Alcester Academy WEEKLY BULLETIN

9th October 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are Louisa, Sophia, Tom and Sam, we are the student Senior Leadership Team at the academy and this week we have taken over the school's weekly bulletin.

Obviously, due to COVID, starting school this year hasn't been exactly normal but our school has been able to get everyone into a great learning and teaching environment in an extremely safe and secure way.

We are extremely excited to tell you all about what's been going on since we all came back in September and how COVID has affected our back to school lives. Even though there are many rules and regulations a lot has still gone on since we returned after the summer holidays, we are looking forward to giving you an insight into it all from a student's perspective.

Each year has been given their own social space for breaks and lunch and all of the timings, for moving from our specific lesson areas to our social spaces outside, have been running really smoothly making sure no social bubbles/year groups are mixing at any points throughout the day. Each year has its own entrance and exit and a specific time when we need to arrive at school. Hand sanitisers are all

Louisa - Head Girl
Tom - Head Boy
Sophia - Deputy Head Girl
Sam - Deputy Head Boy

around the school now too and we are always ready to mask up when we need to move about so all of the students feel extremely safe both during, in and also out of lessons.

The canteen is up and running, with a new contactless card payment system. Even extra-curricular activities are starting to return with Rock Academy back in action and G and T music and drama starting up again this week.

We'd like to thank the Newport Foundation in Alcester for their generous donation to help with these.

New benches have been bought in all over the academy to improve our social spaces during breaks and lunches and the school has also brought out new PE legging and joggers for the students which look amazing and feel great! We are also very, very excited about next week as our very own new school mini bus arrives!

Last week we celebrated our European Day of Languages with a tutor quiz and lesson activities and this week we have had an assembly and have been working on our own wellbeing to support World Mental Health Day 2020.

This week it was also National Teachers Day where we asked the super staff why they love being a teacher. You will see their comments later in the bulletin.

Even though we are in the social bubbles and we have to follow all of these rules and regulations it's been amazing being back with our friends in an actual classroom environment with a teacher in real life and not through a screen. One of the worries us year 11s had coming back was that we had missed out on a large chunk of work, but thankfully the brilliant teachers are already putting on many intervention and revision sessions for year 11s at lunch and after school. These are so useful as our first set of mocks are not far away now.
We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our fantastic teachers on National Teachers Day for all of their continued support and hard work to help us come back to school in a safe and positive way.

We have loved taking over this week's bulletin and make sure to tune into our podcast next week.

Wishing you a happy and safe weekend :)
Louisa (Head Girl)
Tom (Head Boy)
Sophia (Deputy Head Girl)
Sam (Deputy Head Boy)

Supporting wellbeing at the Academy

Over the last few weeks, we have tried to support students as much as we can to help us find out their views all students completed a *Return to school* questionnaire. They were asked about any worries that they had about returning to school. It was also chance for them to identify any concerns they still had. It was great that overwhelmingly most students were pleased to return to school.

The main worries identified were about….	**However, there was lots to look forward to…**
• Friendships • Catching up & being behind • The gaps in my learning from lockdown • Getting the new rules wrong • Things being different because of COVID • Mixing with lots of people • Having less sleep • How school would keep us safe • Social distancing	• Seeing everyone – friends & teachers • Being taught by a teacher in person • Interactive lessons • Socialising • Not having to worry about learning by myself • The food • EPraise & rewards • DofE, ski trip & more sports when we are allowed • Having a routine

Our LSU team have read all the questionnaires, we have shared concerns with staff and are trying to address any issues that were raised e.g. replacing the stools in the year 8 bubble with chairs and ensuring all students will now get lunch in the canteen. We continue to keep trying to make each day better for the students in these strange times.
This week in assembly and tutor time we have been thinking about mental health and wellbeing to support World Mental Health Day on Saturday 10th October.

Meet our Counsellor - Claire Gibb

Hello, my name is Claire, and I am the school counsellor working three mornings a week. My dog Albi often comes to school with me although he is having a break at the moment.

