

1st December 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

End of Term Arrangements December 2020

The end of the autumn term will very soon be upon us and with it the long awaited Christmas holidays! We have had a successful term at Airedale Academy. We welcomed our new Year 7 and Year 12 students, who have made a fantastic start. There has been lots of hard work from our students and staff and a shared commitment towards our drive to achieve the very best for our students and for our community. Your continued support for maintaining our high standards around uniform, behaviour and attendance is very much appreciated. During the current times, we are very grateful for all of the support that you have given to school and very much appreciate how closely you continue to work with us during this very challenging period.

My autumn newsletter will be on our website and available via our Facebook page at www.airedaleacademy.co.uk during the last week of term. Please take the time to read this as it is full of useful information and key dates for the forthcoming year. You will also notice on the website our push to achieve the best attendance ever on the run up to the holidays. Staff and students are acutely aware that this time is all about being in school, enjoying lessons as normal but more importantly, ensuring that students are at school on the very last day to enjoy the festivities, Christmas jumpers and our special virtual assemblies.

The academy will close to students at 12:05pm on Friday 18th December 2020, any students wishing to claim their free school meal on the last day will be given the opportunity to do so. If the early closure time presents any difficulties, then please do not hesitate to contact the academy and we will organise alternative supervision for your child/children. For Christmas Jumper Day on Friday 18th December 2020, after the amazing and overwhelming support our students and families displayed last year, we have chosen to again to support the Castleford Mission which is based at the Trinity Methodist Church in Castleford. The charity provides a safe place for the homeless; this includes clean clothing, hot meals, somewhere to wash, as well as to give support and advice. In addition, the charity supports families and individuals who are in financial need, through the service of a Food Bank.

On Christmas Jumper Day, rather than bringing in the usual 50p or £1 donation, as last year we are asking our students to bring in a non-perishable food item such as a bag of pasta, or an item such as shampoo or toothpaste, which will be collected by Hub staff from now until Friday 11th December. This will ensure that we can quarantine items prior to Mission staff coming into school during the last week of term. Volunteers from Castleford Mission will speak at our end of term virtual assemblies to give us their thanks and also to explain how these Christmas gifts will be used. We hope that this approach will show our students the importance of giving at Christmas, especially to those who are in need. Students may come to school in non-uniform, but they must come in Christmas colours, Christmas jumpers or tops, no fancy dress is allowed.

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Academy App

If we have learnt anything over recent months, it is the importance of being able to keep in touch with each other. We now have our own academy app called **My Child at School** which is available on iOS and Android from wherever you download your usual apps. It is free to download and free to use. Please search your app store for My Child at School provided by Bromcom with the logo as shown below.



My Child at School (MCAS) will offer you so much information at your fingertips such as:

- Access to your student's timetable, the academy calendar and attendance information for your child,
- Communication facilities to improve contact between parents / carers and schools,
- School Announcements,
- Instant access to student reports and letters.

MCAS is also the only way you can currently pay for things at school such as lunches, trips when they restart, revision guides etc.

If you have not already downloaded the app, please do so as you will then receive letters and messages immediately. If we need to contact you regarding your child, for example if they are ill or need to come home, we can send you a notification and you will see it straight away.

To activate your app, you will need an activation code. If you need this resending, please call the office or email us and we will get it to you. The office can help with any queries you have about setting the app up or about using it once you have it.

Dinner Money

Please can I remind all families that you should always pay for your child's meals before they have them. Lunch accounts should never run into a debit balance. Please can all families check their balance and make sure there is enough money available to cover your meals up to the holidays.

If your account is overdrawn, please make a payment to repay this as soon as possible or contact the office to agree when a payment will be made. If anyone is struggling to pay please speak with our office as they may be able to help you look at whether you would be eligible for free meals. Being eligible for free meals, even for a short period of time, can attract additional government funding to support your child's education so we strongly recommend families checking to see if they may be eligible for this. If your income is temporarily reduced you may be able to qualify for this support. More information is available here <https://www.wakefield.gov.uk/schools-and-children/free-school-meals>.

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Spring Term 2020 – Key Information

The academy reopens to students on Tuesday 5th January 2021. The Monday will be taken as an Inset Day. It is vital that your son/daughter attends for the remainder of that week so that we don't undo all the hard work done to date. We really do appreciate your support with this.

Bad Weather

As the weather becomes a lot colder with the likelihood of snow and ice, can I please remind parents/carers that should students need to walk to school in boots or similar, they then need to change their footwear once in school. In the unlikely event that the school should need to close due to snow, parents/carers will be informed as soon as possible via text/website and our Facebook page. It is therefore vital that school has your up to date contact details.

Outdoor Coats

We want all of our students to arrive at school warm and dry and ready to learn. As the weather takes a turn for the worse during the winter months, may I remind you of our high standards and expectations around uniform. Our students look incredibly smart, but the wearing of hoodies spoils the appearance of some of our students. A polite reminder that hoodies of any sort (zip front or pull over) are not allowed in school. Coats can of course be worn over uniform but must be removed when indoors. Students are also encouraged to wear a plain black jumper under their blazer in order to keep warm in school.

I would like to thank parents and carers for their support this year; I would also like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas and holiday season. We look forward to welcoming students back in the New Year.

Yours sincerely



Miss L Proctor
Principal