



Alderbrook School
& Sixth Form
AMBITION | BRAVERY | KINDNESS

Parents' Handbook

2025-2026

This handbook is designed to bring together key information that, in our experience, our parents/carers need to know about Alderbrook School's processes and procedures.

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We aim to provide a high-quality education where all students learn the essential knowledge and skills to enable academic success, future learning and employment. It is our intention to prepare all students to become responsible and engaged citizens, with the core aptitudes of ambition, bravery and kindness.

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MISSION STATEMENT

Our school is an organisation which offers every child, regardless of circumstance, the chance to thrive through high quality, inclusive education in a safe, compassionate and inspiring environment.

We do this through developing:

- **AMBITION**

Students are given the tools to prepare for their future and be the best that they can be. Staff are empowered to take opportunities for growth and development.

- **BRAVERY**

We promote bravery so that all members of our community take every opportunity to meet their potential.

- **KINDNESS**

We are inclusive, caring and kind to all member of the school community.

THE SCHOOL DAY

We would ask that students do not arrive in school before 8.10am unless wishing to purchase a breakfast or are involved in an official school activity - on the grounds of safety and supervision. In circumstances where a student arrives before 8.10am, they may wait in the playground or in the Cartwright Dining Hall.

Year 7/8/11		Year 9/10/12/13	
Period 1	08.30-09.40	Period 1	08.30-09.40
Period 2	09.40-10.40	Period 2	09.40-10.40
Break	10.40-11.00	Form(R1)	10.40-11.00
Form (R2)	11.00-11.20	Break	11.00-11.20
Period 3	11.20-12.20	Period 3	11.20-12.20
Lunch	12.20-12.55	Period 4 (4a)	12.20-13.20
Period 4 (4b)	12.55-13.55	Lunch	13.20-13.55
Period 5	13.55-15.00	Period 5	13.55-15.00

CANTEEN & PARENT PAY (CASHLESS SYSTEM)

Breakfast snacks are available between 8.00am and 8.20am in Cartwright Dining Hall. The canteen is also open at break and lunch times to sell drinks and snacks both hot and cold. After school, students can visit the canteen to purchase reduced-price items.

Free school meals are available to children of parents in receipt of certain benefits. Please apply via the portal – www.solihull.gov.uk/fsm where your request will be treated in confidence.

All other students are expected to be outside unless weather conditions are particularly wet. This is especially important during lunch as there are lessons at that time.

Students will be expected to remain on the school site throughout the lunch period.

A ParentPay activation letter will be sent to all new students upon enrolment. You will need to use the login details provided to access your ParentPay account. We are a cashless school; all transactions have to be done via ParentPay. If you have any queries regarding this, please email us using the Contact facility on our website.

TERM DATES

Early in the Autumn Term, a calendar of the main events of the school year will be available and published on the school website. This will include examinations, parents' meetings, music and drama productions, issuing of school reports and other occasions.

Autumn Term 2025

- **Term Starts:** Monday 1 September 2025
- **Half Term:** Monday 27 October 2025 to Friday 31 October 2025
- **Term Ends:** Friday 19 December 2025

Spring Term 2026

- **Term Starts:** Monday 5 January 2026
- **Half Term:** Monday 16 February 2026 to Friday 20 February 2026
- **Last day of term for students:** Friday 27 March 2026

Summer Term 2026

- **Term Starts:** Monday 13 April 2026
- **May Day:** Monday 4 May 2026 – school closed
- **Half Term:** Monday 25 May 2026 to Friday 29 May 2026
- **Term Ends:** Friday 17 July 2026

INSET Days

Monday 1 September 2025
Tuesday 2 September 2025
Monday 5 January 2026
Friday 27 March 2026
Friday 26 June 2026
Monday 20 July 2026

ATTENDANCE & LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUESTS

Ensuring regular school attendance is one of the most powerful ways you can prepare your child for success—both in school and in life. When you make school attendance a priority, you help your child get better grades, develop healthy life habits, avoid dangerous behaviour and have a better chance of achieving.

When students are absent for fewer days, their grades and reading skills often improve—even among those students who are struggling in school. Students who attend school regularly also feel more connected to their community, develop important social skills and friendships, and are significantly more likely to do well, setting them up for a strong future.

But when students are absent for an average of just two days of school per month—even when the absences are authorised— it can have a negative impact.



Requesting a leave of absence during term time

Please be aware it is no longer lawful for students to be granted holidays from school during school term time and therefore the Headteacher will not be able to authorise holiday requests. In very rare circumstances, the Headteacher can consider requests made by parents, at least four weeks prior to the date required, for a leave of absence from school for students due to **exceptional circumstances**, parents/carers should be made aware that holidays do not fall into the category of exceptional circumstances.

To request a leave of absence parents/carers must email put their request in writing. All requests should be addressed to the Headteacher and emailed to the school office. You will then receive a letter informing whether the request has been approved or not.

SICKNESS & ABSENCE

To report a student absence please email the school via: absence@alderbrook.solihull.sch.uk

Student absences must be reported on **each day** of an absence and confirmed by letter on their return to school. For the safety of your child, we will endeavour to text you if your child is absent from school and we have not heard from you.