School councillors are trained to help people with all sorts of problems, sometimes it's not possible to sort through tough times alone and all of us need help. I don't judge you or criticise.

Who can refer me for counselling?
You can! If you feel you need help with a problem, you can chat to anyone in the LSU to ask for counselling. If you can share your worries with your parents they can also speak to LSU about a referral.

How long are therapy sessions? Just under an hour. They take place within a private room in your year group bubble. Usually 6-8 sessions but they can be shorter or longer.

Do my parents have to know I am having counselling?
No, they do not.

Do you have to tell people what I say to you?
Counselling is confidential, I do not pass on anything you tell me. However, if I felt you were at risk of harm or a risk to others, I have a duty of care to pass that on to the safeguarding team at school. I will always tell you when I need to do that.

What sort of problems do people see me about? All sorts: anxiety, low mood, friendship issues, parents splitting up, problems at school, anger issues...anything that bothers you. If it matters to you it matters to me.

Is it awkward when I come in to chat to you as I don't know you?
I hope not. We will just chat about anything, music, gaming social media, pets, Netflix ... We chat about what is bothering you when you feel ready.

Do I have to have counselling? No. You may want to come for an initial session to hear all about it but if you decide it is not for you, you don't need continue.

How do I help you?
We work out what will work for you and make a plan together. I have all sorts of tips and support to help solve problems and coping strategies to help you after therapy finishes.

Photograph of the Week

This weeks picture is by Gabby - a year 10 Photography student

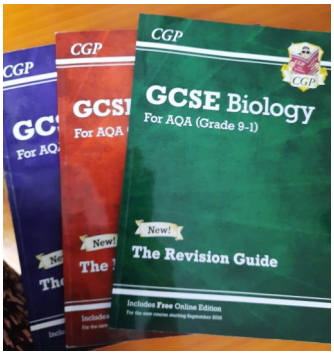
Gabby has been working on a 1970's style Album Cover photoshoot.

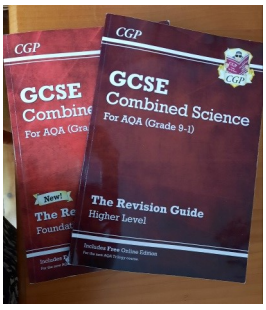
Science Revision Guides

In order to support year 9 with work outside lessons, we are now offering revision guides for sale. 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 selling pages locally. Please check they are the right ones for your son/daughter as some are for different courses. If you have any questions please contact the class teacher.





Dear Parents and Carers,

I'm delighted this week to be handing over the reins to our year 11 Student Leadership Team. I hope that you enjoyed reading their updates this week.

Firstly, I want to reassure you all that we took time this week to practise both lockdown and fire procedures. These were all done safely and within COVID-19 recommendations. I was very proud of the student responses to this.

Coronavirus Updates

https://www.alcesteracademy.org.uk/life-at-alcester-academy/coronavirus--covid-19-
We are working all of the time to make improvements to the learning offer should students be off school. Please refer to the specific website area for details. We now have three offers:

1. Distance learning 'should' the school go into full lockdown again. We have published all of the Google classroom codes on the website in order to help out if these are required.
2. Blended learning if a bubble has to leave us temporarily to self-isolate. This will involve some students working at home and some still in school.
3. Work for those individuals self-isolating as a result of contact with family or friends tested positive. These are specific Google Classrooms holding work for short term absences from school.

We hope that this helps you all from home. Mrs Hodges (Attendance Officer) will refer parents wanting student work to this area of the website.

Buses

Chair of Governors, Mike Dean and I met with the Director of Education again this week in order to discuss the risk of COVID-19 transmission on buses. We have been asked to remind parents that students should be wearing face coverings on transport in order to protect themselves as much as possible and carry, and use hand sanitiser. If seats are allocated, students should make a conscious effort to stay in these seats and remember who is sat around them.
We have attempted to push the issue of separate school buses and, or chaperones on buses but sadly to no avail right now. Please refer to the guidance letter issued further in this bulletin.
If you have issues related to transport safety, I urge you to contact Warwickshire transport please. Without your voice, we simply cannot trigger change.

