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Dear Families

I hope this letter finds you and your families well and that you have a lovely festive break planned. As we come to the end of 2024, it has been a true privilege to have shared with you last week our latest Ofsted Inspection Report, which celebrates the great achievements of our students and staff.

My letter this week is simply to update you on our end of term, and start of term, arrangements.

End of Term Arrangements: School closes for the Christmas break on Friday 20th December at 12.10pm. On this day students will be permitted to wear a Christmas Jumper for a small donation if they wish to.

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

- Monday 6th January; Years 11, and 7 only in school. Normal start time.
- Tuesday 7th January; Years 11, 10 and 7 only in school. Normal start time.
- Wednesday 8th January; All students back in school.

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. If a student chooses to wear a skirt they must wear black tights. 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 £6.00. 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 purple 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 January.

The uniform policy can be found on our website: [School Uniform | Great Academy Ashton](https://www.greatacademies.co.uk/school-uniform)
([greatacademies.co.uk](https://www.greatacademies.co.uk))

It has genuinely been a great privilege to have served you, our students, our staff and our community this last term. GAA is truly an inspirational school, filled with GEAT students and staff who consistently demonstrate our values. Christmas can be a challenge for all families and I hope that you are able to find peace, relaxation and comfort this Christmas time. I will write again on our first day back in January with exciting updates for the Spring and Summer terms.

Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Yours faithfully

Mr David Waugh
Principal