



MacIntyre Academies  
Discovery Academy

Putting children and families *first*

17<sup>th</sup> December 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope this finds you well and ready for a break (if you can have one) over the coming school holidays. I think it's fair to say that this term has brought challenge and opportunity in equal measure for many of us. I know that I, like many colleagues, was looking forward to September immensely, feeling optimistic that the worst of the pandemic was behind us and we could get to our 'new normal' ways of working. However, this has not been the case and it has been difficult to build momentum in our working practices and particularly for newer pupils and staff to experience our usual consistency as we have battled with absences and every changing guidance that has brought ever changing risk assessments to work within. At this stage with the Omicron variant spreading rapidly it is not clear what January in schools will look like. I am however, committed to ensuring that wherever possible we provide some 'normality' for pupils and creatively respond to the challenges that the pandemic continues to give us. I cannot guarantee that we will not have to make difficult decisions, but I can promise that these are well considered and the best interests of our pupils is at the centre of them.

Due to unforeseen circumstances and with a heavy heart, we were unable to open for student on the final day of term. This is a great shame as class teams had a variety of fun activities planned to send the students off for a wonderful Christmas break. We sincerely thank all families for your support and understanding at this time. When we return after the break, Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2022 is a teacher training day and no pupils are expected to be on site. We will welcome pupils back to school on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2022. We are not expecting to stagger the reopening of school, unless guidance changes during the holidays. In order to keep everyone as safe as possible we are insisting on the following measures:

- 1) Please carry out at least 2 LFTs with your child prior to their return on the following dates –  
Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2022 – to pick up any exposure in the main holidays  
Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2022 – to pick up any exposure from new years eve celebrations  
Please call the schools 24 hour number on 07759 836010 if your child tests positive or your child has symptoms prior to the start of term. If you text the number please state – Child name, Date of birth and date of positive result/onset of symptoms.
- 2) Please do not send any child to school who has any COVID symptoms. These are: a new persistent cough, loss of taste or smell or a high temperature. Please also be aware that in children symptoms may look different, so if you are worried ring the NHS on 111 and seek advice.
- 3) If you or your child have been contacted by track and trace and told to isolate ensure that you do or if they have advised 7 day LFT testing please comply and let us know so that we can review our safety measures too.
- 4) All staff and young people (where able) to wear masks in vehicles and communal areas to minimise contamination through droplets.
- 5) We are, of course, using increased cleaning and provision of wipes and sprays to class teams for use throughout the day.

Vernons Lane, Nuneaton, CV11 5SS 024 7710 3370

discovery.office@macintyreacademies.org www.thediscoveryacademy.org





MacIntyre Academies  
Discovery Academy

Putting children and families *first*

Over the holidays we are bidding farewell to Jo Milner (class teacher) & Nicole Forbes (TA) are taking up new posts and will be greatly missed I know. We have also seen a number of colleagues take maternity leave, which so far has seen 3 beautiful babies born in the past term. We are however looking forward to our newly appointed colleagues, some of whom have already joined us and our new phase leader for Lower School settling into their new roles with Discovery. Additionally, internally Matt and Maddie are stepping into roles within the compassionate schools team, so will still be available to their current pupils at times, as well as supporting others across the school.

In January, I am also continuing my dual role supporting both Venture and Discovery Academy, so will continue to divide my time between the 2 schools for the coming term. There will be some minor changes to the structure at both schools in the new year, in order to make this a stable arrangement for all going forward so that all responsibilities are fully resourced. The main impact that mainly will affect Venture families, is that I am likely to be unable to attend as many family meetings and annual reviews as I have in the past, but I still hope to have opportunities to work with pupils and their families, where I can. My e-mail address will remain the same and each school has an allocated 24 hour number for emergencies or safeguarding concerns out of hours, which is listed above. I also hope that as the world opens up we have opportunities to welcome more families back on to both sites in 2022 and I will see you at events. Nominally my days in Discovery will be Tuesday and Thursday, but this may have to change at times to respond to demands as they arise, but I want to give pupils certainty where I can.

If you are based in Warwickshire, eligible and haven't yet explored the offer from Warwickshire for HAF (Holiday Activities and Food Programme) please visit the link here to see if there is support available to your family and your child. Food vouchers linked to free school meals are all now dealt with by the local authorities themselves, not by the school, so please do contact yours if you need help.

If anything critical should arise over the holidays such as a safeguarding concern, family breakup or a loved one becoming very ill (or worse) that might affect how your child feels when they come back to school, please call us on the 24 hour number above to let us know so that we can plan to support them as they return. If there isn't an answer, please leave a message and we will get back to you.

As we head into the holidays, can I thank you all, once again for your support for our team and enabling us to support your child. I hope that you all have lots of rest and reasons to laugh over the break, however you celebrate this time of year. I look forward to welcoming pupils back in 2022.

Yours sincerely

Emily Hopkins-Hayes  
Interim Executive Principal

Vernons Lane, Nuneaton, CV11 5SS 024 7710 3370

discovery.office@macintyreacademies.org www.thediscoveryacademy.org

