

# NATIONAL CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

## Advent Newsletter

### Christmas address from Mr Brailsford – Headteacher

As 2023 ends, I would like to thank all of you for the overwhelming support you have given us this year. We have achieved so much together, not only academically, and not only with our OFSTED inspection, but also in the wider aspects of education and in our plans for a bright future. Throughout the year, you have praised and encouraged your children, cared for them, bought them uniform and equipment, taken an interest in their learning and supported us and our vision and values, and for that we thank you.

Huge admiration goes to all children at National who have given something their best in 2023. Those children who took the decision to give something new a go or showed resilience when they came up against a challenge and found something hard. You are a real credit to our community and you have impressed us by making the most of the opportunities that have come your way. We are extremely proud of you all. I would like to give a special mention to our year 7, who got off to a flying start to their time with us. It has been a pleasure to welcome you all and see how quickly you have become part of our family.

Our students have had some incredible moments outside of school already this term including the WW1 Battlefield Tour, Nottingham University visit, the London RS trip, Germany trip to Aachen, local visits to St Mary's Church for welcome and Christingle Services and the theatre visits to see Cinderella and Shrek the Musical. Speaking on behalf of the leaders who organised those trips, it was a privilege to support your children and allow them to access such a wonderful range of experiences and to return with what we hope are life long memories.

We have ended 2023 with the exciting news that we intend to open our own new Sixth Form Centre from September 2025. We have been working hard on designing a modern, spacious building and the multi-million-pound investment secures the future of post-16 education at National on our main site. Further information is available on our website and we will keep you updated on our progress next year.

The end of term sometimes means a change for some individuals. At National, we do see that our staff are real people with lives away from work, with other priorities and new opportunities in their lives to explore. To the colleagues who are leaving us at Christmas, it has been a pleasure working with you and we thank you for all of your hard work and dedication. Whatever plans you have made, we wish you the very best of luck for the future, and you will always be a part of the National family. The staff leaving us at Christmas are Mr McGibbon (science), Mr Wood (music) and Mrs Hartley (HSFC). Just a reminder that we have INSET days on Thursday 4th January and Friday 5th January. We look forward to welcoming all students back on Monday 8th January 2024.

Finally, on behalf of our governors, staff and pupils, we all sincerely hope you have a wonderful Christmas and New Year and manage to find peace and joy over the next few weeks.

See you in 2024!

**"Every good gift, every perfect gift, comes from above" (James 1:17)**

# 'Life in all its fullness' John 10:10

## Christingle Services

Our year 7 students all attended a Christingle service on Tuesday 12th December. Our students made their own Christingles and then walked to St Mary's Church where they were able to participate in a service. Reverend Helen explained the origins of Christingle, while students were able to have some moments of stillness to reflect on the world. We finally lit the candles so all students could appreciate the light provided by them, just as many Christians see the light being a symbol of Jesus.



## Christmas Tree Festival

It is an annual tradition in the Academy that we dress a tree for the St. Mary's Christmas Tree Festival. Some of our students have helped to make the decorations for the tree. This year the theme of the tree was inclusion and awareness, decorations included sunflowers and awareness ribbons.

The tree was on display at St Mary's Church for the public to see and admire.



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## Year 10 German Christmas Markets Trip

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On Monday the 4th December 36 German linguists from year 10 embarked on their journey to Aachen, Germany. Upon arriving at the accommodation the students had an evening meal and settled in for the night.