If your child is late to school after 8.30am, they must sign in at Attendance before going to lesson.

Students who are late will sit a same day detention with their Pastoral Manager who will look at ways to support with punctuality.

APPOINTMENTS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Wherever possible, you should arrange appointments outside school hours. However, if your child is required to attend a medical appointment (routine dental appointments are not included) during the school day, you must write a note (which can be in the student's planner) along with the appointment letter/card. This should be sent with your child on the day of the appointment.

The note is then taken to Attendance just before leaving school and the student will be permitted to sign out on an official slip giving permission to leave the school site.

For appointments inside school hours, you must collect your child from main reception. We cannot allow students to leave the school site without a parent or designated adult.

Absence notes should be delivered by your child directly to Attendance on their return to school.

UNIFORM & EQUIPMENT

All students attending Alderbrook are required to wear uniform. Whilst fully appreciating the initial cost of school uniform, we feel that it solves several problems. From the school's point of view, it helps us set an example of high standards in dress, establish the identity of the school and pride in that identity. We do ask and expect parents to support us in the detail as well as the principle of school uniform. We do need parental support in maintaining high standards of appearance. Pre-loved uniform sales are held at various points throughout the year.

Uniform

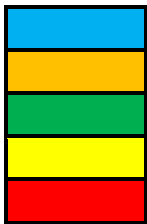
Our school uniform expectations are available on the school's website

- <https://www.alderbrookschool.co.uk/school-uniform/>

Midland School Wear, Monkhouse and Concept School Wear supply a full range of uniform in the approved style and colours. Replacement school ties can be purchased on Parent Pay and your child can collect one from the Admin Office in Malley.

Braids

Braids must be sewed on a student's blazer at the top of the blazer pocket just above the Alderbrook badge. Replacement braids will be available at a cost of £1.00. Year 7 students will be given braids at the start of the year free of charge.

<u>Year 2025-2026</u>		
Year 7	Blue	
Year 8	Orange	
Year 9	Green	
Year 10	Yellow	
Year 11	Red	

Timetables

At the beginning of the school year, students will be given their timetables which they are requested to handwrite into their planners. Any replacement timetables students can obtain from their Form Tutor at Form time.

Carrying Books and Equipment

It is most important for each child to have a suitable bag for their personal property, to carry books and to ensure that exercise books and other items are protected from the weather. All items of clothing and personal belongings must be marked with the owner's name.

Equipment List

Students are required to have at least 5 basic pieces of equipment, every day:

- Pens – black and green
- Ruler
- Pencil
- Planner
- Scientific Calculator

If your child is eligible for Pupil Premium, and you need support with equipment, please email the school office.



ALDERBROOK

UNIFORM EXPECTATIONS

At Alderbrook School all students are required to follow standard uniform guidelines.



Plain Black Shoes
No Trainers



Our ABK Blazer is
worn at all times



Ties are worn
at all times



No Hoodies
(incl ABK PE Hoodies)



No false eyelashes



No Trainers
(of any kind)



