



Morton Academy

The best in everyone™

Part of United Learning

MMc/KR

15th December 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

The purpose of this letter is to provide a few updates for January. As with anything we decide to action, these alterations will be for the improvement of Morton Academy, allowing for the provision of the highest standard of learning experiences that we can offer, which our students are entitled to.

Year 7 Setting:

Upon our January return, we will be resetting our Year 7 students into what will broadly be mixed ability groups. We have explored many different ways of setting students in recent times, and we are of the belief that Year 7 mixed ability setting will be more effective. We have found that mixing abilities allows students to feel more comfortable to respond in lessons, discuss ideas and support each other. We also feel that the pandemic years have perhaps masked some of the true abilities of students and by mixing abilities in lessons it will allow us to investigate this further. A number of schools in Cumbria have adopted this approach and have seen positive impacts. Year 7 students will be issued with their individual timetables on Thursday 5th January 2023. As with any change we will be constantly reviewing the decision throughout the next term.

Behaviour:

We have been impressed with the majority of our students during our first term, and the behaviour of students at Morton Academy continues to be something we are proud of, but as with anything, it can be better still. At present, 85% of students have never been placed within Independent Learning for behaviours that are below expectations. However, in an effort to strengthen our stance on addressing any disruption to the learning environment, we will be actioning some alterations with immediate effect.

Therefore, students who are withdrawn from the learning environment will now be placed within Independent Learning for 24 hours. The reasoning for this is simple, there is no excuse for persistently disrupting the learning environment, as this restricts the progress of other students, and this is not acceptable. Students will be supported, as always, with a warm strict approach being applied to behaviour management. We do appreciate and acknowledge there are times where children are children and errors of judgement can occur, but there is a clear difference between a one-off mistake and the persistent disruption of the learning environment.

Students will be issued a warning if they fail to meet expectations in the first instance, with the reasoning for the warning being clearly explained. If a student who has received a warning is then challenged again, this will result in them being asked to move to another seat within the classroom to support them in managing their behaviour, and providing them the opportunity to remain within the learning environment. However, if the previous two strategies are not effective and the student continues to not meet expectations, they will be asked to make their way to Independent Learning and they will be withdrawn from the learning environment.

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Furthermore, the following graduated response to students being placed into Independent Learning repeatedly will be applied each term. On each occasion that a student is placed into Independent Learning, the member of staff who has withdrawn the student will communicate to ensure that the family are aware. In addition, a restorative conversation with the member of staff will occur one-to-one with the student whilst they are within Independent Learning.

1st Visit:

- The student will be placed onto a 'TUTOR REPORT', with targets linking to the specific reasoning for being withdrawn.
- 'TUTOR REPORT' will be for a minimum of two weeks.

2nd Visit:

- The student will be placed onto a 'HEAD OF YEAR REPORT', with targets linking to the specific reasoning for being withdrawn.
- This will be communicated to the family by the Head of Year.
- 'HEAD OF YEAR REPORT' will be for a minimum of two weeks.

3rd Visit:

- The student will be placed onto an 'ACTION PLAN', with targets linking to the specific reasoning for being withdrawn.
- This will be communicated to the family by the Head of Year through a formal meeting.
- 'ACTION PLAN' will be for a minimum of four weeks.

4th Visit:

- A 'MANAGED MOVE' will be actioned for the student.
- This will be communicated to the family by the Vice Principal through a formal meeting.

5th Visit:

- The student will be required to join our 'INCLUSION SUPPORT UNIT', with the focus being on altering the mindset through tailored one-to-one support.
- This will be communicated to the family by the Principal through a formal meeting.
- 'INCLUSION SUPPORT UNIT' will be until the student demonstrates that they are prepared to consistently contribute to the learning environment.

6th Visit:

- The student will be required to join our 'ALTERNATIVE MORTON', which will operate from 11:00am to 5:00pm.
- This will be communicated to the family by the Principal through a formal meeting.
- 'ALTERNATIVE MORTON' will be until the student demonstrates that they are prepared to consistently contribute to the learning environment.

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Honour Badges:

On a lighter note, we are focussed on ensuring that all students who are engaging are recognised for their efforts. We have been delighted with the way our students have interacted with our annual 'Mortonmas'. As a next step, a new and exciting reward system consisting of 'Honour Badges' has been created and will be launched in January. 'Honour Badges' will not be easily awarded or tokenistic, but will focus on recognising those who make a significant contribution across a range of different areas. Pleasingly, there have been over 10,000 'House Points' awarded this term, which demonstrates the considerable efforts the majority of our students consistently make.

Earning 'Honour Badges' will come with a degree of challenge and will be a measure of a student's tenacity, resolve and commitment. The six 'Honour Badges' that will be introduced have been developed to consider all of the core values of Morton Academy and to recognise a 'Model Mortoner' across different fields. 'Honour Badges' will be worn on the lapel of the blazer and there will be six to be collected. All members of staff will be leading on ways in which students can earn these through activities both within the curriculum as well as beyond the classroom. We believe that it is important that students who are truly making the most of what Morton Academy has to offer receive the recognition they deserve and know that their efforts are valued.

From all at Morton Academy, we hope that you have a lovely Christmas, and we look forward to welcoming students back to us on Thursday 5th January 2023.

Yours sincerely

M. McClelland

Mr M McClelland
Vice Principal: Student Culture