



As we rapidly approach the end of 2017 it has been a year of good progress at The Academy. There have been many high points and lots to celebrate since September and the students have been a credit to you and our Academy.

Our focus remains on ensuring all of our students continue to develop into good citizens and make the most of the opportunities afforded them. Pride and respect remain our core values and developing student resilience is a constant theme for us. We want everybody to strive for and 'expect excellence'.

We have welcomed our new students into Year 7 and they have made a settled and mature start to the year. They have quickly risen to our high expectations, under the guidance of Mr Pickup and his team of excellent

Form Tutors, making a very positive impression with staff.

Our current Year 11 have recently completed their mock examinations and now have clear targets for improvement in preparation for their final examinations in the summer. Year 9 and 10 have also been completing their first 'spiral assessments', which are effectively end of term tests, but include topics taught in previous years, to develop the depth of knowledge and skills required for the new challenging GCSE examinations.

It was great to see so many of you at our Parent Forum event in November and at the 'Sneyd Green Christmas Lights Switch On' in December. Those opportunities for us to come together as a community add to the 'team spirit' which I feel we need to ensure we maximise the opportunities for success for our young people.

We will finish for the Christmas holiday on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> December at 1.45pm. It is also Christmas Jumper day when students can replace their school jumper and blazer with a festive jumper, if they are willing to pay a £1 donation to charity. Lessons will finish at 1.45pm but should you wish your child to remain in the Academy our Learning Resource Centre will remain open until 3pm.

The Academy will reopen on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> January. Students are expected to be in The Academy by 8.40am. Any student arriving after this time will be marked late and there will be a series of escalating consequences for persistent lateness.

2018 Dates for your diary:

Thursday 04 January – Students return to the Academy by 8.40am.

Thursday 11 January – Year 9 Parents Evening

Finally I would like to thank all staff, students and families for your support this term, have a Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year and I look forward to working with you in 2018.

Mr Bishop - Principal



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# HOY Updates!

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Another action packed half term for Year 7 building on the busy first half term. As we approach the end of the calendar year it seems appropriate to reflect on the term as a whole and commend the vast majority of Year 7's who have adapted to academy life impeccably. Undoubtedly, one of the highlights of the half term is the rewards event with laser quest, roller disco and sports activities being enjoyed by the aforementioned students who richly deserve to celebrate the hard work and efforts they have made throughout the entire Autumn term.

Specifically this half term, Year 7 have once again been very busy. One of the highlights for me personally as Head of Year was taking 28 students to Staffordshire University as part of The Sentinel's Big Read event. Each of these students entered a writing competition and enjoyed an afternoon taking part in a number of creative workshops, with the highlight at the end being the awards for the standout pieces, of which a student from Excel Academy won. A special Newsletter mention goes to Teagan Tunstall (7JL) for taking part in the '11 million takeover day', a youth event in the city. Well done Teagan for representing yourself and The Excel Academy with such outstanding contributions.

Events in school have come in the way of the Familiar Face afternoon, where some Year 7 students shared their experiences of the first half term, not only with their peers but with primary teachers from our feeder schools. It was a pleasure to see how proud the Year 7 students were in sharing all the positive experiences from The Excel Academy with their former teachers. Primary staff left that day with so many positive messages to relay to the next group of Year 7s joining us in September 2018. Also, this half term was the Halloween disco which I know Year 7 students richly enjoyed, and I'm sure the Christmas disco will be equally as popular.

Year 7 students have once again blown me away with their charitable contributions. Over 150 advent calendars were brought in by the Year Group for local children not fortunate enough to enjoy one, proving once again how kind, caring and thoughtful the Year 7 students at Excel are. Special mention once again goes to 7MM who brought in over 50 just from their Form alone. Year 7's also joined in the baking events for anti-bullying week, contributing a variety of cakes and treats to the event to bring awareness to the fact that everyone is different and unique and deserves to be treated with pride and respect.

As we approach the Christmas period, as an Academy, we enjoy all the festivities and celebrations that come with it. The Celebration Assembly happening on the last few days is a personal highlight for me and I know a large number of the Year Group will be rightfully rewarded for all their hard work through this busy Autumn term. It is vital that all students in Year 7 look to strive to achieve their full potential and this starts with the core skills of being well organised, correctly uniformed and correctly equipped each morning. Year 7 must not let their standards slip and those small number of students who haven't reached the high standards we expect at Excel must ensure that they use the new calendar year as a chance for a fresh start. For the vast majority of Year 7, keep up the hard work, continue achieving your best and above all else have a safe and happy Christmas break and I wish you all the best for 2018.