No rolled up
skirts



Shirts are to
be tucked in



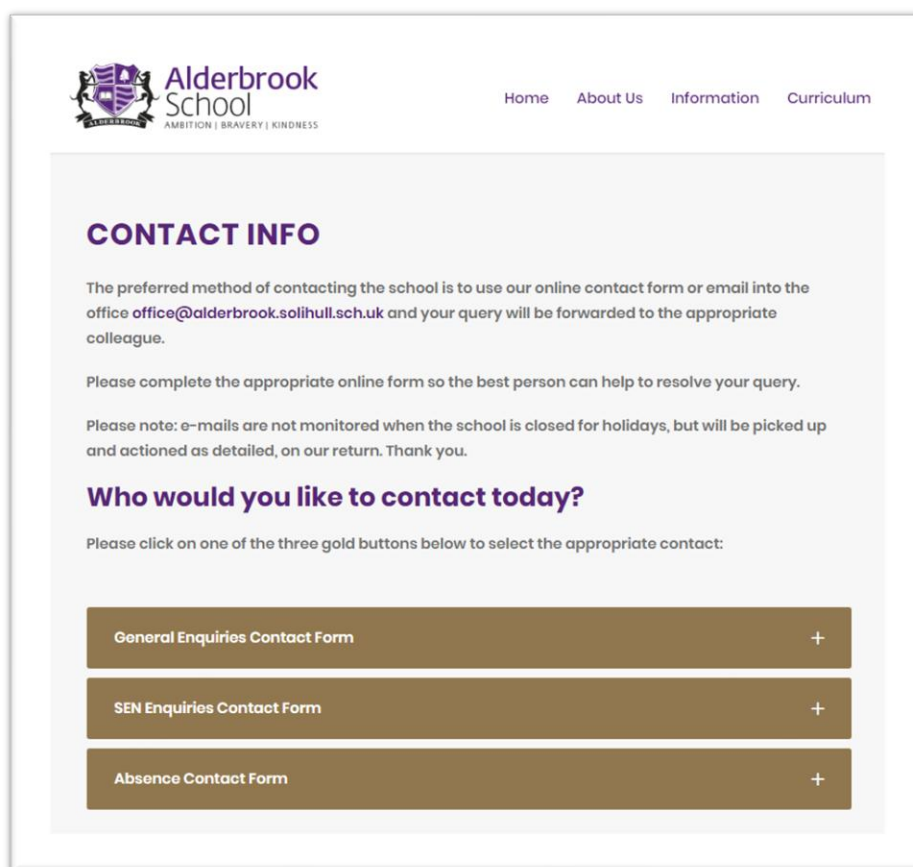
Socks are black &
below the knee

CONTACTING THE SCHOOL

Home and school must work together and support each other for the benefit of your child. We aim to educate our students in a spirit of friendship and co-operation and we have high expectations of our students, assuming that there will be good behaviour at all times - both in and out of school. We expect our Form Tutors and Pastoral Managers to notify parents if attitudes or standards of behaviour give cause for concern and we hope that parents will similarly inform us if they notice deterioration in these.

If you need to contact us, in the first instance, please email the school at office@alderbrook.solihull.sch.uk and your enquiry will be directed to the appropriate colleague in school.

Alternatively, you can use the Contact page on the school website.



The screenshot shows the Alderbrook School website's contact page. At the top left is the school's crest and logo, which includes the motto 'AMBITION | BRAVERY | KINDNESS'. To the right of the logo are navigation links: 'Home', 'About Us', 'Information', and 'Curriculum'. The main heading is 'CONTACT INFO'. Below this, a paragraph states that the preferred method of contact is via an online form or email to office@alderbrook.solihull.sch.uk, which will be forwarded to the appropriate colleague. Another paragraph asks users to complete the appropriate online form. A note mentions that e-mails are not monitored during school holidays but will be handled upon return. The section 'Who would you like to contact today?' follows, with a prompt to click one of three gold buttons: 'General Enquiries Contact Form', 'SEN Enquiries Contact Form', and 'Absence Contact Form'. Each button has a '+' icon on the right.

Please provide details of your enquiry in your message to school. All enquires will be forwarded to the appropriate member of staff.

MAIN RECEPTION & VISITING THE SCHOOL

Students are not normally permitted to use the school's main reception. This is an area for parents and visitors to the school. The school has electronic gates, and these will be closed from 8.30am until 3pm Monday to Friday.

If you have a prearranged appointment you must report to main reception, where you will be signed in and given a visitor's lanyard. You are not permitted to leave main reception unless you are with a member of staff.

Please **do not** come into school expecting to see any member of staff without an appointment. It may be difficult to find an appropriate member of staff to speak to, as they could be teaching, speaking to other parents or students, on duty, holding a meeting etc. and this is frustrating and a waste of your time.

*In the interest of safety, parents who bring their children to school by car are **not** allowed to drive onto the school premises, not to use the drive, nor to park opposite or adjacent to the school entrance at the beginning or the end of the day. There is very limited space within the school grounds and the school buses load and unload students on site. This is to protect our students and staff, and has serious Health and Safety implications if parents/carers do not adhere to this rule.*

Parents must not, due to Safeguarding and Health & Safety, wander around the school at any time. This protects everyone.

**Please be patient and respect our staff who are here to help you.
Any abuse of staff will not be tolerated.**

MOBILE PHONES & DEVICES

Electronic devices, mobile phones, iPods, tablets, iPads, MP3 players, Smart Watches, airpods and other expensive items should not be brought into school. The school cannot be held responsible for loss or damage. If these items are in school, they will be confiscated in the first instance and returned to the student at the end of the school day. For a second offence, parents/carers will have to collect on subsequent occasions.

Smart Phones are banned items at Alderbrook School at all times of the school day.

If a parent allows their child to bring a Smart Phone on site, because, for example, they need to be contactable for meeting / travel home at the end of the school day, this is entirely at the student's own risk and the device must be switched off and kept out of sight in the student's bag or locker where appropriate.

(From 25/26 all students in Year 7 and Year 8 will be directed to hand their phones in at the start of every school day).

If for any reason, a student is unable to store their phone safely out of sight, it is to be handed in immediately at the start of the school day at the KS3 / KS4 Pastoral Offices. If students need to contact parents in an emergency, this will be facilitated where appropriate by the Pastoral Team.

If a student is seen or heard on the school site at any time of day with a mobile phone, whether actively using or not, it will be confiscated immediately, with no argument.

The following sanctions will apply:

- 1st Offence – Phone confiscated. Student will have a 30-minute detention after school, parents notified
- 2nd Offence – Phone confiscated. Student will have a 60-minute detention after school. Parents will have to collect the phone from Pupil Reception at the end of the school day
- 3rd Offence - Phone confiscated. Student will have a day in our Reflection Room. Parents will have to collect the phone from Pupil Reception after having a meeting with a member of the Pastoral Team

Any student who refuses to hand over their mobile phone to a member of staff upon request, or initially refuses on more than one occasion, is at risk of suspension. They will also be directed to hand their phone in to the Pastoral Team for the remainder of the school year.

