

Friday 19th July 2024

HEADS UPDATE



Armthorpe
Academy
ARMTHORPE ACADEMY



And that is the year done! I can't quite believe that my first year Armthorpe is nearly at an end. A year in which I feel the school has made significant steps towards restoring itself to being the amazing school this community deserves.

I won't deny there have been bumps along the way, but I am confident that the team of staff I am assembling, and more importantly the student 'buy in' to the changes we are making will see this school go from strength to strength.

I would like to take this opportunity to again thank you for your support and positivity over the last 12 months. It's been fantastic to see so many of you at parents' evenings and other school-based events.

Just last night seeing over 300 people attend our first celebration of excellence evening reminds me just how amazing our community is, and it only furthers encourages us to do more things like that. More opportunities to celebrate excellence, more opportunities to celebrate hard work, dedication and commitment, more opportunities to recognise those amazing students that attend school every day, that demonstrate our values, that work hard, that try hard and deserve to be the ambassadors of this school.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank my amazing staff, their commitment and dedication to your children is unwavering. We may have lost staff along the way but I know you'll share with me in thanking them for their commitment to Armthorpe, I also know you'll welcome with open arms new colleagues joining us, and we celebrate the impact some of these new staff are already having on your children.

On a final note, please do take the time to read through the other sections of this newsletter as key members of my team reflect on the year gone but also look to the year ahead. I again am unapologetic about having high ambition and high aspirations for this school, I will always endeavour to do this in an open honest and transparent manner and continue to pledge to treat all members of our community with kindness and empathy. I make no apologies for wanting the absolute best for my students and staff and look forward to working with you all again in making this happen in 2024/25.

Have an amazing summer, stay safe, and I look forward to seeing you all on enrolment day on the 3rd of September.

Regards
David Bisley
Headteacher

Awards and Rewards

We have had an extremely busy final few weeks in school. The crowning glory was our Awards Evening that took place last night – over 100 awards were given out and special mention goes to Paige (Y10) and Goodness (Y7) who won 6 and 4 awards respectively! In addition to this, Y7 and Y8 have taken part in Sports Day, all year groups accessed rewards activities on Wednesday both in school and out of school and over 500 students and staff took part in our first ever Consilium Run that took place last Friday. We cannot wait for next year to build on the successes of this year so we can reward and award even more students.

Changes to National Framework for Penalty Notices







With the introduction of the new national framework for penalty notices, the following changes will come into force from September and will be enforced at Armthorpe Academy.

- The National Threshold for Penalty Notice Fines for term time leave will be for 5 or more consecutive days.
- Penalty Notice Fines will now be issued to each parent, for each child that is absent. eg: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines
- Penalty Notice Fines will be considered when there have been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in any 10-week period.

WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR PENALTY NOTICES, THE FOLLOWING CHANGES WILL COME INTO FORCE FOR PENALTY NOTICE FINES AFTER 19TH AUGUST 2024

PENALTY NOTICE FINES FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ARE CHANGING.

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY.

 <p>PER PARENT, PER CHILD FINE Penalty Notice Fines will now be issued to each parent, for each child that is absent. FOR EXAMPLE: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines</p>	 <p>5 CONSECUTIVE DAYS OF TERM TIME LEAVE The National Threshold for Penalty Notice Fines for term time leave will be for 5 or more consecutive days.</p>	 <p>10 SESSIONS OF UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE IN A 10 WEEK PERIOD Penalty Notice Fines will be considered when there have been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in any 10 week period.</p>
 <p>FIRST OFFENCE The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance, the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child is paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 per child, per parent is paid within 21 days.</p>	 <p>SECOND OFFENCE (within 3 years) The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance, the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.</p>	 <p>THIRD OFFENCE AND ANY FURTHER OFFENCES (within 3 years) The third time an offence is committed for term time leave or irregular attendance, a Penalty Notice will not be issued. Instead, the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Magistrates' fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child. Cases found guilty in Magistrates Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.</p>

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE ABOVE ARE NATIONWIDE CHANGES AND NOT JUST OUR SCHOOL.

Awards and Rewards

Changes to the school week

As you will be aware from previous communications, schools have been instructed to increase the time students spend in school to 32.5 hrs p/week – this is now being made compulsory for all schools from September 2024. As a reminder, so we can fulfil this requirement the three main changes are:

- Adding 5 minute 'movement and equipment resolution' time onto the start of every day, this time can be used to sort out all uniform and equipment issues before the day starts.
- Adding 5 minute 'movement and equipment resolution' time onto the end of every day, this time can be used to return any borrowed uniform or equipment once the day has finished.
- An assembly once a week from 14:50 – 15:15 for all year groups, these take place on Mondays for KS3 and Thursday for KS4.

