause difficulties for some parents and we therefore try to avoid them if possible – however, as I am sure you can appreciate, we do not know what the weather is going to do so can only make the decision on the information available to us at that time.

Once again, thank you for your continued support over this term. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy and peaceful break when the end of term arrives, and to those families celebrating, Merry Christmas.

Yours sincerely,

Ms C Green
Principal



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