

Aston Academy

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Striving for **Excellence**
Empowering Achievement
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CEO: Rebecca Scutt BSc (Hons), PGCE

12 December 2025

Dear parent/carer,

Our penultimate Friday of the year arrives and my final Friday update of 2025. Next week I will be sending my Principal's Newsletter sharing the progress we have made together throughout 2025. I have really enjoyed compiling my Friday updates, the main aim of these has always been to increase communication, celebrate together and harness the power of home and school, working together to benefit the children. If you would like me to include details of any particular area of school or specific updates, then please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

As you would expect this week has been full of Christmas cheer, we have had Christmas lunch served to our students and staff, Christmas jumper day and perhaps the highlight of any Aston festive period - our Snowflake Fayre. All our children have the opportunity to go to the Fayre today - play festive games, buy treats to eat and even purchase some Christmas presents for friends and loved ones (you might be getting an extra present!). As you will remember all of this is in aid of Sheffield Children's Hospital with all money raised at the Fayre going to this amazing cause, so closely linked to Aston Academy. Thank you again to the wonderful staff who plan, set up and run this, it is greatly appreciated by myself and our students.

Our Christmas spirit extended outside the academy gates and into our community on Thursday 11 December, when eight of our Y13 Health & Social Care students volunteered in a local community initiative. Students attended Treeton Hub Lunch Club's Christmas celebration arranged by Cllr Adair. Students gained valuable hands-on experience by assisting in setting up the event, taking orders, serving meals and supporting the bingo activities. It was a privilege for our students to be invited to attend the event, and it was incredibly rewarding for them to be able to give back to our local community and spend time with local elderly residents. We were extremely proud of the way students conducted themselves and applied the knowledge and skills they have gained in their health and social care studies. Well done to our Health & Social Care staff and students. If you are involved in community events and feel that there may be an opportunity for our students to support or make a positive contribution, please do make contact with me.

Positive interaction with our community is important to me, that could be helping or when visiting on a trip. This was the case on Tuesday evening when 120 Y7 students got into the Christmas spirit by attending the Crucible Theatre in Sheffield to watch a production of 'A Christmas Carol'. The trip, organised by Mr Kilgannon, was more special as this was not a private school showing it was open to the public. A trip to the theatre, at Christmas, in the evening, with members of the public is a really special opportunity for our students. One that builds (and tests) social confidence as well as securing a great cultural capital opportunity that will provide lifelong memories. I know from speaking to students and staff that a great time was had by all, a thank you also to our parents/carers for supporting with transport. I was an extra proud Principal when I read the feedback from members of the public at the event with our students. On our trips we frequently hand out QR codes to ask members of the public for feedback - this time we asked one question - *'Before, during and after the performance did you find our students polite and engaged?'*

Here is the response wheel we received from our QR questionnaire →

I have also included below a few responses from the members of public - it really fills me with pride how our students are representing their families, school and community.



'The children were very well behaved and a pleasure to be around at the performance'

'We were impressed by your student's maturity and politeness. You should be very proud of them'

'It was lovely to see so many of Aston Academy students taking an interest in the theatre. Their behaviour was exemplary'

'Impeccable behaviour by the whole group at tonight's Christmas Carol performance'

'They were very well mannered'

'Gorgeous, polite and enthusiastic students. It was great to see them enjoying their trip and the performance. A credit to the school and staff!'

'Wonderful staff and students! Fantastic manners'

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You may remember from previous Friday updates that we are seeking more and more opportunities for our student leaders. On Tuesday of this week our student leadership group travelled to Swinton Academy to be part of a trust wide anti-bullying initiative. Students from all 3 of our ACET secondary schools; Aston, Swinton and Shirebrook came together to complete training on anti-bullying in order to become ambassadors in our schools. They shared ideas on how we can combat bullying and started working on a trust wide campaign. It was lovely to meet students from other schools, our students represented themselves and their school in the best way possible. Well done to all our Year 10 students who took part. The work they completed will now be brought back into our academy to further bolster our support around how our student leaders want to help those who feel they are being bullied. They have a mission statement which encourages students to create change and be the change.

The best part of my job is seeing everyday how our children are making a positive difference - to themselves, to each other and to our community.

Last week I included a plea to parent/carers to support the school in ensuring that the children return to school on Monday 5 January fully equipped and in correct uniform, meaning that 2026 starts in a productive and positive way. I repeat that plea again this week and again it links to that word - *community*. Uniform breeds a sense of belonging, pride and a common goal. We strongly believe that uniform creates a sense of identity, equity, and unity for our students. It helps to make students feel part of our community and by wearing the academy uniform it demonstrates that our young people are adhering to our core values and our drive to be successful.

It is an expectation that all students should wear their uniform every day and adhere to this policy. We expect that our parents/carers support our Uniform Policy and to work with us in partnership to ensure that uniform and appearance adhere to our policy, found [here](#).

If necessary, please can you work with the academy to ensure your child returns to school in January with a full uniform and any items corrected that have been missing or incorrect before the Christmas break. We have a uniform shop that is open every morning to lend uniform to students who have missing or incorrect pieces. However, this should not be relied upon, it is there for the 'one off' and not a substitute for replacing uniform longer term. In particular can I highlight that every student should wear a blazer, tie and footwear should not be trainers (unless a medical reason has been discussed and agreed). Christmas is also a time for presents and special occasions. However, for the return to school please remind your child that, apart from one pair of stud earrings no other jewellery (including facial piercings) should be worn for school.

As we approach that last week, we have been stressing the need to finish the year strongly. We do not want attendance to drop, lesson progress will continue and we will have more Christmas treats for the students, including the end of year celebration assemblies with lots of surprises planned by the year teams. Please continue to support the school in ensuring your child attends Monday to Friday next week and enjoys the final school week of 2025.

We finish for our Christmas holidays on Friday 19 December at 3.00pm. Our staff will be ready to welcome the students back on Monday 5 January from 8.10am to begin what we hope will be a fantastic 2026 for them.

Have a wonderful weekend, when it arrives.

I will leave the last words to Charles Dickens, I am sure our Y7 students will remember these lines -

"I will honour Christmas in my heart and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach."

The combination of home, school and student will make a difference.

Best regards,



Mr J Graham
Principal

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