STUDENTS CONTACTING PARENTS/CARERS

As mobile phones are a banned item in school, students are **not** permitted to use their phones during the school day. Students should not be contacting their parents/carers directly and vice versa. It is important that if there is a concern that a student speaks to a member of staff, who will decide on the appropriate course of action. If a student uses their phone to contact parents during the school day, they will be sanctioned appropriately.

Please **do not** contact your child by mobile phone during the school day. All parents and students have been made aware of our expectations around ensuring Alderbrook School is a mobile free site.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND KEEPING STUDENTS SAFE ONLINE

The internet is a brilliant place to connect with others, to be creative and to discover new things. There are many things we can do to ensure that all young people are using the internet and technology safely, responsibly and positively. An emerging national concern is the inappropriate use of the internet by students. This problem has the potential to be harmful, and we ask your support in assisting us with this challenge.

We would like to share some useful information to support you to monitor your child online. It is important that you are keeping the dialogue with your child open. Here are some conversation starter ideas:

1. Ask your children to tell you about the sites they like to visit and what they enjoy doing online.
2. Ask them about how they stay safe online. What tips do they have for you, and where did they learn them? What is OK and not OK to share?
3. Ask them if they know where to go for help, where to find the safety advice, privacy settings and how to report or block on the services they use. More information on reporting websites can be found on www.childnet.com/resources/how-to-make-a-report
4. Encourage them to help. Perhaps they can show you how to do something better online or they might have a friend who would benefit from their help and support.

All occurrences and reported incidents of misuse of social media sites happen at home, after school hours when children have access to their mobile phones and other devices. With this in mind, and in response to concerned parents who have asked for advice regarding internet safety, we feel it important to point out to parents the risks of unregulated use of such sites, so you can make informed decisions as to whether to allow your child to have a profile or not and when and how to monitor their use, particularly at night time. We strongly advise a device free bedroom policy after bedtime to allow for uninterrupted sleep and rest.

There are many websites available to support parents to ensure that their child is safe online. These include:

- www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/
- www.thinkyouknow.co.uk/

- www.childnet.com/resources/
- www.gdst.net/parents/live-my-digital
- www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/
- www.net-aware.org.uk
- www.getsafeonline.org
- www.educateagainsthate.com/parents

We have seen an increase in negative student behaviour as a result of messages written using electronic technology, posted to popular social networking websites. Many sites contain instant messaging components that allow students to chat with other students and to post statements that ordinarily would not be said in a face-to-face conversation. Realistically, we cannot ban the use of the internet as it has many benefits, but it is essential to educate and monitor students when they are online or using electronic devices.

The internet watch foundation offer some excellent advice to parents about monitoring online usage. This can be found using the link <https://talk.iwf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/A-guide-for-parents-and-carers-v7.pdf>.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/CARERS

We communicate with our parents/carers via email through our MIS system, Bromcom.

Please ensure that abkbromcom@alderbrook.solihull.sch.uk is added to your safe senders list.

When your child starts at Alderbrook, you will receive an invitation to sign up for MCAS (My Child at School). If you sign up for MCAS, you will receive a push notification via the MCAS app, not an email. If you open the app on a mobile phone device and look towards the bottom right-hand corner, there is an envelope. Click on the envelope to view your messages. You will need to ensure you update your settings to allow MCAS notifications, or you will not receive a push notification when an email is sent from school. If you open the desktop version of MCAS, the envelope will be in the top right-hand corner.

If you sign up for MCAS, please ensure that no-reply@mychildatschool.com is added to your safe senders list

VIEWING YOUR CHILD'S RECORD ONLINE

Mychildatschool

Alderbrook School records have gone live!



This means you will be able to view information about your child who is currently studying at this school. This information will include attendance records, behaviour and achievement information, the current timetable and some relevant assessment data as well as the latest school report.

You will also be able to view your own personal details and check that it is correct. It is vital that we have up-to-date records for both you and your child and that you provide us with a minimum of two contact names and numbers for your child, should we need to contact you in an emergency.

Classcharts

Classcharts is an online system used by staff and students to track achievement and behaviour. Some homework is also added onto Classcharts.



The main purpose of using this system is to allow students to view and monitor their own behaviour and achievement record.

This programme has been created in response to requests from both students and parents/carers. Students wanted staff to put a stronger emphasis on rewarding positive behaviour and learning.

The is the system that you will receive detention notifications, please add **donotreply@classcharts.com** to your email contacts, as this will be the email address that we will be using to inform you of any detentions. If your email address has changed, please logon using the parent app or section of the Classcharts website.

Please note: for you to receive email notifications from Classcharts, you need to sign up using a passcode specific to your child's account. Please call 0121 704 2146 or email office@alderbrook.solihull.sch.uk if you require more assistance with this.

THE MARJORIE WILLIS EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION



MARJORIE WILLIS

Supporting Young People Through Education

— EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION —

Marjorie Willis is a registered charity that for 50 years has been supporting the students at Alderbrook by raising funds and awarding grants to individuals and to the school for support and equipment that is not provided from educational funding.

Examples of what have been paid for include stage equipment, arts and science equipment, new kilns, basketball nets, reading pens, sports kit and subsidising school trips. We have many applications pending for next year.

