

Welcome back and a Happy New Year. I hope you all had an enjoyable Christmas and New Year with friends and family. Yesterday, the Mossgate team spent the day receiving training and updates, and today we have enjoyed welcoming back all of the children. Mr Smith



As a thank you from the school, the children were able to choose a book and meet Father Christmas on the last day before the Christmas break. Thank you to MOFFS for once again agreeing to fund the books.

MOFFS (Mossgate Friends, Families & Staff) had an incredibly busy half-term organising Christmas Bingo, the Secret Santa Gift Room and Santa's Grotto. We will be meeting in the coming weeks to evaluate these events and discuss how much we raised to support the children at Mossgate with new resources and opportunities. All parents are welcome to attend to find out more about MOFFS and share their ideas.

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## Staffing Update

Just before the Christmas break, we said goodbye to Mrs Wannop, who went on maternity leave, and welcomed back Mrs Elwers, who returned from her maternity leave! Mrs Elwers will be taking over Mrs Wannop's teaching duties – all day in Y4 every Monday and then providing release time for teachers on Tuesdays and Wednesday afternoons for curriculum development and subject leadership.

Unfortunately, Mr Thwaites was admitted to A&E on NYE, and later that day had his appendix removed. All went well and he is now recovering at home, but unfortunately, he will be absent for six weeks. Miss James will be covering Mr Thwaites Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday with Mrs Boswell continuing to teach all day on a Thursday and Wednesday afternoons. Miss James has experience of teaching Y6 and we are pleased to welcome her to the Mossgate team.



We are incredibly proud of our Y3 & Y4 Football Team who won the competition at BLA last term against nine other local schools. Thank you to Mr Thwaites for coaching and to parents for transporting and supporting. Thanks also to Mr Fletcher for organising and to the BLA pupils for refereeing.

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## Nursery Update

Before the Christmas break, we received approval from Lancashire County Council to apply for central government funding to open a school-based nursery. We have submitted our application to the Department for Education who will be reviewing the applications and notifying schools about their decision at some point this term. As soon as I find out more, I will provide you with an update.



## National Changes to Unauthorised Absences

From September 2024, all schools in England have to follow the government's new attendance rules which I have summarised below. The main changes are that:

1. Schools now receive termly visits from the local authority to scrutinise their attendance data and the action they are taking to address persistently absent pupils – attendance below 90%.
2. Schools should use legal interventions (which includes fines) to tackle absences caused by repeated holidays and / or when families do not engage in plans to support attendance and punctuality.

Fines, now referred to as legal interventions, have increased from £60 to £80, or £160 if not paid within 21 days, per parent per child. Legal interventions should be considered when a child has missed 10 sessions for unauthorised reasons in a rolling period of 10 school weeks which can span different terms or school years. (One session is half a day so a full day equals two sessions.) Unauthorised absences include:

- **Holidays** – all holidays are unauthorised. If we suspect a family is on holiday, we will request evidence.
- **Lateness** – children arriving at school after 8:55am. This is recorded as a half day absence.
- **Persistent illness** – if a child has historical attendance concerns, we can request medical evidence before authorising absences for illness. For children with Health Care Plans, this will not be required.

Over the next two weeks, I will be writing to families where there is an ongoing attendance concern. If your child has had repeated absences for genuine medical reasons, please do not worry.

## Extra-Curricular Clubs – Spring 2025

We are once again able to offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities after school. Please discuss club options with your child before signing them up using the School Spider app. Places are limited, so only choose a club that your child will commit to attending weekly. Clubs will run for a block of **8 weeks** across the **Spring term** starting w/c 13/01/25. **Clubs will not run the first and last week of each half term: w/c 06/01/25, 10/02/25, 24/02/25 and 31/03/25.** Dates when clubs do not run are included in the Diary Dates.

Due to the time taken for children to change, we ask that younger children do not change their clothes, but they can bring trainers. All children will be dismissed from the school hall. Please wait in the foyer. Texts will be sent to parents to confirm which club(s) your child has been allocated.

