

Alcester Academy

WEEKLY BULLETIN



11th September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

What a fabulous end to a terrific week! It has just been so rewarding, uplifting and joyous (and no, not just because I could get my work suits back on after lockdown!). We have been absolutely delighted to welcome the entire school community back this week and the school has felt calm, purposeful and most importantly, extremely safe! The students have shown great maturity and patience as the new routines for each bubble were fully established during this week. Their behaviour and attitude has been just exemplary and I continue to be so proud. I know as parents and carers, you would be too. All students have grasped the new routines so quickly. I've been amazed frankly and should know never to underestimate an Alcester Academy student!

Our new year 7s arrive to school each morning with enthusiasm and energy. They are display-

ing such lovely manners and I have enjoyed speaking to them each day as they arrive. The other year groups are role modelling the high standards and expectations required of academy students, and attendance has been absolutely excellent. Thank you all as parents and carers for the lengths that you have gone to in order to kit students out with the correct uniform. The students look so very smart. We are aware of a few supply issues at the National School Wear Centre in Alcester and we are attempting to work collaboratively in order to try and rectify these as quickly as we can. I appreciate that this is not ideal. Thank you for persevering. The students are also learning to utilise their new essential accessory, and we believe that the importance of face coverings around the school might well be supporting us



Term Dates

AUTUMN TERM 2020

Half term Monday 26th October – Friday 30th October 2020
Back to school Monday 2nd November 2020

School closed Monday 14th December —Teacher training day

Autumn Term ends Friday 18th December 2020 at 12.40pm

SPRING TERM 2021

School closed Monday 4th January 2021—Teacher training day

Spring Term begins Tuesday 5th January 2021

Half Term Monday 15th – Friday 19th February 2021
Back to school Monday 22nd February 2021

Spring Term ends (Easter) Thursday 1st April 2021

with restricting any transfer of COVID. I can confirm at the point of writing this bulletin, that there are absolutely no confirmed cases of COVID in school. Should any cases of COVID develop in school, I will inform you as parents and carers in order that you can be vigilant. We will also notify parents and carers if your child has shared a bubble with any individuals affected, or a bus journey. Please be assured that I guarantee a continued, open and transparent line of communication with you all. In return, I would ask for your support with any future measures that we may have to take in order to restrict cases across the school. The staff are working so very hard to continue to teach as normal whilst dashing to and from numerous year group bubbles and classrooms. By doing this we have managed to maintain core subject teaching sets and the 'right teacher in front of the right group'. I thank them immensely for their efforts this week. We have all had to invest in plasters and comfy shoes as the week has progressed!

I was uplifted to hear from new staff this week about the positive conduct of our students in comparison to their experiences in other schools. Again, of course I know this but it is delightful to hear all the same. My week has been spent largely on duty. A much higher volume of staff are present around the school in order to help out. The staff team agreed to this as part of our return plan. Our midday supervisors have been such an asset agreeing to be in school from break time onwards also to help monitor bubble social areas. I anticipate a few adjustments needed to routines initially and we will talk these through carefully with students.

I have spent a considerable amount of time this week either liaising with Warwickshire transport, or you as parents about this. Transport continues to be an area that I am not quite satisfied with and I have added some notes later on in the bulletin to identify the issues that we are facing. Students still do not have allocated seats on some transport and this is required in order to identify 'bubbles' if a COVID case is identified. If you can support this drive as parents, I'd be very grateful therefore.

Mrs Woodman and staff have begun looking at data, tracking and how we might operate future Parents' Evenings, and Miss Buckthorp and her LSU team have mobilised and continue to provide such amazing care for the students as they return

within each year group bubble area. Please be in touch if you need any support. I have been excited to visit year 9 option classes as students embark upon their GCSE pathways; Mr Hollis' Further Maths group was incredible and I look forward to visiting far more students next week. Mrs Stedman commented on the amazing attitude of her year 10 Geography class in their first lesson and Miss Bishop highlighted some incredible contributions from year 11 boys especially in History. We're back! We did it! And...thank you all for supporting this!

I hope that you are reassured by the school updates from the children each day and that you are able to re-establish the 'new normal' in your homes now. Please let us support you. I'm very conscious about the new 'rule of 6' that is established on Monday. I ask that you seriously talk to your children about respecting this in order to keep us all safe please. I would also ask that you continue to speak to children about the need to wear face coverings. Not only do I have a duty of care to the students and your families, but I do also to our staff. Many staff have supported family members shielding during these times and I would encourage students to think beyond themselves right now. Whilst this is not about me, as an example I haven't been in to my own parents' home since March in order to protect them and my amazing but very vulnerable dad! This is very common occurrence across a lot of the staff and I'd like the students to appreciate the lengths that staff are going to in order to provide a full education for them all.