Period/Event	Timings
Free Breakfast Club ¹	08:00 – 08:25
Student Movement Time / Equipment Resolution	08:25 – 08:30
Form Time	08:30 - 09:00
Period 1	09:00- 10:00
Period 2	10:00 - 11:00
Break	11:00 - 11:15
Period 3	11:15- 12:15
Period 4 / Yr 9 & Yr 11 Lunch	12:15 - 12.45
Period 4 / Yr 7 Lunch	12:45 - 13:15
Period 4 / Yr 8 & Yr 10 Lunch	13:15 - 13:45
Period 5	13:45 - 14:45
Student Movement Time / Equipment Resolution	14:45 – 14:50
Assemblies - Monday (KS3) & Thursday (KS4)	14:50 – 15:15
Extra-Curricular ²	14:50 – 15:50

Uniform Reminder

As has been successfully introduced in July, if a student is choosing to wear a skirt, black tights must be worn at all times. Skirts should be between a student's knee and the mid-point of their thigh –any student attending school without tights and/or a skirt that doesn't meet these criteria will be placed into Supervised Learning until replacement items can be sourced. These new expectations are part of our continued drive to raise standards and increase the professional expectations of our student body, whilst at the same time maintaining their safety and dignity.

As ever, the Summer holiday is associated with the purchasing of new items of uniform. To avoid any complications in September, the expectation is always that black shoes are worn by all students – this does not mean trainers or include any item of footwear made by sportswear companies such as Nike and Adidas. Further details on all aspects of our uniform are available on the website.

Pupil Premium at Armthorpe Academy

Since my appointment in January, it was clear that we needed to improve and re-vitalise our offer to not only our Pupil Premium students, but also their families. The very 1st incentive that was launched, was the Pupil Premium Pledge, which is a document outlining our vision, responsibilities and aims with regards to our PP students and families. With the outgoing Year 11, we completed a substantial amount of the pledge, but the greatest success came from the Academic mentoring program, with each year 11 PP student assigned a mentor for academic advice and emotional support for the run up to and during the exam period. On leaving the school, 78% of these students stated that they found the mentoring programme "extremely helpful and supportive", therefore this programme has already begun for our current Year 10s, to ensure that they receive the very best support and advice throughout Year 11.

As we end this year, we are already looking ahead to the new academic year and how we can improve the experience our PP students and families have next year. We are in the process of finalising a 3-year university programme for a selection of our new year 9 students. This will see the group visit the University of Sheffield multiple times during the 3 years to experience all aspects of university life, as well as having tailored careers advice for their post-16 destinations.

As a school we are very proud of our standards of behaviour and although this initially led to an increase in suspensions to our PP students from September, we have since seen a decrease in our average weekly suspension rate to our PP students by nearly 66%. This is in large due to an increase in awareness and support from our staff for our PP students.

As part of our family inclusive offer, we will be hosting Pupil Premium parent forums, where parents can hear the schools' plans moving forward, get a feel for the experiences our students have, express any concerns and have them heard in person. The 1st of these will be taking part on Friday 27th September 9am to 10.30am and will be part of the MacMillian cancer support coffee morning programme. I would love to see as many of our PP parents there as possible so that pupil incentives and whole school offers can be explained and any issues going into the new academic year can be addressed. I would ask that parents scan the below QR code to inform us if you would like to attend, so that we can have enough cakes and coffee for all!



If you would like to discuss anything and would like any further information, please feel free to contact myself.

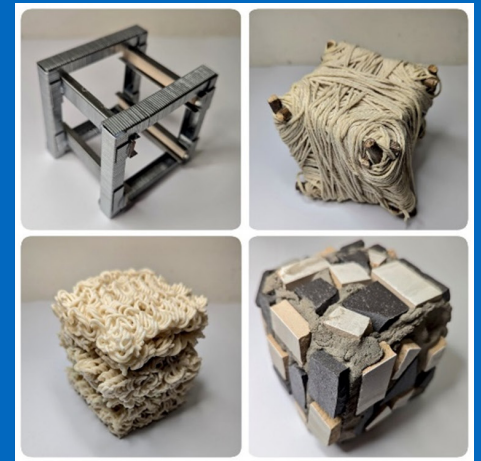
Craig Fox
Craig.fox@consilium-at.com

Creative Arts

This academic year has been a resounding success for our creative students at Armthorpe Academy, marked by remarkable achievements and creative milestones. These young people have demonstrated extraordinary talent and dedication in their Fine Art, Technology, Photography & Food Studies.

