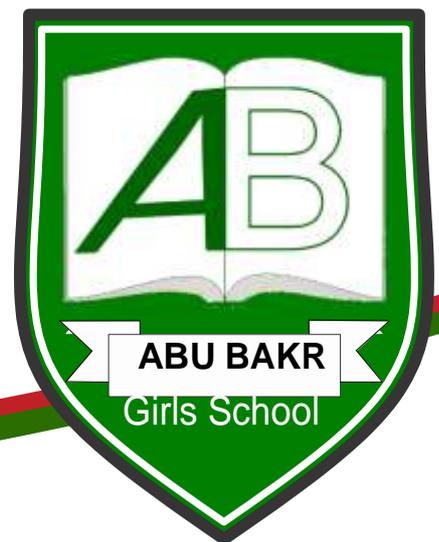


**HIGH EXPECTATIONS
FOR SEPTEMBER 2018**

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

(Please read and retain for reference)



Abu Bakr Girls School

An Abu Bakr Trust Academic Institution



*Message
from the*
Headteacher

Dear Parents

Assalamu Alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu

As I have often emphasised in previous newsletters, an effective and respectful partnership between home and school is vital to ensuring continual improvements in outcomes for our children. When parents and the school work in unison, consistently demanding the highest standards in all aspects of attendance, behaviour and academic achievement - then great learning and excellent outcomes will, almost inevitably, follow.

I would like to thank all the parent/carers who have given their unwavering support this year and I will be asking for your continued support as we set even higher expectations and aim for even higher standards over the next academic year.

Please take the time to read through this newsletter which outlines our key expectations for September 2018.

I hope you and your families have time to rest and recuperate over the coming weeks and that you have an enjoyable summer. I look forward to celebrating further success with you throughout the next academic year.

Wassalam, Peace Be with You

Moulana M. Ramzan (Headteacher) H.Saini (Associate Headteacher)

High Expectations For September 2018

The start of a new academic year is always a time to look forward - to aspire to new achievements, to set high personal targets, take advantage of new opportunities and challenges and to aim to be the best that we can be.

To ensure that Pupils, Parents and School can work together in harmony and create the most effective learning environment possible, we would like to share key information with you prior to the start of the new academic year.

New school start times

The new school start-time for girls at Abu Bakr Girls School will be **8.50 am** from September 2018 (instead of the current 8.30 am start time).

This important decision has been made for number of reasons which include alignment with school start times at the Boys site (8.30 am) and the Primary site (8.40 am).

The new times will also help to alleviate punctuality issues for some pupils, which in turn will ensure a more stable and productive emphasis on pastoral care during form time.

The School site will, however, be open from 8.15 am to accommodate those pupils who need to arrive early. It is expected that this additional time will be used for personal spiritual development; Quran, Zikr, silent reading and reflection. Please ensure your child arrives to school in wudu and with the materials for this quiet time.

Punctuality

Please ensure your daughter attends school punctually and is on-site, ready for registration, every morning **before** 8.50am. Anyone arriving after this time will need to sign the late book at the office explaining the reason.

If punctuality becomes a concern then Welfare will be in touch and a meeting will be arranged with parents. We take a very firm line with repeat lateness and we expect your full support us by ensuring your daughter arrives to school on time every morning.

Similarly, it is also parents' responsibility to ensure their daughter is picked up promptly after school. This also applies to collecting children after school trips, revision sessions, after-school detentions etc. There is limited supervision after school hours - so please do keep this in mind.

School Calendar dates

The new academic year will start for Year 7 students on Wednesday 5th September and for Year 8 -11 on Thursday 6th September at the new start time of 8.50 am.

The school calendar and school website will highlight key dates and events including term times, parent’s evenings, assessment dates etc.

It is vital that parents make themselves available for parents’ evenings so that we can update you on your daughter’s progress and share any issues that may have arisen.

Please do make prior arrangements so you are able to attend the appointments – you will be notified of dates and times well in advance of each event.