If all families would be willing to donate **as little as £1 a month** to the school through Marjorie Willis, it would make a significant difference to all of our students.

Please scan the QR Code or follow the link to our donation page.

<https://mwef.uk>



ALDERBROOK COMMUNITY



Alderbrook Community is our parent forum group that offer parents and carers the opportunity to develop closer links with the school community and to have a greater involvement in school activities.

The forum helps to:

1. Canvas the views of parents and carers on issues affecting students and school life
2. Promote partnership between staff, students, parents and carers by providing opportunities for working together
3. Give parents and carers the opportunity to volunteer in the school, for example, helping out back-stage at drama productions or running a coffee morning for new parents

The group meets approximately once a term, and occasional smaller group meetings may be required for specific reasons, for example providing fundraising support for the school or planning for helping out at events such as the Summer Show.

There is a website link on the main school webpage entitled 'Alderbrook Community' which will give you details about dates of meetings, feedback from meetings and requests for volunteers to help at upcoming events.

Please watch out for information about the first meeting of the Autumn Term, and we hope to see you there. If you have any questions, or would just like to get in touch, please e-mail alderbrookcommunity@alderbrook.solihull.sch.uk

FIRST AID

The school has a registered Nurse and several trained First Aiders who are able to treat minor injuries in school. If your child is taken ill at school and we feel they should not stay in school, we will contact you using the emergency contact numbers you have provided. It is important that we have at least two contacts for your child. **Students must not call/text home directly as the use of mobile phones in school is prohibited – your support in this matter is greatly appreciated.**

Any students who have been advised by their doctor that they require an EpiPen or Inhaler, **must** carry one with them at all times whilst both in school and on school trips. If your child is due to go on a trip out of school and they do not have the correct medication they will not be permitted to attend and will remain in school.

If your child has sickness and/or diarrhoea, they should stay at home and return 48 hours after their symptoms disappear.

Prescribed Medicines

If your child has been prescribed any medication you must complete a consent form, for us to administer the medication; this is available on our website. All medication must be kept in the medical room. Students must not carry and administer medication themselves (apart from inhalers and EpiPens).

If your child appears unwell in the morning but you have made the decision to send them into school, it would be helpful to notify us either via an email to the office or a note written in your child's planner. Should your child present to first aid, the team will monitor them throughout the day with a view of keeping them in school. We will contact you if we feel they are too unwell to be in school (this is usually in cases of sickness and/or diarrhoea and/or a high temperature). In these cases, all students who are unwell must be collected by a parent or designated adult.

Non-Prescribed Medications

If your child requires pain relief whilst in school, e.g., paracetamol or ibuprofen. Parents must complete a consent form, which will be sent via email and / or a call will be made by the School Nurse and the medication will be given by the Nurse's discretion. Paracetamol is administered by the School Nurse only. If you require "over the counter" medications to be stored for your child in school, then a consent form should be completed which is available from first aid or the school website. All medication must be in full blister packs and in the original box. Medication will be kept in the first aid room and may be given at lunchtime/break times.

All medications should be in date and it will be Parent's responsibility to ensure that medications are not expired and are suitably stocked. Any medications that expire will be handed back to parents or disposed of if necessary.

Medical Conditions

We ask all parents to let us know if their child has any medical condition which requires medication, special care or special consideration. We will keep safe any prescribed drugs or treatments which a child must have during the day and we will assist in administering any if necessary. First Aid also keep supplies of sanitary wear for all students to access.

Accidents

If an accident occurs or a child becomes unwell suddenly, our first responsibility is to provide immediate medical attention. If the student's condition is serious, an ambulance will be called and parents will be contacted to accompany their child to hospital. Students will be accompanied by a designated member of staff if not accompanied by a parent/designated adult/carer.

Please ensure that you notify the school as soon as you are aware of any changes to contact details to ensure we can contact you without delay in case of an emergency.

If your child sustains an injury outside of school and is given crutches to use or has been put in a plaster cast that may affect their mobility, please contact the First Aid department as we have to complete a full risk assessment to ensure your child is safe in school. Your child may be issued with a pass to allow them to leave lessons a few minutes early to avoid busy areas around school and reach their next lesson safely.

School Nurse Service

We work closely with the School Nurse Service and the Immunisation Team. The school organise and collaborate with the Immunisation Team for the arrangement of vaccinations which take place in school. Parents will be notified of these arrangements where applicable. The School Nurse Service arrange regular drop-in sessions in school and students are notified of these in advance.

Physical Education Lessons

If your child cannot participate in PE lessons for more than a period of 2 weeks due to a medical condition or accident, we will require medical evidence.

If they are unable to participate for a shorter period or are unable to participate unexpectedly, please ensure a written note is provided to the member of teaching staff prior to the start of the lesson, explaining the reasons and time period that they will not be able to participate for, this can be in your child's planner. When informing the PE department on the same day, only a written note should be provided, please **do not** rely on email or a phone message, as we cannot guarantee the PE department will receive your email or phone message before your child's timetabled PE lesson.

