

A message from the Head Teacher



Dear Mortimer Families,

As another academic year draws to a close, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for the support you have given our staff and, most importantly, your children throughout the year. Working together makes a real difference and is greatly appreciated.

As we enter the final weeks of term, our Year 11 students have now completed their GCSE examinations, left school and enjoyed a memorable Prom. It hardly seems possible that, for many of them, five years have passed since they first joined us as nervous Year 7 students. Time really does fly. They have made memories, formed friendships and experienced so much during their time at Mortimer, and we wish them all the very best as they move on to the next stage of their journey.

As one chapter closes, another is about to begin. Our new Year 7 students have already spent two taster days with us and their excitement has been clear to see. With around 240 children preparing to join us in September, they are raring to go, and we look forward to welcoming them fully into our school community.

I would also like to recognise the hard work and commitment of our staff. While achieving strong academic results is important, their role goes far beyond that. Every day, they support, encourage and care for our students, helping them to grow in confidence, develop new skills and make the most of the opportunities available to them.

The last few weeks have been particularly busy. Sports Day was, as always, one of the highlights of the year, while Year 10 also completed a full week of Work Experience. Students have also enjoyed a range of visits and educational experiences, including trips to Newcastle, Wimbledon, Alton Towers and Cambridge University, to name just a few! As I often say, exam results matter, but they are only one part of what school should be about. Creating memories, developing new interests and broadening horizons are just as important.

I am delighted to share that the extension building work is now officially complete. Internet connections are currently being installed, and everything will be ready for students to use in September. We also have further improvement work planned over the summer, both inside and outside of the school, and I look forward to sharing the results with you when we return. Watch this space!

Thank you to everyone who has attended our Parents' Evenings, Coffee Mornings and other school events throughout the year. It has been great to see so many families involved in school life. We will continue to offer these opportunities next year, along with school tours for parents. The dates for next year's events will be available on the school website by the end of this term.

If you have not already done so, please download the ClassCharts app if you are able. This is now our main method of communication with families and allows you to keep up to date with school news, reports, attendance and homework. It also helps us to reduce paper use as part of our commitment to being a greener school.

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One of the biggest changes this year has been the introduction of mobile phone pouches. Thank you for the positive support you have shown. Students have adapted brilliantly and it is quickly becoming a normal part of the school day. One of the most pleasing things for staff has been seeing students spend their breaktimes and lunchtimes talking, laughing and socialising together - rather than looking at screens!

As part of our mobile phone procedures, students will retain their mobile phone pouch over the summer holidays and are responsible for keeping it safe and in good condition. The pouch remains the property of the school and should be looked after accordingly.

We expect all students to return to school on Thursday 3rd September with their phone pouch ready for use from the first day of term. Students should ensure that they bring their pouch with them when they return in September. If a pouch is lost or damaged over the summer, a replacement pouch will need to be purchased from the school. Replacement pouches can be purchased on Tuesday 1st September or Wednesday 2nd September. We appreciate the support of parents and carers in helping students take responsibility for their phone pouch.

As always, if you need to contact your child during the school day, please get in touch with the school. Equally, if your child needs to contact home, we will ensure they are able to do so through their Head of Year.

I know that many parents use social media groups to share information and discuss school matters. While these can be useful, with regards to sharing information, posting inappropriate comments about the school or staff online does not help the school address the issue. It may also prevent the school from conducting a full and fair investigation, or could present a serious safeguarding concern. I would always encourage families to contact us directly if they have a concern. We will do our very best to help and ensure that any issues are dealt with by the right member of staff.

Attendance remains a key priority for us. Quite simply, students achieve more and enjoy school more when they attend regularly. Thank you for your continued support in ensuring your child is in school every day and ready to learn.

I am also delighted that our fundraising efforts have once again made a real difference to local charities, with over £2,700 raised this year. This is a tremendous achievement and something our whole school community should be proud of. We will also be sending out a short survey via email and text message and would be grateful for your feedback.

Finally, I would like to wish all our students and families a wonderful summer break. Thank you again for your support throughout the year. We look forward to welcoming students back to school on Thursday 3rd September. Please don't forget to check the reminder later in this newsletter regarding our new school day timings.

Take care and enjoy the summer.

Mr Hignett
Head Teacher





The last day of term is Friday 17th July 2026. Students will attend their normal lessons for Period 1 and 2, before spending Period 3 with their form tutors. We will then begin a staggered dismissal, with students leaving school shortly before 12:05pm. School will then close for the summer break.

These arrangements should not result in any student being left unsupervised or unable to travel home safely. If you feel this may be an issue for your child, please contact the school office and we will be happy to discuss appropriate arrangements with you.

The school kitchen will not be serving lunch on the final day. However, packed lunches will be available for any student who requires one. If your child would like a packed lunch, please

inform Reception by 11:00am on Wednesday 15 July. Packed lunches can be collected from the kitchen when students leave school on Friday.

The final day of term will also be a non-uniform day. We ask students to dress appropriately and respectfully, and our usual no jewellery policy will still apply.

We kindly ask that students bring a voluntary donation of an item for Key to Life Foodbank instead of a monetary donation for non-uniform day. This will support our local foodbank over the summer and can be dropped off in the collection boxes at the school gates on Friday morning. Please ensure donated items are tinned, or non-perishable goods.

