

Dear Parent/Carer,

As we reach the halfway point in the year I write to share with you some of the amazing stories of the last half term, but firstly to remind you all of The Albion Way, and the professional standards we have in place for our students to ensure they are attending in the right frame of mind and representing us all well.

The Albion Way:

Punctuality: Students must be in the academy building at 8.40am ready for the start of the day, as our form time programme contains a range of essential activities – from keeping safe online to relationship education and learning/revision strategies. If they are not, they will be required to complete a same-day 20 minute detention. Repeated late arrivals are treated as absences with the associated impact on attendance and bringing the risk of fines.

Uniform: Students must be in full academy uniform – something they still do well almost without exception and I am very proud that they wear it with confidence and always represent us well at events and public ceremonies. This does mean there are no hoodies allowed – and as we move into spring, with warmer weather this should make it easier for you to insist they do not use a hoodie under their blazer. They can, of course, wear a school jumper if they choose to. Coats should be hung in the cloakroom, or put in a schoolbag, on arrival and not worn in school – and all hoodies will be confiscated if worn at all.

Equipment: Students must come to school with the correct equipment – a schoolbag big enough to carry homework, books and PE kit for example – and a pen, pencil, rubber and ruler. They must also carry their planner at all times – if they have lost it, they can be replaced for £2.50. The planner is where you will be able to see their homework, notes from staff or a record of their conduct in the form of merits for excellent behaviour or codes when mistakes have been made.

What isn't allowed? Finally, please remember that extreme hair styles are not permitted, nor make up or fake tan. The latter is particularly important to me as the mother of two teenage girls; it will take all of us to make sure that girls do not believe make-up is an essential part of who they are or part of their value of themselves and they are all far too young to begin to depend on it. Please support us by insisting they do not wear make-up to school.

Mobile Phones: Mobile phones are not allowed in the academy at all; if you need your child to carry one for before or after school, it must be turned off and out of sight throughout the school day – including break and dinner time – or it will be confiscated. Again, as a parent, this is important to me as the students do have trouble managing friendships online and this can become difficult for us all to manage as we are taking staff away from their jobs to manage fallout from social media exchanges. You can help support your child immeasurably by limiting their screen time out of school too.

Health and Wellbeing: High sugar foods are proven to be damaging to concentration and behaviours and as a result are not allowed in the academy. We manage what is offered in the form of meals through break and dinner time over the week and keep the proportion of sugar within guidelines. Please support us by not allowing students to bring fizzy drinks, sweets, chocolates, over-sized bags of crisps or Pringles etc into school – or by supporting us should we see them and confiscate them.

Year Group messages:

The Albion Way – and more - for Y11: Leaders – Mr Warmington and Ms Eaton

Y11 are now entering their last few weeks with us, and the pressure and expectation on them increases every year as examination standards rise. This is challenging, and we want to both set a high bar for them and also show our care in terms of supporting them as they manage their emotions. We are not helping them if we allow them to opt out of hard work though, and fear of failure can only be managed by making sure they put in enough time to reduce their anxiety. Therefore we expect them to follow our rules to reduce confrontation and stress – but we also expect them to show their motivation and ambition by attending revision sessions and completing coursework on time. We can help with this by arranging extra sessions, but we need your support in ensuring they attend. Saturday mornings are up and running in Science already and other subjects will be on offer after half term – please encourage your Y11 student to come in for extra input in their exam subjects, it will help their confidence and reduce anxiety. I enclose the after-school, revision timetable – there is something on offer every night, so do insist they stay and take advantage of their teachers' hard work and time.