Those students not able to participate will still be expected to bring their PE kit to their lessons, unless agreed with the Head of PE prior to the lesson, as they may be able to participate in a different capacity (such as with leadership or coaching) and will still be in attendance to the lesson, which may be outside.

Earrings must be removed for health & safety reasons during PE lessons, regardless of when they were pierced. No other body piercings or jewellery are allowed as per the school uniform policy.

Footwear in regards to medical conditions/injuries

If footwear is required to be changed due to having a foot related injury or medical condition, a conversation with the school nurse will be required. If the circumstances do have the need for alternative footwear other than that what is in the uniform requirements, the footwear must be black in colour without white soles or labels present. Evidence will need to be

provided for any long-term condition or change of shoes different to the uniform policy and must be dated within the last 3 months.

THE CURRICULUM

Students at Alderbrook will usually be with us for five crucial years, passing through a very important stage of comprehensive education before continuing their education in our Sixth Form, elsewhere, or going on to training and/or employment.

Our aim is to provide an education for all students, regardless of their background or ability, the skills, aptitudes and understanding which will provide solid foundations for further and higher education and more importantly for life. Teaching develops students' knowledge, skills and understanding and takes place within a broad and balanced curriculum. This is accompanied by an effective social, moral, spiritual and cultural ethos and PSHCE curriculum.

KEY STAGE 3

All students study:

- Art
- Computing
- Dance
- Drama
- English
- Food Preparation and Nutrition
- French or Spanish
- Geography
- History
- Mathematics
- Music
- Physical Education
- Religious Education
- Science
- Technology
- Dance
- Drama

We also offer:

- Personal Social Health and Economics education as part of our Life Ready Days provision, assemblies and dedicated fortnightly lesson.

KEY STAGE 4

All students study:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Personal Social Health and Economics education
- Physical Education
- Religious Education
- Science (Combined Science or Biology, Chemistry and Physics)

In addition to the compulsory subject students choose their option choices, from the following subjects, subject choices do change year on year.

- Art
- Business
- Computer Science
- COPE
- D&T (Product Design, Textile & Graphics)
- Dance
- Drama
- ICT
- Food Preparation & Nutrition
- French or Spanish
- Geography
- Health & Social Care
- History
- Media Studies
- Music
- Photography
- Physical Education

We aim to provide bespoke curriculum for all students based on their needs.

SETS, GROUPS AND CLASSES

Alderbrook expects to take about 280 students across 12 form groups each September. Students will follow a structured programme during form time and take part in assemblies.

The way the curriculum is set out we will then allocate students to learning groups. The learning groups will be allocated in order to achieve a balance of ability, gender and interests. Most learning groups are mixed ability. A small number of children who require additional support in developing their literacy and numeracy skills may be withdrawn from some lessons for special targeted help and small group work or, whenever possible, are given extra support by a Student Support Assistant within the classroom. We do change learning groups each year, this is a great opportunity to meet new friends.

HOMEWORK

KS3

1. Whole School Homework

- Pupils will complete **at least** one piece of revision homework for **each subject** per every term.
- Homework tasks will be displayed on the homework sheet. This will be given to the students and uploaded onto the school's website and ClassCharts.
- Pupils will be awarded stars for their level of effort and presentation, allowing pupils to gain credits and awards.

2. Departmental Homework

In addition to the whole school homework, departments will set individual homework.

One homework per week	One homework per fortnight	Two homework activities per half term
English Maths Science	French / Spanish Geography History	IT Drama / Dance/ Music Art PE Technology Food RE

There will be no departmental homework for PSE.

3. Reading

- Any at home reading activities to be recorded in the planner (books, newspapers, magazines etc.).

KS4

Departments will set homework in line with the needs of the curriculum and the departmental policy. The frequency of homework will differ between subjects due to the different course requirements of each subject.

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT FACULTY

The Student Development Team supports teaching and learning throughout the school. We provide support for students who are experiencing barriers to accessing their education due to a specific learning difficulty, special educational need or disability. We are committed to ensuring that all our students have full access to a broad curriculum and are able to enjoy all the resources and opportunities available at this school.

Alderbrook has students with Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs) for a variety of differing needs. There are 6 additional places in the ARP for students who have autism as the primary need on their EHC plan. These places are allocated by the Local Authority not the school.

We liaise with primary schools in the summer term of Year 6 to share valuable information about students with SEND to enable a smooth transition to Year 7 before they begin their school life at Alderbrook. The Student Development Team work with class teachers and the pastoral team to ensure a clear picture of each individual's needs are looked at and information is shared. This information enables all teaching staff to ensure that appropriate reasonable adjustments are made to support every student.

The Student Development Team comprises a SENDCo, Deputy SENDCo (both who hold the NASENCO qualification) and a dedicated ARP (Additional Resource Provision) Manager together with a team of specialist teachers and support assistants. In addition to the expertise provided by the team in school, where necessary students are supported by external agencies including Educational Psychologists, the Specialist Inclusion Support Service (Autism, SEMH, CLD, Sensory Impairment team) and other external agencies such as SOLAR/CAMHS.

For many students, monitoring their progress is sufficient. However, where additional support is deemed appropriate, parents/carers will be contacted.