Face Coverings

Please can you ensure that students have a face covering with them now at all times and a spare one in their bag if they are using a disposable version. Thanks. We sadly cannot keep up now with constantly giving out masks when students forget. Some schools are now charging for forgotten face coverings to be replaced and I'd much prefer that we did not have to. I hope that you understand.

Need to make contact with someone at school?

Please contact your child's tutor in the first instance.
If your query is subject related, email addresses are all on the website for curriculum leaders

https://www.alcesteracademy.org.uk/quality-of-education/subjects
If you have a matter related to learning, assessment or reporting, these go to Mrs Woodman: wendywoodman@alcesteracademy.org.uk
If you have a pastoral or safeguarding matter, direct this to Miss Buckthorp: karenbuckthorp@alcesteracademy.org.uk
Finally, I am always the out of hours contact: head@alcesteracademy.org.uk You can telephone in and leave a message also.

Queries related to special education needs or disabilities?

Mrs Bush, SENCo will be happy to support in any way that she can:
anitabush@alcesteracademy.org.uk
We also work with SEND Supported as our specialist team within school:
https://sendsupported.com/

Please do not raise issues on social media.
Thank you.

Winter coats

Now the cold weather is here please can you ensure that students bring a coat to school. We are encouraging the students to be outside in order to get fresh air.

Charity Collections

Thank you to those parents and friends who want to sponsor a poppy for Remembrance Sunday. We have 68 poppies sold so far. I'm thrilled at the response! There is still plenty of time to do this. Use the School Gateway to make your donation. If you struggle using this, Mrs Savery in the main office can help you out.
Mr Kirby has finalised the design for the poppies as follows:

On Friday 23rd October, we will be holding our first non uniform day for MacMillan and Young Minds Charities. We are asking for a £2 donation for this please. Again, this can be made through the Gateway too. Cash will be collected on the day if you don't wish to use the Gateway. For new parents, this is a quick and effective way to fund raise with the students and we hope that you will support us. Those children wearing particularly uniquely themed clothes will be photographed! Our colours this time are green for MacMillan or yellow for Young Minds.

Year 11 Parents

A letter has been sent to invite you to a live Microsoft TEAMS event on Tuesday 20th October outlining essential information related to GCSE English and maths. Mrs Weatherley will also introduce herself as new Head of MFL. SLT and subject leaders will guide you through some essential year 11 information. Contact: rachelbliss@alcesteracademy.org.uk to book a place.

Homework

Homework Clubs have resumed in some form for all students this week at lunchtimes with after school provision in place for years 7 and 8 one night a week.

Year 7 Parents and Carers

Tutors will be making calls home to you in the next week or so in order to check that your child has settled in to the academy well. We look forward to speaking with you.

