



**Manchester Academy**

The best in everyone™

Part of United Learning

# Newsletter

**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020**

## **Principal's Message**

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have made it to the end of a long half-term, and I want to praise our students for their stamina in completing an eight-week half-term after many of them had not been in school for a long time due to lockdown. The shift back to five lessons a day took some adjusting to, especially with all the additional changes that we put into place to make sure things were safe with during the pandemic. Both staff and students have demonstrated impressive resilience across this long half-term.

### **Half-Term 19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> October**

As you will be aware by now, Greater Manchester has been placed in the highest tier (Tier 3) of COVID-19 risk by the government, starting on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October. For more information regarding what Tier 3 means please click on this link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-covid-alert-level-very-high>

Over the holiday period, we want all our students to remain safe and protect you, their families, from any risk in terms of infection. There has also been a rise in street crime in the city, so please make sure that children are safe when travelling or playing with friends. This is a testing time for our city and we will all need to pull together to support each other through the winter months under these restrictions.

### **Manchester Academy – response to Tier 3**

After half-term, we will be speaking to the students about our response to the city being placed in the highest Tier for COVID-19. It is likely we will reduce movement in the Academy by moving to year groups having baserooms to further reduce the mixing of bubbles within the school. Our current model has been successful – we have had less infection and disruption than other schools but the pressures COVID places on staffing mean we will need to move to further reduce movement to ensure students can remain in school throughout the winter. I will be discussing this with the students when they return to the Academy after half-term and will write to you with more information after the holiday. Students' timetables will not change – this would mean a change in rooming for some lessons.

## **COVID-19 Schools Infection Survey**

We have been asked to support national research on how COVID-19 impacts on schools. 150 schools have been selected across the country to help us learn more about this disease. This will mean that every half-term students in Y9 and Y10 can get a free COVID-19 test and anti-body test. This is not the COVID test that is available at testing stations – it is less invasive and painless. MA staff will also be able to join the survey. This is entirely voluntary – no student will be made to take part – and the information provided will not be analysed at an individual level. Public Health England is trying to understand how COVID-19 affects children and how infection rates change across a school year. All the tests will be conducted by specialist staff, wearing PPE and all students will receive their results. If a student tested positive, we would of course inform families so appropriate action can be taken. The study is seeking to understand how many people might have COVID-19 without any symptoms (asymptomatically). Again, we will send through full details to parents and carers of Y9 and Y10 students.

## **Attitude to Learning and Big Test reports**

All students will receive their Attitude to Learning (ATL) report for this half-term after the holiday. Years 8 and 9 will receive their Big Test reports alongside the ATL report. Year 7 and 10 complete their Big Tests towards the end of the next half-term. Year 11 will sit their important first set of Pre-Public Examinations (PPEs) next half-term and we will be using the results from these to inform their predicted grades which will be sent to colleges. We hope that this information keeps parents well informed around their child's progress. Don't forget, you can also use Classcharts to track attendance and behaviour data for your son/daughter.

## **Academy Uniform**

We are really grateful for parents' support in maintaining excellent levels of uniform. Manchester Academy has also supported families who have struggled with the cost of providing uniform and shoes. Your support has meant that students look business-like and make an excellent impression. The weather is worsening as winter approaches and students can wear a waterproof coat to school to keep them dry and warm but not hoodies/sweatshirts or tracksuits. Once students arrive at school they can take their coat off. Trainers are not allowed in the Academy and I feel strongly that this creates a more mature, business-like ethos – trainers are great for out of school and for sport. I have teenagers myself and know that uniform can, at times, be a battle so I am grateful for your help in making sure students follow our rules.

## **Halloween and Bonfire Night**

This year it is important that if students are going to celebrate Halloween they do so safely and within the guidance in place due to COVID-19. 'Trick or treat' is not appropriate this year as community members will not want to breach social distancing or handle items which may pass on the virus. If you are celebrating, please do so at home with your family. Fireworks should not be bought or possessed by anyone under the age of 18 and are extremely dangerous. Please discourage your son/daughter from being involved with fireworks. This year organised displays have been cancelled due to the pandemic, any celebration should be postponed to 2021.



## Important Information about Parental Communication

Please top up your child's lunch money via our new school app Weduc, can you ensure you download the App so you can also be kept up to date with all important information. We will send your enrolment codes via email or SMS. Please can you follow the instructions to download Weduc. There is more information about it on our website:

<https://www.manchester-academy.org/parents/weduc-parent-app>

## Thank You

This is my 10<sup>th</sup> year of being a Headteacher in Manchester and I have never experienced a half-term like the one just finishing. It has been hugely demanding and I want to pay tribute to all the staff of Manchester Academy for their amazing work in difficult times. Their dedication and commitment are always impressive, but they have been magnificent despite the challenges of our current situation.

I also want to thank you – our families – for your support. We have seen lower levels of infection than many schools and that is due to your support in following the national guidelines – thank you.

I wish everyone connected with Manchester Academy a safe and restful half-term.

Best wishes,



Mr J Eldon, Principal

