

26th March 2024

Dear Families,

I hope that this letter finds you well and that you have a lovely Easter break planned. As we come to the end of this 11-week term, I wanted to take an opportunity to reflect with you how amazing our students have been and how grateful I am for your continued support in encouraging your sons and daughters to “jump in with both feet” to academy life. This last term has seen the best attendance results GAA has ever seen. Thank you so much for your support and encouragement. I really do not underestimate your input in promoting positive school attendance.

Our work in developing our GREAT values at the heart of our engagement culture has been recognised nationally and the development of positive framing, learning modes, internal alternative provision, mental health and well-being services and inclusion has led to our best term on record for the least amount of behaviour related corrections and incidents. We have had to order more prizes than ever before to recognise these achievements in our end of term celebration assemblies.

The outstanding work that our Safeguarding team carry out has been recognised following a recent audit from Anchored Schools. I am very pleased to tell you that we have been awarded the Gold Award for Safeguarding. This is a GREAT achievement, and we are aiming to achieve the AcSEED award for our continued work on Emotional Health and Wellbeing.

End of Term Arrangements: School closes for the Easter break on Thursday 28th April. We are not closing early on that day as all learning time is key at this time of year. Thursday will be made up of normal lessons and it is important that all students attend.

Start of Term Arrangements: When we return in April, we will have our traditional staggered return.

- Monday 15th April 2024; Years 11,10 and 7 only in school. Normal start time.
- Tuesday 16th April 2024; Years all years in school. Normal start time.

The staggered return allows us to support transition back into learning and embed our high culture of engagement and expectations. General reminders for the start of the new term All students must wear the academy blazer and tie, their shirt tucked into their skirt or trousers and be in black shoes. Footwear must look like a sensible Academy shoe and not be able to be mistaken for trainer. Shoes must be plain black only with no white or contrast piping. Please be aware some shops do sell black trainer type shoes within their school shoe section and this style of shoe is not permitted. As a rule, any footwear by Nike, Adidas and Converse are trainers and are not permitted to be worn in school.

When you are purchasing a school skirt, please ensure it is not made from Lycra and that the length of the skirt is at least at mid-thigh level. Any student wearing an incorrect skirt, either due to material or length, will be provided with an appropriate school skirt to wear. The academy jumper is optional for all students. Students are not permitted to wear any outside attire inside the academy building – this includes hoodies and non-academy jumpers. Ties can be purchased from our uniform suppliers, but we do have a limited number of ties in stock that can be purchased directly from school for £5.50. Each year group has a different colour stripe on their tie, and this moves through the years with them e.g. if your child is currently in year 7, they have a tie with a Red stripe and they will continue with this colour stripe until they leave in year 11. If you are experiencing any issues with acquiring uniform, please do contact the relevant year team who will be happy to support. Due to health and safety limited jewellery is allowed to be worn by students. Students can wear one pair of stud earrings in the ear lobe only, a watch and Medicare bracelets only. A plain or clear nose stud is permitted – no body piercings of any other kind are permitted.

As we approach the school holidays some students may want to have false nails. This is up to families during holiday time but in school acrylic nails are not permitted for safety reasons. If a student is wearing acrylic nails, they will be placed in isolation until they are removed. Please bear this in mind in terms of time for this to be removed before the return to school in April.

Over the Easter break, our Year 11 students have individual revision requirements and there will be sessions available in school. The final exams are fast approaching and it is important that they take every opportunity to consolidate learning and practice their exam techniques. The details of this will be messaged via Microsoft Teams, email, and text message. Please encourage your son or daughter to complete all the work as this has been specifically designed for their own individual learning needs.

All that is left is for me to wish everyone a lovely, peaceful, and family filled break. We are looking forward to welcoming everyone back to the summer term which will be filled with more opportunities to succeed.

Yours faithfully,

Deana Owen
Vice Principal
Great Academy Ashton