Wishing you a great weekend as always.
Sarah Mellors
Headtecaher

School Attendance — up to 8.10.20

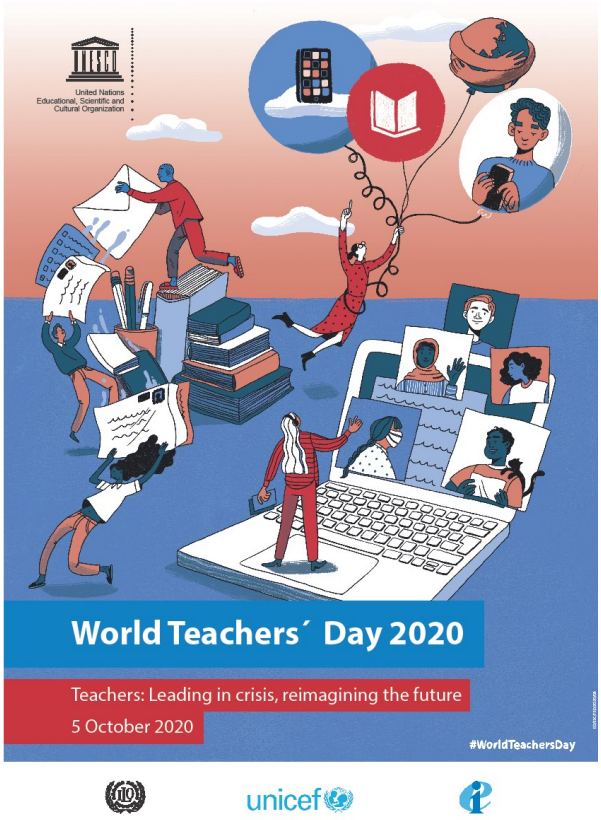
Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Whole School
96.1%	**93.9%**	**95.1%**	**92.4%**	**92.8%**	**94.1%**

Top Tutors per Year Group — well done!

7BW, 8MA, 9AN, 10RO and 11BR

World Teachers' Day 2020

Our student senior leadership team asked the super staff why they love being a teacher. Here are their insightful comments…



***Mrs Mellors* - It's rewarding, different every day and the biggest privilege that I can think of!**

Mrs Woodman - You get to play a small part in helping to shape someone's future opportunities, and hopefully create some lifelong memories as well as a love of learning that stays with them way after they've left.

***Miss Buckthorp* - No day is ever the same!! I love seeing how students come in so young and leave with such confidence and independence & are all grown up! I love been part of their academy journey.**

Miss Taylor (Science) - The funny things kids come out with in class and when students don't know the answer to something and suddenly they get it.

***Mr Rossiter (History)* - I love working with young people, and being able to teach a subject I am passionate about. I also love the funny things the students say during lessons- it keeps me entertained.**

Mrs Weatherly (MFL) - Teachings appeals to me as I love passing on my passion for my subject and spending time with young people keeps me young too!

***Mrs Case (Maths)* - When students expect a low grade and get a high one.**

Mrs Farnell (English) - When students go on to A-Level or University to study your subject.

***Mr Hall (Performing Arts)* - I like teaching because I get to see young people create and perform amazing music.**

Mr Bastock (Maths) - I like being a teacher because I like working with kids and I also love maths and physics and enjoy sharing the joy of those subjects.

Miss Heitmuller (MFL) - I love sharing the love of languages with students in this country as I know they struggle. I want them to be able to have the experiences that I was able to have due to languages.

***Miss Sacco (Performing Arts)* - I love my subject and I really enjoy instilling that love into other people. I really enjoy the experience of introducing performing arts into people's lives forever and also believe it's a privilege and an honour to be a teacher.**

Mr Hollis (Maths) - I love being a teacher as it allows me to share my love of the subject with students and I love the buzz of being in the classroom.

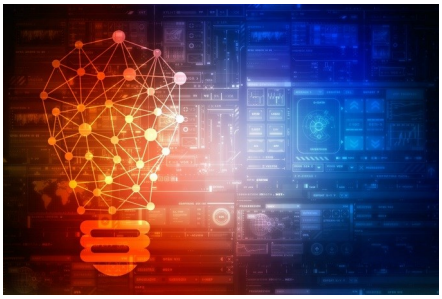
***Miss Hoskins (English)* - I love the positive interaction and lively banter between me and my students and really enjoy being challenged everyday by the pupils.**

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF...
A Teacher Moving Around the School

Monday morning. The rush to the printer is like gazelles to the watering hole during a drought. Our arms are filled with worksheets and we must sift, slice, and sort these ready for a full day of lessons. We prepare for the race between classrooms as best we can. Some of us even have our smart trainers at the ready to make the race a little easier on our feet.

