

14 September 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

RE: Return to school

I have been delighted to welcome all our students back into the academy and I hope you and your families have had a restful summer break.

Schools in the News

You may have seen recent media coverage regarding Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) and its use in educational settings. RAAC is a lightweight form of concrete; because it is weaker than regular concrete, concerns have been raised about its long-term durability. The Department for Education (DfE) has recently changed its guidance to education settings on the management of RAAC to take a more precautionary approach and as a result areas in affected spaces are being closed.

We wanted to inform you that we are not affected by this issue, as we do not have RAAC in any of our buildings and therefore they will continue to function as normal.

We understand that parents may want to understand more about the support to educational settings to manage RAAC safely. You can read more through the article published by the DfE on the Education Hub at <https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2023/08/31/new-guidance-on-raac-in-education-settings/>

I hope that this offers reassurance.

Year 9 Events

Please see below key dates and events during our first term. These dates are detailed below for you and I ask for you to save these dates and look forward to seeing you at our events throughout the year.

Date	Event
2-Oct-2023	Parent information evening (all year groups)
26th & 27th Oct 2023	PD Days
30th Oct to 5th Nov '23	October Half Term
22nd Dec '22 to 7th Jan '24	Christmas holiday

Year 9 Enrichment

Enrichment sessions continue to run this year, with the following evenings available to support our students.

Day	Subject
Monday	Athletics, Sewing & Crafting, Match of the Day
Tuesday	
Wednesday	Library Club English, Yin Yoga, Rounders & Cricket, MFL, Maths Masters, Eco Club
Thursday	Sparx, Drama, Business, MFC Football, Cyber Explorers, History, KS3 Science, MFL
Friday	Sports Studies

Free school meals

I would like to draw to the attention of parents/carers the eligibility criteria for accessing free school meals. As we are beginning a new academy year and the cost of living continues to have an impact on all of us, I am aware people who may previously have not been entitled to free school meals may well be.

Not only does applying for free school meals ensure that children get a hot meal at school it also provides additional funding for school so we can better support our students.

Children may be able to receive free school meals if their parent/carer receives at least one of the following:

- Universal Credit – with an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400 (£616.67 per month)
- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance
- The Guaranteed Element of Pension Credit
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit – provided you are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit 'Run On'- paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

How to apply?

You need to complete an online application, via Middlesbrough Local Authority, if you are not currently in receipt of free meals but believe that you qualify. The link is below: [Free School Meals Application](#) - you will need to sign up for a Middlesbrough Council account to do so.

Uniform

It was a pleasure to see the return of our students to the academy, with the vast majority of them arriving fully equipped and wearing the correct uniform. As mentioned above at this time of year it may be more difficult to ensure that your child is in full academy uniform. If there are any issues you require support with in ensuring your child is fully equipped for school please liaise with academy staff. However, should you need further support financially please follow the link to our hardship policy application, which can be found [HERE](#). Should there be any queries regarding our uniform policy please follow the link to policy which can be found [HERE](#).

As always thank you for your continuing support of all we do as an academy in our pursuit of supporting all our students to be the best they can be.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'GSKM' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr Skidmore
Principal