Thursday 3 September 2026 – Return to School



In order to help with transition, new Year 7 students will return on Thursday 3rd September by 8:35am. All other year groups (Years 8, 9, 10 and 11) will also return on Thursday 3rd September, but students should arrive at the school gate from 11:00am and proceed directly to their designated areas. At 11:10am, students will make their way to their form rooms. Paper copies of student timetables for the new academic year will also be issued. Students will then take part in a whole-school assembly, streamed to students in their form rooms, before moving to Lesson 3. The school day will then continue as normal in line with the new school day timings shown below.

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
8:40 – 9:40	Lesson 1	Lesson 1	Lesson 1	Lesson 1	Lesson 1
9:40 – 10:40	Lesson 2	Lesson 2	Lesson 2	Lesson 2	Lesson 2
10:40 – 11:00	Form	Form	Break	Form	Break
11:00 – 11:20	Retrieval	Retrieval	Retrieval	Retrieval	Retrieval
11:20 – 11:40	Break	Break	Form	Break	Form
11:40 – 12:40	Lesson 3	Lesson 3	Lesson 3	Lesson 3	Lesson 3
12:40 – 13:10	Lesson 4	Lesson 4	Lunch	Lesson 4	Lunch
13:10 – 13:40	Lunch		Lesson 4		Lunch
13:40 – 14:10	Lesson 4	Lunch			
14:10 – 15:10	Lesson 5	Lesson 5	Lesson 5	Lesson 5	Lesson 5

We expect all students to have a bag suitable for carrying school books and equipment. As a minimum, students are expected to have a black/blue pen, red pen, pencil, ruler and pencil case; it is advisable to also have spare equipment.

Students are also expected to bring their mobile phone pouch to school each day.

Mobile phone pouches are issued to every student as part of the school's equipment expectations and remain the property of the school. Students are responsible for ensuring that their pouch is looked after, kept in good condition and available for use each day.

Failure to bring the outlined equipment, including a suitable bag and phone pouch, will result in a 30-minute detention on the same day. Stationery can be purchased before Lesson 1, at breaktime and during lunchtime. It is also advisable for students to bring their own Casio scientific calculator – fx-83GT CW.

Full school uniform must be worn by all students in September; failure to do so will result in a sanction.

If you have any concerns regarding uniform, please make sure the relevant Head of Year is aware.

On the days that your child has P.E., they are to attend school in full Mortimer P.E. uniform. Students will remain in the school's P.E. uniform for the entire day. This is an arrangement that we are continuing as students, staff and parents have given us very positive feedback.

Students must ensure they are following the school uniform and P.E. uniform policy, which can be found on our website at:

<https://mortimercommunitycollege.co.uk/uniform/>

School Contact



The pastoral team from September will be:

Year	Head of Year
7	Mr Clough
8	Mr Jessen
9	Miss Gribben
10	Miss Welsh
11	Miss Mills

Appointments with families will continue to be made mainly by telephone. If you wish to arrange a meeting with your child's Head of Year, please ring the school to make a pre-arranged appointment. If you have any more queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to email admin@mortimer.school, or ring the school on 0191 456 6511. We are open until noon, Friday 17th July and will then be closed until Tuesday 1st September 2026.

Support During the Summer Holidays

While school will be closed over the summer holidays, we want to remind families that support is still available if it is needed. If you or your child need advice or support, please visit the Student Information and Support area of our school website and select External Helplines.

This provides quick access to trusted organisations offering support with mental health, safeguarding, online safety, family issues and many other concerns. We encourage all families to bookmark this page so that help is easy to access whenever it may be needed. The contact details for emergency services and key safeguarding organisations are also included below should you need them.

<https://mortimercommunitycollege.co.uk/student-area/student-information-and-support/>



INSET Days

School will be closed to all students on these days:

- Tuesday 1st September 2026
- Wednesday 2nd September 2026
- Monday 23rd November 2026.

Before and After School

A reminder that students are required to access the school premises via the main student entrance on Mortimer Road, or via the side gate on Reading Road only if students have a bike.

Attendance

Attending school consistently provides the greatest opportunity for success. While we recognise that genuine illness will sometimes prevent attendance, every day in school matters.

There are 190 school days each year and 175 non-school days available for holidays, family events and appointments. Regular attendance is essential, and even a small number of absences can have a significant impact over time.

A small number of days makes a big difference. Our attendance reviews have shown that many students do not become Persistently Absent because of long periods away from school. Instead, attendance often declines through occasional days of illness, odd days off, Monday or Friday absences, and repeated short-term absence throughout the year. Whilst each individual absence may seem insignificant, these days quickly accumulate and can have a considerable impact on attendance percentages, learning, progress and future outcomes.

The infographic below highlights how quickly absence builds over the course of an academic year and the impact this can have on a student's education.

ATTENDANCE %	DAYS MISSED	WEEKS MISSED	EQUIVALENT TIME OFF
95%	10	2	= TWO EXTRA HALF-TERM HOLIDAYS 
90%	20	4	 = FOUR EXTRA SCHOOL HOLIDAYS 
85%	30	6	 = HAVING A SECOND 6-WEEK SUMMER HOLIDAY 

As we prepare for the new academic year, we ask all families to support us by ensuring students attend school whenever possible, arrive on time and maintain positive routines from the first day of term. Where attendance concerns arise, we will work with families to identify barriers and provide support. By working together, we can ensure every student has the best opportunity to thrive, achieve and reach their full potential.

Every day matters. Every lesson counts. Every student deserves the opportunity to succeed.