

## Aston Academy

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

23 January 2026

Dear Parents/Carers of Year 7,

How fast the weeks go. We have had another busy week with fantastic attendance from Year 7 - here each morning with full equipment and uniform, ready to learn. We have had some bleak weather this week but seeing Year 7 arriving with a polite and cheerful greeting certainly brings the sunshine. Our morning meet and greet and line-ups are such important parts of our day - setting the tone and standards for the day's lessons. It also enables us to quickly sort out any barriers to learning such as missing equipment or any worries the children may have.

### **In to Win**

Linked to attendance - Ms Carroll observed that Fridays were when attendance sometimes took a little 'dip' in Year 7: perhaps pupils are feeling tired and ready for the weekend to start! However - missing even a handful of lessons each term has a huge impact on pupil progress, so it is vital that pupils attend every day, every week. To remind pupils to be resilient and get in on Fridays, Ms Carroll has incorporated another element of reward into our Friday's assembly. A few seats in the assembly hall are tagged with rewards and prizes...pupils look forward to checking under their seats to see who has won. Of course they have to be **IN to WIN!** It is lovely, as always, to hear pupils congratulate and applaud each other warmly - one of those all-important glimpses of how they have come together as a team.

### **Equipment - out on desks**

Our key aim in Y7 is disruption-free learning. Pupil behaviour and attentiveness in lessons is excellent - we know because we visit many Y7 lessons per week. However, we want to eradicate anything that slows or puts the brakes on lessons - such as teachers having to sort out pupils who need equipment. Y7 pupils should routinely put their basic equipment out on the desk at the start of each lesson: they should consider this part of their 'Do Now' task and not wait to be reminded. We have provided an equipment template in the mastery booklet to make this completely clear to all pupils. This may seem a simple and small step - but teachers have fed back that it makes a real difference to the pace of lessons. We are delighted to be at this level of 'refining' with Year 7 - we are getting the little things right, building the classroom culture that best serves all pupils.

### **Sheffield Steelers Trip**

Sincere thanks to Mr Taylor for his efforts and organisation of the trip to see Sheffield Steelers this Sunday. If your child has been invited then please see this as a recognition of their fantastic approach to learning, attendance, courtesy and respect. We are so proud to be able to take such a large group of Aston Academy students out into the community, knowing that they will do us proud.

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### **NGRT tests and Reading**

As part of the 'Step Up' to Aston Academy, your child sat an NGRT test measuring their reading age. We monitor their reading progress closely as we know that sharp reading skills, and a love of reading, unlocks learning across the curriculum. Pupils absolutely need to 'Read to Succeed'! Y7 pupils will be re-tested in the coming weeks. They do not need to worry about these tests or revise - but all of the evidence shows us that pupils who maintain a healthy, nightly reading habit make much better progress than those who only read occasionally. There is masses of reading in lessons and the mastery booklet homework - but children should also be reading what they enjoy. If you can find time to take an interest in what your child is reading, read with them or share a book, story or article you have enjoyed - this is a huge investment in their learning progress.

With fingers crossed for better weather next week,

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Kilgannon". The signature is written in a cursive style and is followed by a horizontal line.

**Mike Kilgannon**  
**Assistant Vice Principal**