Up bright and early the next morning, the students visited the Lindt Factory Outlet where lots of delicious chocolate was purchased and they began the walk in to the old town of Aachen. Here the students were set an Apprentice style challenge and were given the opportunity to visit the quaint shops and practise their German speaking. The winning team was awarded a prize for their enthusiastic engagement with the activity. The students then visited Aachen Cathedral and the Christmas markets, where students embraced German culture and food. The day was finished off nicely with an evening meal and a quiz night. The next day the students travelled further inland to the city of Cologne. Students started the day at the Sports History Museum. Students embraced trying different sports including Stabübungen, Fussball, Gymnastik and Boxen. They then walked along the River Rhein to Cologne Cathedral. Here the students were given a guided tour of the interior of the Cathedral where they learnt about the history of the city and religious symbolism. Students had the opportunity to visit authentic Christmas markets within the city including Heinzels Winter Fairytale located in the heart of Cologne's old town. Students travelled back to the accommodation for an evening meal and an awards ceremony with Christmas themed prizes. On Thursday 7th December students began their journey back home to England where they arrived back at National safely late in the evening. Students enjoyed their cultural experience of Germany and it was a great way to begin Christmas festivities.

*Mrs K Simpson - Teacher of English*



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## Fundraising on Santa's Sleigh

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11 fantastic students battled the cold weather after school on Wednesday 13th December to become Santa's helpers and raise money alongside the Hucknall Rotary Club for our sponsored child. The students were extremely enthusiastic and members of the public had nothing but praise and kind wishes for us. The students should be extremely proud of themselves, and to top it all off were able to collect £253.66 on behalf of our tutor group, 9D.

*Mr M South - Teacher of science and 9D tutor*



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## Year 9 Battlefields Trip

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Year 9 were a credit to the Academy on their trip to the WW1 battlefield sites. On Tuesday 17th October, after a ferry crossing, we headed to Zonnebeke and the fantastic Passchendaele War Museum. The dugouts here are maintained from WW1 and really show the nature of trench warfare. This really developed the students knowledge from the classroom in a really practical and interesting fashion.

Day two on Wednesday was all about the battles of Ypres that skirted the Belgian town between 1915 and 1917. After learning about the nature and horror of trench warfare, we visited two contrasting cemeteries. Tyne Cot Memorial showed the gravity and scale of loss. The attitude to mourning in this British graveyard was completely different to the contrasting German cemetery at Langemark. With its gravestones contrasting with the white spacious feel at Tyne Cot it highlighted how the two nations do remembrance in a different way. Having skirted around Ypres all morning we arrived in the beautiful market square. From that point, a large chocolate shop was our next destination. As the school goes here every year, we got a special offer on the chocolate (parents, I hope you got a present!). Some free time was spent around the remarkable town square at Ypres, which was followed by another dive into trench warfare with a scout around the 'In Flanders Fields Museum'. A large museum with the purpose of commemorating the many men that fought in the war. A quick lunch gave the group the sustenance to head back to Ypres, to partake in the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate; a granite arch that commemorates the journey of British soldiers as they left the safety of Ypres for the front line. In sombre mood, we watched the ceremony which was very touching. Some of our students laid a wreath on behalf of the school.



Our last day took us south along the old front line to the River Somme. We had studied this battle in our history lessons but to see the scale of loss in such a small area was sobering. We arrived amidst heavy rain unlike the sunny conditions of the 1st July 1916 that had greeted the 'green' Commonwealth soldiers. Newfoundland Park preserves a section of the battlefield as it was in 1916. It gives you a great insight into why the losses were so significant. All that was left to do was a return by ferry back to waiting parents.

The conduct of the 49 students was exemplary. We are exceptionally proud of the studious and respectful attitude of year 9.

*Mr M Jones - Head of humanities*

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## Year 9 Personal Development and Careers Day

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Year 9 took part in our annual Personal Development/CEIAG Day on Tuesday 21st November for the second year running. The whole year group were off timetable for the day to explore their self-development and future ambitions. We had the pleasure of working with the RTC, ITP Aerospace, the University of Loughborough and the University of Nottingham in a rotation of workshops and presentations.

*Miss O Hyde - Teacher of English and CEIAG lead*

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# Year 10 Religious Studies London Trip

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On Wednesday 29th November, 52 year 10 students travelled to London as part of a three day Religious Studies trip. They visited a Buddhist temple in Wimbledon and found out about Buddhist beliefs as well as asking questions to two Buddhist monks. The students then had free time for shopping in Leicester Square, the giant M&M store was a big hit!