Club	Staff	Day	Location	Spaces
KS2 Dance	Miss Price	Monday	Hall	15
Y1 & Y2 Cooking	Mrs Cassidy & Mrs McLatchie	Monday	Staff Room	12
Y1 & Y2 Football	Morecambe FC Community	Monday	KS1 Playground	15
KS2 Chess	Miss Myers	Monday	Y6 Classroom	10
KS2 Athletics	Mrs Wright	Monday	KS2 Playground	15
Y4, Y5 & Y6 Arts Award (Music, Art & Drama)	Miss Head, Miss Day & Mrs Booth	Tuesday	Y5 Classroom	12
KS2 Netball / Korfbal	Mrs Taylor	Tuesday	Y3 Classroom	20
Y1, Y2 & Y3 Nature Club	Mrs Edwards	Tuesday	Y2 Classroom	9
Y5 & Y6 Gymnastics	Mrs Wright	Friday	Hall	12
Girls' Football	Morecambe FC Community	Friday	KS1 Playground	15

## Earrings, Jewellery and Make-up

If your child has pierced ears, small stud earrings - not hoops, are allowed as part of our school uniform. On PE days, including Y5 swimming on a Friday, children should come to school with earrings removed to minimise the risk of injury from increased physical activity during PE / swimming lessons.

A polite reminder that no make-up, nail varnish, false nails, jewellery (including smart watches) or fashion statements (large hair bows etc) are allowed and children will be asked to remove these by their class teacher. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the school office to arrange to speak to me.

## PE Kit Reminders

A reminder that on PE days, children need to wear our agreed PE Kit which forms part of our uniform.

- Mossgate sports top - required
- Navy shorts - required
- Slip on plimsolls with light coloured soles for indoor PE and trainers for outdoors - required
- Children in Reception do not need plimsolls, and will only need trainers in the summer term
- Navy blue tracksuit (please avoid hoods) will be needed when it is cold as children wear their PE kit to school on their PE days instead of their usual uniform - required

This half-term, Spring 1 2025, children will need to wear their PE kits on the following days:

- Rec Elm: Monday and Thursday
- Y1 Maple: Thursday
- Y2 Willow: Tuesday and Thursday
- Y3: Holly: Monday and Thursday
- Y4 Rowan: Wednesday and Friday
- Y5 Beech: Tuesday and Friday (Swimming)
- Y6 Oak: Friday



Thurs 09/01/25	KS2 Boys' Football Competition
Mon 13/01/25	New extra-curricular clubs start
Wed 15/01/25	Y5&6 Dodgeball Competition
Wed 15/01/25	Y2 Geography of Morecambe Trail
Thurs 16/01/25	Census Day – themed lunch
Tues 04/02/25	Y5 Slave Trade Trail – Lancaster
Wed 05/02/25	Chinese New Year workshops
Mon 10/02/25	No extra-curricular clubs this week
Wed 12/02/25	Parents's Evening
Fri 14/02/25	Y3 parent event in the afternoon – TBC
Fri 14/02/25	School closes for February half-term
Mon 24/02/25	School reopens for Spring 2 2025
Mon 24/02/25	No extra-curricular clubs this week
Mon 24/03/25	Big Walk and Wheel – walk, cycle or scoot to school as much as possible
Wed 26/02/25	NSPCC workshops
Mon 03/03/25	Extra-curricular clubs re-start this week
Mon 03/03/25	Academy Photography in for class photos and Y6 leavers
Mon 24/03/25	Lancaster & Morecambe Singing Festival this week – details TBC
Wed 26/03/25	Reception walk to the post box
Wed 26/03/25	Parents' Evening for children with SEND
Mon 31/03/25	No extra-curricular clubs this week
Wed 02/04/25	The History Man (Romans) in Y3 all day
Wed 02/04/25	Brazilian Drumming Workshops in Y2 & Y5
Fri 04/04/25	School Closes for the Easter break (2 weeks) and reopens Wed 23/04/25

