

Alderbrook School

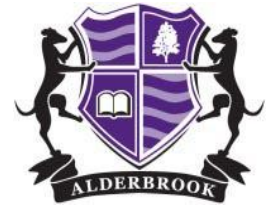
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Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you have had an enjoyable summer break. It has been fantastic to welcome students back to school this week and to meet our new cohorts in Years 7 and 12. This letter provides some important updates about the year ahead and gives a number of links to other documents.

COVID-19 Control Measures in School

As you will be aware, there are a number of control measures that have now been lifted. We will not be conducting contact tracing, close contacts will be identified through track and trace; schools will only be asked to support contact tracing in exceptional circumstances. Children under 18 years and 6 months will not be required to isolate if they are identified as a close contact through track and trace unless of course, they are symptomatic and receive a positive PCR test result. Face coverings will no longer be mandatory but if any member of our community wishes to continue to wear a face covering then they are able to do so.

Key control measures that we will continue to use are:

- Continuing with the good hygiene routines supported by using the sanitiser stations in place around the school, including sanitiser available in every classroom.
- Maintaining the extra cleaning we already have in place, including increased cleaning of contact surfaces such as desks and doors.
- Keeping occupied spaces well ventilated.
- Following any PHE advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- Maintaining the facility to immediately isolate an individual with symptoms.
- Asking all students to continue to wear face coverings on public and school transport.
- Asking all students and staff to complete a twice weekly LFD test (this will be reviewed by the Government at the end of September).

We have updated our school risk assessment, and developed a contingency plan, should there be a COVID-19 outbreak at Alderbrook, and these documents are available [here](#). We will keep our control measures under constant review and may need to reinstate some measures during the school year.

We ask that parents, where at all possible, continue to only visit the school if they have a pre-arranged appointment with a member of staff.

Testing and reporting positive cases

We ask for your continued support in ensuring that students are completing a twice weekly LFD test, on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings. Students have been given test kits to take home, and if they run out can collect these from pupil reception. The government are reviewing this policy at the end of September and we will be in touch if there are any updates.

For ongoing information about testing and logging results on School Screener, please see the detailed letter available [here](#). If your child tests positive for COVID-19, please immediately inform the school through the dedicated email address, covidpositive@alderbrook.solihull.sch.uk. A reminder that if your child does develop COVID symptoms and you are waiting for the results of a PCR test, they should not be sent into school until a negative test result is received. Although it is no longer necessary for schools to immediately inform parents of positive cases, we will give you weekly updates.

Open Evening and Early Finish, Monday 20 September

We are very much looking forward to returning to an in-person Open Evening on Monday 20 September between 6.30pm and 9pm. In order for staff to be able to prepare for this, and to give a break for students helping out on the night, we will finish slightly early on that day, at 2.05pm. The 894 and 895 buses will be on site by 2.30 pm and if your child does wish to wait and catch this bus rather than use alternative means of transport, they will be supervised on site until the buses arrive. Unfortunately the 821 and 822 from Dingle Lane are not available at this earlier time and we would ask that you make alternative arrangements for your child's transport home. Students will be able to catch the 49 bus from Blossomfield Road. We will of course put in place provision for any students not able to leave school until 2.55 pm for their usual method of transport home. Thank you for your understanding.

Each year our Open Evening is a special event, made so by the participation of our current students in demonstrating what Alderbrook has to offer – we ask for your support in allowing students to help out at the Open Evening if asked and letters will follow next week.

Feedback from Parent Survey

Thank you to all parents who completed the survey we sent out in July. This has given us some valuable feedback that will support our planning for this academic year. We have taken your feedback on board and introduced a number of changes for this academic year, outlined below. Full results of the survey are available [here](#).

Changes for this academic year

A number of changes that we have put in place over the last 18 months have proved very beneficial to the smooth running of the school. We also asked for your views on some of these changes in the parents survey in July and they have been positively received. We will therefore be making a number of changes permanent and I outline these changes below:

- Parent consultation evenings are planned on the calendar. We received very positive feedback about the remote parent consultation evenings in the parent survey (over 65% in

favour) and so plan to continue with these for the next academic year. We are pleased to be planning for the return to 'in person' parent information evenings but will ensure that resources are available on the website for those who do not wish to attend in person.

Upcoming Information Evenings include:

- Year 7: Thursday 16 September, 6pm
- Year 11: Wednesday 22 September, 6pm
- Year 10: Tuesday 28 September, 6pm
- Year 13: Wednesday 6 October, Intervention Evening for selected students, 3.30pm-6.30pm
- Year 9: Wednesday 24 November, 6pm
- Year 8: Tuesday 18 January 2022, Options Evening, Timings tbc

If you are attending in person, the information evenings will take place in Malley Hall which will be well ventilated and thoroughly cleaned before parents arrive. Visitors are welcome to wear a face mask or covering if they wish and we ask that all attendees take a lateral flow test at home before attending.

- The one-way systems (both inside and outside of the building) have worked well and so we will continue with these moving forward.
- We are going to continue with staggered break and lunch times, reducing the amount of students using the communal spaces at break and lunch times. Years 7, 8 and 10 will be on first break/lunch and Years 9, 11, 12, and 13 will be on second break/lunch. We have made a number of changes to our catering facilities and extended lunch by 5 minutes to 35 minutes to ensure all students have plenty of time to buy and eat their lunch.
- The timings of the school day are slightly different this year due to the increase in lunch break, so school will start **at 8.30am** and finish at **2.55pm** for all students.

We also had to reduce or stop a number of elements of school life due to the COVID pandemic and we are hopeful we can now bring these back in full. Our extra-curricular programme, for instance, will return, and more details will be published shortly.

Marjorie Willis – a charity supporting the education of Alderbrook Students

Established in 1974, the Marjorie Willis Educational Foundation has supported school projects that fall outside of normal school funding, such as minibuses, water fountains, art equipment and presentation evening awards.

As we move our school out of the COVID pandemic, we are asking parents and carers who are able to support the charity to make small regular donations or a one-off donation. There are a number of projects we are hoping to support to benefit students, including additional outdoor seating, books for our new school library and the redevelopment of external communal areas. If you would like to find out more please visit the dedicated website [here](#).

If you would like to donate, please visit:

<https://www.nowdonate.com/checkout/marjorie-willis-educational-foundation> or <https://www.totalgiving.co.uk/appeal/Alderbrook/donate>

We will keep parents and carers updated on the progress of projects that the Marjorie Willis Foundation supports throughout the year.

Update on site work

A number of improvements have been made to the school site over the summer break:

- Cartwright playground has been resurfaced and we have built an additional 'grab and go' servery (opening after October half term).
- We have modified the catering facilities and queuing systems for the main canteen and Malley servery.
- We have installed a new library in the school. Our new librarian, Miss Cameron, is busy stocking the library and we hope it will become a central space in the school to be used in lessons and during unstructured times. We will officially open the library in the coming weeks.
- Replacement of all lighting in Malley and Gibbons buildings with LED lighting.

There will continue to be improvements to the school site during this academic year. We will be replacing all windows on Cartwright building and putting in new canopies over external queuing areas. As you are aware, we have had an application to expand the school and build a new 7-classroom block approved; as soon as we have further details of the dates that work will start we will update all parents and carers.

I am truly hopeful that this will be a very positive year for all students at Alderbrook, and I look forward to working with you all. I hope to meet you at upcoming information evenings, and we will invite parents in for a more informal chance to speak to me and members of the senior team during this term.

Best wishes



Tom Beveridge
Headteacher