

Headteacher's Bulletin

10th December 2021

School has been very busy in the lead up to the end of term and everyone is looking forward to next week's Christmas celebrations, even if they are slightly more 'low key' than originally planned.



The roof is almost on the former English Centre (despite the weather!) and internal refurbishment will commence in the New Year. We will have a new Learning Resource Centre, staffroom, offices and classrooms.

Main Reception will also start being revamped as we break up. From March, Reception will be smaller with a large Admin and Finance office incorporated and a new glass frontage for the school. A temporary main entrance will therefore be in operation for all staff and visitors in the New Year and this will be situated at the **Sixth Form Entrance**. Students will continue to enter school via the student walkway (KS3/4) and via Sixth Form Entrance (KS5).

Covid Update

The Omicron variant has unfortunately meant that face masks should be worn in all indoor communal areas and on buses. Students should bring their own masks to school, preferably with a spare one in a small plastic bag. The wearing of face masks will continue when we return to school in January. For confirmed cases of Omicron, Track and Trace will be identifying close contacts. Please see our updated risk assessment for further information with regards to this as the stay at home guidance is different to other Covid cases:

www.altrinchamcollege.com/information/covid19

Mrs Careswell will be distributing LFD testing kits in the lunch hall every day next week. Please ensure your child collects theirs and brings home enough to see them right up to the return to school.

We will no longer be holding a whole school assembly on the last day of term but Form Tutors will be celebrating in class with their forms on the last day.

Please can I remind you that due to the need for testing on return to school, students will be phased back as follows:

- ✓ **Sixth Form students test day before return to school and if negative, start school as normal on Tuesday 4th Jan**
- ✓ **Tuesday 4th Jan: Y10 and 11 in school for testing and normal lessons**
- ✓ **Wednesday 5th Jan: Y8 and 9 come in for testing and normal timetable**
- ✓ **Thursday 6th Jan: Y7 come in for testing and normal timetable**

Therefore, all students will be back in school by Thursday 6th January.

Hot Chocolate Friday with the Headteacher



Students across all year groups who achieved the most Class Charts praise points were selected to attend Hot Chocolate Friday with the Headteacher last week. This is one of the rewards which students chose at the start of the year and, needless to say, the squirty cream, marshmallows and chocolate bars had run out by the end of our get-together!

I chat with the students about what they studying and what they are enjoying at school, they chat about their outside interests and (usually) holiday plans! We have a raffle and one lucky winner receives a special HCF mug to take home!



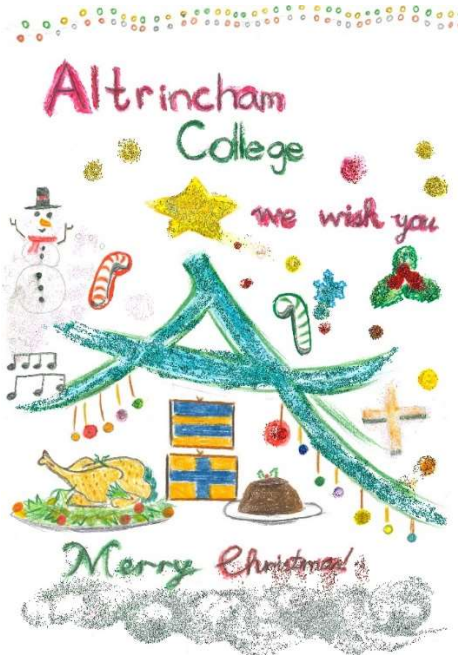
Christmas Card Competition (£30 voucher for Amazon)

The competition saw some really wonderful entries from students of all ages and it was a difficult job choosing the winner to be printed for our AC Christmas Card this year....but we managed eventually and the winner is.....Mac F in 7.2!! Many congratulations Mac- you win a £30 Amazon voucher! Happy spending!!