Parents who feel their child is struggling with their SEND needs in school can contact the individual class teachers for specific subject support and also the Student Development Team.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH, AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION

At Alderbrook School, we believe that a balanced PSHE curriculum makes a major contribution to a range of statutory responsibilities. PSHE is taught during form time fortnightly, assemblies and through the Life Ready Programme.

- Clear consideration of the personal, social, health and economic well-being of the young people within our community.
- An age appropriate and thorough provision for 'Relationships and Sex' education.
- Development of the spiritual, moral, social, cultural development of students.
- Preparation for opportunities, responsibilities and experiences in later life.

PSHE is a priority for Alderbrook and at the heart of the school's work. Time is provided for teachers to have training and prepare for the delivery of this broad and important area of learning.

The curriculum is divided into three broad areas:

- Health and Well-being (including both physical and mental health)
- Relationships
- Living in the Wider World (including citizenship and career's guidance)

The design of this programme is based on the needs of each year group and is designed, crafted and constantly reviewed, aiming to provide inputs at the most relevant time in their school lives. The programme is delivered across a series of days where the timetable is collapsed, allowing deeper and more flexible learning opportunities, including those provided by external visitors and carefully sourced key note speakers.

The collapsed days, our Life Ready Days, have been designed to offer in depth and broad learning experiences.

LIFE READY PROGRAMME

An important part of the curriculum is the opportunity to develop wider skills for life. Alderbrook is a lead school in a programme and co-designer of a programme called 'Life Ready', which provides opportunities for students to develop:

- Health and wellbeing
- An understanding of human values
- Employability skills
- Social, moral, spiritual and cultural learning
- Online safety

Whilst these aspects will be embedded in the curriculum, there are some key places within the school day where these aspects are a particular focus.

We have a programme of three Life Ready Days spread throughout the year, where students will not go to usual lessons, but will allow us to work in more depth with the students on important topics and issues.

PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS (RELIGIOUS EDUCATION)

The religious education at Alderbrook complies with the 1944 and 1988 Education Acts, and the specification detailed in the Solihull Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (2008). The school teaches the subject in a non-confessional way; giving dignity, respect and integrity to each of the world religions studied. The school respects the rights of parents who do not wish their child to attend Religious Education, however, in this circumstance, parents should note that they will be responsible for providing suitable learning resources for study during the time they would have been studying Religious Education. Parents are required to notify the school in writing, outlining the reasons, at the beginning of each academic year.

EXTERNAL LINKS

Links with the Primary Schools

A majority of our new students joining Alderbrook in Year 7 come from our feeder primary schools. In order that there is a close connection between Alderbrook and the catchment area schools, the Headteachers meet regularly at least once a term to discuss ideas, methods and content of syllabi. The senior members of staff at Alderbrook will be particularly involved in helping the students to make the transfer from primary to secondary. All students granted a place at Alderbrook are given the opportunity to take full part in induction procedures and to spend time here in advance, where possible.

Links with the Post 16 Sector

The vast majority of our students continue traditional education beyond the age of sixteen and many seek to gain an offer of a place within the Alderbrook Sixth Form to do so. The development of a Sixth Form community here since 2015 has been a very welcome addition, with Sixth Formers serving as excellent role models for young aspiring students. We have established good relationships with many Higher Education institutions and Degree Apprenticeship providers as well as with organisations such as UCAS. The different options available to our students in post-16 education and the world of work feature in our KS3, KS4 and KS5 programmes of study. A key feature of the CEIAG curriculum includes a careers convention, which is open to all KS4 and KS5 students as well as specialised, and independent careers guidance from a fully qualified adviser. All our Year 12 students undertake Work Experience, which gives students the chance to experience the world of work in general and provides a means of exploring possible career paths. Students gain from the skills they acquire from their time at work, all of which enhance their future applications to higher/alternative education, or employment.

Service to the Community

Taking part in helping those in need is an activity which we strongly support and encourage. The school believes that such activities benefit the helper just as much as the recipient. Many students who achieve Bronze, Silver or Gold Duke of Edinburgh during their time with us will complete community service in numerous ways. Alderbrook has a proud tradition of serving the community by its regular 'Wednesday Club' for senior citizens. Students also support a wide range of charities, local, national and international, each year.

Links with Business/Industry

Alderbrook has strong and growing links with a wide variety of local businesses, small and large. Business and industry personnel work with us in curriculum planning and delivery. We welcome all new contacts and are particularly keen to establish new links via parents who would be willing to volunteer on our Life Ready Days or as part of our Careers curriculum.

If you feel that your company or organisation could have an impact on the students' learning or that your company itself could benefit from contact with us, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please contact our school office.

THE STUDENT ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME

At Alderbrook we understand the vital role that the many enrichment activities that take place beyond classroom lessons, play in a child's social, emotional and educational development. We offer a wide range of opportunities that are supported by a number of wonderful and dedicated staff, without whom these activities could not run. Many staff comment on how much they also get from contributing to our enrichment groups.

