

# A message from the Head Teacher



Dear parents/carers,

As the holidays rapidly approach, so too do Year 11's final GCSE examinations. We encourage our students to engage in revision over the Easter holidays, aiming for at least two hours of study each day. Your support at home during this crucial time will make a significant difference to their preparation and confidence. There will be several revision sessions available during the break, and teachers have communicated these opportunities directly to their classes.

Students continue to enjoy the extra-curricular activities available to them, whether that be the recent Ski Trip, Poland Trip or looking at hitting 180 at Darts Club! There are loads of opportunities for our students to get involved in, which a lot do.

Our Year 9 students have successfully completed their option choices for next year, as they approach the start of their GCSEs. The Year 9 Options Evening and Parents' Evening both saw excellent attendance, and I would like to extend my thanks to all who participated online. The positive feedback about all events has been great.

I am also pleased to share the news that the new extension should be ready for students and staff to use next term. Discussions about this project began four years ago, and I am delighted to report that we are nearly there! A huge thank you to everyone involved in making this happen, as we are now one of the most oversubscribed and popular schools in South Tyneside. The new facilities will greatly enhance our students' experiences at Mortimer.



I would like to express my gratitude for your continued support regarding our uniform policy. If your child needs to purchase a new tie, they can be obtained from Reception. Our uniform is an important aspect of our school identity, and we maintain exceptionally high standards. Please remember that the minimum requirements include a school jumper, a white shirt, a school tie, black trousers/skirt, and no trainers or jewellery. If your child borrows any uniform items, I kindly ask that they are returned to the uniform bar promptly at the end of the school day.

Attendance remains a key focus for us, as we know that students achieve best when they are present in school. We are currently running our form league attendance tables, where the winning form class enjoys a Greggs party at break time, as voted for by the students. Please keep an eye out for information regarding the attendance streaks that students are working towards in form time.

Next term, I will also be able to share details about changes regarding mobile phone usage in school. The Education Secretary has indicated that schools should be mobile-free, including during breaks and lunch. We will communicate our plans with you in the Summer Term.

As always, if you have any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

I look forward to welcoming all of our students and staff back to Mortimer on Monday 20th April.

Enjoy the break.

**S Hignett**

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Mortimer

## Parental Communication, ClassCharts and ParentPay.



To ensure effective communication with parents, please download the ClassCharts app and enable notifications. ClassCharts allows you to report absences, receive messages, check attendance, view timetables, and stay up to date with announcements. **The most efficient way to speak with staff is by contacting the school to arrange an appointment, rather than arriving without notice.** Also, please ensure your ParentPay account is credited and enable automatic top-ups.

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April



We look forward to welcoming all of our students back to Mortimer **on Monday 20th April 2026.** We continue to 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 and red pen, pencil, ruler and a pencil case. Equipment can also be purchased before school, as well as at break and lunchtime. Free toasted breakfast bagels will continue to be available to any student in any year from 8:30am.

## Attendance

As the end of term approaches, we want to look ahead to next term and emphasise the importance of excellent attendance. **Every day in school makes a difference, and strong attendance at the start of the new term is essential for your child to keep up with learning, build confidence, and begin the final part of the year with momentum.**

Our Attendance Streak system will continue next term to support positive daily habits. Each day in school adds to a child's streak, whilst any absence resets it. This simple, visible system helps students understand the value of consistency and motivates them to attend school every day.

We will also be holding our Attendance Streak Prize Draw on **Thursday 2nd April.** Students will receive one prize draw ticket for every day in their current streak, meaning that students with longer streaks will have more entries and therefore a greater chance of winning! **Students must be in school on the day of the draw to claim any rewards.**



It is also important to highlight the real impact of absence. When attendance **falls below 90%, this is the equivalent of one day off every ten school days**, which quickly results in lost learning time. Maintaining strong attendance from the very start of next term is one of the most effective ways you can support your child's progress.

You will continue to receive regular updates **via ATTEND**, with email or text notifications to help you monitor your child's attendance in real time and see how close they are to key milestones.

We also encourage families to use the NHS guidance, recommended by the Department for Education, on when a child is well enough to attend school. This guidance explains that children with mild illnesses, such as a minor cough, runny nose or sore throat, should usually still attend.



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