We enter the classroom, to see, to our dismay, that the students are already in and have made themselves very comfortable sitting with their friends (i.e. not in the seats they have been allocated). It takes us several minutes to login to the computer and load up the work, praying that technology will be on our side, only to find that we have left a key document, or even our memory stick, behind. Improvisation at the ready. The students are set on a task as we open OneDrive (or maybe I uploaded it to Google Drive?) to find the PowerPoint for today's lesson. Phew. The students are working, and technology is doing its job.

Nothing more could hinder our teaching... Until a hand appears and a little voice says that they do not have a pen. It is always a revelation that something so small, and, to some, so obvious, could cause so much distress in the classroom. We hope that the teacher to whom the classroom belongs in normal circumstances has made an 'equipment box' for such occasions. They do and the distraction of the absent pen is subdued.



After we have packed away and reminded the students for the one hundredth time to put their facemasks on, we move to our next classroom. A lot of trust is placed on the students to fend for themselves before their next teacher arrives. As we race to our next station, we pass our colleagues with their trollies, boxes and caddies filled with books, pens, coffee. A quick nod of acknowledgement (there is no time to stop) and we step into the next classroom to repeat the whole process again.

By the end of the day, our feet are aching, and our voices are sore. But we know that we would not have any other job in the world.

Miss Watson

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

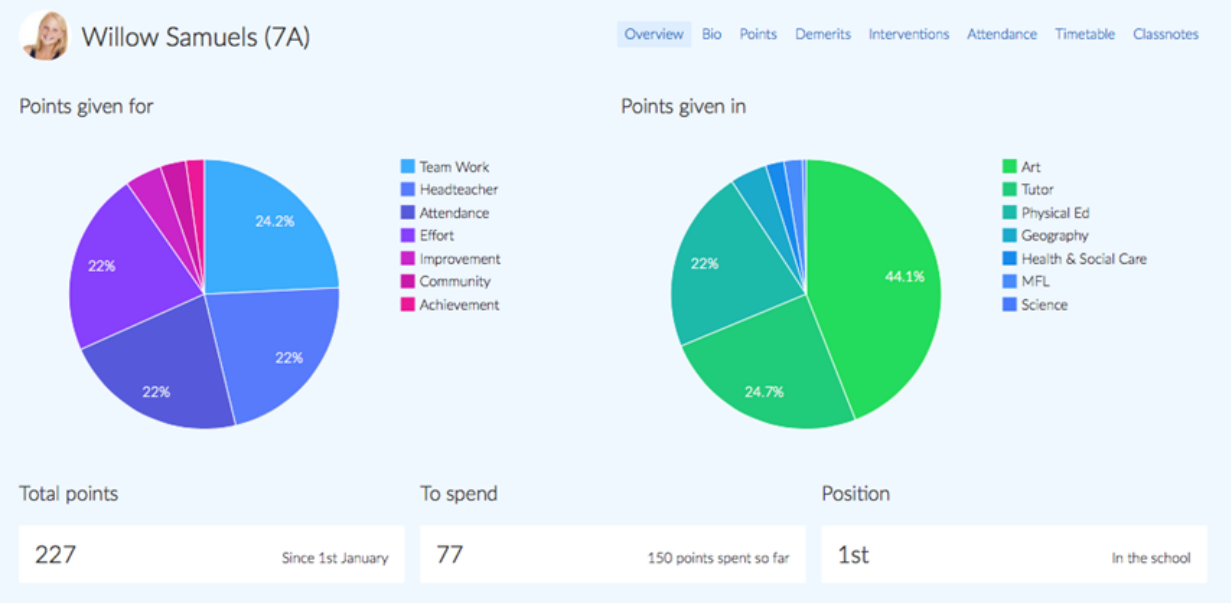
Music Mark 2020

Congratulations to the Music and Performing Arts team for being recognised for their commitment to the subject.
We are all very proud indeed!

We are excited to introduce our new rewards system

epraise.co.uk
The award winning school rewards system

Check out the website www.epraise.co.uk for more information
Epraise is an online platform for schools that helps parents to engage more with their children's education



Students have already being awarded epraise points for their work and contributions in lessons and homework.