School Planners

School planners will be issued to ALL students from September. These planners will be used for pupils to record their daily homework and will include your daughter’s subject and homework timetable.

Please do check your daughter’s planner for any notes from form and subject teachers as well as monitoring that she is completing and submitting homework on due dates. The planners need to be signed weekly by parents. Form teachers will be checking that this is happening on a regular basis.

New House/Form system

Abu Bakr Girls School is implementing a new whole school **house system** from September. Pupils will be placed in one of three Mixed-Ability groups which will also serve as their form groups. The houses will primarily be used for form-time activities but will also enable teamwork for school fundraisers, competition, sports events etc.

Your daughter will be placed in 1 of 3 houses named after 3 great masjids;

HOUSE	Form Groups				
Al Harram	7H	8H	9H	10H	11H
Al Aqsa	7A	8A	9A	10A	11A
Al Nabawi	7N	8N	9N	10N	11N

Pupils will be allocated to Houses (and hence Form groups) on their first day back to school. Form teachers will also lead the houses to ensure that teamwork and healthy competition is maintained. Each house will have a House representative/captain who will be selected to lead and manage their house in extracurricular events and activities.

Pupil Leadership Team (PLT)

We will be providing a range of opportunities to allow our students to participate fully in the wider life of the school, and prepare for life beyond school, by developing, practicing and enhancing their leadership skills as members of the Pupil Leadership Team.

The roles of School Prefect, School Ambassador, House Representative, House Captain, School Councillor and Mediator will empower students to work in partnership with key members of staff towards shared goals.

Students will develop, and demonstrate leadership skills through a variety of inspiring, challenging and valued projects and responsibilities which will have a positive impact for both students and staff at Abu Bakr Girls School.

The school will provide formal and informal learning opportunities to develop a wide range of students as leaders. Student Leaders will be the school's role models. They will be students who work hard to reach our school's expectation of good behaviour, maintain at least 95% attendance, constant punctuality and who are always in full and correct school uniform.

All Students Leader will be required to wear their Student Leadership identification (either a lanyard or badge) at all times.

Attendance

Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late.

There is also a strong link between the attendance of a student at school and the level of attainment when the student leaves school. Thus, children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Parents have a duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at school and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored on a regular basis using individual, class and whole school records. Where pupils are identified as having a pattern of attendance that is a cause for concern or where their attendance & punctuality falls below 95%, parents can expect contact from the welfare officer with a view to resolving any issues as soon as possible.

School attendance and punctuality procedures may include: Phone calls and letters home, parents meetings, home visits and the signing of an attendance/punctuality contract.

In the case of pupils whose attendance falls below 90% without a valid reason, and then attendance remains inconsistent, the school will have no choice but to consider cancellation of admission followed by removal from the school roll.

Attendance Data

Above 98%	Excellent Attendance
95% - 98%	Good (Minimum Expected) Attendance
91%-94%	Below Minimum Expected attendance
Below 90%	Cause for Concern

- In event of absence, parents must telephone each day their child is off on school number 01922 612361 using ext. 4 - clearly stating the pupil's name, form and nature of absence
- Attendance officer will make daily calls if a child is marked absent without valid reason. It is therefore important to notify school if you change your contact numbers or need to update your emergency contact list
- On return back after an absence please give confirmation in writing of the reason for the absence to the form teacher. The school planner has a section which can be used for this purpose.
- A pupil's absence from school will be considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is received

The schools attendance and punctuality policy outlines the schools guidelines in full.

Extended (holiday) leave

Visits to spiritual sites and country of family origin can be positive personal and educational experiences. However it is clear that an extended absence from school during term time can have a significantly negative impact on attainment. **The law states that families do not have the right to take children out of school during term time.** Our schools extended policy clearly outlines the consequences if a child is taken out of school for a planned or emergency leave without prior authorisation.

