

20 October 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

Principal Update

I am writing to express my gratitude for the incredible support you have provided to our school community during this first half term of the academic year. Your active involvement and encouragement have made a significant difference, and we are truly grateful for your partnership in your child's educational journey.

I am delighted to report that we have had an excellent start to the academic year. The enthusiasm and dedication displayed by our students has been truly inspiring. Their achievements, both academically and in various extracurricular activities, reflect their hard work and the positive environment that your support helps create. It has been particularly pleasing to see how well our new Year 7 students have settled into academy life.

Your involvement in school events, parent-teacher meetings, and volunteer activities have strengthened our school community, fostering a sense of belonging and collaboration among students, teachers, and parents. It is through this collective effort that we can provide the best possible education and support for our students.

As we continue this academic year, I encourage you to stay engaged and involved in your child's education. Your interest and participation make a significant impact on their success, and we value your partnership in nurturing their growth and development.

Secondary School Performance Tables – Department for Education

On Thursday 19 October, the Department for Education released the performance of schools for 2023. I am delighted to confirm that South Axholme Academy has once again topped the academic league tables for North Lincolnshire. The academy continues to be one of the highest performing secondary schools in the Yorkshire and Humber.

Congratulations again to the class of 2023 on their amazing results. The link below provides all parents and carers an opportunity to compare schools across England.

<https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/schools-by-type?step=default&table=schools®ion=813&geographic=la&for=secondary>

Sponsored Walk

The sun shone on a wonderful day in September, where over 900 students completed our annual sponsored walk. I am delighted to announce thus far we have raised over £5,000.

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A huge thank you for your support.

We have more charitable activities planned during next half term and in the run up to Christmas.

Key Stage 3 Assessment Weeks – Term 1

Next half term sees the start of formal assessments within the majority of subject areas. These assessments are extremely important, as they will provide teachers with an insight into individual student's knowledge and their understanding on a range of specified topics.

Written assessments will be completed in a normal classroom environment within a 50-minute lesson.

Most written assessments will be following the same structure of: -

Retrieval Topics (10 marks)	- to help assess students' long-term memory and may be based on key knowledge that was taught during the last academic year.
Key Knowledge Topics (10 marks)	- to assess some topics that students have been taught this term.
Application of Key Knowledge Topics (30 marks)	- to assess how students apply the key knowledge learnt. For example, this could be a question in context, a multi-step question or could be a longer written response.

Individual departments will be supporting and providing resources to help students prepare for the assessments. These will be both in class and posted as home learning on Satchel One.

Topic lists will be provided to all students, parents and carers to support their revision.

Dates for Assessment Block 1 (2-week window):

- Year 7 w/b 20 November – 29 November
- Year 8 w/b 6 November – 17 November
- Year 9 w/b 30 October – 10 November

Please contact your child's class teacher for further questions or enquiries.

Calendar Dates – a reminder

Below is a reminder of some important calendar dates for next half term. All this information can be found on the academy website [HERE](#).

Monday 30 October	All students return to the academy
Wednesday 1 November	Flu vaccinations (mop up)
Thursday 9 November	Year 11 Parents' Evening - 4.30pm - 7.30pm
Wednesday 15 November	GCSE Presentation Evening – Class of 2023
Monday 27 November	Year 11 Mock Examinations begin
Thursday 30 November	Trust Training Day (students not in school)
Friday 1 December	Academy Training Day (students not in school)
Wednesday 20 December	Christmas Carol Concert - Year 7 and 8, daytime - Wesley Methodist Church

Friday 22 December

Final day of term

Uniform

Again, thank you for your continued efforts in making sure our students have had the correct uniform, especially during a time when all families are experiencing added financial pressures due to the increase in costs of living. Your collective efforts are very much appreciated. We have several pre-loved items of uniform available free for families. Please contact the academy for further details should you need any additional support.

Winter appears to have arrived and I would encourage students to bring outdoor coats / waterproof coats during this period. Please note as per policy, hoodies or hooded jumpers should not be worn as coats, and students will be asked to remove these and, or they will be stored for safe keeping if they arrive or continue to arrive wearing them to the academy.

Uniform is very important to us, as it helps to establish the right attitude to learning and behaviour, which we pride ourselves on here at South Axholme Academy. Students learn about appropriate dress code preparing them for the world of work. It also helps them to understand how, when wearing a uniform, they become a representative of the logo they are displaying. Finally, there is also a safeguarding element with staff able to identify our students when entering or leaving the academy.

A reminder can be found below of our uniform policy, or by using this link: [Uniform Policy 2023](#).

Attendance

At South Axholme Academy, excellent attendance and punctuality is our aim for every child. We set an attendance target of 100% as the minimum that we expect for all students.

Evidence shows that those children who attend school regularly make better progress academically and socially. To help a child achieve full attendance, parents and carers play a critical role in helping us promote good attitudes towards attendance.

Together, it is important that we ensure children are present at every opportunity, arriving on time, and not being taken out of the academy without authorisation. A child's attendance is monitored closely, and we will follow up unexplained absences with parents or carers.

Our attendance this half term has once again been excellent, and I thank you for your continued support.

Leave of Absence Requests – reminder

Amendments came into force in September 2013 and the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 now state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Please note that absence will not be authorised for reasons such as, birthdays, day trips, weekends away, shift patterns, holidays etc.

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence.

Requests should be made in writing to the attendance team well in advance by parents or carers.

Requests for absence for reasons such as compassionate leave, special family events, sporting or musical competitions, etc. should be made in the same way.

All requests are considered individually, taking into account the circumstances of the request. Other factors will be taken into account, such as:

- the time of year the child will be absent
- the attendance record of the child
- the number of previous requests for leave of absence

We will notify parents of our decision either by telephone or in writing.

Where a parental request has been refused, and parents continue to take their child out of school, this absence will be recorded as unauthorised. We reserve the right to apply to the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.

Where a child's attendance record reaches a concerning level, we will contact the child's parents or carers to discuss ways in which we can support all parties to help improve the child's attendance.

Staff Updates

We welcome Mrs Lindley-Hall after half term as she will be joining the Academy on Monday 30 October, as our new Progress and Achievement Leader for Year 8. Mr Hickin will look after Year 10 as Progress and Achievement Leader of this year group.

Summary below of Progress and Achievement Leaders for 2023 - 2024

Progress and Achievement Leader Year 7 – Mrs Lee

Progress and Achievement Leader Year 8 – Mrs Lindley-Hall

Progress and Achievement Leader Year 9 – Mrs McKay

Progress and Achievement Leader Year 10 – Mr Hickin

Progress and Achievement Leader Year 11 – Mrs Haigh

Opportunities at South Axholme Academy

We have a number of opportunities for roles at South Axholme Academy with many parents or carers already working within the team. Please see the academy website for information about the roles available.

Academy Hours – School Re-opening

Please note the academy is closed from Friday 20 October at 4.00pm and re-opens on Monday 30 October. Please be mindful that should you need to contact the academy during the holidays, it may not be possible to respond to emails sent to admin@southaxholme-iet.co.uk immediately, as they are not monitored on a daily basis throughout the holidays.

Finally, I wish all our students and staff a very restful half term.

Yours sincerely



Mr S Barlow
Principal