

19 December 2023

**The Dorcan Academy**

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Dear Parents/Carers

Christmas is almost upon us and what a busy term it has been – as always! You will be receiving our Dorcan newsletter early in the new Year which will include a celebration of all the great events of this term. Thank you for supporting each event – in particular, the Christmas concert and Carol service which were packed and clearly highlighted our need for a bigger hall! The students were fabulous and it was a great opportunity to celebrate all our students who show 100% commitment and go the extra mile. We apologise for the inconvenient two-day school closure – renamed ‘crane days’ – but hopefully, by summer next year it will all be worth it.

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

Thank you for ensuring your child attends school regularly and for notifying us of your child's absence each day they are off. At Dorcan we have an efficient and secure system for reporting student absence called Studybugs. Ideally, this system should be used for the reporting of all student absence. Please get the app or register now (<https://studybugs.com/about/parents>) if you haven't already done so. You can also call the school on 01793 525231 and select the option to report an absence; this will take you through to the Attendance Officer.

Thank you for ensuring your child is on time to school. As previously stated, we will be keeping a log of lateness and will only be issuing a detention on the 3<sup>rd</sup> time of being late. We will make exceptions for students who come by public transport where the bus is late and also, for students with specific medical needs that we know about and have agreed concessions for in advance. We appreciate your support for ensuring your child attends the same day detention should they receive one, to reinforce the importance of punctuality and taking personal responsibility.

### **Uniform donations**

Due to the cost of living crisis, we are seeing an increased need for pre-loved school uniform. We are particularly lacking in PE Polo shirts, but any uniform donations are gratefully received, particularly the branded items such as blazers, ties, jumpers, sports reversible and Dorcan hoodies.

### **School Gateway Safe Senders**

Here at The Dorcan Academy we use School Gateway, which is an essential tool to keep you informed about what is going on at school. To ensure that this service runs smoothly, it is important to add the following email address to your safe senders list.

The address that you should add is [SC8664060a@schoolcomms.com](mailto:SC8664060a@schoolcomms.com) <The Dorcan Academy>.

Here are some instructions about how to add addresses to the safe sender list for some of the more commonly used email programs.

- [Outlook/Hotmail/MSN](#)
- [AOL](#)
- [Yahoo Mail](#)
- [Gmail or Googlemail](#)
- [Apple/iCloud](#)
- [Tiscali/TalkTalk](#) - (scroll down to 'Setting up filter rules' section)
- [BT Internet/Mail](#) – (scroll down to 'Using the safe senders feature' section)
- [Sky](#)

### **Prospect Hospice**

Funds are being raised for Prospect Hospice, by collecting and recycling Christmas trees within our community, in return for a donation to the hospice. Please see poster attached to this correspondence.

### **End of term arrangements**

The last day of this term is Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> December, and we will be finishing at 12 noon to allow you to begin your Christmas celebrations and for us to say goodbye to colleagues who are leaving us. Students may, if they wish, bring a charitable donation of £1 and wear non-school uniform. It would be great if they could embrace the Christmas spirit by wearing a Christmas jumper. Although this is a non-school uniform day, please make sure your child is sensible in their choice of clothing and jewellery.

### **Timings for the last day are as follows:**

08:30 – Tutor time

08:50 – Lesson 1

09:40 – The Big Fat Dorcan Quiz of the Year hosted by Mr Tanner

11:10 – Break (FSM students will be provided with packed lunches)

11:40 – Back to tutor for final goodbyes

12:00 – Finish for Students

### **Staff leaving**

Sadly, Ms Keller, our Lead practitioner for Literacy and outstanding English teacher is leaving us to start an exciting new adventure. She has brought so much to the school and transformed our approach to literacy and reading which was recognised by Ofsted. We will really miss her and wish her every success. Ms Keller said that if she was ever to return to teaching, she would definitely want to return to Dorcan because she has loved teaching here. So that is nice to hear! We are advertising for her replacement currently but in the interim, Mrs Cox, who retired last year, and who is also a fantastic English teacher, is coming back 3 days a week to teach Ms Keller's classes. Mrs Jones (AHT) will take the lead on literacy until we make a new appointment. We are also sorry to be losing our wonderful Engineering technician, Mr Junior who has been offered a teaching post at the UTC Swindon. Again, we wish him all the best and our door is always open if he wishes to return!

### **Vacancies**

As Dorcan has now become a school of first choice, and is oversubscribed with first choice places, we have already started to recruit new additional staff for September. We want to ensure that we attract the best staff for our students. If you know anyone who would be interested in working at Dorcan please refer them to our vacancies page on the school website.

**House points totals** are as follows:

House	Falcon	Eagle	Kingfisher	Osprey
<b>Overall total</b>	54453	44759	50511	52053
<b>Average per student</b>	227.8	233.1	234.9	244.4

### **Character counters**

**The winners of the most character counters are as follows:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> place – Falcon (617)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place – Osprey (404)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> place – Kingfisher (381)
- 4<sup>th</sup> place – Eagle (241)

We wish you a safe, relaxing and happy Christmas and a wonderful new Year and look forward to seeing everyone again on **Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January**.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs Bareham  
Headteacher