



Morton Academy

The best in everyone™

Part of United Learning

MMCL/KRE

5th February 2024

Dear Parents/Carers

As we approach the end of this short half term, I wanted to keep you as updated as I can with developments here at the academy. Despite the brevity of the half term we've packed a lot in with many trips, activities and sporting events. We have visited Science Live in Manchester, Student Council went to the Houses of Parliament, we have triumphed in many sports fixtures - there is too much to mention! Please follow our Facebook page to see what is happening in school.

Survey Headlines:

I want to thank you for your commitment to helping improve the academy by completing our survey. We had the highest response rate in our history and were among the strongest in our trust. The survey is vital in letting me know how you feel and what you want from us. The key headlines are:

Our top results from the Parent Survey were:

- I am confident supporting my child with their next steps after school.
- I feel my child can raise any concern with staff.
- My child feels safe at school.
- It is easy to speak to the school about my child when I need to.
- I feel I can raise any concern about my child with staff.
- The school has a clear understanding of my child's needs.

These all scored very highly and I am humbled by the positivity by how you feel we support your child in school. This is due in the main though to the relationship between us (parent and academy) to place your child/our student at the front of everything we do.

Our lowest scoring results from the survey were:

- My child gets the right amount of homework.
- I encourage my child to read.
- Disruption free learning is not 100%.
- The school is good at letting me know about my child's achievements.

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Taking these in turn we have changed our approach to homework significantly this year, we do try and make sure the balance is fair but we probably need more detail which we will investigate with the Parent Teacher Community. My letter at the end of last term regarding changes to behaviour were in response to your survey and our commitment to 100% disruption free learning continues. Our reports tend to come out later in the year, so it may be that this is part of the issue with reporting achievements, but again we will ask for feedback from the PTC to get more detail. Finally, reading is a significant priority in school, we would really appreciate support from all parents to encourage reading at home. Confidence in reading is a life changing skill and if you would like advice please do get in touch.

Uniform:

As you know we were wanting to improve the overall quality of uniform at the academy and I am pleased with the progress that we have made with blazers and ties. We will now turn our attention to the next three issues that we need to address:

- **Footwear** – The academy's longstanding expectation is that students wear polishable black shoes to school. The standard on this has slipped whilst we have focussed on blazers/ties. I would appreciate your support when making your next school footwear purchases. If in doubt please ask.
- **Skirts/Trousers** – To support parents in making choices of these items we are going to add a preferred skirt and trouser style to our Your School Uniform page. This will make it clear what style is acceptable in school. Short, tight fitting jersey style skirts are not appropriate for school wear and will need to be replaced. Additionally, we have seen students arrive to school in jeans, leggings and tracksuit bottoms recently – this needs to be rectified also.
- **Jewellery** – Around 18 months ago I adapted our uniform policy to allow the wearing of stud earrings only. Unfortunately this has not been respected by students and we have seen a dramatic increase in jewellery in school. Therefore from half term all jewellery is now returned to the banned list and will be confiscated for parents to collect.

Punctuality:

While the majority of Morton Academy students arrive on time and prepared to learn, we have noticed a recent slight increase in the number of late arrivals. We understand that unforeseen circumstances can sometimes cause tardiness, but consistent lateness can have a significant impact on your child's and others' education.

You may also be aware that there is a huge focus not only at Morton Academy, but nationally, to improve attendance. Please be aware that if a child arrives more than 30 minutes late (without a valid reason) to school it is considered an absence.

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Why arriving punctually matters:

- **MISSED LEARNING:** The first few minutes of each lesson are crucial for setting the tone, providing important instructions, and introducing key concepts. Arriving late means missing out on valuable information and can make it difficult to catch up.
- **DISRUPTION TO THE CLASS:** Late arrivals disrupt the flow of the lesson, requiring the teacher to pause and re-explain missed information. This can be frustrating for both the teacher and other students who are trying to focus.
- **DEVELOPING GOOD HABITS:** Punctuality is a valuable life skill that will benefit your child throughout their academic and professional careers. Arriving on time demonstrates respect for others and commitment to responsibilities.

We understand that there are occasional exceptions:

- **Illness or unforeseen circumstances:** If your child is genuinely unwell or there is a truly unavoidable reason for lateness, please inform the school office as soon as possible.
- **Appointments:** If your child has a medical or dental appointment during school hours, please communicate this to the school in advance and schedule it for non-academic times whenever possible.

To help your child arrive on time, we encourage you to:

- **Establish a consistent morning routine:** Set a realistic wake-up time, plan and prepare breakfast and lunches the night before, and allow sufficient travel time to account for potential delays.
- **Talk to your child about the importance of punctuality:** Discuss the impact of lateness on their learning and the learning of others. Encourage them to take responsibility for being on time.
- **Communicate with the school:** If you are facing any challenges getting your child to school on time, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are here to work with you and find solutions.

In an effort to combat poor punctuality and to uphold our high standards for learning, students who arrive late to school without a valid reason will be placed in a one hour detention the following school day. We appreciate your cooperation in ensuring that all students arrive at school on time and are prepared to learn. Working together, we can create a positive and productive learning environment for everyone.

Have a lovely half term.

Yours sincerely

Richard McGuire
Principal

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