Mr Pickup - Year 7



Year 8 have made an excellent effort with their Advent Calendar collection for the Food Bank, totalling 253 Advent Calendars! Incredible effort Year 8!

Year 8 students have also been involved with the Assist programme, which looks at smoking prevention. A number of Year 8 students have been training and spreading the word about how bad it is to smoke. The NHS, who have been highly involved with the programme, have commented several times of Year 8's excellent efforts and work with the programme.

Some Year 8 students have also been helping out at a local Special school, with feedback showing that they got a better reaction from their Special school group than staff do! Well done to Liberty Ford, Deborah Dryden, Regan Beech and Emily Bonehill - fantastic work!

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a lovely Christmas break and a very happy New Year.

Mrs Moore - Year 8



Year 9 are now one full term into their studies for their GCSEs. Good luck to all Year 9 students who are completing their spiral assessments in all subject areas this week - I'm sure all of the hard work and revision will pay off!

The whole Year Group are to undertake further PIXL Edge workshops after the Christmas break, and this will develop individual areas for students, such as resilience, overcoming challenges and organisation.

I wish you all a fabulous Christmas and a very happy New Year!

Mrs Gerrard - Year 9



I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support during this half term. We have had several events happening including a production company delivering a performance advising students on their post 16 options and our annual Careers Fayre.

Year 10 Prefects have had their first solo duty of leading and supporting the Year 11 Parents Evening. They did an amazing job and were a credit to the Academy!

Year 10 students have been revising and working hard for their spiral assessments and early indications are that they have achieved excellent results. Hopefully, they will carry this on in to Year 11 for their GCSEs.

I would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a successful New Year!

Mrs Robb - Year 10



Seasons Greeting to you all! I would like to start by saying how proud I am of the Year 11 students, who showed maturity during their mock exams and mock results day, in which they all reacted with the correct responses of a young adult who has taken ownership of their education.

Year 11's have celebrated with a successful Prefect's trip to The Trafford Centre, a Year 11 Christmas meal, and a Rewards Event in which they got to watch Elf!

Please keep a look out for a letter regarding the Prom, and how each child will qualify to be invited to attend the Prom. Have a great break together, and we will see you in the new year, where we will be less than 7 weeks away from the next round of mock exams!

Mr Rimmer - Year 11

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# Mr Kelsall - Vice Principal

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## Mock Exams & Results Day



Year 11 students have now received their mock exam results during a Mock Exam Results Day. The day consisted of a session from an external company who taught the students about exam skills; an assembly to celebrate student achievement; college provider interviews and student action planning.

It was great to see the students take the event seriously, reflecting on their progress made so far and what they need to do to improve further in their last few months before the real exams in the summer.

Year 9 and Year 10 have also been examined in their Autumn spiral assessments, with results coming to parents via our interim reports in the next few days. To support Year 10 students, we have now opened a learning area from 3pm-5pm every Tuesday where students can complete homework and revise for forthcoming recently spiral assessments, so if your child would benefit from this, please encourage them to attend.

Year 7 and Year 8 will take their internal exams after Christmas. To make sure students perform their best, can I ask parents to make sure revision takes place over the holidays.

We have also recently purchased GCSEPod, an interactive app with hundreds of mini clips in a variety of subjects for Years 9 - 11 to use help them in their revision. A Parent Forum evening on 28 March will provide parents with more information on how you can use these with your child to support them further.

R Kelsall - Vice Principal

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## Stoke on Trent Humautopia Launch Event

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Earlier this year, a group of year 10 students, including myself, attended an event called Humanutopia with three other schools, The Co-operative Academy, Thistley Hough Academy and Ormiston Horizon Academy. The event was organised by Business in the Community and took place at the Bet365 stadium where we were brought out of our comfort zones helping us to become more confident around new people. They also gave us a glimpse of what the working world was like as we were put into groups and pretended to have an interview with students from other schools and a business mentor. Our mentor's started by introducing themselves, telling us about their pasts and their lives during education, then got everyone to talk with each other about 3 things we liked about ourselves and 3 things we wanted to do better in life. We all had an amazing yet emotional day. Here we are at the Bet 365 stadium at the end of the day. **By Caniece Bailey 10VB**



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# Mr Harvey - Assistant Principal

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## Remembrance Day Service



The Excel Academy came together as one on Friday 10 November to pay our respects in an emotional service of Remembrance. Hundreds of students gathered in the dining hall and around the balcony, and lined the neighbouring corridors as the service took place. Scouts, Guides and Cadets led a parade march, before Head Boy, Jared Nixon, laid a commemorative wreath, and Reverend James Gandon from St Andrew's Church said a prayer and delivered a reading to the congregation. Mr Olphin played The Last Post to initiate a 2 minutes silence.