Our students have shown a profound understanding of diverse creative techniques and themes. The introduction of new two new specialist teachers in Technology and Food studies has further enriched their learning experience, providing valuable specialist knowledge and skills.

This year students have not only honed their technical skills but also fostered a strong sense of community and creative identity, setting a solid foundation for their future endeavours in all the creative subjects on offer.



We also ran our first GCSE Photography trip – A wonderful, jam-packed day in Sheffield City Centre where the photographers visited The Millennium Galleries, Winter Gardens, Peace Gardens, City Hall & Graves Gallery.



Performing Arts

This year has been a success for Performing Arts at Armthorpe Academy. We have some exceptionally talented students and the confidence to express and share their work is ever increasing. We have students writing their own plays, choreographing their own dance routines and we have introduced peripatetic music lessons for students to learn to play a new instrument.

In December, we held our annual Performing Arts Christmas Showcase. The evening was a collaboration across all year groups and celebrated dance, drama, music, singing and poetry. For many of our students this was their first time performing on stage to a live audience, the support from a full house in South Hall gave them a huge confidence boost and made the night a success.

Our students were then inspired, and we wanted to do something on a bigger scale. So, earlier this month we hired Doncaster Little Theatre and performed our first production of High School Musical Junior. Our students rehearsed and performed in a working theatre alongside industry technicians, an invaluable opportunity for our GCSE students to experience. The student's performance was outstanding! They carried themselves with professionalism and their effort, commitment and enthusiasm made the two performance nights truly wonderful. There was a mixture of students across year groups involved, this saw new friendships being made and our younger emerging performers being inspired by our talented, creative GCSE students. We are very proud of all the students who were involved and look forward seeing them perform again at future events.



Year 6 Transition

This year has also marked an exceptionally smooth and successful transition for Year 6 students into Armthorpe Academy. Our new Transition programme which included interactive tours, meet-and-greet sessions with teachers, and many team-building activities, has built confidence in our future Year 7 students.

Transition day taster sessions were tailored to bridge the gap between primary and secondary school and has equipped students with the necessary skills and knowledge, ensuring they feel well prepared for September.

The active involvement of parents and consistent communication between primary and secondary staff has also been pivotal, creating a supportive network that has made this transition year one of the most effective and positive to date.

The importance of Reading

The Armthorpe academy community have shown the power of mastery of the English language this year but, did you know the digital era has changed the way we read?

According to one study only 31% of the population reading at least one book a year.

So, why are people reading less? It may seem simplistic to say technology, but the availability of social media, streaming apps, and access to the Internet has provided a welcome distraction to many people who are overworked and overwhelmed. And there are plenty of digital resources for anyone to access news, stories, and other reading material that condense the content into bite-sized pieces.

Studies show that the average reading time online is approximately fifty-five seconds, which isn't nearly long enough to see the amazing brain benefits reading can provide. Did you know that reading, of any kind, for more than ten minutes per day can increase a person's ability to process and recall complex information over longer periods of time? This can also, statistically, improve a student's average GCSE outcome by a full grade across all subjects if applied consistently and in some cases two or even three grades. Ten minutes per day. So why not make this the summer of reading? Access free online resources such as Project Gutenberg (<https://www.gutenberg.org/>) where there are thousands of free eBooks across all subjects, subscribe to a newsletter and, perhaps most of all talk to each other about the things you are reading.



Sporting Achievements

Its been an amazing year on the Sports Fields as well for Armthorpe students, despite being one of the smallest schools of the 19 in Doncaster, we have absolutely smashed it when it comes to competitive sports!

Football:

Y8 Doncaster Boys League Champions

Y8 Doncaster Schools Cup Champions

Y9 Doncaster Boys League Champions

Y10 Doncaster Boys League Champions

Y11 Doncaster Schools Cup Runners Up



Other Sports

Doncaster Schools Table Tennis League Runners Up

U13 Doncaster Schools Futsal Champions

U12 Doncaster Girls Athletics Champions

U12 Doncaster Boys Athletics Runners Up

Consilium Olympics Champions

U13 Doncaster Schools Rounders Runners up

