



THE ARNEWOOD SCHOOL

Working Together - Shaping Tomorrow

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Dear Parents and Carers

It seems only a moment ago that we welcomed students back after the summer break, and yet October is already upon us. It has been wonderful to see, already, busy clubs and activities running after school and the fixture lists for various sporting teams already under way, as are the rehearsals for the Our House musical scheduled for January. You will find updates on various aspects of school life and school improvement below, including details of our forthcoming INSET days.

RAAC

You may have read about the impact on schools where reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) was used in the construction of their buildings. Thankfully, the survey completed prior to the summer holidays confirmed that we do not have any of this type of concrete at The Arnewood School.

Culture of Learning

Whilst Year 11 and 13 enjoyed some excellent results we continue to focus on improving our culture of learning this academic year. We have engaged a company called When The Adults Change (WTAC) to train all staff on the relational approach to managing behaviour in classrooms and around the wider school. If you are interested in this approach there is supporting parental literature here: <https://www.whentheparentschange.com/>. On November 8th we welcome a visiting speaker from WTAC and we are aiming to accommodate parents who wish to find out more about this approach. Dr Parkes will confirm the details of this in due course.

I held assemblies with most year groups to reinforce our three school rules; be **ready** to learn, be **respectful** and to be **safe**. The aim was to reinforce the importance of the smooth running of every lesson, every day, if students are to be inspired and supported to reach their potential.

Toilets

The Student Council have raised concerns about the level of damage / graffiti in toilets since we have returned. This is a concern that I share and so we will be acting in the short term to narrow down the perpetrators of this vandalism by restricting access to some toilets during lessons and changeover times, and implementing routine checks for damage by members of staff. Where we are able to identify an individual or a group of students, the family will be invoiced for the cost of the damage. We will communicate the details of this to students this week, and trial the approach for the remainder of this half term before reviewing the impact of it.

Mobile Phones

You may have seen in the media recently the push to ban mobile devices from schools (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/mobile-phone-use-to-be-banned-in-schools-in-england>). At Arnewood we have a 'See it, Hear it, Lose it' policy which prevents the use of mobile devices during the school day. We have seen some instances of unpleasant messaging between students outside of school hours and would ask that you keep a close eye on any social media accounts that your child is allowed access to.



Absence Requests

You may have seen in the national media that attendance is a growing concern in schools at the moment (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-66701748>). There is such a clear link between attendance at school and educational outcomes that I am only able to authorise absences in exceptional circumstances, which would not include family holidays. At The Arnewood School the majority of pupils track above the national average, but we would like to see all pupils attending school 95% of the time or more. If you would like support with your child's attendance, please contact their Head of Year in the first instance. Where a student has unauthorised absence of 5 school days or more in a 50 day period, we will report this to the Local Authority and you may be subject to a fine.

Appointments with Staff

If you wish to meet with a member of staff please ensure that you have a pre-booked appointment with them. It is not possible to accommodate spur of the moment meetings, so please contact our office staff at enquiries@arnewood.hants.sch.uk to confirm the appointment before you travel to school.

Travelling to and from School

Please remind your child(ren) that when travelling to and from school they should be respectful towards members of the public and their property. Residents have reported that some students have started to cut through private property on their way to school. I would be very grateful if you could reinforce the need for them to remain on public footpaths. In particular a few students walking on Old Milton Road are taking a shortcut through residential areas to reach school.

Parental Feedback / Communication

Please find the link to our annual survey below. The survey is aimed at all year groups, though there will be an additional survey for Year 7 parents focusing on transition / settling into The Arnewood School in due course. We really value your feedback and would welcome a high response rate, and would really appreciate you spending 5-10 minutes completing the survey **before Monday 16th October**. It is based on the questions used by Ofsted and is largely multiple choice in nature. **Please do not use the survey to alert us to any safeguarding / serious issues as the responses will not be looked at immediately.**

<https://forms.office.com/e/rMUJi2XKfd>

The area of focus for each of the Parent Forums this year will be derived from the results of the survey. As a reminder these are informal discussions with myself and/or members of the Senior Leadership Team on a particular area of school life e.g. uniform. Dates for your diary are as follows:

- 23rd November 2023
- 18th January 2024
- 7th March 2024
- 25th May 2024
- 20th June 2024

So far this term we have held two Parent Information Evenings which seem to have been well received by those who attended. These evenings are designed to highlight the importance of attendance to school, supporting your child's study skills at home, current safeguarding concerns that we are aware of in the local area and an update on year specific issues (such as work experience) from your child's Head of Year. The dates for the remaining year groups are as follows:

- Year 7 – Tuesday 5th December
- Year 8 – Thursday 22nd February (options evening)
- Year 9 – Tuesday 28th November



INSET Days / Early Closures

Finally, I thought it would be useful to confirm our INSET schedule for this year so that you are able to plan any necessary childcare. INSET for this academic years are as follows:

- Wednesday 8th November
- Thursday 28th March
- Wednesday 26th June

Thank you for your support through the start of this academic year, it is much appreciated.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anderson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A'.

Jamie Anderson
Headteacher