



Inspiring Excellence Together

# Montgomery Academy

An Academy within the Fylde Coast Academy Trust

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Headteacher: Mr S. Careless BSc MSc NPQH

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5<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

I would normally be writing my introduction to the Easter term newsletter at the end of March yet find myself writing a very different letter. The normal hustle and bustle of 1300 staff and students working, learning, laughing and playing has been replaced by a daily roll of about 18. Lunch duties are definitely quieter! We are still providing for about 11 students where parents are key workers and they cannot be at home.

I hope your household is getting to grips with remote learning and there have not been too many teacher(parent)/student disagreements. The paper-based resources given to students before we closed should be enough to last until at least the second week back after Easter holidays. A reminder that this would have been the two week Easter break and students, other than Year 11s, would not have been expected to do much studying during this time. It is important if students have been sticking to their programme of work at home that they (and their supervisors) get a break. The new term would have started on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April, so students should look to start up their work at home again from then. New work and resources will be provided from the second week back, 27<sup>th</sup> April and will appear on Google Classroom/Classcharts. Work set will also be available to view on the website. Could we please remind students to use their school email addresses and not their personal ones to access the work on Google Classroom. If you have difficulty accessing work online, please drop us a line and we will endeavour to get paper-based resources out as best we can. Please remember that not all 'learning' has to take place on a screen or in an exercise book – enrichment can also be in the form of reading, gardening...washing up! All we ask is that you try your best.

We have been working hard to provide weekly Free School Meal packs for parents/carers whose children are eligible and I would like to thank the staff who have volunteered to come in and support collections. However, the collection rate is around 40% which means the majority of students eligible are not receiving their entitlement. We are currently waiting for confirmation that Montgomery can use the National Voucher scheme. We may not be able to use it, as it has been put in place by the government for when a school's catering supplier cannot supply packs, which Chartwells have been able to do. In the meantime, it is important that if your child is eligible for FSM that you complete the online form. The link was sent on Friday. We need to know your email address and preferred delivery option either by email or by post.

The government published guidance for schools on Friday on how they intend to determine Year 11's GCSE grades this year. They also published a guide for parents and students and a letter written directly to students. These are all available on our website or from the government website below

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcses-as-and-a-level-awarding-summer-2020>

These documents make it clear what schools need to do to provide the information that exam boards need to decide final overall grades. If you have a child in Year 11 this year, then please read the guidance carefully.

Points of note are :-

- “It is important that schools and colleges take into account the full range of available evidence when they grade students - including non-exam assessment; the results of any homework assignments or mock exams; and any other records of student performance over the course of study.”
- “Schools and colleges do not need to ask students to complete any unfinished non-exam assessment work for the purposes of grading.”
- “It is important schools and colleges do not share provisional grades, nor rank orders, with students or parents and carers before final results have been issued. This is to protect the integrity of the teachers' judgements, and to avoid teachers, Heads of Department or Heads of Centre feeling under pressure to submit a grade that is not supported by the evidence.”

**Therefore, parents/carers and students should not contact teachers or the school to discuss this process.**

The guidance also says that any student who does not feel that the final grade awarded reflects what they would have achieved in a normal academic year, will be able to sit an exam in the Autumn term. There will also be the opportunity to sit your exam in the Summer 2021.

We are liaising with the Sixth Form College about what Year 11 students can do in preparation for A-Level courses that they have applied for ie reading lists, transition tasks. We will contact Blackpool & Fylde College to see if there is anything that our students, who have applied, can be doing to prepare themselves for courses next year.

Montgomery will help Year 11 students with next steps as much as we can despite them not sitting their exams this summer. We are also starting to think how Year 10 will be affected by this potential gap in their learning next summer.

I would like to thank my staff for their superb teamwork and dedication over the last few weeks. They have pulled out all the stops to ensure that the Montgomery Family are safe in school, safe at home and that students are able to continue learning at home in the current lockdown. In these testing times, it has been inspiring to see our community come together. FCAT schools, including Montgomery, have donated over 800 pairs of goggles and gloves to Blackpool Victoria hospital to help ensure that their



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amazing staff have the equipment they need. Our Design Technology have also donated their equipment to the Moor Park Medical Centre.

This has been a challenging time for us all, but we bow in admiration at the heroic work of NHS staff at the moment. We hope for everyone's sake that their workload reduces significantly, very soon.

Please stay safe and have the best Easter you can.

Regards

Mr Careless

Headteacher