On the second day the group visited the Lauderdale Road Synagogue, followed by a tour around Westminster Cathedral. Dinner was eaten at the Hard Rock Café before arriving at the Lyceum Theatre for the evening performance of the Lion King.

The final day was spent touring the East London mosque, where the students saw the prayer hall, the minaret, the wash rooms and were able to ask questions to the group leaders. Students then had some free time before heading into St Paul's Cathedral. Nearly all students chose to face their fears and climb the 528 steps to the top! We saw how similar St Paul's was to Westminster Cathedral and also went into the crypt to see monuments to people including Florence Nightingale and Horatio Nelson.

The students learnt a lot which will support them in their RS GCSE, and certainly developed their questioning skills. Several students asked fantastic questions to further their understanding of different faiths and how they worship.

*Mrs R Halfpenny - Head of social sciences*



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## Year 11 Mock Interviews

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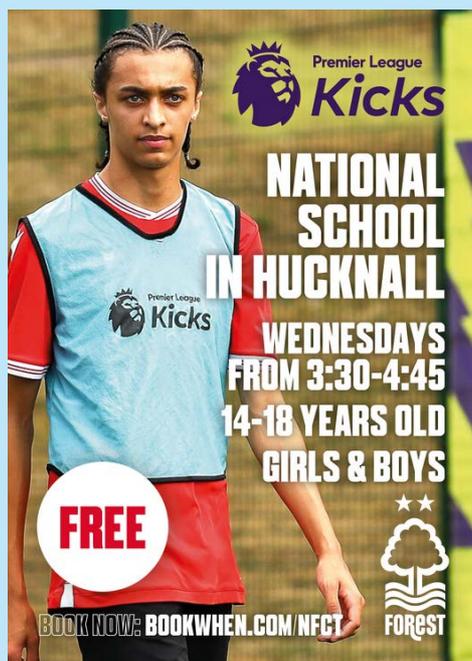
On Monday 16th October, we welcomed fourteen guests into the Academy to lead mock interviews with our year 11 students. This was a fantastic opportunity for our students to work directly with professional members of our community and practise their communication and interpersonal skills. Our students came away feeling enthused and with increased confidence for post-16 interviews coming up! We look forward to seeing them interview successfully in their next steps.

*Miss O Hyde - Teacher of English and CEIAG lead*

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## Premier League Kicks

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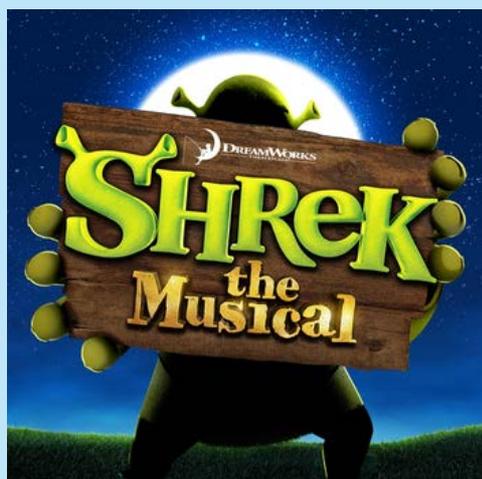
Premier League Kicks sessions are running here at National after school on Wednesdays. Premier League Kicks uses the power of football and sport to inspire young people to reach their potential. Sessions are free to attend. Earlier in the term, three of our year 11 students Ben, Isaac and Oliver from the Kicks sessions had the opportunity to take part in a tournament representing Nottingham Forest Community Trust.



