



Blue Coat Church of England Academy

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Principal: Mr D Smith

14th March 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,

As we approach the Easter break, I wanted to take the opportunity to outline the arrangements for the end of term.

Friday 22nd March 2024 will be the last day of term for all year groups, which will be a fundraising non-uniform day, with a minimum donation of £1 per pupil. All monies raised will be donated to this year's Lent charity, *Save the Children*. Dismissal on the last day of term will be at approximately 12.00pm. A lunch service will be available as normal but at an earlier time on the last day of term.

As communicated before half term, on **Monday 8th April** and **Tuesday 9th April 2024**, **only Years 11 and 13 will be in school** as we are running Road to Success days to support their final preparations for the summer examination season, which requires additional staffing to make the days run as smoothly as possible.

Wednesday 10th April 2024 is a training day to coincide with when we anticipate Eid celebrations will be taking place. No students will attend on this day.

All students will then return to school, as normal, on Thursday 11th April 2024.

Mobile Phones in School

You will probably be aware that new guidance on mobile phones has been issued to schools by the Department for Education. There is a clear directive that mobile phones should not be having a negative impact on teaching and learning. We will consider our response to this guidance over the coming months. In the meantime, we will be closely monitoring compliance with our current policy which reflects one of the options available to us moving forward, which is outlined in the guidance:

"Never used, seen or heard – *Some schools may choose to adopt a policy where pupils keep possession of their mobile phones only on the strict condition that they are never used, seen or heard – with consequences for breaching this that are sufficient to act as an effective deterrent.*" Department for Education February 2024

If students cannot consistently follow this expectation then one of the other options available to us will need to be considered, these are:

- No mobile phones on the school premises
- Mobile phones handed in on arrival
- Mobile phones kept in secure location, which the pupil does not access throughout the school day

Holidays in Term Time

There have been a number of instances over the last term where families have disputed the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices in relation to leave taken during term time. As a school we will not authorise holidays which are taken in term time and any unauthorised leave which is taken can result in sanctions being applied, which includes the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices by Walsall Council.



Lent Appeal

We have taken a different approach to our Lent Appeal this year with a range of activities which students can get involved in. Details are on the school website:

<https://www.bluecoatacademy.org/lent-appeal-2024/>

On Thursday 21st March 2024 all students in Years 7, 8 and 9 will be involved in a sponsored challenge. All students need to come in P.E. uniform on this day. Donations can be made online and cash donations should be handed in to the Finance Office from Tuesday 19th March 2024.

The deadlines for the Courageous Advocates and the Art & Poetry Competition are **Friday 15th March 2024**.

Cost and Price Increases

Recent times have been very challenging for us all with rapidly increasing costs. As a school we have faced very sharp increases in a number of areas. Unfortunately, due to rising costs from suppliers there will be some increases in costs over the coming months which will see increases in the cost of P.E. Uniform and school meals. In an effort to support families, we have managed to negotiate a phasing of the price increases as follows:

- From 8th April 2024, new prices will be charged for all items of the P.E. uniform.
- Increases in the cost of school meals will be phased with small increases from 1st June 2024 and the remainder of the increases effective from 1st September 2024.

I appreciate that increases in costs will be challenging for families to manage, but I am hoping the phased approach will help you to plan as effectively as possible.

Old Blues – The Alumni of Blue Coat

We are keen to hear from former students of the school who may be interested in keeping up with events in school, supporting events or helping us with new initiatives. There is a new page on the school website where 'Old Blues' can share contact details if they would like to get involved:

<https://www.bluecoatacademy.org/blue-coat-alumni-the-old-blues/>

Six4Schools

I am pleased to include details below of the discounted ticket programme with the Birmingham Bears cricket team at Edgbaston. This year there are two dedicated fixtures for Six4Schools, including the popular Family Fun Day on Saturday 8th June 2024. There will be fun for all the family as well as two games of cricket with Central Sparks also in action.

Uniform

Thank you for your support this term to ensure that your child looks smart each day. If you are getting new school shoes for your child over the Easter break, please ensure they are plain black with no logos and definitely no training shoes or plimsolls. Please refer to the information below regarding uniform expectations and I would draw particular attention to the expectations regarding hoodies, track suit tops, piercings and hair styles. More details are available on the school website:

<https://www.bluecoatacademy.org/school-uniform/>

I would again like to express my gratitude to you, parents and carers, for the support you have given to your children over this term. We appreciate that many students in Years 10, 11, 12 and 13 will be preparing for examinations during the summer term and that Easter represents an important time in their preparations.

Yours faithfully,



Mr D J Smith
Principal

Easter Services – St. Matthew’s Church



All services take place in Church unless otherwise stated

Palm Sunday

Sunday 24th March

8:45am Parish Communion
10:45am Morning Praise
6:30pm The Evening Service

Holy Week

Monday 25th March – Friday 29th March

7pm Holy Week Service

A short, 30 minute service reflecting on the events of Holy Week (with Holy Communion on Maundy Thursday)

Good Friday

Friday 29th March

10:00am Walk of Witness (Town Centre)
12pm – 3pm The Great Big Easter Festival (Town Centre)
12pm – 3pm Church open for private prayer and reflection at the cross
7pm Holy Week Service

Easter Sunday

Sunday 31st March

8:45am Parish Communion
10:45am All Age Easter Celebration
6:30pm The Evening Service

Six4Schools

I am delighted to inform you that Blue Coat Academy has signed up for a new initiative to support families and schools called Six4Schools introduced by the Birmingham Bears.

What is Six4Schools?

Six4Schools is an initiative by Birmingham Bears which offers adult tickets starting at £13 (normally £25) for their T20 matches this summer when using a discount code unique to the school. U5s are always free and 5-15 year olds £5.

Our school will benefit because for every adult ticket sold, the school will receive £6 back. As an example, if we sell 200 adult tickets, we will receive £1200! This is meant to be used to reinvest in the education of the pupils (for e.g., for: computer equipment, playground equipment, or cricket coaching sessions).

It's a great opportunity for the school and hopefully a chance for you to enjoy the incredible T20 atmosphere at Edgbaston this summer.

To purchase your tickets, follow the instructions below:

1. visit: [Tickets.Edgbaston.com](https://tickets.edgbaston.com)
2. At the top of the page enter this promotional code: BCCA24
3. Select the Birmingham Bears fixture you would like to attend this summer (please note the discount only applies to Saturday 8 June and Sunday 14 July fixtures). If you did not enter the promotional code before this can also be done here on the right-hand side of the page.
4. Select the stand in which you would like to purchase your tickets. U16s must be accompanied by an adult and for every 1 adult ticket sold, 5 U16 tickets may be selected.
5. Make your payment using your credit/debit card

You will receive your tickets via email.

It would be fantastic to see as many parents/carers as possible take advantage of this offer to head to Edgbaston this summer to watch some exciting cricket and in the process help us win the interactive board!