

McMillan Messenger

July 2024

Message from Mrs Lang, the Principal

Dear Families,

The summer is finally here! The holidays are, anyway, but I think we'd all agree that we're not too sure about the weather! We will be finishing school on **Wednesday 17 July at 2:30pm**. School will close at 2:30pm and there will be no option to stay later than this on Wednesday, so please make arrangements for childcare, if needed. We return to school with a staggered start, as usual. Please see below for specific year group details.

We have had an amazing end to the academic year, full of enriching experiences for our students. Year 9 have been partaking this term in their Duke of Edinburgh expeditions with Mr Hellewell. Did you know that we complete our Bronze DoE Award in scheduled lesson time in Year 9? Over 85 students passed the qualification last year, and we look forward to seeing the results improve for this year's participants. Well done to all involved!

We have been on a really broad range of trips and visits too. Last week, we participated in our inaugural Enrichment Expeditions day for the whole academy. The aim of these days is to support our students in gaining cultural knowledge of their local area and the wider world, as well as bringing learning to life. Year 7 visited a range of important historical places in Bradford with the Art Department, learning different drawing and sketching techniques along the way. Year 8 were in school but participating in a wide range of activities linked to their new option subjects for Year 9 in vocational qualifications. Year 9 visited significant religious buildings in our community led by the RE team, including the Gurdwara, a Church and a Mosque. Finally, Year 10 were participating in online work experience with a range of businesses in technology. The feedback from the day was resoundingly positive, and we look forward to embedding these days each cycle, moving forward, to help to bring the curriculum to life. Year 7, 8 and 9 also attended Bradford Literature Festival education sessions and learnt from a range of writers and authors.

Finally, a reminder from me regarding the changes to the academy day from September. As I am sure you will remember, we consulted all families and staff regarding our academy day and made the following changes in response to that feedback. The academy start time remains the same, and all students are expected to be in the building for 7:55am ready to attend line up for hands up at 8:02am. The school day will finish at 3:10pm each day for our usual lessons. There will be 6 lessons every day that are 55 minutes in length. There will then be a range of Co-Curricular opportunities available each day that will last until 4pm, for Years 7-11 inclusive. We will offer sign up in the first week back and aim to start these week commencing 16 September. Children will sign up for a cycle, and attendance will then be expected. There will also be some compulsory KS4 (Year 10 and 11) intervention for GCSEs. You will be informed of these in writing and attendance will be expected and compulsory to support your child's progress and outcomes. The library will be open until 4:30pm each day, and Reception until 5:00pm. We will expect all students off-site by 4:45pm.

I do hope you have an enjoyable summer!

Yours faithfully



Kat Lang
Principal



Key Dates

Returning to school:

Year 11 – Monday 2 September, 7:55am prompt

Year 7 (and Year 11) – Tuesday 3 September, 7:55am prompt

Year 8/9/10 (and Year 11 and Year 7) – Wednesday 4 September, 7:55am prompt

Summer Activities

Children on benefits-related free school meals are eligible for a free place at a HAF holiday club during the Easter, summer and Christmas school holidays.

HAF clubs provide free fun activities and a healthy meal for eligible children, including children with SEND or additional needs.

Places are limited on the clubs so please book early to avoid missing out. Bookings are now open for summer so don't delay, secure your child's place now.

<https://www.bradford.gov.uk/education-and-skills/haf-holiday-activities-and-food-programme/haf-holiday-activities-and-food-programme/>

Equipment

Please can we take this opportunity to remind families that all students need to be 100% equipped for the day, each day. Currently we are seeing an increase in children not arriving to school with the correct equipment and this is having a huge impact on children being able to engage in Morning Meeting (focused on revision skills for assessment) as they are spending time finding / organising equipment. All families have signed the home-academy agreement, agreeing to support with this. A list of equipment your child should have can be found in the family handbook here: <https://www.dixonsma.com/about/document-library>. Families are kindly reminded that we **only** accept cash at student support. Summer is a perfect time to ensure that this learning habit is met. We will provide a new mini-whiteboard and 100% folder in September, but we **will not** be replacing lanyards or prisms – these will need to be purchased if lost or damaged.

Parent Pay

We are currently seeing an increase in ParentPay debt, with families not topping up their child's account and allowing it to go into debt. If you need support with ParentPay, or paying for school lunches, please do contact school in the first instance – we want to help. Secondly, families are reminded that lack of payment comes directly from the school budget and impacts what we can pay for, for children – such as Trips and Visits. Please ensure over the holiday that you check your ParentPay account, and credit it where needed.

Website and Twitter

We post regular updates about life at the academy on both our website: www.dixonsma.com and our Twitter account: @DixonsMA

Free School Meal Entitlement

Please see the Bradford government website regarding free school meal entitlement. Further information can be found at: <https://www.bradford.gov.uk/benefits/applying-for-benefits/free-school-meals/> If you would like help in completing the form, please do contact main reception.