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## Year 8 Theatre Trip to Shrek the Musical

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170 year 8s headed to the Leicester Curve to see a fabulous performance of Shrek on Thursday 19th October. The tour has previously been in the West End and as you would expect it was a performance of the highest quality. The students all enjoyed the performance and with lots of song and dance, it was a truly memorable day. Although we had a late return to school, all the students represented the school fantastically and had excellent manners and conduct throughout the whole trip.

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## Year 7 Theatre Trip to Cinderella

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On Wednesday 13th December we took 176 year 7 students to see a theatre adaptation of Cinderella at Derby Theatre. It was a modern retelling of the traditional fairy tale, all set in the Derbyshire countryside. Our year 7 students enjoyed their theatre experience and the twist on a classic tale gave us lots to discuss on the bus on the way home.



# News from the library

## Bookbuzz

There has been a Bookbuzz in year 7! Bookbuzz is a reading programme from Book Trust that aims to help schools inspire a love of reading in our students. All of our year 7 students had the opportunity to choose their own free book from a selection of 16 exciting titles to take home and keep! We watched videos of the authors introducing their books and explaining why we should pick that one! The range of books included quick reads, non-fiction and graphic novels as well as fiction.



## Book Fair

We have also had a visit from the Scholastic book fair, the fair was in the library during November for all of our students to browse and get some reading inspiration! There was a fantastic selection to choose from, but the most popular book by far was the Hunger Games prequel, The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes.

## Yoto Carnegie Judging

Our school librarian, Mrs Prestwood is the East Midlands judge for the prestigious Yoto Carnegie book awards this year, and she has been busy reading the 129 books nominated for the writing and illustration awards in her free time.

The Yoto Carnegies are the UK's longest running and best-loved children's book awards, judged solely by librarians. The awards recognise outstanding reading experiences created through writing and illustration in books for children and young people. Visit the website for more information:

<https://yotocarnegies.co.uk>

Mrs Prestwood has received copies of all 129 books nominated and will donate all of the books to the Academy library once the judging is over. So our students will be able to read and enjoy all of the books too.

The longlist will be announced on 13th February 2024

The shortlist will be announced on 13th March 2024

The winning books will be announced on 20 June 2024

# Faculty Blog - Maths and Computing (MAC)

The maths department welcomes two new teachers this academic year; Miss Copeland (maths) and Mr Bolster (maths and computing).

We have started our year off in computing by using BBC microbits with year 9, which are small micro computers, to teach the principles of coding. Our year 9 students have taken on the challenge of designing and refining algorithms. We are fortunate to have well equipped computer rooms, some of which have been refurbished with brand new computers.

With our year 8 students, this year is the first opportunity for them to experience the computing curriculum and we have started by looking at the components that enable computation to happen; this will give them an overview of the purpose of various types of hardware and software.

As part of our plan to embed deeper digital literacy into curriculum, we have transitioned away from using exercise books in our computer science lessons and are making greater use of Microsoft Teams to equip students with the necessary skills to use technology effectively and safely. As the year gets underway, we will be releasing regular e-safety updates to students, staff and parents via our social media, so please look out for these.

In maths we have invested heavily in our new online resource, Sparx maths. This platform tracks the students progress, and alters the difficulty to ensure students are challenged. It monitors the areas a student is struggling with and supports them by targeting questions on these areas. Staff use the feedback it sends to go over key areas again in lessons. Hopefully by now your child will have used this either in class, or for homework if they are in key stage 4.

We would value some feedback from parents on this new platform, so please email any comments you may have to [kmarshall@nationalacademy.org.uk](mailto:kmarshall@nationalacademy.org.uk)

*Mrs K Marshall - Head of MAC*

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## News from HSFC

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Year 13 interview day was held on Thursday 16th November. A plethora of employers kindly gave up their time to help year 13 with this task. They were able to receive a personalised and realistic interview experience and then able to give feedback to the students to help them as they move forward in their own personal journey. The take up for the interviews was extremely high and the students were highly positive about the experience.

