

July 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

As we approach the end of another academic year, I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on what has been a vibrant, successful, and busy year for Furness Academy. It has also been a particularly memorable term for me personally, having had the privilege of leading the school as Acting Headteacher over the past seven weeks. I am incredibly proud to now be taking up the role of substantive Headteacher from September 2025 and look forward to continuing our journey together.

Throughout the year, our students have enjoyed a wide range of enriching experiences, both in and beyond the classroom. Earlier this year, we welcomed our Brazilian partner school for a memorable exchange visit. Our guests experienced the English education system, explored the heritage of Barrow, and discovered the beauty of the Lake District. This global perspective continued with trips to Iceland, where students witnessed volcanic landscapes, bathed in geothermal pools, and walked on a glacier, as well as visits to Paris, Barcelona, and Switzerland, including a highlight visit to CERN. Our annual ski trip to Austria for Year 9 students remains a firm favourite.

The performing arts continue to thrive at Furness Academy. February saw a spectacular school production of Frozen, followed more recently by our Performing Arts Showcase, where students shared their talents in music, dance, and drama. Our MiSST music programme now includes all KS3 students and has gone from strength to strength, culminating in a full orchestral concert, performances in London, regional events, and successful residential trips to Gresham's School in Norfolk.

In sport, our students have represented the academy with pride, passion, and determination. Highlights include our Year 8 and 9 boys being crowned Rugby County Champions, while the Year 8 boys also secured the County Football Championship. Both our Year 11 and Year 8 teams were named Barrow Schools Football Champions. In athletics, the Inter-Boys team excelled by qualifying for the regional finals, and several students proudly represented Cumbria in inter-county athletics competitions.

We were also proud to host the Cumbria Youth Climate Summit, welcoming over 200 students from more than 20 schools. The feedback we received about our students, and school community, was overwhelmingly positive.

These successes, combined with the daily academic rigor that takes place in the classrooms, are only possible due to the dedication and hard work of our staff. I am deeply grateful to all colleagues who go above and beyond to support and inspire our students every day. Their commitment ensures Furness Academy remains a place where every young person belongs and can thrive.

### **Student Leadership 2025-26**

Congratulations to Phoebe Case and Kai Marwood, who have been appointed Head Girl and Head Boy for the next academic year. I have already met with them to discuss their roles, and I am confident they will make a meaningful contribution to the leadership of the school, supported by their deputies, Eva Stannard and Sasha Owusu Ansah, and a fantastic team of prefects. Their first task will be to help welcome our new cohort of Year 7 students in September.

### **Staff Farewells**

As always at this time of year, we say goodbye to several valued colleagues:

Jennifer Wildman, Assistant Headteacher, begins a secondment as Deputy Headteacher at Walney School. We wish her every success in her new role.

Megan Fitzpatrick is taking a sabbatical year to travel the world, true to her Geographer's spirit! We look forward to hearing about her adventures on her return.

Michael Reeves leaves the DT department and his role as Year 11 tutor to pursue new ventures. We thank him for his commitment and wish him well.

Amanda Newby, who joined us as a trainee teacher and then as a maths teacher in 2023, is moving to a new career at BAE. We thank her and wish her every success.

Sharon Thomas and Julie Cowlayshaw are both leaving after 16 years as dedicated teaching assistants. Their unwavering support for some of our most vulnerable students has been greatly appreciated. We thank them both and wish them well for the future.

Emma Elliott, after 17 years of outstanding service in our SEND team, including the past 10 years as SENCO, is now stepping up to the role of Trust Inclusion Lead for the Mater Christi Academy Trust. Her expertise, professionalism, and empathy have made a lasting impact on countless students and families. Emma will be greatly missed, and we thank her sincerely for all she has given to Furness Academy and wish her all the best for the future in her new role.

### **Summer Fair and Non-Uniform Day – Friday 18 July**

We will celebrate the end of term with our annual summer fair. Students may attend in non-uniform, and donations of 50p will go to the Cumbria Wildlife Trust, as a continuation of our commitment to environmental awareness, following the Youth Climate Summit. Donations will be collected in form time.

### **Final Day Arrangements**

The academy will close at **12.40pm on Friday 18 July**. Students will attend periods 1–4 as normal. Free school meal arrangements will be in place. If your child requires a free school meal, they need to order it at one of the meal counters in the morning and they will be provided with a packed lunch available for collection after dismissal. Students **do not need** to wear school uniform on this day.

### **Start of the New Academic Year – September 2025**

The Autumn term begins on:

Wednesday 3 September for students in Years 7 and 11

Thursday 4 September for students in Years 8, 9, and 10

All students should arrive by 8.40am and begin the day with their form tutors.

Finally, I would like to thank you for your ongoing support. I am excited and honoured to continue leading Furness Academy from September and look forward to working closely with you to ensure the very best outcomes for all our students, where every student can succeed and feel proud of who they are.

Wishing you and your families a relaxing and enjoyable summer.

Yours faithfully



Mrs Helen Robinson  
Acting Headteacher (Headteacher – September 2025)

# TERM DATES 2025-2026

## AUTUMN TERM 2025

**Term Starts:** Wednesday 3 September

Half term holiday: Monday 27 October – Friday 31 October

**Term Ends:** Friday 19 December

Number of school days in term: 73

## SPRING TERM 2026

**Term Starts:** Wednesday 7 January

Half term holiday: Monday 16 February – Friday 20 February

**Term Ends:** Friday 27 March

Number of school days in term: 53

*Good Friday: 3 April  
Easter Monday: 6 April*

## SUMMER TERM 2026

**Term Starts:** Monday 13 April

Early May bank holiday: Monday 4 May

Half term holiday: Monday 25 May – Friday 29 May

**Term Ends:** Friday 17 July

Number of school days in term: 64

Total number of school days in year: 190

***INSET days (Students are not to attend on INSET days, these are for staff only)***

*INSET day 1: Monday 1 September 2025*

*INSET day 2: Tuesday 2 September 2025*

*INSET days 3, 4 and 5 will comprise of fortnightly staff CPD sessions*



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