

Aston Academy

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Striving for **Excellence**
Empowering Achievement
Shaping **Learning**

16 January 2026

Dear Parents/Carers of Year 7,

Year 7 have had two assemblies today - two opportunities to shine and I truly wish you were able to see their impeccable manners and attentiveness. You can feel in the assembly hall that they are a team who support and applaud one another, who behave well, who get the little things right each and every day. A year group to be very proud of.

Our first assembly was a hard-hitting visit from South Yorkshire Police around knife crime and keeping everyone safe in school and out in the wider community. Delivering these messages is part of our statutory safeguarding duty and I was heartened to see the pupils engage so well with the facts and guidance around these issues. Phil Whittaker from South Yorkshire Police made a point of telling me how "wowed" he was by our Year 7 and their conduct during his presentation.

This afternoon's assembly was led by the Principal. Mr Graham will often pop in to see Year 7 in the assembly hall or at line-ups as well as in their lessons - but to get the privileged view from the front of the hall and see just how high their standards are confirmed for him what we know from our behaviour and achievement points data: running a tight ship and keeping things calm and focused on learning while insisting on good manners and considerate conduct is building a very special Year 7 group. This will be so important over this term and next as more Y6 pupils visit us to see how we do things at Aston Academy. I sincerely believe that your child could not have joined us at a better time.

Equipment Packs and Mastery Booklets

Pupils in Y7 all have their mastery booklets - new for this term - as part of their A4 equipment pack. Pupils are reminded that these should be taken out and the basic equipment laid out on their desk on the template provided at the start of every lesson. This enables the teacher to quickly scan the room and check that everyone is equipped and it also means that the necessary equipment - be it a pen, a ruler, a whiteboard pen etc. - is to hand. Ensuring that this is part of the lesson routine minimises any breaks to the 'flow' of the lesson and contributes to our sharp focus on disruption free teaching. Many pupils have re-stocked up on basic stationery over the Christmas break, and all pupils have daily access to our uniform/equipment stock on arrival to school each morning - nobody should be arriving to lessons unequipped.

Uniform and standards

Issues around incorrect uniform are vanishingly rare in Year 7. Thank you for helping us to uphold high standards and build our team vision for Year 7 in this way. It is really important we have no exceptions and our smart uniform, worn correctly, really does help to foster a positive sense of belonging. Pupils look and feel ready for learning and ready to do things 'the Aston way.'

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Ms Carroll and Ms Layden have suggested the following reminders for this week's letter:

- Acrylic or false nails should not be worn to school and will need to be removed. Please keep this in mind if booking appointments for a school holidays treat.
- Likewise - coloured 'pen' streaks in hair are not allowed. Check the policy on the website: natural hair colours only are allowed in school.
- Skirts should be the approved loosely tailored knee-length style.

Upcoming trips and extra-curricular experiences

We have many more fantastic experiences in the pipeline - including at least one more theatre trip in the summer term. Look out for letters in the coming weeks to secure your child's place - as always, your prompt response is appreciated.

Congratulations to those students who have been offered a ticket to see a Sheffield Steelers ice hockey game - they have been selected linked to outstanding effort, attendance and conduct. Many thanks to Mr Taylor for organising this trip.

A firm-line

While we are delighted with the masses of achievement points and praise that flood in daily for Y7 pupils, we are clear with the children that we will hold them to account where their conduct falls short of our expectations. Where pupils have accumulated a few warnings in class, the Y7 team have scheduled meetings in school with parents/carers to ensure that these issues do not 'snowball.' We are already seeing the positive impact of this, with pupils who may have been relaxing their standards applying a 'handbrake,' and getting themselves back on track. Daily check-ins with the year team - who are on their duty spots rain or shine - mean that we can quickly turn any concern

Yours faithfully,



Mike Kilgannon
Assistant Vice Principal