

# Alcester Academy

Headteacher: Mrs Sarah Mellors  
Deputy Headteacher: Mr Nick Cooke



Assistant Headteacher: Miss Karen Buckthorp  
Assistant Headteacher: Miss Charlie McKenzie

3<sup>rd</sup> September 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

## Back to School – September 2024

Welcome back! I hope that you enjoyed a relaxing and peaceful summer. A warm welcome to those of you who are new to the academy as Year 7 parents/carers.

The return to school dates are as follows:

**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September – Year 7 and 11 only**

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September – Year 8, 9, 10 only**

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September – All year groups back**

**Friday 6<sup>th</sup> September – Rewards Trip Day. Y7s all in school and students not attending a trip**

I am writing with key updates at the start of term. Thereafter, I will keep you updated in the weekly bulletin. I am delighted to welcome the following staff to the academy this term:

Mr Nash – Teacher of PE

Mr Dallow – Teacher of maths

Mrs van Zyl – Teaching Assistant

We hope that these new staff will be very happy with us.

## Summer School 2024

Thank you to the new Year 7s for a superb Summer School. This will feature in the first bulletin next Friday. 92 children joined this superb event in school this year.

## Results 2024

Congratulations to our Year 11 cohort of 2024. I'm thrilled to report some outstanding grades yet again this year. Our headline figures saw an increase from 2023 with more students than ever securing a grade 5+ in English and maths, and those achieving a 7+ also.

64% of the year group achieved a GCSE in English and maths at grade 5+ compared to 59% in 2023.

Our highest performing students scored;

Josh – 4 grade 9s, 1 Distinction \*, 3 grade 8s and 3 grade 7s

Rachel – 2 grade 9s, 1 Distinction \*, 6 grade 8s and 2 grade 7s.

Results day was a very joyous event with numerous students achieving beyond their predicted target grades. We are very proud of the students indeed and wish them our very best wishes as they move on to their new post 16 destinations.

## Attendance

We continue to aim for the highest attendance for students. Holidays in term time will not be authorised. For any support needed around this area, please contact

[LouiseHatcher@alcesteracademy.org.uk](mailto:LouiseHatcher@alcesteracademy.org.uk)



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You will be aware that Bridgett Phillipson, Education Secretary has spoken out about school attendance very recently. She warned that *'she will make no 'apologies' for fining parents with frequently absent children and said too many believe truancing is acceptable for the sake of 'cheaper holidays', to avoid 'unpopular subjects' or for 'birthday treats or even a runny nose'.*

### **Uniform**

Thank you for the time and budget spent helping to support us to maintain a high standard of school uniform. We will conduct a full check with students upon their return to school. These are some of the key areas that need a special focus:

- Trousers should be mid grey and not black
- All shoes should be plain and polishable
- Boys should wear black or dark grey socks
- One stud can be worn in each ear with no other piercings allowed
- Hair should be a natural colour; no holiday braids or shaved in patterns
- Nails should be natural in colour and short
- Tailored shorts are reserved for the summer term only; Easter-July.

### **Homework**

All homework tasks will be listed on your child's Google Classrooms. For Y7 and 8 we will also provide a planner in order to aid organisation. There is no physical planner in Y9-11. If you have a child in year 7 or 8, please find their KS3 homework rota attached.

If you require some support in how to use Google Classroom to check this as a parent, we are providing an online session on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 6-7pm to demonstrate this. Separate details will be sent out about this.

### **Communication**

- Your child's form tutor remains your first point of contact. Where your child has two tutors, please clearly mark any email communication for one of these staff members with the other cc'd in for information.
- Miss Bartlett continues to oversee transition and Year 7  
SaschaBartlett@alcesteracademy.org.uk
- LSU and Miss Buckthorp, Assistant Head teacher and our designated safeguarding lead oversee pastoral and well-being issues karenbuckthorp@alcesteracademy.org.uk
- Each subject leader has their contact details attached to the appropriate area on the website: <https://www.alcesteracademy.org.uk/quality-of-education/subjects>
- Mrs Bush is our Special Needs Co-ordinator and will respond as required  
AnitaBush@alcesteracademy.org.uk

We have developed a new area of the website to upload all whole school and year group written communication for you: <https://www.alcesteracademy.org.uk/news/communications>. The weekly bulletin is also archived to: <https://www.alcesteracademy.org.uk/news/bulletin>

- Physical drop-ins operate each Wednesday 3.30-4.30pm in reception. You can visit school to see a member of staff and we will take details from you in order to look into anything troubling you.

We will always aim to respond to you within 24 hours to acknowledge your contact in the first instance.

Mr Cooke oversees any matter related to progress, assessment and reporting teaching and learning as the Deputy Headteacher [NickCooke@alcesteracademy.org.uk](mailto:NickCooke@alcesteracademy.org.uk)

Miss McKenzie, Assistant Head teacher oversees matters related to teaching and learning [CharlieMcKenzie@alcesteracademy.org.uk](mailto:CharlieMcKenzie@alcesteracademy.org.uk)

### **Home-School Agreement and Consent**

A copy of this year's Parent Handbook will be emailed home soon and will include a link to complete the home-school agreement and update your consent preferences for this year.