Our year 12 and year 13 art and photography students took part in a fantastic trip to London on the Monday 11th and Tuesday 12th December. The staff and students really enjoyed touring Tate Britain, Tate Modern, The National Portrait Gallery and The Photographers Gallery. They also walked an impressive 18 miles, covering a long walk of the Thames, Westminster, Covent Garden and Trafalgar Square.

*J Cliffman- Head of Hucknall Sixth Form Centre*



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# Head of Year Highlights

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## Year 7

The first term of a new school year is always filled with excitement and anticipation, especially for the year 7 students stepping into the unfamiliar territory of secondary education. As the term comes to a close, it is heartening to witness how well these young learners have settled into their new academic environment. Moving from primary school to the larger, more diverse setting of secondary school can be daunting, but the students have adapted admirably. The enthusiasm displayed by the year 7 cohort has been contagious. Whether it's participating in class discussions, joining extracurricular activities, or engaging with their peers, these students have shown a genuine eagerness to embrace all aspects of their new academic journey. Staff have commended their positive attitudes and their willingness to take on new challenges.

As the first term concludes, it is evident that the year 7 students have laid a solid foundation for their secondary school journey.

Big congratulations to our top 5 achievement point earners, Tillie B, Sureya B, Cameron C, Oliver C and Vienna L. Keep up the good work.

*Mr J Beaver - Head of year 7*

## Year 8

Another term under our belts already for year 8, this academic year is flying by. This week we are holding our achievement assembly where we can celebrate all the wonderful successes we have had in year 8 so far. Earlier in the term year 8 students had the opportunity to visit the theatre to watch Shrek. What a fantastic experience that was for our students.

We are also looking forward to spending period 5 on the last day of term with our tutor groups, a time to celebrate with our form and reflect on the year this far. We would like to wish all our students and school community a merry Christmas and a happy new year. We hope you stay safe and look forward to seeing you all in 2024!

*Mrs E Hopkin and Mrs S Bird - Head and assistant head of year 8*

## Year 9

Year 9 have had a very positive first term of an important academic year, where plenty has been achieved both in and out of the classroom. Being in school every day that it is open, is important to your child's achievement, wellbeing, and their wider development; and the average attendance for year 9 this term is 94.3% at the time of writing. Well done to 9A, leading the way with an average attendance of 95.7% this term, and the 100 year 9 students above our 97% target, with 51 students at 100%.

In lessons every student has received achievement points, as year 9 have collectively been awarded over 21,500 positive achievement points this term. 9E lead the way this term with over 3,600 positive achievement points. Individually, congratulations to Tyler in 9C, Poppy in 9E, Micaiah in 9A, Harley in 9F, Teye in 9B, for being our five most rewarded students this term.

We have also taken the first steps in the options process leading up to GCSE's, with the year group having an options assembly and a careers information and guidance day this term. In the new year, every year 9 student will have a careers interview as well as work in PD lessons to offer more support and guidance, before the options evening in March, where parents and carers will be invited in. Well done to all year 9's for all their positives this term, and enjoy the Christmas break.

*Mr J Gilham and Mrs L News - Head and assistant head of year 9*

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# Head of Year Highlights

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## Year 10

Congratulations again to Emily B, Toby T, Liddeyia B, Marley H, Kelsey E, Tamsin M and Akua M. All of these pupils have 100% attendance, more than 100 achievement points, have not been late to a single lesson and have not got a single debit. They are a fantastic example to all other pupils in year 10!

Our top three positive point earners for the half term are Emily B with 152 achievement points, Toby T with 134 achievement points, and Liddeyia B with 132 achievement points, looking back at the same time last year there are significantly more credits being earned, a fantastic effort!

Well done year 10, let's make our push into the new year even better!