Finally we are looking forward to resuming Rock Academy safely next week. Mr Badham has contacted parents about this and we have risk assessed the activity fully. It is so exciting! We are also looking forward to meeting year 5 and 6 parents for our Virtual Open Week 2020 next week as a very alternative type of event! Please refer to the details on the school website if you are interested in this:

<https://www.alcesteracademy.org.uk/life-at-alcester-academy/open-week-2020>

I encourage you to get in touch with us at school if you have any queries at all during this time. I wish you all a wonderful, relaxing weekend.

Very best wishes
Sarah Mellors
 Headteacher

In Brief

Communicating with school

For general enquiries, please email your child's tutor in the first instance. Thank you.

If a query, is subject related, the Subject Leaders email addresses are all on the school website under 'Quality of Education'.

In serious cases, don't hesitate to contact SLT as required.

We ask for enough time to respond to you, usually 24 hours. I would also ask that you respect that communications from staff are not expected after school hours or of a weekend in order to protect staff well-being. Thank you all.

In the case of emergencies, I will always try to respond within a reasonable time frame head@alcesteracademy.org.uk

New routes around school (wet weather)

We have plans for students to stay in classrooms during wet



weather at break times but the safe routes to the dinner hall/snack shack remain via outdoor paths. I would advise that children have waterproofs or umbrellas therefore in order to keep them dry during wet days. Thanks.

Buses

I can now confirm the position of Warwickshire drivers regarding face coverings:

'Drivers are under no obligation to wear masks on dedicated school transport. I believe that most have screens fitted now to protect them and the students. We are asking companies to keep the same driver and vehicle on each route if at all possible so that should an incident occur, we are minimising the impact of any infection.'

School Transport



240 Route

We have contacted the 240 route to ask about

Alcester Academy

Virtual Open Week 2020

Monday 14th September to Friday 18th September



The Staff and Governors of Alcester Academy warmly invite you to our:

Virtual Open Evening Presentation & Virtual Open Mornings

Alcester Academy is happy to virtually open its doors to prospective parents for Open Week 2020.

The Virtual Open Evening Presentation will be posted on the school website week beginning 14th September 2020.

Alcester Academy will host Virtual Open Mornings from Monday 14th September to Friday 18th September, at 9.30am and 11.30am, via TEAMS. Respectfully we ask families to book one meeting at their convenience during this week.

Please call the main office on 01789 762285.

'There is a culture of high expectation in lessons. Pupils are encouraged to aim high and teachers do not accept mediocre answers.' *Ofsted 2019*



Winner
Maths teacher
or team of the year

View our 360° tour at: <http://tours.lourdesit.org.uk/Alcester/>

Alcester Academy, Gerard Road, Alcester, B49 6QQ * Tel: 01789 762285 * Email: admin@alcesteracademy.org.uk * Website: www.alcesteracademy.org.uk

over crowding issues on this route. I have been assured that this is being looked at.

Green Buses

Big thank you to The Green Bus Company and Ian Mack for re-organising the routes around Alcester Academy students. The new pick up time from school starts on Monday 14th September. Parents should have received a communication if this impacts your child.

Please can you ensure that you are constantly reminding you child/ren to wear a face covering on the bus to be safest. We are concerned that this isn't always being done.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-rules-on-face-coverings-coming-in-on-monday-will-help-keep-passengers-safe>


I wrote the following message to parents on a particular bus route this week:

Please can I urge you to discuss the importance of wearing a face covering on public transport with your children. The school has gone to the greatest lengths to establish safe and clear boundaries in school in order to protect all children and staff and these are now frankly being undermined by the students not wearing face coverings on the transport that they use to, and from school. I am aware that some children are continuing to wear masks and I thank them for this.

The safe continuation of the school operating on a daily basis for all students is based upon them respecting that we are safest when following the guidance in place. I urge you to discuss this with you child and I thank you for your support and cooperation.

If your children do not wish to wear their masks in open areas of school for themselves, I ask them to respect the staff and their peers and please wear a face covering to protect us all. Many staff are still trying to be in school for the children whilst protecting their own family members as much as possible. The same goes for the walk in and out of school. Thank you.

Now offering via
Microsoft Teams!



Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust

Warwickshire
Primary Mental Health Team
Parent Information Sessions via Microsoft Teams

Are you a parent or carer of a child or young person living in Warwickshire?