We continually review our offer to ensure there is something for all student groups to access. We will be adding new activities this year, so please see the school website and communications for further details. (see link below to the Extra Curricular page of the school website)

Enrichment activities take place before school, during break and lunchtimes and after school. They include extracurricular clubs, day trips, residential trips, activity groups, arts performances, gaming and sport, to name just a few.

A list of extracurricular clubs is available on the school website with trips and other enrichment events included on the school calendar.

Extra Curricular: <https://www.alderbrookschool.co.uk/extra-curricular/>

School calendar: <https://www.alderbrookschool.co.uk/school-calendar/>

Educational trips and visits are part of the curriculum of the school; these include day visits and visits to theatres and concert halls in the evenings.

Opportunities for students during their time at Alderbrook include:

- Arts Council Arts Award
- Overseas trips to Poland, Iceland, Spain
- World Challenge - expeditions across the globe, including Belize, Borneo and Tanzania
- Duke of Edinburgh Award
- Combined Cadet Force
- International Committee

If you have any queries about enrichment activities at the school please contact Martin McLoughlin, Assistant Headteacher.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

There are a number of extra-curricular activities taking place after school, before school and at lunch times. Details of after-school activities can be found on the school website <https://www.alderbrookschool.co.uk/extra-curricular/>

After school clubs will be put on the school website and updated each half term. The clubs will run from 3-4.15pm. If a club is cancelled, your child will be told via word of mouth or via Assembly Notices. Please ensure that you have made arrangements for your child to return home safely following a club.

If your child has a sports fixture against another school, parents will receive an email stating which team they have been selected to play in and the location, times and arrangements for that particular event.

Parents can receive updates about our extra-curricular programme on X (Twitter)

<https://twitter.com/abkclubs>

PASTORAL SYSTEM

Your child will have a Pastoral Manager, Head of Year and Form Tutor who supports the behaviour of students within a year group. Your child's Pastoral Manager is a key contact for both your child and yourself in school and they can identify the most appropriate route and contact, for any queries you may have.

Pastoral Managers can be found in designated offices during the school day for students to access them if they need support. They are also visible on duty in unstructured times of the day, for instance break or lunch.

LOCKERS

If your child would like to use a locker for the next 5 years, you will be required to pay £10 via parent pay.

Any student wishing to have a locker must abide by the school's rules. Lockers are to be used to store school supplies and personal items necessary for use at school. Any student who fails to abide by this will forfeit the right to have a locker. Students are advised not to bring valuable items to school. The school will not be held responsible for any items that are lost or stolen.

If your child wishes to enquire about the availability of a locker, please ask them to speak with the Site Team at their office in Malley.

LOST PROPERTY

Lost property is a problem which can be reduced if every article is named including casual clothes brought into school.

Although every effort will be made to trace lost articles of clothing and personal property, the school cannot accept any liability for such items. With regard to high value electronic equipment such as mobile phones, iPods, air pods, speakers, cameras etc., the school rule is not to bring such items to school, as they are banned items. Parents/Carers are responsible for insuring their property and the school accepts no liability for items brought into school.

Our lost property is located by Pastoral. If your child has lost an item, please ask them to check lost property either before school, during break or lunch, or at the end of the day (not during lesson times).

BICYCLES

Please ensure that your child's bicycle is in a safe and roadworthy condition if they are travelling to and from school. We ask all students to mark their bikes and to padlock them securely in the designated area. Any bikes left on school premises must be locked away in the bike shed and are left at the owners' own risk.

For safety reasons, cyclists must wear helmets to and from school, and walk along the drives when entering or leaving school. If the school are made aware of a student cycling dangerously, parents will be informed that their child will not be allowed to cycle to and from school or have their bike on school site.

Please also ensure they follow the 'safer routes to school' cycle lanes.

STUDENTS' POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY

PREFECTS

There are approximately 100 prefects in Year 11. Students make an application via their form tutor and this is then assessed by their Pastoral Manager and Head of year. The final list is reviewed and approved by the Senior Leadership team. The prefects take up their duties for a 'probationary' period in June of their Year 10, following the departure of Year 11 on study leave. Providing this probationary period is completed successfully, they are confirmed as prefects in the following September and presented with their official 'prefect ties'.

The prefects are expected to lead by example in setting the right 'tone' of behaviour in school. They also have a minor disciplinary function and assist staff in maintaining good order and behaviour generally. They are always present at our special functions and evenings in order to greet parents and visitors, acting as guides and giving information.

ALDERBROOK PARLIAMENT

The Alderbrook Parliament has been created in order to enable students to participate more fully in school planning and organisation and to give all students a forum in which to air their views, seek information and give their advice. A member from each form is selected for the Year Parliament and meets with their Head of Year and Pastoral Manager to discuss their year's views. Then, two members of each year group is selected to represent their year's views in the Alderbrook Parliament chaired by Mr Hall, our Politics teacher. There is then a dedicated form time where the Headteacher and Senior leadership team respond to students' ideas to help the school progress.

The elected members of the Parliament take their duties very seriously and their deliberations are conducted according to proper committee procedure - which exemplifies the way in which, at Alderbrook, students feel respected and listened to, and respond in a responsible and mature manner.