



The Halifax Academy

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Dear Families,

Well, what a half term it has been! The hard work of staff and students continues across the school: from the phonics work in reception, the reading and multiplication work in Y4, continued SATS practice in Y6 and examination preparation in Y10 and Y11. Throughout it all, your children, as always, have been amazing.

It has also been lovely to welcome so many of you into school, be it through reading workshops, maths quizzes, family dining or even good old parents' evenings. It is such a pleasure to have families visit the school during the day, especially after it proved difficult for so long during the pandemic. If you would like to visit then please do get in touch.

Strikes

I am personally very grateful for your many messages of support. Managing strikes is not easy and I appreciate the understanding that you have shown. The next planned strike day is on Tuesday 28th February. At the moment, it looks like the Primary school will be able to open fully and there will be a partial opening in Secondary. I will send out more detail nearer the time when I have better information to work from.

Attendance

I know I sound like a broken record when it comes to attendance, but it is vital that students come to school every day. The link between good attendance and good outcomes at GCSE is undeniably strong. Across their school career, a student who averages 80% attendance misses over a year of school. Our own data reaffirms the impact of this. Those students from last year's GCSE cohort who attended school over 98% of the time, achieved, on average, 1.2 grades above their target. The effect of poor attendance is stark.

Your child's success depends on their regular attendance. I appreciate your continued support, but I will continue to drive the message home every opportunity I get.

Mobile Phones

Following feedback from families, I would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone of our approach to mobile phones.

1. Mobile phones and accessories must remain out of sight and switched off during school hours. If seen or heard they will be confiscated. This includes break and lunch.
2. Confiscated phones can be collected from the main office at the end of the same day.



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3. Students who refuse to hand their phones over to staff upon request will have the following sanctions: extended confiscation of phone with parents/carers to collect from school or suspension from school.

We appreciate that there are sometimes life events or situations where a student may feel they need contact with home during the day. If, for any reason, students need to contact home, they can request support from the Student Window.

Exams

The exam season will soon be upon us with the Y6 SATs starting in just under eight weeks. In preparation, we are continuing the extra sessions in Primary for the SATs and multiplication checks, as well as period 7 for Y10 and Y11 students. Thank you to all of you who have supported your children in attending these – it really is making a difference.

Enrichment

Our enrichment programme is going from strength to strength. We now have over 70 clubs running across the school and it is fantastic to see so many children taking part. Please do speak with your children about the clubs they are attending and find out what exciting things they are getting up to.

Community Work

Our community work also continues apace. Since September, we have made over 6000 meals, given out over 100 coats and supported hundreds of families. A big thank you to all our volunteers who help in the garden, the kitchen and around the school. It is one of the best parts of my day when I see all of you in school supporting what we are doing. Remember, if you would like to volunteer or know someone who needs a little extra help, then do contact school.

Training and development

We have continued to support staff from the region, developing their practice not only in the classroom but also as school leaders. We have now worked with over 100 new teachers and over 70 leaders from the Yorkshire region. The feedback we receive has been incredibly positive and demonstrates how strong the school's reputation is nationally. This half term we have even travelled to Brussels to talk to schools across Europe about our work.

I am sure this next half term will prove just as busy and successful but fingers crossed, the worst of the weather will be behind us, and we can expect a bit more sunshine, the blossoming of our beautiful cherry trees – and lower heating bills. Thank you all for your continued support, good humour and kindness. The Halifax Academy really is a very special school and it is a privilege to work and spend time with you and your wonderful children.

Mr Perry
Headteacher