If you feel you have a valid reason to take your child out of school, for more than one day, then the following procedures MUST be followed;

- A Holiday request form must be completed by parents 4 weeks or earlier prior to leave.
- The holiday or flight must not be booked until written authorisation has been given by the head teacher or welfare officer
- During an extreme emergency requiring immediate travel - an adult representative must contact the school as soon as possible and complete a holiday request form on their behalf. A copy of tickets will be required on return.
- Where the school is not informed of an extended/emergency leave, then the child is liable to be removed from school roll and the local authority informed.
- Should a pupil not return to school after the period authorised without a valid reason, she is liable to be removed from school roll. Valid reasons need to be supported by, e.g., a genuine medical note from a GP and/or official documentation outlining flight details etc
- Where there are a significant number of days taken out of school which are deemed unauthorised, parents will be given the following two options:

Option 1: Parents choose to end admission at the school; in which case, the child is removed from school roll and the local authority informed.

Option 2: Unauthorised Leave charges are applied - ranging from £100 to a requirement to pay full school fees prior to discount.

It is important for parents to read and understand the extended leave policy fully so they can understand how it will affect them and their child.

Medical Matters

Our aim is to ensure that all children with medical conditions, short or long term, are properly supported in school so that they can play a full and active role in school life. Parents need to make an appointment with Welfare officer and discuss their daughter's medical issues so a care plan can be devised.

If a child has any medical needs or requirement then it is the parent's duty to let the school know in advance so arrangements can be made where necessary.

We advise parents, where possible, to make all medical appointments out of school times. A copy of the appointment letter will be required to authorise leave from school when unavoidable, and parents/guardian will need to sign the child out of school. Please ensure that authorisation is obtained prior to the appointment day.

In exceptional circumstances, where your daughter needs to take prescribed medication within school-time, this must be arranged and authorised in advance.

If your daughter is ill or suffers an accident whilst at school, the matter will be dealt with by a suitably qualified first aider. If there are any concerns or your daughter needs to be collected from school, every effort will be made to contact you. Please ensure emergency contacts provided are up to date

Pick-up and Drop-off: Road Safety

I would like to take this opportunity to emphasise to parents, guardians and those involved in van/car share schemes, of the importance of road safety, care, courtesy and consideration when transporting pupils to and from Abu Bakr Girls School.

Sadly we have received numerous complaints from local residents and other road users regarding a perceived lack of care shown by drivers when picking up and dropping off outside the school.

Please observe the relevant traffic regulations and park appropriately on Scarborough Road and in the surrounding residential area. We ask parents to drive slowly, be mindful of people walking near the school grounds and show regard to other road users and residents.

We have a duty of care for our neighbours and under no circumstances should parents;

- Block resident's driveways or mount the kerb
- Park at a bus stop or obstruct the passing of a bus
- Park or stop on restricted areas - marked yellow lines outside the school gates
- Stop in the middle of the road to allow pupils to disembark from a vehicle
- Perform road manoeuvres which may obstruct traffic flow

Please discuss road safety matters with your daughter and arrange an appropriate and safe spot where your child can be picked up from regularly. Although not a requirement, pupils do have the option of waiting inside the school gates until they are picked up.

If you are running significantly late when picking up your, you should inform the office as soon as possible. However there is only limited supervision available after school. Pupils who are consistently dropped-off and picked-up late will be contacted by the Schools Welfare officer.

As a school we are currently investigating ways to make the drop-off and pick-up process safer and more effective for both parents and local residents. In the meantime, please remember the road environment around the school can be complex and hazardous – so please show Care, Courtesy and Consideration when dropping-off and picking-up!

Uniform

School Uniform

The wearing of correct school uniform is compulsory and non-negotiable because it:

- promotes a sense of pride in the school;
- engenders a sense of community and belonging towards the school;
- identifies the children with the school;
- prevents children from coming to school in fashion clothes that could be distracting in class;
- allows children to feel equal to their peers in terms of appearance;
-

From September, if pupils are not in the correct uniform (including footwear), they will be sent home to change - or parents will be expected to bring in the correct uniform items for the pupil to change into!