The Warwickshire Primary Mental Health Team offer free Parent Information Sessions via Microsoft Teams with a Mental Health Clinician.

You will have the opportunity to learn about common emotional wellbeing concerns in children/young people and find out what you can do to help.

Please email risecommunityoffer@covwarkpt.nhs.uk or call 07917 504 682 to receive a link and click to join the session!

TOPIC	DATE	TIME
Anxiety – Back to School	15 th September 2020	11.30am – 1.00pm
Self Esteem	16 th September 2020	10.00am – 11.30am
Challenging Behaviours	18 th September 2020	1.00pm – 2.30pm



Details of the new GOV.UK Hands, Face and Space campaign can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-campaign-to-prevent-spread-of-coronavirus-indoors-this-win-ter?utm_source=10%20September%202020%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19

Break time – use of cash

We have five separate trolley services running at break time for the students. It would be extremely helpful if the students had coins to speed up the transactions required. I completely understand that this contradicts COVID advice and suggest that the students might wish to wear disposable gloves and sanitise before eating. The only solution to this is not to serve food and we really do not want to do this. The canteen staff have struggled this week to provide enough change for the numbers of notes given. Obviously we are considering other options as the routines begin to settle. If parents are uncomfortable about the use of coins, I completely understand and students can bring in their own food. Thank you.

Illness

In order to keep the school community safe, I would ask parents/carers to isolate all siblings should a child present with COVID related symptoms until test results are established. Please keep Mrs Hodges, Attendance Officer updated: jackieHODGES@alcesteracademy.org.uk

The latest guidance for parents keeping children at home related to COVID is: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

If you think that your child is showing any COVID related symptoms, please be cautious and keep them away from school to be sure. We will not be setting bespoke work for students who are ill at this time and ask that you look for useful websites as follows:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>

<https://www.thenational.academy/>



<https://www.alcesteracademy.org.uk/quality-of-education/subjects> (our subject long term plans are recorded on the subject pages of the school website)

If we need to move to a more formal blended learning approach, we will make adjustments as required.

You must contact me at head@alcesteracademy.org.uk if you have concerns about your child, or a family member developing COVID at any time including out of hours please. I have provided a useful check list for parents as an aide memoire at the end of this bulletin.

Department for Education coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline

The Department for Education coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline is available to answer questions about coronavirus (COVID-19) relating to education and children's social care. Staff, parents and young people can contact this helpline by calling:

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Opening hours:

Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm

To book at COVID test: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

Late to School?

If children are late to school, they enter via main reception wearing their face covering, sign in via the book outside the main LSU area and head straight to class via the most straight forward route. Similarly, to sign out for appointments, the reverse happens.

Thank you – Newport Foundation

Many thanks to the Alcester Newport Foundation for agreeing to support us with the social seating areas that we require in our new bubbles. We are very grateful.

Training Days

Please check the school website for 2020-21 training days. 23rd October 2020 is no longer a training day. This is a normal working day in school for students.

We have added Monday 14th December and Wednesday 21st July 2021.

Year 11 science revision guides

Year 11 are expected to have their revision guide in all lessons now.

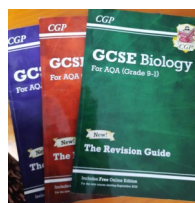
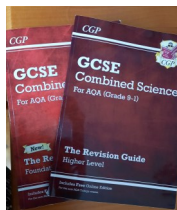
Guides can be purchased from school directly by cash - in an envelope or cheque - payable to Alcester Academy

Set 1 and 2 - Triple Award - 3 guides - total £9

Sets 3 to 5 - Combined Award £6

There are a number of these for sale on various selling pages.

Please check they are the right



ones for your son/ daughter. If you have any questions please contact the class teacher.

School Photos

The school photographer will be in for years 7-10 on 22nd September. We will send out a school comms nearer the time. We have been assured of the safety aspects in place to do this. Children will not be sat down to have photos taken and will be organised within their year group bubbles.

If you do not want your child/ren involved in this opportunity email admin@alcesteracademy.org.uk I have been assured that the team will have 3 ply face masks, surgical gloves, hand sanitizer.

They will be working at a distance of 7ft from pupils and it will be the responsibility of children and parents for uniform and hair, (tidy & straight collars etc). We are using Brainswick as a company and I am in receipt of their COVID risk assessment. Year 11 photos will take place in the new year.