The atmosphere was poignant and moving, and we were pleased to welcome Sneyd Green Primary and Maple Court Academy pupils to join us for the event. This service is a wonderful part of the Academy calendar, and the students' level of Pride and Respect on display is fantastic to see.



## Chelsea's Choice CSE Production

Students from Year 9 to Year 11 have watched the Alter Ego Creative Solutions production of 'Chelsea's Choice' earlier this week; a hard hitting play based on a true story about the sexual exploitation of a teenage girl. The performance forms part of the students SMSC education and was part of a touring programme which visits hundreds of schools throughout the year.

The topic is a sensitive area, and the production is performed expertly by acting professionals, who also deliver very clear facts around the topic, and an overriding message that the risks and dangers that young people are exposed to in today's world are not things that only happen to other people. Many thanks to the staff from Creative Solutions for delivering their production for us at Excel.



## Sneyd Green Community Christmas Tree Light Switch On

On 30 November, The Academy joined together with Councillor Powell-Beckett and hosted a community event to celebrate the switching on of the Christmas Tree lights on Milton Road. Students had made soup, mulled wine (non alcoholic!) and mince pies earlier in the day, along with decorations for the Dining Hall to create a wonderful, festive atmosphere. The Performing Arts department then showcased singing, dancing



and musical performances as a 200 strong audience enjoyed a family event in The Academy. After the entertainment, we then gathered around the tree for a final Christmas Carol with The Academy Choir before the countdown to switch on took place.

A wonderful evening, only possible because of the joint efforts of students, staff, and the community and Councillor Powell-Beckett.

## Year 10 Steps to Success: Performance in Education

Our Year 10 students spent an afternoon in November experiencing a theatre production informing them of the post 16 pathways available to them when they leave The Academy. The 'Steps to Success' production returned to The Academy after a successful event last year and delivered information to the students to help inform the choices they make as they move towards post 16 education and careers.

## Year 9 Rewards Trip to The Houses of Parliament



In November, 10 Year 9 students had the pleasure of a trip to London alongside students from The Discovery Academy and Birches Head Academy. The trip was a reward for their hard work and performance on the Order of Merit since September, and was an opportunity for them to see fundamental British Values first hand. We started the day by catching the tube to Buckingham Palace, before walking down Pall Mall and into Trafalgar Square, where we had lunch and watched the street entertainers.



We then walked along Whitehall, taking in such iconic sites as



Horse Guard's Parade, the

Cenotaph and Downing Street. When we reached the Houses of Parliament, we spent the afternoon in a Democracy Workshop, having a tour of the building, including visiting the gallery of both the House of Commons and House of Lords.

The rush hour dash on the tube back to Euston was an experience in itself and was a great way to end a really special day.

Mr R Harvey - Assistant Principal

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# Eco Schools Award

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The Excel Academy has launched their very own Eco Committee! The committee is made up of a group of very enthusiastic Year 7 students, who work alongside Mr Law and Raz in Year 11, with the aim of earning the Academy the 'Eco Schools Award'.

The students will be working on different environmental activities over the coming months, and are currently conducting a student environmental audit of the Academy in order to create their action plan! Well done!

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## Year 9 & 10 History Trip

On Thursday 07 December, a group of 36 History students went to France and Belgium with The Excel Academy, with a focus on WW1 Battlefield Medicine. They visited war cemeteries, and found soldiers who had fought in the South Staffordshire Regiment, as well as thousands of others. They also visited the Passchendaele Museum and had the opportunity to walk through trenches and underground dug outs as well as historical artefacts.

The highlight of the trip was when they visited the Menin Gate in Ypres and 2 students laid a wreath on behalf of The Excel Academy in a memorial ceremony in front of at least 500 people. This event was livestreamed on The Academy Facebook page and is still available to view.

The students also had the opportunity to sample delicacies of the region, including chocolate and snails (see right), as well as visiting two Christmas markets.

Overall, both staff and students had a very enjoyable trip and the students were a credit to The Academy with their impeccable behaviour and maturity, as well as showing great pride and respect.



# The Excel Academy Reading Stocking Fillers

Research shows that reading suitably challenging books every day raises a child's attainment in all subject areas. Reading for pleasure develops a child's vocabulary, improves their written communication and teaches them about the world in which they live. All of these bestselling teenage and young adult books have been carefully selected to give our pupils a challenging read that they won't be able to put down.

Young teenager reads



Teenage and Young Adult



So why not give the gift of a book this Christmas?

