



Morton Academy

The best in everyone™

Part of United Learning

RMCG/KRE

16th December 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

As we reach the end of 2020 I wanted to write to you with some final updates for this term. As confirmed previously we are closing to students on Thursday 17th December, 2020 this has been planned in for some time and is not linked to last week's announcement by the Department for Education. But I do hope that one positive outcome for families is having one fewer day in school to help support Christmas bubbles.

Informing the academy of a positive Covid test:

Unfortunately, the virus will still be with us over the Christmas period and the academy will still have a role to play in supporting local services with controlling any potential outbreaks. For the Christmas break we will have a new email system set up called covid@rrma.org.uk this is the only method you will be able to use to inform the academy if your child tests positive for Covid-19. You will be directed to complete an online form which we will then use to inform potential close contacts. We will **only be emailing** information over the Christmas break, so it is important that the academy has an up to date email address for all families. Please do let us know if you believe your current email address is not correct.

Lateral Flow Testing:

You may have read in the press that the local authority is planning to mass test students in a pilot scheme across the county after the Christmas holidays. Morton Academy will **not** be taking part in the pilot along with many local schools. Whilst we agree in principle with the idea of testing students and staff the current plans and logistics to do this are not secure enough at this stage. We will be monitoring the pilot and hope to be involved in similar approaches later in the term.

Christmas Holidays:

As you'll know Carlisle remains in Tier 2 restrictions. Therefore, to protect the academy community it is vital that we all continue to socially distance and wear face masks as directed by national guidance. The academy has been fortunate to have had very few links to the virus since re-opening in September. This is due to everyone's collective effort. The academy will continue to have high levels of control when students return in January. It is absolutely vital that if your child has any of the 3 main symptoms of Covid-19 (high temperature, new continuous cough or loss of taste/smell) that they do not come back to the academy until they have been tested.

Staffing Update:

I would like to take this opportunity to say goodbye to some staff who leave us at the end of this term. Victoria Sabuda, Alex Adamson and Alex Cowie leave us to move on to new opportunities in 2021. I'd like to thank them for their contributions to the academy and wish them well for the future. We have appointed Lara Martyn to join the English department from January. I will be resuming the role of Head of English for the rest of this academic year.

/cont'd



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Year 10 Revision Guides

We have purchased revision guides for every student in each subject for our current year 10 cohort. Students will be invited in on Tuesday 5th January, 2021 to collect and sign for their books at reception. A separate letter will be emailed from Mrs Bewley with a time slot to attend the academy.

Staying Safe

As we spend more time online and electronics become a larger part of our lives, it is important that safety measures are in place on children's devices and that we are aware of where to get advice if there are any concerns. If you, or your child, is concerned about the way in which they are being contacted online you can find advice and support here: <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>.

We also know that our mental health is important and services such as Kooth and Mind have been shared with students regularly over the course of this term.

Of course time at home can also lead to pressures within relationships, especially during this time when our movements are restricted. If you, or your child, are concerned about domestic violence you can find advice and support here <https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/> or call 0808 2000 247 which is a free, confidential service available 24 hours a day.

Any safeguarding issues that you are worried about can also be discussed with the Safeguarding Hub on 0333 240 1727.

End of Term Arrangements/Start of Next Term:

The academy closes to students on Thursday 17th December at 3pm. This will be a Christmas Jumper Day for students and staff. The academy will reopen to students on Wednesday 6th January, 2021 at 8.35am.

This has been an incredibly hard year for us all but hopefully the vaccines point the way to a brighter future. I'd like to thank you all again for the support you have given the academy. As I write our Year 8s are sorting through your donations to go to the Foodbank. I can't thank you enough for this. I wish you all a restful Christmas break and a Happy New Year.

Yours sincerely

Richard McGuire
Principal