



7<sup>th</sup> September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you and your family had an enjoyable summer. It has been a real pleasure to welcome our students back to Alsop this week and to see the school busy again.

I want to start by saying how impressed we have been with the way students have returned. There has been a positive atmosphere around the school, students have looked incredibly smart, and the vast majority have quickly settled back into the routines of school life. Our new Year 7 students have made a particularly strong start, and it has been lovely to see our older students helping them to find their feet.

We begin this year in a much stronger position than we did twelve months ago. Last year was an important one for Alsop. Attendance improved, persistent absence reduced and suspensions fell significantly. Most importantly, the school became calmer and more orderly, giving teachers more opportunity to teach and students more opportunity to learn. That progress belongs to the whole school community. I am grateful to our staff for their hard work, to parents for the support you have given us and, of course, to our students for responding so positively to the changes we have made.

### **A phone-free school**

One of the most significant developments this September has been the successful introduction of phone pouches for all students.

This builds on the 'never seen, never heard' approach we introduced last year. That was an important first step, but securing phones in pouches throughout the school day has allowed us to go further. The early signs are extremely positive. Students have responded maturely and sensibly, and the routine has very quickly become part of the normal school day. We are seeing fewer distractions and students are able to concentrate more fully on their learning.

Importantly, we are also beginning to remove the culture of constant notifications from the school day. Students no longer need to think about a message arriving, who may be contacting them, what is happening in a group chat or whether they are missing something on social media. For those hours in school, their attention can be where it should be – on their lessons, their friends, and the people around them.

At break and lunchtime, it has been pleasing to see students talking, socialising, and enjoying each other's company without phones becoming the focus. Thank you to parents for supporting us with this change. Your backing has helped us establish a clear and consistent expectation from the very beginning.

We now need to sustain this strong start. We would also ask parents to ensure that students bring an appropriately sized school bag each day. This needs to be large enough to safely carry their phone pouch, books, equipment, and anything else required for lessons. Being organised and looking after belongings may seem like small things, but they are important habits. Arriving each morning with the right bag, and equipment means students can start their day positively and focus on learning.



# Alsop High School

## MyChild at School App

We encourage all parents and carers to use the **MyChild at School (MCAS) App**.

The app allows you to:

- Monitor attendance and punctuality.
- View behaviour and achievement information.
- Receive important school communications.
- Access reports and key information.
- Keep your contact details up to date.

**IMPORTANT:** We are now using MCAS app for school payments, including lunch payments, trips, and other school-related payments, as we move away from ParentPay. Please do not add any further funds to ParentPay. Please add all funds to MCAS.

If you have not yet registered, we strongly encourage you to download and register for the MCAS App. Information can be found on our website [parents-carers/parent-app](https://www.alsophigh.org.uk/parents-carers/parent-app)

## Free School Meals – Important Changes from September 2026

From September 2026, the eligibility rules for Free School Meals have changed, meaning many more families may now be entitled to support. All children living in households receiving Universal Credit can now receive a free school meal, regardless of household earnings. This means that even if your child was not eligible previously, they may be eligible now. I would strongly encourage every family receiving Universal Credit to complete the eligibility check, even if you are unsure whether you qualify. It only takes a few minutes and could ensure your child receives a free, nutritious meal every school day. Importantly, completing the check can also help Alsop access additional funding, where applicable, which we use to provide further support and opportunities for our students. Please follow this link to use the **Free School Meals Eligibility Checker** <https://fsm.lgfl.net/app>. A few minutes completing the check could make a significant difference to both your child and our school community.

For further information please visit our website here [School Meals | Alsop High School](https://www.alsophigh.org.uk/school-meals)

## Building on our progress

Our job now is to build on the improvements we made last year.

You will hear us talk a lot this about being 1% better every day. This is deliberately simple. Success rarely comes from one big moment. It comes from attending every day, arriving on time, being properly equipped, working hard in lessons and making good choices consistently.

Our values of Ambition, Respect and Community remain at the heart of this. We want our students to be ambitious for themselves and their futures. We expect them to show respect to each other and to the adults who work with them. We also want them to understand what it means to belong to a community – looking after each other, celebrating the success of others and speaking up when something is not right.



# Alsop High School

This week I will be speaking to students in assemblies about the culture we choose at Alsop. In particular, we are reinforcing our expectations around prejudicial and discriminatory language and behaviour. Racist, homophobic, transphobic, sexist or misogynistic language, and sexual harassment, have no place in our school. Calling something 'banter' or saying it was intended as a joke does not make it acceptable if it leaves somebody feeling unsafe, humiliated or that they do not belong. We will challenge these behaviours when we see or hear them, respond appropriately and support students who report concerns. We are also encouraging our students to be upstanders rather than bystanders – not joining in, speaking up when it is safe to do so and reporting concerns to a trusted adult.

Alongside this, we will continue to hold high standards around attendance, punctuality, uniform, behaviour and readiness to learn. These expectations are not there for the sake of rules. They help us create a school where children feel safe, classrooms are calm and teachers can focus their energy on teaching well.

## **Open Evening – Wednesday 23rd September**

A reminder that our Open Evening will take place on **Wednesday 23rd September**.

To allow staff time to prepare the school and ensure that we are ready to welcome prospective students and their families, all students will finish school **at 2.00pm** on this day.

Open Evening is an important event for our school. It is an opportunity for families who are considering Alsop for their child to visit us, meet our students and staff and see what our school has to offer. We are very proud of the progress the school is making and look forward to sharing that with our visitors. Please make any necessary arrangements for your child to travel home at the earlier time.

## **Looking ahead**

There is a great deal to look forward to this year. We want students to enjoy coming to Alsop, take part in the wider life of the school and be proud of their achievements. We will continue to celebrate students who work hard, attend well, contribute to their community and demonstrate our values.

Thank you for the support you continue to give the school. When school and home work together and give young people the same clear messages, it makes a significant difference.

We have made good progress, but our ambitions for Alsop are much greater. I am excited about what we can achieve together this year.

I hope your child has a happy, successful and rewarding year at Alsop.

## **Achieving Excellence Together.**

Best wishes,

Mr P Mee

**Head of School**