## Careers

The Excel Academy took 50 Year 9 students to the Skills Show at Keele University, where they could find out about various careers and pathways. Students participated very well in the activities, and behaviour was outstanding. Students engaged well with all of the stall holders, and one of our students, Joshua (right), completed the challenge task to speak to the most providers, winning £50 worth of vouchers! Congratulations Joshua!

The Excel Academy held our annual Careers Fair evening for Year 10 and 11 students, with a very good turn out of both providers and students/parents. All of the questionnaire feedback was positive, and we are looking to develop an Apprenticeship specific event in March.



We took 15 Year 9 students to Stafford to specifically focus on NHS Careers. Students found this a very valuable experience and we were particularly impressed with how well they engaged with providers and spoke so articulately to adults.

## Sports Leadership

We continue to support the Primary Sports Calendar in collaboration with Nigel Edwards. We have over 60 students who have represented The Academy in Years 8, 9 and 10 this term, organising and delivering sessions to both Primary and Special school children. Staff and Nigel have commented how fantastic our students have been, and many comment that they are like teachers when delivering.

Nigel is now coordinating with Primary schools for our best Young Leaders to go into the Primary feeders and deliver with staff at after school sports clubs!

## Premier League Business Enterprise

14 Year 9 students were selected to participate in the Premier League Enterprise Programme. This looks at enterprise and business skills, but specifically develops self confidence, resilience and communication skills in students. The students have completed 10 sessions with Stoke staff and really engaged with the activities and lessons. There will be a Celebration Event and Awards on 18 December.

5 students from the group were then offered the opportunity to participate in the Enterprise Challenge. Their brief was to come up with a business plan to increase the number of diverse spectators who attend Stoke City matches.

The students stayed behind after school over the last month and put together a plan for a Multilingual Device, where fans could listen to a translation of the match commentary through a wireless receptor.

Students had to do market research, costing, a business plan, advertising and a presentation on how to market the product. On Thursday 30 November, they went to Stoke City FC and presented their product in a similar way to Dragons Den. They delivered their presentation on a stage in front of a panel of 4 adults, including the Chief Executive of Stoke City, Stoke City player Erik Peters, and 2 high level business executives. Unfortunately, we did not win, but we had excellent feedback and our business idea was the most innovative according to the judges!

A huge congratulations to Charlie, Jermaine, Ange-Lynn, Rory and Tia! The students improved a great deal on life skills from the project. They said they felt challenged throughout and picked out communication, resilience and team work as the things they had most improved on.



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# Maths Peer Tutoring

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The Maths Peer Teaching Programme has continued this half term with the support of Mr Tipping and the amazing volunteer tutors who give up an hour of their time every Monday after school to offer 1:1 support to Year 8 students who have been identified as being a little behind their current target in maths.

When asked whether she felt that attending the peer teaching was helping her maths, Year 8 student, Safina King, responded: "Maths Club has helped me in my Maths and helped me to get a better grade on my Maths test."

Year 10 volunteer tutor, Lauren Hall, added she felt participating with the tutoring has "helped me with Maths too, because practicing the basic skills is something we don't always get to do in class." She added, "The tutors and tutees are engaged and enjoy it. It also helps to create relationships between other students."

Fellow volunteer tutor, Jodie Collins, commented that, "The atmosphere in the room is focused and engaged. It always feels pleasant and hard working."



Beth Adams, another volunteer tutor, added, "The students have benefitted from the extra Maths because by the end of every session they are able to do tasks that they couldn't do, or weren't fully able to do, at the start."

The Maths tutors and those Year 8 students who have attended the majority of the sessions since half term are to participate in a Rewards Event on Monday 18 December, where they will be allowed out of lessons to watch a film and enjoy some snacks. They have earned it for their hard work and dedication.

Maths Peer Tutoring will be continuing in 2018 and we are looking at expanding the programme to include more Year 8 students. I would like to thank those parents/carers who have supported the initiative by allowing their child to take part and would encourage any parents whose child is asked to participate in the future to encourage them to do so.



Thank you again, and I wish you a great Christmas.

Mr Martin - Maths Teacher

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# Anti-Bullying Ambassadors

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The Anti-bullying Ambassadors have completed their training about tackling bullying online. This was delivered at Endon High School by the Diana Award.

Ambassadors are now preparing the resources to launch a campaign at The Academy to encourage students to 'Be Strong Online'.

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## Year 7 Sportshall Athletics

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On Tuesday 28 November, several Year 7 students took part in a City Sportshall Athletics Competition. Altogether, 12 schools/academies competed with the top North and top South schools qualifying for the County event in February 2018.