Over the coming weeks we will be developing prize draws and rewards for those students with the most points and students will be able to work towards their epraise bronze, silver, gold and platinum badges.

Also we will be letting you know how you can access the epraise platform and see the points your child is achieving. It will also provide other information such as attendance, timetable and much more information.

Young Enterprise launch 2020

The Young Enterprise programme provides opportunities for our young people to develop essential skills and attitudes, which not only enrich their academic learning, but also provide a strong foundation for their future.

Young Enterprise will motivate our young people to succeed in the changing world of work by equipping them with the work skills, knowledge and confidence they will need.

Our year 10 students will have the challenge of setting up and running their own business during this academic year.

If you are prepared for hard work, to sell to the public and enter competitions and make money, come along to a meeting about it on Wednesday 11th November @ 1.45pm in H2.
Mrs Hale will look forward to seeing you there.

This week saw...

...the start of year 7 and 8 after school homework clubs. Year 7 can use the LRC on Tuesdays and year 8s IT4 on Thursdays, within their bubbles, with the help of TAs until 4.30pm.

A popular game in year 8 Friendship Group this week has been hangman, it's taken over from the usual favourite—Frustration! Every lunch time all students in the year 8 bubble are welcome to come along to S5 and join in a variety of activities including games, crafts or other fun social activities.

Year 11s, 8s and 10s busy at lunchtime in Homework Club.

Connections 2021

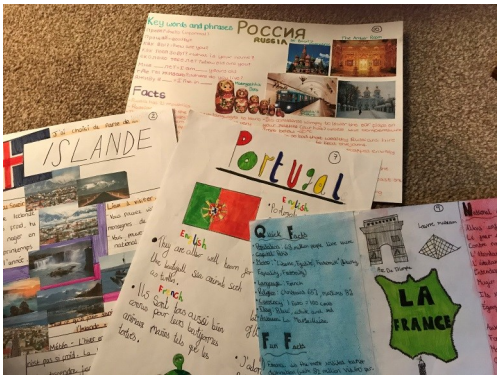
We are delighted to announce that Alcester Academy have been successful in their application to be part of the National Theatre Connections 2021.

The National Theatre commissions ten new plays for young people to perform in professional theatres around the country.

Miss Sacco

MFL competition winners

Congratulations to our ten winners who have been selected to have their posters sent to the Routes of Languages, European Day of Languages competition. We will be presenting these students with school certificates and prizes next week. There will also be some certificates for the runners up. Many thanks to all students who entered the competition. Miss Heitmuller and I were absolute thrilled with the standard of the entries.



Overall winners:
Zoey
Mary
Chloe
Diana
Emily
Charlotte
Isaac
Zoe
Archie
Katherine

Good luck in the next round!
Mrs Weatherley

Language Idiom of the Week

To be icy cold

French: Un froid de canard

Literal meaning: A cold of duck

German: Hundewetter

Literal meaning: Dog weather

Warwickshire County Council

Communities

Transport Operations
Shire Hall
Warwick
CV34 4RL

Tel: 01926 412929

busservices@warwickshire.gov.uk
www.warwickshire.gov.uk/schooltravel

September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

HOME TO SCHOOL/COLLEGE TRANSPORT – Advice and rules for travelling
Autumn 2020 Reminder

I am writing in relation to the advice and guidance that has been issued by Warwickshire County Council (WCC) regarding travelling on home to school transport from September 2020.

The advice has been guided by the principles underpinning the system of controls and guidance set out by the UK Government. It is important that pupils following this advice where possible, at all times. This includes:

- Pupils over the age of 11 are advised to wear a face covering
- Pupils are encouraged to wash hands/use sanitiser prior to boarding and on disembarking from the vehicle
- Pupils should be socially distanced whilst queuing, boarding and alighting vehicles where possible.
- Pupils should sit in the same seat/row of seats.
- Pupils are asked to sit with peers from their own school and their own school year group.
- Whilst travelling, pupils should always stay seated, avoid physical contact, face forwards and away from others, and not shout or raise their voices.