To help keep your child and fellow student's safe, your child should not come to school if:

- **They are feeling unwell or are experiencing any coronavirus symptoms (If in doubt, book a test. If positive, isolate for 10 days from start of symptoms)**
- **They have tested positive for coronavirus and are within the 10 day isolation period**
- **They are sharing a household or support bubble with someone with symptoms (person with symptoms to be tested, if negative can return to usual activities; if positive, you must isolate for 14 days from last contact)**
- **They have been advised by the NHS test and trace service to self-isolate or aware they are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (isolate for 14 days from last contact)**
- **They have returned from abroad and government guidance states they need to quarantine for 14 days**

If you are not sure if you child should or should not go to school please call your school reception.



Keeping you safe: Getting tested.

If anyone develops a new or persistent cough, temperature, or loss of smell or Taste:

- They need to self-isolate for 10 days. They need to isolate **WITH** household members immediately. Even if household members do not have symptoms, they may need to self-isolate for 14 days *dependant on COVID-19 test result. [Follow national guidance on how to self-isolate](#)
- Book a test (the test must be taken within 3 days of symptoms starting , and no later than 5 days)

What is the process to book a test?

- You book at test at <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> or call 119.
- You will enter your postcode into the online system and it will give you options of a drive thru test or a walk thru test (figure 1) – this will be part of the call with 119.
- If you have transport available please attend a drive thru or walk thru testing site rather than ordering a home test. Testing at these sites tend to be quicker to produce results which help us to manage cases more quickly and effectively. However if you need to get a bus to attend a walk through site, order a home test immediately.
- Test slots are released every day at 8pm for the next day, regardless of working day or weekend. Test sites and availability may change.

Figure 1: Entry screen for Drive thru, Walk thru or home test.

How do you want to get the coronavirus test?

Based on your answers, these testing services are available to you

☐ **At a drive-through test site**

- you need to book your test as soon as possible
- you or someone you live with must drive to the test site by car or small van
- site staff will tell you if an assistant does the swab test for you or if you do it yourself

☐ **At a walk-through test site**

- you need to book your test slot as soon as possible
- you can walk or cycle to the site (do not go by public transport or taxi)
- site staff will tell you if an assistant does the swab for you, or if you do it yourself

☐ **Home testing**

- you can get a test kit for yourself and up to 3 other people you live with
- It is posted to your home and should arrive the day after you order it
- It's important that you return your test as soon as possible after doing it

Liann Brookes-Smith – Public Health – Warwickshire County Council

IT access at home

Please contact the school if your child does not have internet or IT access at home. Should we need to move to distance learning quickly in a lockdown situation, we would want to be able to support all children. Please contact:
karenbuckthorp@alcesteracademy.org.uk



Impress Don't Stress

Cookery course for teenagers!

**Learn how to make a simple
nutritious meal and pudding
from scratch for free!**



**4 week course - every Wednesday
from 4:30 - 6:30 starting 30th Sept**

**No charge for attendance and
you can come with a mate!**

**For more information and to book
the course, please contact:**

Wendy Sherwood

Tel: 01789 766084

Email: info@alcester-tc.gov.uk

Covid-19 related pupil absence
A quick reference guide for parents and staff (September 2020)

What to do if...	Action Needed	Return to school when...
...my child has Covid-19 symptoms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do not come to school - Contact school to inform us - Self-isolate the whole household - Get a test - Inform the school immediately about the test result 	...the test comes back negative or a period of 10 days has passed since the symptoms started, and the child feels well.
...my child tests positive for Covid-19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do not come to school. - Contact school to inform us. - Agree an earliest date for possible return (minimum of 10 days). - Self-isolate the whole household. 	...10 days have passed since symptoms began, even if they still have a cough or loss of taste/smell. <i>(These symptoms can last for several weeks.)</i> AND the child feels well.
...my child tests negative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contact school to inform us. - Discuss when your child can come back (same day/next day). 	...the test comes back negative.
...my child is ill with symptoms not linked to Covid-19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do not come to school. - Contact school to inform us. - Ring on each day of illness. 	...after 48 hours following the last bout of sickness or diarrhoea (as per attendance policy)
...someone in my household has Covid-19 symptoms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do not come to school. - Contact school to inform us. - Self-isolate the whole household. - Household member to get a test. - Inform school immediately about test result. 	...the test comes back negative.
...someone in my household tests positive for Covid-19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do not come to school. - Contact school to inform us. - Agree an earliest date for possible return (minimum of 14 days). - Self-isolate the whole household. 	...the child has completed 14 days of isolation.
...NHS test and trace has identified my child as a close contact of somebody with symptoms or confirmed Covid-19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do not come to school. - Contact school to inform us. - Agree an earliest date for possible return (minimum of 14 days). 	...the child has completed 14 days of isolation.
...NHS test and trace has identified a household member (other than my child) as a close contact of somebody with symptoms or confirmed Covid-19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The household member must self-isolate for 14 days. - Child can continue to attend school. 	...child can continue to attend school
... a sibling attending another school has been sent home to self-isolate due to their being a positive case in their school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sibling must self-isolate for 14 days. - Alcester Academy child(ren) can continue to attend. 	...child can continue to attend school