Head scarf:

PLEASE NOTE: all girls must arrive to school in a **plain black headscarf on the first day**. This black scarf will be the scarf that will be worn by pupils for all PE lessons and also as their main headscarf until the new green scarves (see below), become available for purchase.

The under hat/cap will also be black in colour. It is advised that every pupil wears the hijab hat under their scarf so it secures the hijab firmly and hair is not exposed. Suitable hijab hats will be sold to pupils at £3 if they fail to cover hair as advised.

The existing white scarf is **no longer part of school uniform** and Girls at Abu Bakr Girls School will be required to wear a **new Green headscarf (hijab)** as part of their uniform (replacing the previous white scarf). The new green colour will play an integral part in enhancing the image and status of the school and its students in the wider community. The new headscarf is expected to be available to purchase from school early in the new term. The cost of the scarf will be £5.

We also must emphasise the correct etiquette for wearing a headscarf as a hijab. The Headscarf should not contain numerous layers or folds. Girls are also precluded from wearing high buns, pony tails and additional scarves which all emphasise a 'hump' style

School robe: Pupils must wear the correct School robe with school badge which is **available from school** at £17. Your daughter's robe must be **full length** - otherwise it will have to be replaced. The robe is available in all sizes. Robes bought from any other providers are unacceptable as school uniform.

Trousers & Socks: following expectations of appropriate Islamic attire, girl's leg should be fully covered. Pupils must therefore wear black loose fitting school trousers. Black leggings or black PE jogging bottoms can only be worn if they are not visible beneath the school robe.

Furthermore Black mid-calf length socks are now compulsory for all girls. Ankle socks or short socks are not allowed and any pupil whose legs and feet are exposed because of this will be expected to purchase the correct socks from school for £2.00 a pair.

Shoes: Pupils are expected to wear black sensible school shoes which are suitable for all weather conditions. Pupils are NOT allowed under any circumstances to wear pumps, plimsolls or trainers to school – even if they have if they have PE that day. Parents - please check before purchasing your daughters footwear that they are classed as ‘smart school shoes’. If pupils are seen to be wearing inappropriate footwear, parents will be contacted and asked to bring the correct shoes to school. Until the correct shoes are worn the pupil concerned may be kept in isolation.

Black school Blazers: We are pleased to announce the Abu Bakr Girls School will be introducing a smart new School Blazer from next year. These blazers will display the school badge and create a unique academic identity for our students. The procedure for sizing and ordering the new blazers has already commenced and the new blazers will be available to purchase from school by the end of autumn term. The cost will be approximately £30 (the same as the blazers for the Boys school). More details will follow soon. Year 11s will have the option of either purchasing the smart new school blazer or wearing a plain black blazer (readily available at large retail shops such as ASDA George, Matalan, etc.)

The new black school blazer will replace the current black cardigans worn by girls. Until the blazers are fully in place, cardigans may be worn- but only if they are plain, black, loose fitted, with no designs and no longer than mid length.

We do NOT allow pupils to wear hoodies or unacceptable zip tops. Such items will be confiscated and retained until the end of term or longer.

Coats & Bags: Permissible coat colours remain the same as before: black, dark grey or navy blue - plain with no prints or logos. When purchasing a school coat please bear in mind that it will need to fit when worn over the school blazer, which will be a compulsory requirement when they become available later in the term. We advise that the school-bag purchased for students should be plain, waterproof and big enough to comfortably hold all items required for the school day

PE Uniform

PE is a compulsory subject for all students. We expect all pupils to actively take part in weekly PE lessons and wear correct PE kit for all lessons. Sanctions will apply to repeat offenders who do not bring their PE kit, wear incorrect PE kit or continually miss PE lessons without a valid reason.

