



# Montgomery Academy

An Academy within the Fylde Coast Academy Trust

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Senior Deputy Headteacher: Mrs C. Montgomery BSc MSc NPQSL

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30th September 2024

## **Update to all parents regarding IT systems at Montgomery** **Plus a few reminders**

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to all parents and carers to update them regarding the functionality of our IT systems that suffered a ransomware attack on Tuesday on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> September. As you will know the attack rendered the majority of our IT systems unusable and since the 17<sup>th</sup> September, Fylde Coast Academy Trust has been supported by a cyber security company commissioned by the Department for Education to restore our systems safely as quickly as possible. We installed temporary wifi dongles across the school at the start of last week to provide a limited wifi to staff to facilitate essential IT services crucial to the running of the school such as Bromcom to monitor attendance and Class Charts for behaviour and rewards. This worked well and happily access to the school's wifi network for staff was restored on Thursday meaning these systems will be more stable and consistent. However, this is just the first step in recovering the full suite of IT services used daily. Currently the following services have not been restored:

**Catering till system** – we are hoping that this can be restored at some point in this week. Until it is we will continue to run the limited complimentary break service and the 'meal deal' lunch. I must make parents and carers aware that we are recording names for the lunch 'meal deal' with a view to debiting the students' accounts who do not receive free school meals at a later date. It is very frustrating that the till systems are not working as it is making the queues longer at lunchtime, even though students at the back of the queue will be given extra time to eat if required.

**ICT Suites/Sets of Chromebooks** – the restored wifi only has capacity for 230 devices currently, which means that sets of Chromebooks cannot be used in lessons as this would mean that teaching and support staff would not have the access to the internet, they need to fulfil their roles. Also, the desktop machines used in our IT suites will need basic software reinstalling before they can be used.

When we get more concrete information regarding timescales on the recovery of our system, we will let you know. The standard timescale we were given was 6-8 weeks and we are approaching two weeks since we lost our IT systems. In the meantime, I would like to sincerely thank parents, students and staff for their patience, adaptability and resilience to the challenges we have and continue to face in recovering from this senseless criminality.

### **Y9-11 Careers Evening tomorrow from 4:30pm to 7:00pm**

Just a reminder to parents of Years 9, 10 and 11 students that Careers Evening is tomorrow Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October and runs from 4:30pm to 7:00pm. This event is an excellent opportunity for you and your child to explore a variety of career paths, gain insights into different professions, and meet representatives from various industries. A letter was sent to parents regarding this last week.



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## Messages for Year 7 Parents only

Firstly, later than originally planned we will be amalgamating the two half-year groups in to one Dining Hall from Tuesday 1st October. This normally happens at the start of the second week, however we have delayed this a week due to our current situation. This means all Year 7 students will now get their break and lunch in the L-Block Dining Hall. Both Dining Halls have been getting through the queues in 10 minutes, though it will take a few days to get up to speed. Today, at lunch, we just got everyone through in the 30 minutes and tomorrow will be faster.

Secondly, a reminder that this Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> October is our Year 7 Information Evening, starting in the Assembly Hall at 6:30pm. Please arrive slightly earlier so that you can pick up an information pack. The full details of the evening are available in a letter on the Letters & Documents page of our website. Presentations include areas such as using Class Charts, homework and independent learning, rewards and behaviour systems, assessment and our extra-curricular offer. It would be great to see you.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Careless  
Headteacher