

McMillan Messenger

March 2024

Message from Mrs Lang, the Principal

Dear Families,

What a busy cycle it has been! Ramadan Mubarak to all of our families who are observing the holy month. I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of our planned closure on **Friday 22 March**. On Friday we are closed for our pre-arranged data and planning day. Therefore we break up for the Easter holiday on **Thursday 21 March**, finishing school at the usual time of 3:00pm. We return to school on **Monday 08 April**.

Yesterday, we held our inaugural 'Iftar at DMA' event. We hosted over 70 staff and students for the event last night. It was an absolute joy to see staff and students come together, and I felt honoured to be a part of it. All money raised from the donations (currently around £230) will go to Save The Children: Gaza Fund. We would like to recognise and thank all of the local businesses and restaurants in the community who very kindly donated to the event: MyLahores Bradford; Paratha Box (Great Horton) and International Restaurant (Morley Street). Thank you to Mr Ali and Mrs Sharif for working tirelessly to organise this for us, and to Esa in 11X for giving us the idea to host Iftar at school.

For those of you who did not get a chance to attend, we also held our very first Talent Show at DMA this cycle. Miss Rosser and Miss Slattery did an amazing job of organising and hosting the event – a very big thank you to them. However, it was astounding the level of talent and dedication displayed on the night by all performers. Resilience was clearly demonstrated by all. A special mention also to the winner of the show, Eessah in 7B. All of the judging panel agreed that they were blown away by his performance.

After the Easter break, we will be closed for Eid ul-Fitr on **Wednesday 10 April**. School will be closed to all staff and students on this day.

Last year, Culture Day was a resounding success and we plan to hold our second Culture Day this year on **Friday 12 April 2024**. We will take this day to learn about and celebrate our unique and diverse cultures and backgrounds. On this day, students will be allowed to attend school in cultural attire. Anything worn by students must be suitable for school and show respect to people from other cultures. We understand some items of cultural clothing may include accessories and so we ask families and students to select these sensibly. If students do not wish to wear their cultural attire, they should attend in their usual uniform or business dress. During the day, students will have the opportunity in their lessons to learn about how culture is embedded in each curriculum subject. There will also be some opportunities in Morning Meeting and Advisory time to learn more widely about the different cultures we have in school.

Finally, I wish to share with you the outcome of the consultation on changing the times of the Academy day for 2024-25 onward. A resounding 89% of parents agreed with the changes to the academy day, and so we are proceeding as planned – a standardised day, 8:00am – 3:10pm, Monday – Friday inclusive. There will be after school clubs and interventions available to students every day, meaning we will have provision available each day until 4pm, should children wish to attend. There will be more information shared with you on this closer to the time, but thank you, as always for your feedback and support. I do want to share some of the lovely comments made about the school and the changes in the feedback:

"It's a brilliant change. As my son did say how long the day felt. This will allow them breathing space."

"This will be very helpful."

"It's fantastic to see the children having their voices heard by DMA and action being taken to reflect what they have said."



"It shows DMA are student centred."

"Happy to hear about the change."

"Should have been done sooner, makes a big difference."

Finally, I do hope that you have a restful break when it comes, and Happy Easter to those celebrating, and Eid Mubarak to those celebrating soon after.

Yours faithfully



Kat Lang
Principal

Key Dates

Data and Planning Day C2: 22 March

Easter Holiday: 22 March – 7 April (return to school Monday 8 April)

Eid ul-Fitr Closure: 10 April

Year 8 Parents' Evening: 18 April

Data and Planning Day C3: 22 April

Year 10 Parents' Evening: 02 May

Bank Holiday: 06 May

Year 11 GCSE Examinations Begin: 09 May

Issues with 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 accept cash at student support.

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.

Family Dining

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



Uniform

We are always in short supply of spare uniform, business dress and PE Kit at the academy, particularly in larger sizes. If you have any spare uniform, or clothes suitable for business dress (for boys or girls) we will gladly accept your donations. Please just drop them in at main reception.

If you need support with purchasing any uniform, please do reach out and ask. Your child's Head of Year can support, or just call main reception who will put you in touch with someone who can help.

Attendance

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our students, we monitor student attendance on a regular basis. To help us improve attendance across the school, we have Nabeela Kiran joining us from the Education Safeguarding Team. Nabeela's role will be to support with attendance, reduce barriers to accessing learning, and meeting with families and students whose attendance is below 90%.

