

Our ref: MMC/NWI

10 January 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope that you all had a lovely Christmas break and enjoyed time with loved ones.

The return to the academy was made slightly more challenging due to the snow but the students have settled fantastically and behaved in a mature and calm manner.

Where possible, we will always work hard for our academy to remain open. We firstly look at the site and ensure it is safe; we then ascertain that staff can travel in from home addresses safely and then we look at the local transport and the area around us.

For those who are working, a school shutting can mean a day less pay or holiday days being taken to look after a dependant. More important than that, some of our families and students depend on us and need us to be open. We have a heated building and provide food and support. Whilst ever it is safe to do so, we will be open for those who need us to be open. As always, we appreciate your understanding and support.

## **Teaching and Learning**

### Year 11 Examinations

Our first week back saw our first formal examination for Year 11, with BTEC Sport students sitting their Component 3 examination. All students demonstrated the highest levels of investment and there was fantastic attendance to the breakfast Achieve session ahead of the examination, with special thanks to Miss Rusby and Mr Webb for delivering this session to ensure students were fully prepared.

### Sixth Form Examinations

Several year 12 and 13 students have sat examinations this week for their BTEC qualifications, with more to come next week. Students have been invested and well prepared for their exams, attending additional pre-exam sessions and showing high levels of investment throughout.

### Tassomai

In the final week before Christmas, students showcased their impressive investment in Tassomai, as they completed over 70,000 questions on the revision app to test their knowledge in English, Science, Geography, History and Computer Science. We also want to celebrate the twelve students across Years 10-11 who found time to quiz on Tassomai on Christmas Day, and they have been rewarded with a free drink at the Grumpy Mule in recognition of their efforts.

As we enter the final months before GCSE examinations, we are also running Prom Rewards, with this month's reward being linked to Year 11's collective investment in Tassomai. They have been set the target of 125,000 questions over the month, and they are storming their way to that target with over 52,000



questions answered already! As an additional reward, the student with the highest combined points total on Tassomai and Sparx will win a VIP table at the Prom.

### Sparx

Sparx tasks restart this week. All tasks are set on Friday and due in on Thursday mornings. This half term we are aiming to complete 300,000 questions and improve our mathematics understanding. Students who get 100% are entered in for queue jump passes and other rewards. Any students looking to do extra mathematics, be it for joy or preparing for trial exams are recommended to complete XP boosts and Target work available at menu on the log in page.

### **Events**

#### Year 9 Options Evening

This half term, year 9 will begin the process of choosing their GCSE options subjects. This week they have been looking at careers, as part of our life skills curriculum and they will be undertaking more activities in the coming weeks.

On Wednesday 22 January, we will be holding our year 9 Options Evening. This is a virtual event, starting at 5:00 pm and will provide you with a greater understanding of the options process and how to choose the best options for the coming years. We will provide you with all the information needed to support your child to make an informed decision. A letter containing further details and a link to join the meeting will be sent to all our year 9 parents and carers via ClassCharts next week.

#### Year 11 Parents Evening

On Thursday, our year 11 Parents' Evening was another successful event that provided a vital opportunity for parents, carers, teachers, and students to review the progress of students following the trial examinations before Christmas.

This was our second time meeting face to face with year 11 parents and carers this academic year, following our Revision Guide evening in October. We look forward to inviting parents into the academy for a third time in March, when we will share March trial examination results in a special results assembly. The date and time will be confirmed in due course, but this event will take place in the week commencing 24 March.

### **Enrichment**

#### Community Fusion Youth @ STWA

We are proud to host the Active Fusion team youth sessions every Wednesday from 8 January to 26 March 2025 during term-time. The sessions will run from 4:00 to 5:00 pm and are free of charge. Fusion Youth is more than just sports – it's a community-driven initiative tackling youth inactivity head-on and the fun, informal sports-based sessions are available for children from 10 to 16 years.

### **House Update**

After the success of our Christmas Hamper competition, Wentworth have maintained their lead heading into the first week back with Cusworth closely chasing behind them! Students can still take part in weekly wins, online quizzes, extended house projects and box tasks to earn their house points.

### **Attendance**

What a start to the term. We had the challenges with the snow on Monday, but it has been great to see attendance this week start back at the same high level as last half term. Please do continue to ensure that students are in everyday and ready to learn.



## Standards

We have started this term with behaviour and standards reset assemblies focusing on the key aspects of the standard we have in school. All students have been given a reminder about why it is important that we keep high standards of ourselves at Sir Thomas Wharton Academy each day. We will be focusing this half term on behaviour in lessons and ensure that ALL students who attend Sir Thomas Wharton Academy are able to take part in our high quality and engaging lessons.

### Toilet Processes

It continues to be very important that students plan time to use the toilet during social times. The following toilets are now open to specific year groups, following feedback from students:

- BF (Mathematics) will be for year 7
- BG (Humanities) will be for year 8
- BL (Social Sciences) will be for years 9 to 11

This allows students to use toilets with specific year groups and comes from feedback we have taken from students over the last half term.

May I take this opportunity to wish you a fantastic 2025.

Yours sincerely

Mr M McDonald  
**Principal**

