

December 2021

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Dear Parent/Carer

enquiries@horbury.accordmat.org
horbury.accordmat.org

Christmas and New Year Update

Principal: Mrs N Waker

As the end of our first term draws to a close, I wanted to take the opportunity to write to parents/carers and provide some updates and information for the New Year. When we return to the Academy in January our coronavirus restrictions will continue to be in place, with some minor adjustments to our operational plan. I hope that this letter provides you with some reflection on this term in addition to some useful key information.

Our January return will be a staggered start for some pupils, for further details on our return to the academy, please see our January return [letter](#).

Testing prior to return

Please find a reminder of the Governments restriction; Plan B of the COVID-19 Response: Autumn and Winter Plan, to reduce pressure on the NHS.

We are strongly encouraging all our staff to continue with regular LFD testing both during term time and over the Christmas break. We encourage all our pupils to do the same, having had access to sufficient test kits for the school holiday period.

The Government advises children in year 7 and above and adults, to test if they will be in a high-risk situation on any particular day and before visiting people who are at higher risk of severe illness if they get COVID-19.

The academy will facilitate onsite testing for those pupils who have elected to do so. All year 7,8,9 and 10 pupils who have requested an onsite test should attend the academy in full uniform at their allocated time on Tuesday 4 January. Year 11 pupils will be collected from lessons.

Standards for Success January 2021

All pupils will be expected to be in full Academy uniform with equipment, as per our Standards for Success without exception. In order to effectively support all pupils to meet our Standards for Success when they return in January and to support the need to avoid the sharing of equipment amongst pupils, we would ask that all pupils arrive to the Academy prepared for learning with the following items of essential equipment, these include:

- At least one black pen
- A purple pen
- A pencil, ruler and sharpener
- A scientific calculator and protractor
- A reading book that is age appropriate
- A suitable bag in which to carry their books, planner and any specific equipment for practical activities.

In terms of uniform, our high expectations remain. Specific details of our uniform expectations are available on our website however, for clarity I would ask for your support with the following in preparation for a smooth return to the Academy:

1. Pupils should continue to wear their colour coded lanyards and are expected to return to the Academy with their lanyard.
2. Pupils should continue to bring a suitable face covering with them to the Academy each day. Pupils who are not exempt should wear these in all communal areas of the academy.
3. Pupils are in receipt of the correct uniform (as per the Academy website) and understand how to wear it correctly. This includes ensuring that skirts are of the correct length, are not rolled or bunched at the waist; shirts are long enough to be tucked into trousers and trousers are not skinny fit but are a tailored school trouser.

4. Pupils are in receipt of appropriate school shoes and these should be broken in (worn in advance) so as not to cause blisters. Pupils will not be permitted to change into alternative footwear should this issue arise.
5. Pupils should not wear makeup of any description. This includes artificial nails, fake tan or false eyelashes.
6. Pupils should not wear piercings of any kind.
7. Pupils should not wear jewellery of any kind.
8. Pupils should have appropriate outer wear and all pupils are reminded that no hoodies are permitted.

Senior Leaders will continue to greet pupils at the Academy each morning to ensure they are fully prepared and ready for the day's learning. Should you require any support with uniform in advance of our return in January please contact the Academy via enquiries@horbury.accordmat.org where we will be happy to support you with this.

Site entrance and exit

On our return all pupils will enter and exit the academy site via the pupil entrance at the front of school. Senior Leaders and Pastoral Year Leaders will greet all pupils and check standards for success ensuring all are ready for their days learning. The Berry Lane gate will no longer be open from January.

When pupils enter the academy, they will continue to congregate in their year group zones.

Lockers

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all pupils for their patience in the re-instatement of lockers. All new lockers have been allocated and pupils will receive their keys on their return to the academy in January and will be able to access their lockers. In order to ensure we continue to minimise the risk of the spread of Covid19, all pupils are asked to ensure single person use of each locker. Sharing of lockers is not permitted. Any pupils in breach of this will have their key removed.

Pre-Public Examinations

Our Year 11 pupils sat a full suite of pre-public examinations in November to help them prepare for their GCSE exams at the end of the academic year. I am incredibly proud of their efforts and achievements leading up to and during these examinations. Their engagement in lessons throughout the term has been excellent, alongside their commitment to revision and personal preparation. It was great to see so many smiling faces on their Mock Results Day last week, where pupils were able to see the benefits of all their hard work. A further round of PPE's are scheduled for the weeks beginning 14 and 28 February.

Positive Recognition

I am proud to be able to congratulate our Yr11 boys football team who recently won the Regional Wakefield tournament, it turned into a true nail biter when it went to penalties. There were some excellent individual performances although the whole team were a credit to themselves and the academy, demonstrating admirable team spirit and support of each other. Congratulations and well done to all involved.

Thank you to our talented performing arts department and pupils. Yr7 had the pleasure this week of watching a fantastic Christmas performance, thoroughly enjoyed by all.