### **Behaviours for Learning – New!**

September 2024 sees the launch of some new '*Behaviours For Learning*' in classrooms and tutor time '*Non Negotiables*'. I will write in more detail about these in the first bulletin edition. The students are all aware of these expectations and we will work together in order to continue to maximise the best learning environments possible at all times.

<https://www.alcesteracademy.org.uk/quality-of-education/teaching--learning---assessment/behaviour-for-learning>

### **Football**

Following a significant injury to a student at the end of the summer term, ball games will now only be allowed after the settle bell at lunchtimes. This ensures that as many staff as possible have completed their assigned duties and can oversee the conduct of students.

Parents should note that individual football games are not supervised by one identified staff member. There is an expectation that all students play showing a respect and courtesy to safety at all times. If you could relay this message at home, I'd be most grateful. Until this recent, isolated incident, the school had an exceptional reputation for safety during unstructured times, and I thank those students who always play with the respect expected.

### **EPRAISE**

Parents/carers will be able to see both praise points and demerits from the start of term. A demerit might be issued for poor attitude or effort, lack of HW etc. You will be able to see in which subject these are given. We always give out more praise points than demerits. Hopefully, this will help you to feel confident about knowing what has happened in your child's school day to discuss each evening.

### **Friends of Alcester Academy PTA**

The school has a PTA known as 'Friends of Alcester Academy'. The first meeting for interested parents is online on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2024. Please contact the Friends if you are interested in joining, [Friends@alcesteracademy.org.uk](mailto:Friends@alcesteracademy.org.uk).

### **Phones**

Students should not have phones or devices out in school. Any phones seen will be confiscated. Taking photographs, recording and/or posting on social media is very strictly prohibited under safeguarding. Matters related to this will be dealt with according to the school behaviour policy.

## Social Media

If parents could refrain from posting anything negative about the academy on social media, I would be extremely grateful. As a school community, we don't generally have any issues with this, thank you all. We do have a strict policy around this for parents: [AA Social Media Policy for Parents.pdf \(alcesteracademy.org.uk\)](#) Please do contact the school if you need to discuss any issue.

The school has a number of twitter accounts. The main one is @AlcesterAcademy  
Many others are listed on the website: <https://www.alcesteracademy.org.uk/news/twitter---facebook>

## Other policies

All relevant policies can be found on our website: [Alcester Academy | Policies & Statements](#)

## Environment

Several parents and local organisations have asked if cars can be switched off whilst collecting children at the end of the day. Thank you in advance for your support with this. The Parish Council also ask kindly that parents refrain from parking on verges.

## Financial concerns

In light of the growing concerns around the cost of living, please reach out to school if you are worried about any aspect of finance during the year. Direct any queries to LSU. We don't promise to be able to always help but we will try our best to work with you to support you.

## Key dates for your diary:

Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	School photographs Year 7 – 10
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	Blencathra Parents Information Evening 6.00pm
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	PTA 'Friends' meeting online 7pm
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	Year 7 Induction Trip
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	Year 7 SLD "My Mate Fancies You" Year 8 parent information evening for Skern Lodge. Details to be sent separately to parents
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> – Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	Year 11 Blencathra Field trip
Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> - Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	Open Week 2024 Note: School finishes at 1.30pm on Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> September for preparation
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	European Day of Languages
Monday 30 <sup>th</sup> September - 4 <sup>th</sup> October 2024	Skern Lodge Residential trip for Year 8
Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> October 2024	Iceland trip 2024 – Parents' Information Evening
Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2024	Parent Forum 6-7pm on-line How to access homework on Google Classroom?
Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup> October 2024	Year 7 'Meet the Tutor Evening'. In school 4-7pm
Thursday 24 <sup>th</sup> October 2024	Year 11 Parents' Evening online 4-7pm
Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> November 2024	Year 11 Parent Forum online (revision theme) 5.30-7pm (This will be recorded and a link sent to Y11 parents)

## Parents' Evenings 2024-25

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2024 – Year 10 Parents' Evening School Cloud

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2025 – Year 11 second Parents' Evening. Live in school

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025 – Year 8 Parents' Evening School Cloud

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2025 – Year 9 Parents' Evening School Cloud  
Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2025 – Year 8 Options Evening. Live in school  
Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2025 – Year 7 Parents' Evening School Cloud  
(note, School Cloud is an online video service).

We have been made aware of several Post 16 Open Event clashes with our calendared events by Year 11 parents. Mr Cooke is looking into these. You'll be aware however that any changes that we make could very likely then clash with other local events too.

### **Buses**

We continue to ask the for best possible behaviour from students on buses to, and from school.

In sad news...

Finally, we were extremely sad to hear about the death of Reverend Stephen and Katherine Burch in a terrible accident recently. Stephen was a former governor at Alcester High School and several staff were married by him too. We are sending our deepest condolences to their family at this tragic time.

Phew! Thank you for your attention to these matters. I hope that this information is useful, and I look forward to updating you again in next Friday's bulletin. We're looking forward to seeing the children back this week.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Mellors  
Headteacher