*Mr K Mistry - Head of year 10*

## Year 11

I have been very pleased with how year 11 have started the academic year, with attendance being a strength within the year group, seeing them placed 2nd after year 7 – which is fantastic! There have been over 4,500 achievement points issued to year 11 since September and this again demonstrates the commitment that the year 11 students have shown to working hard and being engaged with their learning in this exam year. Every student in year 11 has gained some achievement points and of the 209 students in the year – a fantastic 94 of these have no negative behaviour points at all.

Year 11 can be an extremely stressful time for our students and starting their revision early can help reduce the stress of feeling that they are not prepared. The following websites can help you support your child to plan their revision and give them ideas on how to revise:

<https://getrevising.co.uk>

[https://app.studysmarter.de/register?website\\_signup\\_flow=true](https://app.studysmarter.de/register?website_signup_flow=true)

May I take this opportunity to wish you a Happy Festive Season.

*Ms S Craven – Head of Year 11*

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## Staffing Update

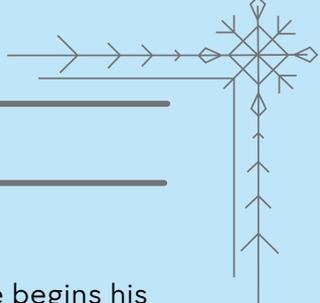
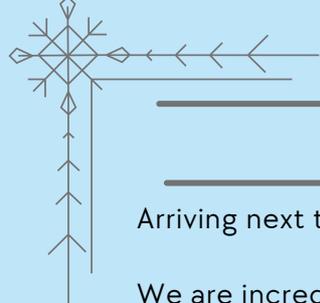
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Leaving us this term,

**Mrs Hartley** is saying goodbye to The National Academy after an incredible 16 years here. Mrs Hartley joined us in 2007 under the headship of Dr Edwards. Her title at the time was 'Student Support Assistant 14 – 19 Phase'. She then continued her career here, providing essential clerical & administrative support, particularly for our post-16 team, being mainly based at HSFC. It is difficult to imagine HSFC without Mrs Hartley and wish her the very best as she retires. It has been a privilege for all to work with her.

**Mr McGibbon** is leaving us to explore other opportunities. He joined The National Academy in 2015 and has been a fantastic asset to the science faculty and a popular colleague to work with. He has brought science to life for many hundreds of our students past and present. We thank him hugely for his service to the children and community of Hucknall.

**Mr Wood** is leaving having started his career as an Early Career Teacher of music at The National in the PACE faculty. We wish him well as he heads off to continue his career elsewhere.



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# Staffing Update

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Arriving next term,

We are incredibly excited to welcome **Mr Surgay** to The National Academy as he begins his new role as academy chaplain in January. Coming from an educational background, Mr Surgay is also a former student at The National Academy and a Hucknall resident. Mr Surgay will be a great addition to our team.

**Ms Price-Hood** is joining us in January as a Learning Support Assistant, working as part of the inclusion team. She will add to the excellent support the team offer our SEND students.

**Ms Endrijaitiene** is joining us at HSFC working as a post-16 administrator supporting our students and staff in the smooth running of our sixth form provision.

Lastly, we welcome **Ms Waters** to the midday supervisors' team, providing vital supervision and support during our students' lunchtime.

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## Dates to remember

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*Thursday 4th January and Friday 5th January 2024 - INSET days  
Monday 8th January 2024 - return to school for all year groups*

*Thursday 1st February 2024 - Year 11 AMP evening  
Wednesday 7th and Thursday 8th February 2024 - Academy show*

*Academy holiday - Monday 12th February to Friday 16th February 2024  
Monday 19th February 2024 - INSET day  
Tuesday 20th February 2024 - return to school for all year groups*

*Wednesday 21st February 2024 - Year 10 AMP evening  
Wednesday 6th March 2024 - Year 9 options evening  
Tuesday 12th March 2024 - Parent forum meeting*

*Friday 28th March - Academy closed for bank holiday  
Academy holiday - Monday 1st April - Friday 12th April 2024  
Monday 15th April - return to school for all year groups*

*Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year*

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