... my child has travelled abroad from a country or territory that is NOT on the exempt list of countries.	If returning from a destination where quarantine is needed*: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - minimum of 14 days self-isolation for all those who travelled. - contact school to inform us you are back in the country and we will agree an earliest date for possible return to school. - Self-isolate the whole household. <p><i>*Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) – for up to date travel information</i></p>	...the quarantine period of 14 days has been completed.
... my child has travelled abroad from a country or territory that IS on the exempt list of countries.	If returning from a destination where quarantine is NOT needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check the current Exempt countries and territories list to confirm the country you have travelled from or through is on the exempt list. - Ring school to inform us you have returned to the UK and agree a return date to school. 	... you have informed the office of your return to the UK <i>(the office will ask you a few questions about your travel).</i>
...I have travelled from a country that requires us to quarantine (but my child didn't travel).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As long as you do not have / have not had symptoms in the last 14 days, your child can continue to attend school. - The person who has travelled MUST NOT leave the house, including to do pick-ups and drop offs <i>(please contact school if you need support getting your child to school).</i> 	...child can continue to attend school
...we have received medical advice that my child must resume shielding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do not come to school. - Contact school to inform us. - Shield until you are informed that restrictions are lifted and shielding is paused again. 	...school inform you that restrictions have been lifted and your child can return to school again. ...you receive medical advice that your child may return to school.
...my child's bubble is closed due to a Covid-19 outbreak in school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child must not come to school. - Support your child at home with remote education provided by your school. - Your child will need to self-isolate for 14 days. - Other siblings may continue to attend school. 	...school inform you that the bubble will be reopened.
... I am unable to get a test for someone in the household who has symptoms	<i>If you are not able to get a test in the first 5 days of having symptoms, your child and anyone they live with must stay at home and self-isolate for 14 days. Anyone in your support bubble must also stay at home.</i>	...the child has completed 14 days of isolation.

School Attendance — up to 10.9.20

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Whole School
98.1%	96.6%	97.7%	94.3%	96.0%	96.7%

Top Tutors with 100% attendance! Well done!

Year 7— 7HT & 7TY

Year 8 — 8MA

Year 9 — 9AN, 9BI & 9SC

Year 10 — 10SO

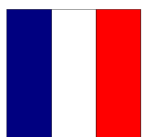
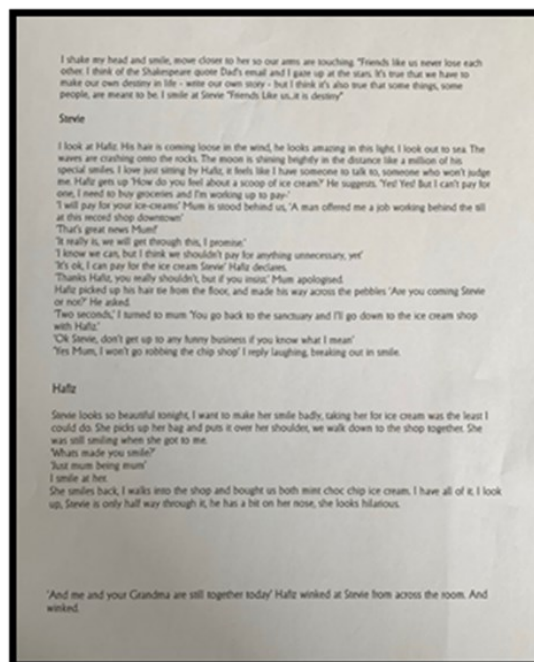
Year 11 — 11HK

Alternative ending wins a prize...

Way back in April, our student Hannah (now in year 8) entered a competition and wrote this stunning alternative ending to her favourite shortlisted book, *Don't stop thinking about tomorrow* by Siobhan Curham, from the Warwickshire Secondary Book Award 2020.

The judges and the author, Siobhan, also agreed that it was a stunning piece of work and from entries that came from all over Warwickshire, Hannah was awarded first prize!

So, after a long wait, Hannah has now been awarded her prize. Congratulations Hannah – keep reading and writing!



Language Idiom of the Week

To have a lot on.



French: Avoir du pain sur la planche.

Literal meaning: To have bread on the board.

German: Viel am Hals haben

Literal meaning: Have a lot on their neck.