

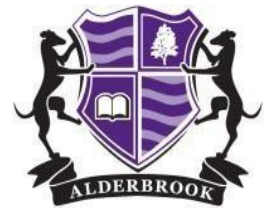
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9 December 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we quickly approach the end of term, I'd like to start by thanking all students involved in our festive events this year. Whether singing to the public in Shirley last Saturday, performing in our Winter Wonderland Dance show last week or the Christmas Concert last night, the students have been absolutely fantastic. The festivities keep coming next week with the Key Stage 3 drama performance on Wednesday. Thank you for supporting all of these events.

This week we have held a 'Life Ready Day' for all students. Instead of attending their normal lessons on Wednesday, students attended sessions on a wide range of topics, with some years working with external visitors. Year 7 focused on relationships, with each group taking part in a session on Friendship with Dreadlock Alien; Year 8 focused on British Values, working on a range of topics including a session on Respect with Dreadlock Alien; Year 9 had a day thinking about their own wellbeing, with the whole year group taking part in sessions including yoga and mindfulness; Year 10 had sessions on sex and relationship education; Year 11 focused on preparing for their exams, with revision technique sessions and lessons in Maths and English; and our Sixth Form took part in a Culture Day, exploring their own cultures and taking part in a very entertaining afrobeat workshop.

Next week I will not write to parents and carers by letter, but we will issue our Christmas Newsletter. In the meantime I wish you all a restful and very happy festive break.

End of Term Arrangements

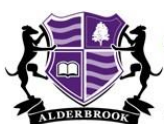
A reminder that the last day of term is Friday 16 December and we have an earlier finish time of 2.00pm. Unfortunately we have been informed that only the 895 and 896 buses are able to pick up at this time and students who catch other buses need to either make their own way home or can stay at school until the usual finish time of 2.55pm when the buses will arrive as normal. Any students who are staying at school should go to Malley Hall where they will be registered and supervised.

All students should come into school on the last day of term in full school uniform as usual, but can wear Christmas accessories if wished. These can be a headband, Christmas Santa hat etc and must be appropriately sized and in keeping with a day at school.

Scarlet Fever and Group Strep A Infections – information from the DfE

This is intended to inform, not frighten and please be assured that we are monitoring this situation very carefully at school and if we need to react or communicate with you we will do so as a priority.

The Secretary of State for Education is closely monitoring the increased cases of Group A streptococcus (Strep A) and scarlet fever and is working closely with the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), who are leading on the response. UKHSA is reporting an increased number of cases of Group A streptococcus



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(Strep A) compared to normal at this time of year. There is no evidence that a new strain is circulating and the increase is most likely related to high amounts of circulating bacteria and social mixing.

What are scarlet fever and Strep A?

Scarlet fever is caused by bacteria called Group A streptococci (Strep A). The bacteria usually cause a mild infection that can be easily treated with antibiotics. In very rare occasions, the bacteria can get into the bloodstream and cause an illness called invasive Group A strep (iGAS).

What are the symptoms of Strep A/scarlet fever?

Strep A infections can cause a range of symptoms that parents should be aware of, including:

- Sore throat
- Headache
- Fever
- A fine, pinkish or red body rash with a sandpapery feel
- On darker skin the rash can be more difficult to detect visually but will have a sandpapery feel

If a child becomes unwell with these symptoms, parents/carers should contact their GP practice or contact NHS 111 (which operates a 24/7 service) to seek advice.

If a child has scarlet fever, they must stay at home until at least 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment to avoid spreading the infection to others.

Please see the attached sheets for further information.

Best wishes



Tom Beveridge
Headteacher