The generosity of pupils at Horbury Academy this term has once again been wonderful. Funds have been raised for Children in Need and Save the Children. The total raised for both charities amounted to £857.53. Additionally, throughout the term pupils and families have continued to donate to our foodbank collection for Horbury and Ossett Foodbank. There has been a staggering amount of food, toiletries and household products donated, thank you all for these valuable contributions.

Accord Multi Academy Trust – Annual Report 2020/2021

I would like to signpost all parents and carers to the Trust Annual Report for 2020/2021 which is now available on the Trust website at the following link:

<https://accordmat.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Accord-Annual-Report-2021-Digital-1-2.pdf>.

The report showcases all the amazing efforts and successes of our academies, pupils, students and staff across the course of a challenging academic year. We are really proud to work in the Trust and of what has been achieved collectively across the last 12 months.

Adverse Weather Conditions

As we move into the winter months, I wanted to ensure all parents/carers understand our Academy closure procedures. Whilst we would always try to remain open to pupils and staff, sometimes adverse weather conditions make this impossible. In the event of a closure for pupils, we will communicate our intentions via our text messaging service, MCAS, the Academy website, Facebook and Twitter, as well as providing updates on Greatest Hits Radio West Yorkshire & Pulse 1. As with closures due to the coronavirus pandemic, all pupils will be able to access work remotely via Microsoft Teams with information regarding their learning being shared with pupils via our Accord SharePoint platform.

Given the reduced temperatures, it is also important that pupils arrive to the Academy suitably equipped for any cold and/or severe weather. As parents and pupils are aware, our coronavirus risk assessment states that we need to continue to maintain a good circulation of fresh air into all buildings and classrooms. Pupils are encouraged to continue to wear layers when and where possible as well as ensuring they have the following items including, their blazer and an Academy jumper. The academy also holds a stock of academy jumpers and trousers which we are happy to loan pupils for the forthcoming coldest months of the year. If any parents/ carers need any support with purchasing academy jumpers or trousers please contact the academy via enquiries@horbury.accordmat.org and we will be happy to support.

Support for Families over the Festive Period

As the majority of staff, pupils, parents and carers look forward to the Christmas break, I understand that the holiday season can present a real challenge for some of our pupils and their families, particularly this year. As such, please find attached a list of useful telephone numbers, websites and points of contact should you require them over the holiday period. I hope these services are able to provide you with the support you may need, should you wish to contact them.

Upcoming dates for your diary

- **Friday 17 December 2021 – Christmas Break begins at the end of the Academy day**
- Tuesday 4 January 2022 – Academy re-opens for year 11 pupils only at 10am (please see January return letter for further information)
- Wednesday 5 January 2020 – Academy re-opens for all pupils (please see January return letter for further information)
- Thursday 13 January 2022 – Yr10 Parents Evening
- Wednesday 19 January 2022 – Yr9 Options and Pathways Evening
- Monday 14 February 2022 - Yr11 Pre-Public Examinations (PPE's) begin
- **Thursday 17 February 2022 – Half Term begins at the end of the Academy day**
- **Friday 18 February 2022 – INSET Day**
- Monday 28 February 2022 – Academy re-opens

All that remains for me to say is, on behalf of the Academy, I wish all our pupils and their families a safe and happy Christmas and New Year. I look forward to welcoming everyone back into the Academy in January.

Best wishes



Mrs N Walker
Principal

Useful Numbers for Families over Christmas

Child line

Support and advice for children online and over the phone. 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk.

Change, Grow, Live

An under 18s substance and alcohol misuse service providing free and confidential service to young people, families, friends and significant others that are residents in the Wakefield District. 01924 438383.

Citizen's Advice

An independent, local charity which offers free, confidential and impartial advice to the citizens of the Wakefield District for a wide range of issues e.g. housing, debt, family, employment... For telephone advice or for an appointment please call the advice line 0800 144 8848 – Monday to Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm.

Kooth

Free, safe and anonymous online mental health support for young people <https://kooth.com/>.

Star Bereavement & Support Service

Emotional and practical support to children and young people aged 4 – 18 who live in the Wakefield District and have suffered bereavement or significant loss. 01924 787384 or 07881750094 claire@starwakefield.org.uk or via Facebook (Star Bereavement)

The resource food bank (Christ Church Ossett)

This operates on a referral basis from Job Centres, Social Services, Local Authority Crisis Units, Schools and Children's Centres, Homeless Shelters and Benefit Centres, Refuges and Vulnerable adult organisations. For further information contact 01924 263311 or christchurchsouthossett@gmail.com.

Worried About a Child?

If you have concerns about a child's safety or well-being you should contact Social Care Direct free on 0345 8503 503 or email social_care_direct@wakefield.gov.uk. They will deal with your concerns and can offer advice and support on what to do.