The correct PE uniform is as follows:

Sky blue, full sleeve polo shirt available to purchase from Clemmys

Black Tracksuit bottoms- loose fitting

Black scarf

Black Trainers

Pupils are expected to come to school wearing their PE kit under their robes on the days they have PE and change back to full School Uniform at the end of the lesson. Trainers must only be worn during PE lesson and not during school day. Sanctions will apply to those caught wearing trainers other than during PE lessons. In addition, if pupils repeatedly fail to comply with the correct PE uniform, they will be required to purchase the missing PE uniform item from school and parents will be invoiced for the cost.

Cosmetics - Make up & Jewellery

As part of our uniform policy we make it very clear that pupils are NOT permitted to wear any form of makeup or jewellery at school. This also applies during out of school activities such as school trips and visits and non-uniform days (when we still expect pupils to wear appropriate attire which is modest and complies with the schools Islamic dress code)

Prohibited make up includes: eyeliners, mascara, brow pencils, lipstick, blusher, nail varnish and nail extensions. Coloured contact lenses are a cosmetic which is not permitted whether it is a prescription or not. Pupils must ensure that prescribed contact lenses are clear.

Prohibited Jewellery includes any visible item such as ear rings, rings, bracelets, pendants, anklets, nose studs and nose rings. Sanctions will be applied to pupils who fail to comply with these restrictions including removal and confiscation of items and detentions.

School equipment

It is important that pupils come to school fully prepared with all the correct stationary and equipment needed to support their learning in each lesson. Specialised equipment requirements will be made clear to the pupils by their subject teacher and may include: materials and ingredients for DT, equipment for PE, calculators and drawing instruments for Mathematics, in addition to daily items such as exercise books, homework, planners, pencil cases (full stationary), USB etc. Ensuring your daughter is checking her timetable, planner and school calendar in advance can help in developing good habits and organisational skills which will benefit her in her lessons and further academic studies.

Mobile phones

The following rules apply:

- Pupils are not allowed to bring mobile phone to schools unless a valid reason is provided (e.g. pupil travelling from a long distance) and prior authorisation is obtained, by parents, from Head teacher.

- Pupils who are authorised to bring a mobile phone to school must hand it into the office as soon as they arrive onto school site and collect it at the end of the school day.
- Pupils found carrying or using mobile phones or any similar prohibited technical equipment on school site will be subject to immediate confiscation of the device (for a minimum period 6 weeks) AND a minimum of a one-day suspension. If an agreement to bring in their mobile phone to school exists – it will immediately become void.
- Authorised mobile phones should be standard and not overly expensive. The school will NOT take responsibility for any lost or damaged mobile phones.

The safety and wellbeing of our pupils and staff is paramount. Therefore we may carry out random checks to ensure that the mobile phone policy is fully adhered to by all pupils. Parents with a valid reason requiring their daughter to bring a mobile phone to school should contact the school office for an authorisation slip from the Head teacher.

Social media issues

We live in an age that is hugely influenced by digital activity. As a school we promote positive digital wellbeing and pupils are advised on how this can be achieved through social media; including extolling its virtues, such as: raising awareness of current affairs, campaigns and issues, celebrating differences and giving people a voice etc.

However, we are all aware of the serious negative consequences of social media when used inappropriately. Hence we must all play our part in educating pupils about the risks of careless online activity. As a school we will never ask pupils to create any social media account or share any personal data online. Social media websites are banned on school computers so pupils cannot access them from school. Although internet safety and online dangers are taught in school, it is a parent's responsibility to ensure that their daughters are using the internet positively and safely at home - especially now that internet access is readily available to pupils with mobile phones/tablets etc.

Our schools behaviour policy highlights the effects of cyber bullying and pupils are also advised that cyber bullying is an offence and perpetrators can be reported to the police. Please discuss with your daughter how to interact safely with others to make sure they develop healthy and positive relationships, whether it is online or in person.

