



Co-op Academy
Manchester

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Dear Parents / Carers

I write with some important updates which all parents and carers should know.

Cloud Services

Every student at the academy has access to a number of online services to help them with their studies. I write to draw your attention to two of these which all students have access to:

Microsoft 365 - this includes the full online Office suite of applications to allow your child to work online to create and save presentations, spreadsheets and documents. The suite also includes OneDrive, which is a cloud storage area that can be accessed from home and school and on any device. Each student has 1TB of space in their OneDrive, which should be plenty for all of their work over their five years with us. In addition, as a licensed academy user, your child's Microsoft account also entitles them to download and install the full Office Suite on up to 5 computers or laptops. This represents a huge saving as these packages cost hundreds of pounds to buy from the shops.

G Suite - the academy also uses Google's G Suite of applications. These allow students to create presentations, spreadsheets and documents using any internet browser. Each student also has their own Google Drive, which is a cloud based storage area with a further 1TB of space. Students can upload items of work or homework at home and easily pick these up when they log in at school.

For security purposes, local USB drives are disabled within the academy, so making use of these cloud services offers students an easy way to transfer their work between home and school.

School Skirts

There is an emerging issue with the suitability of the skirts that some students are wearing. Where this is an issue, this is largely because the skirts are far too short and/or are stretchy. The academy uniform policy is clear in that girls should wear:

Black academy trousers or plain black skirt (knee length or just above and not pleated). Trousers and skirts must be straight, and must not be Lycra, denim or similar stretchy/skin-tight material.

Parents are free to buy trousers and skirts from whatever supplier they choose as these core items are often available at very affordable prices from the high street and online. To help parents who might have struggled finding compliant academy skirts, I have listed an example of three suppliers below with web links.

Straight Skirt in Black (Uniform Direct) £11

<https://www.uniform-direct.com/acatalog/Straight-Skirt-in-Black-2125814.html> (<https://www.uniform-direct.com/acatalog/Straight-Skirt-in-Black-2125814.html>)

Senior Girls' Long Pencil Skirt (Marks & Spencer) - Price Range £10 - £14

https://www.marksandspencer.com/senior-girls-pencil-skirt-with-crease-resistant/p/p60100363?image=SD_04_T76_0193_Y0_X_EC_90&color=BLACK&prevPage=plp&pdredirect
(https://www.marksandspencer.com/senior-girls-pencil-skirt-with-crease-resistant/p/p60100363?image=SD_04_T76_0193_Y0_X_EC_90&color=BLACK&prevPage=plp&pdredirect)

Senior Girls Black School Pencil Skirt (Asda) From £4

<https://direct.asda.com/george/girls-school-skirts/senior-girls-black-school-pencil-skirt/GEM618437,default,pd.html> (<https://direct.asda.com/george/girls-school-skirts/senior-girls-black-school-pencil-skirt/GEM618437,default,pd.html>)

Please take the time to check your child's academy skirt to make sure that it is long enough and that it is not made of stretchy material, and if required, purchase a replacement one that complies with the academy uniform policy. We will be giving a period of one week for parents to address any outstanding issues with academy skirts before we start taking action with students who are in the wrong uniform.

Keeping the academy a safe place

As parents have come to expect, we are committed to keeping the academy a safe place for students and staff to work. In order to achieve this we are currently in the process of securing our perimeter fence during the day. When the final work takes place to automate another set of gates (in December), we will then move to a fully secured site throughout the day. Visitors will be able to buzz in at the intercom located at Gate 1. Visitors parking is located in the car park at the rear of the academy and in the temporary overspill car park, also accessed just beyond Gate 1. Please note, there is enough space in the new drop off and collection spaces (new car park, Gate 4) and the overspill car park for parents not to have to park on Plant Hill Road. The parking at the end of the day in particular has become dangerous, with cars double parked leaving students no choice but to step out in between parked cars. A student was hit by a car before half term as a result of this. In addition, the double parking is leading to lots of congestion which has meant that emergency vehicles cannot get down the road. I urge all parents / carers who pick up their children to either park further afield or make use of the collection spaces or overspill car park so that we can keep the road as clear as possible.

Whilst I write about keeping the academy safe, it is timely to remind parents of the academy's stance on knives / weapons. In light of recent events nationally, and as a point of principle, we are proud to uphold a zero tolerance approach to this and will not hesitate to permanently exclude any student who is found in possession of such an item. This is clearly stated in the academy's behaviour policy and is adhered to rigidly. I make no apology for this stance and will not make any exceptions. Given the time of year, all students have recently had assemblies on this and other matters such as firework safety.

Community Action

As well as the many community activities that the academy runs, we are committed to trying to give something back to our community by getting our students engaged in community action. Our student council have just embarked on an exciting social action project with a national organisation called Envision and will be trying to get as many people involved as possible over the coming months. In connection with this, we are starting to roll out a programme where tutor groups will volunteer some of their time on one morning, going out into the local area picking up litter and cleaning up the area. Each tutor group will only be asked to volunteer once throughout the year, students will be properly equipped and all of these will of course be supervised by academy staff. We really feel that this is a way that we can do some social good, and at the same time, help students to appreciate their local area more. These voluntary litter picks are not compulsory, but are linked in to the family competition that runs throughout the year. I hope that you agree that this is a worthwhile activity and will support us by encouraging your child to take part.

Parents Forum

Lastly, I would like to thank the fantastic turn out that we had at our recent Parents' Forum meetings just before half term. The minutes from the meeting can be viewed on the academy website (<https://manchester.coopacademies.co.uk/stories/record-turnout-for-our-first-parent-carer-forum-of-the-year/>). I look forward to welcoming more parents at one of our next meetings, which take place once each half term.

Thank you as ever for your continued support.

Yours faithfully

Steve Brice
Principal