



The Albion Academy Headteacher Newsflash

Friday 4th September 2020

Welcome back!

The start of the new year could not have been better given the national return under the new Covid rules. On Thursday we welcomed back into school Years 7 and 11. To add into the strange Covid situation if you are not already aware, we have made massive improvements with our GCSEs compared to any other year which we will share with you all at a later date. So, it is very much reasons to celebrate past successes whilst looking forward to making sure that our children are safe, ready to learn, respectful to everyone in the building and continue to make progress.

Attendance Matters – Every day counts

As we return to a more normal way of living and learning each week I will share with you how the year groups attend. Obviously this year attendance can and probably will fluctuate unexpectedly. However, that being said every single day counts and every single day is important. We want your child to attend as regularly as possible.

Week ending 04.09.2020					
Year	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri
7				96.2	96.5
8					
9					
10					
11				90.2	90.1
Whole school				93.5	93.6

Standards and expectations

There can be occasions when students and parents feel that we are inflexible on issues such as uniform, behaviour or our expectations and that our insistence on the highest of standards at all times can, in some circumstances, be unreasonable. For instance, a parent may feel that a student who normally wears perfect uniform has been treated unfairly if they are given a sanction on the first occasion that they are not wearing the correct footwear, especially if, in their view, the situation was unavoidable. Similarly, a student will be given a sanction and asked to remove jewellery or make-up if they are wearing it.

Consistency

Maintaining high standards can be very difficult and, working in a school, you soon realise that the key to success, and the absolute cornerstone of all good schools, is an absolute consistency in applying your rules and expectations. If one student is allowed to walk around in trainers today, then there will be two tomorrow and five the day after. The following week, someone will come without their blazer or tie. The same applies to make-up, jewellery, chewing gum, handing in homework, punctuality and all the other routines and expectations of school life. Routines, procedures and protocols that you work hard to establish can be very easily lost.

Parental support

Whilst I sometimes understand parental frustrations at what they see as relatively 'minor' issues or transgressions of the school rules, it is important to understand that, with 756 young people in the building, you cannot allow one of them to ignore or disregard the rules and expect the other 755 not to follow suit. Children do, naturally, push the boundaries, that is part of growing up, and if you allow the little things to slip then other things will follow. Most parents, if you ask them, would say that they want their children to go to a 'strict' and well-ordered school. Supporting the school on the small detail as well as the bigger issues is important in establishing and maintaining that disciplined and purposeful learning environment.

Keeping up to date

In order that messages of general news, notifications or changes to policy are communicated and shared, we try to ensure that via this Newsflash we maintain good channels of communication and information is passed on. We also try to keep our website and Twitter feeds as up to date as is humanly possible. With regards to uniform, we began communicating expectations as far back as July with updates about wording related to what is and is not acceptable footwear, this was via the letter at the end of the academic year.

Every year seems to raise the same September problem which is often about footwear brands that fall into a grey area of; "Are they a shoe or are they not a shoe?". In truth it is a minefield, but the advice given in my letter prior to the end of the year was to not purchase them, buy something that looks like the acceptable footwear description. On the 17th July we posted several images of boys and girls' footwear within our end of term letter to parents. We will continue to maintain high standards around our school uniform because we are really proud of how smart our pupils look.

A managed return

Thursday and Friday saw the managed return of Year 7 and Year 11 into the building and we are so happy to have your child back into our building.

On Monday we welcome back Year 8 who will have the orientation assembly and then begin their learning.

We ask that pupils have with them their equipment, full uniform, mask, tissues and a suitable hand sanitizer that works for your child's skin type. Regarding mask and hand sanitizers it really is about social responsibility for us all; we all have families and some of our family members have recently come out of shielding. We appreciate that wearing a mask is not usual in the UK, but these are unusual times at the moment and the more we can do to look after each other, the quicker we can come out the other end of the Covid19 situation.

Tuesday Year 10 return and Wednesday Year 9 return meaning by Wednesday morning we will have all pupils back on-site learning.