School Behaviour Policy & Procedures

Our school's recent Ofsted report (Jan 2017) recognised and praised the **Outstanding** Behaviour and conduct from Abu Bakr pupils. As a school we place great importance on a disciplined approach to life in school and we take pride in ensuring that this behaviour is maintained in highest form from the onset. Positive contributions to the school are not only recognised and rewarded as individuals but the whole school celebrates pupils' successes and achievements through a house-based reward programme.

Pupils are expected to respect and uphold the faith, values and ethos of the school in their behaviour and conduct in and around school. As a school we work hard to establish a positive learning environment where pupils feel safe, happy and can work to their full potential; hence we have a zero tolerance approach to behaviour which negatively affects the learning and wellbeing of members of the school community.

Where behaviour falls below an acceptable standard, our school behaviour policy clearly outlines the **sanctions** that will be applied for behaviour that breaches the school Code of Conduct.

Sanctions and consequences will be dependent on behaviour/ incident but may include; reflective writing, case studies, internal isolation, lunch and home time detentions, phone calls home, meeting with pupil- parents-head teacher, school community service, signing a behaviour contract, being put on behaviour report, fixed suspension, exclusion and admission review/cancellation. The incidents and actions that could lead to disciplinary sanctions are made clear to all pupils.

Our staff training programme includes professional development regarding positive behaviour management strategies which lead to excellent outcomes in terms of constructive staff-pupil and pupil-pupil relationships. Parents can play an important role as co-educators of their children by continually emphasising to children the values and virtues of good character; respect and kindness towards peers, teachers and staff so that pupil discipline continues to be maintained at an exceptional level.

Optimal education is achieved when parents and school work in harmony and minimise conflict. We therefore request parents and guardians to act as role-models for their daughters by treating our staff, pupils and visitors with the same courtesy and respect we would expect from our children. Please be mindful when communicating with staff at the school that rudeness and aggressive behaviour to any member of staff is unacceptable. If you have unresolved issues or complaints then a meeting with senior leaders can be arranged.

The school's behaviour policy now incorporates an additional sanction of an 'After school Detention' with a pupil being detained for a maximum of 50 minutes after school. Parents will be notified via phone call or letter stating the date, duration and reason for such a detention. A minimum notice of 24 hours will be given to parents so arrangements can be made for their child to be picked up promptly following the end of the detention period. Again we need emphasise the importance of parent's full support in ensuring behaviour and discipline at Abu Bakr Girls School continues to be exemplary in all respects. Following up on the small number of pupils who do not comply wastes valuable time and now requires the school to take a much firmer approach.

The highest standards are achieved with the full co-operation of all stakeholders.

The Home-School Partnership agreement, which is signed annually by students, parents and the school as part of the re-admission process, clearly stipulates the high expectations required of all partners to ensure our school continues to function as an efficient and effective learning institution which enables pupils to reach their potential in all areas of academic endeavour.

Pupils who persistently refuse to abide by the expectations of the school behaviour policy, code of conduct and home-school agreement will have their admission reviewed.

Anti-Chewing Policy

Chewing gum is **completely banned** on school premises. Pupils caught in possession of gum or caught actively chewing gum will be subject to severe sanctions which may include detention(s) and/or an extended period of "community service" at lunch and break-times –to give them an opportunity to recognise, understand and alleviate the negative impact of gum and its disposal to the school environment.

In Conclusion.....

Having established an excellent reputation as one of the highest achieving secondary schools in Walsall, Abu Bakr Girls School is now aiming to be recognised as a national centre of excellence in all aspects of academic endeavour. In addition to maintaining a relentless drive to ensure outstanding GCSE outcomes, we will provide opportunities for pupils to develop the attributes and characteristics of lifetime learners and strong leaders, giving them the skills to flourish and achieve success as confident, independent, highly articulate and responsible members of an increasingly global society and workforce.

Thank you for your continuing support.

JazakAllahu khairan katheeran