For Y11 this year we have:

- Saturday mornings and after school revision
- 1-1 Parents' Evenings (the first has already taken place) and additional work to use at home
- Extra time for core subjects as students complete certain subjects
- 1-1 tuition available in school for those on a grade borderline – and access to a reduced rate for home tuition if you decide you would like to pay for some additional input, please get in touch with Cheryl Hurst if this is something you would like to book
- Half term and Easter school sessions for all students so there is no break in study

The Albion Way – and more – for Y10: Leaders - Mr Warmington and Ms Bedford

Students in Y10 may take their full GCSE in English Language this summer, and they are showing every sign of being able to gain a great grade and go into Y11 with some confidence. It is important that they check with their teachers which revision sessions are relevant to them and use the time well – please get in touch with the Head of English, Miss Hutchinson, if you would like some additional guidance on this.

The Albion Way – and more – for Y9: Leaders – Ms Kay and Ms Reilly

Please note that Y9 will begin the process of choosing their options for KS4 this term. We ask that they engage with all our expectations in The Albion Way and extend this to a professional consideration of their choices for next year. Selecting the courses they will study is vital as it relies on teachers having an accurate picture of their ability and potential so we can advise them well – this means leaving behind any immature behaviours and focussing on learning in class – and learning about the subjects themselves and the career routes they open up. If you have a child in Y9 and are hearing that their behaviour is a cause for concern, please reinforce the message that now is the time that must change if they are to have the best chance of fulfilling their potential.

The Albion Way – and more – for Y8: Leaders – Ms Kay and Mr Kavanagh

Y8 will have the chance to make their first choices about further study in the summer term, as they will decide to specialise in History or Geography for Y9, and consider which arts subjects they would like to spend more time on. These decisions are designed to be a practice-run for taking those big and irreversible decisions in Y9, so they have chance to think about things for the first time without them being totally fixed. However – for this to work well, they do need to be thinking about what they enjoy and what they are likely to work hardest in, as we hope that they will choose to stick with their choices moving forward. This means learning that as Y8, The Albion Way should be embedded so that we are not having to keep reiterating basic expectations to them and can instead focus on learning and thinking about the future for the first time.

The Albion Way – and more – for Y7: Leaders – Mr Hough, Ms Wroe and Ms Moir

Y7 have made an exceptional start at the academy and the first ambassador cohort has recently been appointed. They will now find themselves making a big contribution to us as they become involved with transition for next year's Y7 intake. This means understanding why all those rules and expectations can seem onerous at first but are actually quite easy to learn and make a difference to the way the academy runs safely and happily for everyone. If your child is in Y7, please congratulate them on a great start, and encourage them to now think about how they can support Y6 in making the same transition.

Assessment – all years:

As you know we have moved to a new Grades 1-9 assessment system in all years (except those taking GCSEs on old specifications). You will shortly receive your child's assessment details for this half term and at this stage in the year this information is becoming well rounded and reliable. If you see red or amber progress, please get in touch with your child's Head of Year (names above) to discuss what can be done to support them in moving to green (on track) assessment. The colour coding relates to whether or not they are making enough progress to gain passes at GCSE in those subjects, so if they are falling behind, we want to help them get back on the right path and we can help you to help them too.

Albion News:

There are many reasons why Albion is a great place to be at school – here are just a few! This half term has seen our Basketball teams dominate in Salford:



The Albion CCF cadets have had an extraordinary term, with an award for their work raising awareness among young people of Remembrance Day – which was presented at Buckingham Palace at a reception hosted by the Prince of Wales.



The Manchester United Foundation has made a film about the work of our Hub officer and students on the coaching and Believe programmes, featuring our Y7-8 girls' football teams, Y10 Sports Academy students and a group of Y8 boys – not to mention Jesse Lingard and Marcus Rashford who joined the lessons for an afternoon. Look out for the short film in the coming weeks.



KS4 Health and Social Care students have built another great careers link with Salford Royal and spent the day learning about care involving several thousand pounds worth of life-time patients



The Y9 Business Academy students have been back at our partner Freshfields' offices to learn about international law and business, representing us brilliantly in the corporate world, as did students from our Hackathon Work and Business project when they met the Mayor and furthered our cause for greater business education in schools.

