

14 December 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

As we fast approach the end of a successful first term, please find below details for the end of term, our return in January 2024 and some brief updates on events at the academy.

Plans for the end of term

The academy will finish for the Christmas holiday on Thursday 21 December. It will be a half-day, with students finishing at 12.10pm. Teachers will be teaching the normal curriculum up until the last lesson of the final day, on which there will also be year group award assemblies. These assemblies will be held virtually, with students taking part in their tutor rooms. Unfortunately, the academy bus will not run at the earlier 12.10pm finish time on this day, and so parents/carers will need to arrange alternative safe transport home for their children please. All students will return on Monday 8 January 2024.

Christmas Dinner

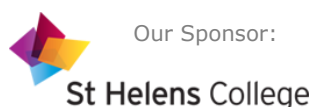
On Tuesday 19 December the catering staff at the academy will be serving Christmas Dinner at lunch time to all students who would like to buy one. The cost per student is £2.60.

Fund Raising

Mr Richardson is raising money for local food banks by completing a 5km run every hour- on the hour, for 24 hours. As part of his fundraising attempt, we will be running our own "Santa Dash" at the end of the academy day on Monday 18 December. Students who would like to take part will need to donate £1, either by ParentPay or in cash. Alternatively, they can bring a food item to place in our collection. Starting at 3.15pm, we will enjoy Christmas music and students are welcome to wear festive accessories as they complete twelve laps of the track. On Thursday 21 December it is our Christmas Jumper day for students who wish to take part. The cost will be £1 and they can donate as they enter the gate or parents can pay in advance via ParentPay.

Coats

As the weather has turned recently, it is very noticeable that a number of students do not have an appropriate winter coat. Even in the coldest of weather, a number of students have been arriving with no coat or wearing two very thin jackets. We have discussed in the past; banning two coats, but this is difficult to do in the cold weather when the coats that students are wearing are not thick enough. With this in mind, the academy will be buying a number of coats to donate to families, and welcome any money donations from local businesses who would like to support with this also.



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Giving Tree - Charity Christmas Appeal

We know that Christmas can be a financially challenging time of year for families in our academy community. Our student leadership team, led by Student Principal Poppy M, launched a charity project called the Giving Tree. The Giving Tree is an opportunity for people in the academy community to buy a gift for a student whose family is struggling financially this year. We have been really touched by the amount of help that has been offered since sending out our appeal, and we are proud to be supporting parents and children in this way. Thank you to everybody who has offered their assistance.

Attendance and Punctuality

Attendance and punctuality remain a high priority to us at the academy and we aim for students to have 96% attendance or higher. We know that the more students attend the academy, the better they achieve; not only academically, but also from a personal development perspective too. Each half-term we will regularly communicate with you and share your child's attendance patterns, and remind you of what support is available when attendance is not meeting our expectations. Our attendance team and pastoral staff are always available to support families if they have concerns, or would like further advice and support.

Due to the recent road disruptions we saw an increase in students being late in a morning, and despite that work now being complete, the number of students late in a morning is still too high. Being punctual is an important skill to learn for life after the academy and persistent lateness will impact a child's education and can lead to prosecution for the parents/carers. A letter will be going home before we finish for Christmas to inform parents of the number of times your child has been late to the academy this term, and we ask for your support in ensuring students attend on time please.

Trips and Experiences

This term has been busy with trips and experiences for students of all ages. Year 12 students started the year with a visit to University of Oxford, and Year 13 took a visit to the University and an Apprenticeship fair hosted at Anfield Football Stadium. At the other end of the academy, students in Year 7 visited The Pumpkin Patch, where they learned about food growth and production. Dance, Music and Drama have all hosted theatrical trips and events, including a visit to Manchester Palace Theatre to watch Hamilton and a talk with industry professionals. Students in Year 9 have engaged with a resilience workshop to support their future goals, and student leaders have been involved in events at St Helens Town Hall and TCAT Parliament, representing student views and ideas. In enrichment, Year 8 students have been given a regular opportunity to attend Warrington Rowing Club and 150 students took to the ice at Planet Ice, Widnes. If that wasn't enough, students in the Sixth Form visited Disneyland in our annual Paris trip!



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Principal: Mr P Willerton

Standards (a regular reminder)

We firmly believe that students' education should not be hampered by a lack of equipment. Below is a list of equipment that is non-negotiable so that students can access their learning.

- A bag that can hold at least a PE kit, exercise books and equipment. Any bag that cannot hold all of these items is not a suitable bag for use to the academy.
- Pen, pencil, ruler, eraser, pencil sharpener
- A reading book
- A green pen (provided by the academy)
- A mini whiteboard and pen (provided by the academy)
- PE kit on those days they have PE. Students will be expected to borrow a kit if they forget their own.

To make sure that staff's focus can be on students learning and wellbeing, can we please make sure that students return back in January with the **correct** shoes and uniform. Students are not permitted to wear false nails, nail varnish, fake eye lashes or dye their hair an unnatural colour. Further information can be found on the uniform section of the academy website.

Thank you again for your support. I am very proud of the attitude that the students have shown towards their education, with a determination to make it count. I hope that everyone enjoys the well-earned rest over the Christmas holiday and I look forward to welcoming all students back on Monday 8 January.

Yours faithfully



P Willerton
Principal



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