The boys team performed excellently, with tremendous teamwork and enthusiasm. They managed to qualify for the County competition by being the best North school!

Well done to the boys team:

Jack Hulme

Lucas Smith

Mohammed Sultan Yusuf

McKenzie Shaw

Ryan Reeves

Callum Dixon

Zach Hallam

Jacob Bossons

The girls performed with amazing spirit and great teamwork.

Well done to the girls team:

Evan Phokeerdoss

Cleopatra Gwaringa

Mairead Lymer

Grace Beattie

Amelia Parkinson

Elle Lee

Sydney Spooner

Kiana Spence

Hollie-Mai Wiltshaw



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# Year 8 Netball Tournament

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On Thursday 16 November, many Year 8 students participated in a netball tournament.

The girls were divided into an A and B team, and played in different sections of the tournament. Altogether, 12 school/academy teams entered and the results for the A team are below:

Excel V Haywood - WON 6-1  
Excel V St Margaret Ward - WON 2-0  
Excel V St Josephs B - WON 3-0  
Excel V OSSMA - WON 3-2  
Excel V Trentham - WON 8-0  
Excel V Birches Head - WON 8-0

The Excel team won their section with style and progressed through to the semi-final where they faced Ormiston Horizon. After five minutes it finished 1-1, therefore resulted in one minute of extra time. After much excitement, the Excel team won 2-1 and got through to the final, which they unfortunately lost 4-1 against St Josephs.

They have been an absolute joy! Congratulations to the A Team:

Jess Ross, Emmie Daley, Blessing Mbiya, Christabel James, Leah Edwards, Liberty Ford, Halle Taylor-Bates, Shani-Leigh Owen

The results for the B Team are below:

Excel V St Josephs A - LOST  
Excel V Haywood B - WON 4-1  
Excel V St Margaret Ward - LOST 3-0  
Excel V Sandon - WON 2-0  
Excel V Ormiston Horizon - LOST 2-0



The girls team came 4th in the section and should be extremely proud of how they played. They showed tremendous support, passion and enthusiasm.

Congratulations to the B Team:

Gracie Carding, Betaneya Shemelse, Safina King, Kazia Perkins, Rebecca Roberts, Shannall Johnson, Lucy-Jo Chirside, Jessica Walker, Ellie Spooner, Jade Mountford.

All girls showed fantastic support for one another, great team spirit and lots of enthusiasm. They have been extremely dedicated to training and Excel are very proud of you!

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# Year 8 Sportshall Athletics

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On Thursday 30 November, several Year 8 students took part in a City Sportshall Athletics Competition. Altogether, 11 schools/academies competed with the top North and top South schools qualifying for the County event in February 2018.

The boys team performed tremendously with excellent teamwork and enthusiasm and managed to come 4th in the City, which is a great achievement!

The boys sprint relay team came FIRST in the city and received a medal - well done!

Well done to the boys team:

Joe Guard  
Billy Weatherall  
Thomas Wright  
Kristian Trotter  
Ewan Longshaw  
Joel Addai

The girls team performed with great spirit and superb teamwork. Jade Mountford came FIRST in the 4 lap and 6 lap event and received a medal for her efforts - a fantastic achievement!

Well done to the girls team:

Liberty Ford  
Jade Mountford  
Jessica Walker  
Christabel James  
Shannall Johnson  
Lucy Marren  
Brooke-Ashleigh Francis-Warburton  
Shani-Leigh Owen





## Meet the Team!

Safeguarding  
& Wellbeing



P. Smith  
(Safeguarding  
Lead across the  
Trust)



C. Malhi  
(Designated  
Safeguarding  
Lead – Excel)



J. Wainwright  
(Deputy  
Designated  
Safeguarding  
Lead – Excel)



C. Sherratt



J. Pickup



C. Fairclough



in support of



Tuesday 19th  
December  
2017

**MAKE THE  
WORLD  
BETTER  
WITH A  
SWEATER**

Wear your  
christmas jumper  
to school on the  
19th of December  
for a donation of

**£1**  
£2 for Staff



# Dates for your diary

Autumn Term 2017	
Academy Closes	Tuesday 19 December
Spring Term 2018	
Academy Opens for Students	Thursday 04 January
Half Term	Monday 19 February - Friday 12 February
Academy Closes	Friday 30 March
	N.B. Easter is 01 April
Summer Term 2018	
Academy Opens	Monday 16 April
May Day	Monday 07 May
Half Term	Monday 28 May - Friday 01 June
Academy Closes	Friday 20 July



# Upcoming Events

Year 9 Parents Evening	Thursday 11 January 2018	Year 9 Parents
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