



Morton Academy

The best in everyone™

Part of United Learning

RMCG/KRE

3rd April 2025

Dear Parents/Carers,

Thank you again for your continued support. I wanted to give you an update on life at the academy this term and to share with you some of the brilliant achievements and activities your children have been taking part in. For the last 6 years Morton Academy has been oversubscribed and this year is no different. In fact we have been so popular that the governors made the decision to increase our numbers to 210 for the next academic year. We look forward to welcoming our new cohort of Year 7s very soon.

Year 11:

We are now in the final stages of the Year 11 students preparing for their GCSE exams. I was pleased with the results of the Mock Exams and I know how hard our students are working. As is the case nationally attendance is the key to success. There is a range of sessions on during the Easter Holidays to support Year 11 and I would encourage them to attend all that apply. When we return there are two weeks until the exams start. Thank you to parents for coming to the final SLT parents' evening. Your child will also be receiving their Prom/Leavers' Assembly invites too if they have qualified. Year 11 students visited Newcastle University for a PE themed visit, we also had a visit to the Medical Museum in Leeds. They were brilliant ambassadors for the academy.

Year 10:

Year 10 mid-year results show positive signs and the year group are settling and maturing as they go through this academic year. I am concerned about attendance for some students as much of what is taught in Year 10 is in the final exams. Our data shows that if attendance goes below 92% the chances of a child achieving well in their exams is made much more difficult. If we can improve attendance in the next term we will be giving students a real boost in Year 11. There is much to look forward to in the next term with the 50 Mile Walk coming into view as well as Work Experience Week.

Year 9:

Year 9 have made their options choices and these will soon be confirmed to you. Much like Year 10, I really need to see an improvement in Year 9 with attendance which is the lowest in the academy. Morton Academy has some of the strongest attendance figures in the local area but as I said to Year 11 parents attendance is the key driver of success. The Key Stage 3 curriculum ends in a way that prepares students for the next steps to KS4. A good ending to the year will set them up well for 2025-26. Year 9 visited Durham University back in January and they took part in the Careers Speed Dating event in February. The students were a real credit to the academy and yourselves.

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Year 8:

Year 8 are doing well in attendance terms compared to other year groups and I thank parents for this. I would really like to see Year 8 take over Year 7 as the best attending year group in the school (it is close at the moment). We took a lovely group of Year 8 students to Durham University who did a brilliant job representing the academy. Year 8 were also heavily involved in visits by the authors Josh Silver and Phil Earle whose books we read here in the academy.

Year 7:

What a brilliant year group they have been so far this year. Year 7s have coped really well with the set changes we made following the mid-year assessments and they are a genuine pleasure to have in our academy. Attendance is really strong in Year 7 and I really want it to stay this way for the rest of the academic year. Year 7 visited Durham University during this term and our sports teams have been competing well across the city and the county. The Year 7 boys football team have had a particularly brilliant year so well done to them.

Rewards:

We are going all out to show your children how much we value their contribution to the school community. At the end of this term I will be having my traditional Magic Hat Game assemblies where students will be playing 'Play Your Cards Right' to win prizes. We will also be drawing out the Weekly Star Nomination Prizes which this half term are: a £100 Amazon Voucher; a £100 Love to Shop Voucher and a Polaroid Camera. There are prizes being issued for our Reading stars, Heads of Year awards and my own prizes for students being Model Mortoners. We took a large group of students to Jurassic Golf in February and a group go bowling at the end of this term. So far this year all students who have attended Morton Academy have been recognised for their effort. I am really proud of this and proud of them. Students are breaking records in terms of the amount of merits being issued.

Toilets:

You will notice on the Arbor App that we are noting when students are leaving lessons to go to the toilet. I do not want to take any draconian action regarding this but we can see large numbers of students disrupting lessons. Unfortunately what seems to be happening is that children leave lessons to go to use their phones out of sight of staff. We really need to bring the number of children disrupting lessons by going to the toilet down. I would rather do this by encouraging them to build better habits during breaks and to refrain from the need to use their phones. So I would appreciate you looking at the Arbor App, the average number of toilet visits a student should have would be once a fortnight for your information.

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Safeguarding:

Following a Parent Teacher Community meeting it was decided that we would keep you updated with what activities are happening in school to promote safety and healthy lifestyles. In the last term we had external speakers in from Talk Consent which is a charity that promotes tolerance, healthy relationships and advice on consent. Students responded to this well. Some of our students took part in the Cyclewise Bikeability course learning about safety on the roads. In the upcoming term we will be welcoming Cumbria Police who will be giving presentations on knife crime, whilst we are fortunate that incidents like this are rare in Carlisle we need to be on the front foot in educating our youngsters about the dangers of knives. This is scheduled for Friday 25th April.

Made in Morton:

On top of all the other things going on at our academy we had a brilliant World Book Day in March. It was brilliant to see so many students join the staff in dressing up as characters for the day. You will notice that we now have a Book Vending Machine which we use to give out prizes to the Principal's Learner of the Week. We have a visit from some Carlisle United players to a boys' group who have been working with the Carlisle United Community group over the past few weeks. We had a lovely day for Comic Relief where students were far too enthusiastic at throwing sponges at staff but we raised some good money for charity. Our Year 10 boys showed their character by raising thousands for charity in the football match at half term. Students have taken part in the Science Made Simple show and Morton Academy won the Rotary Engineering competition at Austin Friars!

So, we continue to be the highest performing school in terms of progress in Carlisle. We are more popular than we have ever been in terms of young people choosing us. As you can see from this letter there is so much going on every day and as I say to students: this is their community and everyone is welcome here.

The academy closes at 12.45pm on Friday 4th April for the Easter break with students returning on Wednesday 23rd April at the normal time. Friday is a non-uniform day to recognise the massive improvements students have made with uniform this term. A donation of £1 would be welcomed.

Have a lovely Easter break and thank you again for your support.

Yours sincerely

Richard McGuire
Principal