

Wednesday 17th December 2024

Dear Parents/Carers

As we come to the end of term, and before all pupils go off to celebrate Christmas and New Year with families, we want to take this opportunity to thank every pupil, every family and every member of staff for their commitment to Excellence at City Academy.

At the end of another busy school term, there is much to celebrate:

- All students experienced the first Opportunity Day of the year, with visits across the country. We have two more Opportunity Days scheduled for this academic year. The next one is on Friday 17th January.
- We have been able to reward 120 students for their attendance, punctuality and attitude to their learning with a trip to the cinema.
- Year 11 students sat their first official mock examinations, giving them experience of what to expect in the summer. The mock exams were approached with great maturity from our year 11 students and the demonstrated resilience and a drive to succeed throughout the exam session. As a result, students are clear on their strengths and areas for development in each of their subject areas, which sets them up well for success in the summer. Following on from mock examinations, year 11 parents attended the first parents evening of the year. We thank all parents who showed their commitment to their child's academic success at City Academy by joining us on a cold November evening. Our next set of mocks are quickly approaching, they will take place week commencing 29th January. A schedule will be shared very soon.
- In the last couple of weeks, we have shared our Christmas concert, that was well attended and had our whole school Christmas jumper and Christmas dinner day.
- We were extremely proud of our GCSE Art students this term, as they had work presented in the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, as part of the Wild City Exhibition. Students demonstrated highly impressive creativity and artistic talent and expression through pieces interpreting sights and scenes in Birmingham, taking inspiration from artists they have studied and using it to create original pieces. Once again, we celebrate the fantastic talents of our students - your children, and we know that these talents will take them far in the future.

There are many more positives that I could mention that have contributed to the success of this term. Pupils should be proud of what they have achieved and build upon the successes of this term.

Reading Mentors/Stars:

As you are no doubt aware, reading is the skeleton key that unlocks the curriculum for children and allows them to thrive and excel. At City Academy, to help develop reading and students' love of it, we have launched two new programmes this term; Reading Mentors (Year 9 students supporting students in Year 7 with reading) and Reading Stars - an advanced reader programme, designed to improve students' pace, expression and grasp of more challenging texts. Through these programmes, we want to remove any barrier to success for our students, not only in literacy but the wider curriculum, and enable them to stand 'shoulder to shoulder' with their peers in the wider world.

Holiday safety:

At City Academy we take the safety and welfare of our school community seriously during both term time and school holidays. Please ensure your child is safe online over the holidays by encouraging them to use social media positively and avoid being negative about anyone online. Further advice and guidance can be found on the City Academy website.

At this time of year the personal safety of your child is important due to the darker nights. Ensure your child is aware of their surroundings and that they keep valuables out of public view where possible.

Year 11 January mock examinations:

Monday 13th January marks the start of Yr 11's second, and final round of mock exams before the summer. Exams run until Tuesday 21st January, with some practical option subjects running after that day, in specialist rooms. Full details of all exam dates and start times can be found on our website via the attached link: [Year 11 Mock Examinations - City Academy](#) In order to fully prepare students for the exam season in the summer, these mock exams will run under the same JCQ examination rules as the main exams, details of which can be found at: [Information for candidates documents - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#).

I know you will join us in encouraging your child to plan their revision and preparation carefully for these exams to ensure the maximum benefit is gained from them.

End of term arrangements:

The Autumn term will finish on **Friday 20th December 2024**. On Friday, there will be an early staggered dismissal. Dismissal will begin at 12.00pm, with all students off site by **12.15pm**. All students entitled to a free school meal will have the opportunity to collect a hot or cold meal at break time. If you collect your child from school, can we please ask that you ensure a prompt collection on Friday. Please speak to your child about returning home promptly once dismissed on Friday.

Return to school:

All students will return to the academy on **Tuesday 7th January 2025**. We will have a staggered start. Please see the timings below:

Year 7 – 8:30am

Year 8 – 10:15am

Year 9 – 10.15am

Year 10 – 9:45am

Year 11 – 9.15am

We ask that when students return in January, that they are ready for learning, meaning that their uniform, including footwear, and their equipment meets our standards. If you need more information about this, it is detailed on our website and in your child's planner. I would also like to remind you that we open our canteen and undercroft every Monday to Thursday for breakfast club, at 7.45am and at



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8am on Fridays. Students need to enter through the main school entrance. We have breakfast available for all students, at no cost. Students have the opportunity to socialise with their friends, play board games, complete homework or revise for their next assessments and take part in structured sporting activities.

All that remains to be said, is that we wish you a relaxing and enjoyable break over the festive period and a Happy New Year. We look forward to welcoming you all back to school, on Tuesday 7th January 2025.

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Bakewell
Headteacher