We will be asking drivers to report any issues to the school and to ourselves. Where pupils do not behave in accordance with transport guidance and/or generate an unacceptable safety risk to staff or others, they may be refused travel.

We are asking for your cooperation in this matter, help us to help protect you whilst using Warwickshire School Transport.

Yours sincerely

School Transport Team
Warwickshire County Council

A reminder of our year 11 offer right now:

Revision TT (1)
DOCX - 8 KB

WEEK **A** wb- 21/9, 5/10, 19/10, 9/11, 23/11.	Lunchtime	Afterschool
Monday	Physics (sets 1 and 2) (M4)	**Chemistry (sets 1 and 2) (M1)** English (M2-5)
Tuesday	History (M1)	MFL (M1 and M2)
Wednesday	**Music&PA(Music rooms)** Science combined if not Music&PA (M1)	Music &PA-(Music rooms)
Thursday	RE (M1) DT (Food room) Art (A rooms) IT (iMedia & CS) (ICT2)	Maths (M rooms)
Friday	Independent study	Independent study at home

WEEK **B** wb- 28/9, 12/10, 2/11, 16/11, 30/11.	Lunchtime	Afterschool
Monday	Physics (sets 1 and 2) (M4)	English (M rooms)
Tuesday	History (M1)	MFL (M1 and M2)
Wednesday	**Music&PA (Music rooms)** Science combined if not music/pa (M1)	Geography (M1)
Thursday	RE (M1) DT (Food room) Art (A rooms) IT (iMedia & CS) (ICT2)	**Biology sets 1 and 2 (M5)** Maths (M1 -4)
Friday	independent study	Independent study at home

Alcester Town
@AlcesterTown

During October Half Term (w/c 26th Oct) Stratford upon Avon Foodbank will again partner with MakeLunch project to deliver food parcels to struggling families in the local area, as long as there is at least one primary school aged child in the household.
facebook.com/SOAMakeLunch/

3:08 PM · Oct 5, 2020 · Twitter Web App

LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

UPDATED INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

The Supreme Court recently reached a decision in the case of Platt v Isle of Wight Council which has clarified the law on unauthorised leave, including holidays, during term time. The parents of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that they attend school on a regular basis. The Supreme Court has made clear that attending school 'regularly' means that the children must attend school on every day that they are required to do so. As such, the parents of any child who is absent from school without authorisation for any length of time are likely to be considered as committing an offence under s444 of the Education Act 1996.

Head Teachers retain the ability to authorise leave in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. When considering such requests for a leave of absence, the school are obliged to act within the law. Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. If the leave is granted, head teachers are able to determine the number of school days a child can be absent for.

It is for the Head Teacher to decide what is 'exceptional' and it is at their discretion if the circumstances warrant the leave to be granted. The school can only consider Leave of Absence requests which are made by the 'resident' parent.

Each application for a leave of absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

Where applications for leave of absence are made in advance and refused, the child will be required to be in school on the dates set out in the application. If the child is absent during that period, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence, which may result in legal action being taken against the parent(s), by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Failure to make an application for leave in advance can also result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued to the parent(s).

All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service, part of Warwickshire County Council

It is important to note, Fixed Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each absent child, (for example 2 children and 2 parents, means each parent will receive 2 invoices in the amount of £120 each, totalling £240 for both children, this is reduced to £60 per child if paid within 21 days).

Where a Fixed Penalty Notice is not paid within the required timeframe as set out on the notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal proceedings under S444 Education Act 1996.

Fixed Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Warwickshire County Council's Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices.

Your child's progress academically as well as socially is our shared priority

Warwickshire School pupils recorded 31,196 half day sessions of absence due to holiday in the Autumn term 2019.