Our two runners-up each receive a £10 Amazon voucher and they are Felicity C in 8.4 and Ruby C in Year 11. Well done to them and a huge thank you to everyone who entered!



Here is the winning entry!



Department in Focus: Maths

“Mathematics is the poetry of logical ideas.” — Einstein

As Maths teachers we obviously love the world of maths! We love the beauty of Fibonacci in nature, the human body and even music,* and the way it allows us to think through problems and process our thoughts logically. Most importantly, we love that every day we get to share these fundamental pieces of knowledge with all of our students, to help set them up to enjoy maths beyond the curriculum at Altrincham College, and to become confident young adults as they head out into the working world. We hope that one day when they are sat in an office analysing the profits of the company they work for (or own themselves) they will think back to their statistics work they began in year 9. If they are pricing up work and estimating jobs in the construction industry we hope they recall their estimation knowledge from year 7 and can apply their understanding of geometry from year 9 to finding areas and perimeters. If they are modifying a prototype in the mechanical engineering industry, we hope that they apply their knowledge of mechanics from year 12 and 13. Or as we all love to do, if they are out, spending their well-earned cash, they are able to remember their number fluency all the way though school by being able to compare best buys or work out a percentage off in a Christmas sale.

*There is a great BBC series by Hannah Fry you may want to explore. Here is the episode where we discover how the Fibonacci sequence appears in nature in many ways

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cyvDG8qjt-M>



Here are some fun facts about Maths you may not have known

- “Forty” is the only number that is spelt with letters arranged in alphabetical order.
- Zero is not represented in Roman numerals.
- The symbol for division (i.e. \div) is called an obelus.
- A ‘jiffy’ is an actual unit of time. It means 1/100th of a second.
- It only takes 23 people to enter a room to give you an even chance that two of them have the same birthday. With 75 people in the room the chances rise to 99 per cent!
- $0.999... = 1$
- The Greek father of maths, Pythagoras, used little rocks to represent equations and numbers. Hence calculus, which is the Ancient Greek word meaning 'pebbles'.
- The word "fraction" derives from the Latin fractio "to break".

What some of the students think about Maths at Altrincham College

“Maths is more interesting when we relate it to the real world.” NG y10

“I am really enjoying Maths in year 10 as I feel like I am learning something new. Something I didn’t know yesterday.” LCS y10

“After an assessment, ever since year 7, we get our own Personalised Learning Checklist. This means I can see which areas I need to improve and which Mathwatch video clips I need to revise from.” JC y11

Extra-curricular opportunities

A quote from Nicky Morgan, former Secretary of State for Education, sums up why maths is such an important subject to feel like progress is being made and most importantly to enjoy as STEM is always going to be around in our lives.

“...the subjects that keep young people’s options open and unlock the door to all sorts of careers are the STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and maths). The skills gained from studying these subjects come in useful in almost any job you could care to name - from the creative and beauty industries to architecture.”

This is why we encourage students to take part in all opportunities offered to them. Starting from putting in their best effort to all lesson as well as taking up the chance to be part of out of the classroom opportunities.

- **[Parallels Online Homework](#)** - A weekly task by the Top Top Set project. These are designed to take 15-30 minutes. Students who are ready to rise to a mathematical challenge are encouraged to take part. This is open to students in Years 7 – 11.
- **[Online Maths Club – DrFrostMaths / UK Maths Trust](#)** - Regular online activities are set to develop mathematical thinking skills. Tasks are based on UKMT Maths Challenge past papers. The club can support students who want to take those

papers, or students who want the challenge without the pressure of the challenge tests.

- **UKMT Maths Challenge (Junior, Intermediate & Senior)** - The UKMT Maths Challenges are the most popular national school competitions in the UK. High scoring students receive certificates (bronze, silver or gold). The highest scoring students are entered into follow on rounds (Kangaroos and Olympiads).

There are more exciting competitions and support clubs to be announced in the Spring term.

Who are our Maths teachers?

Miss Whitworth is the Head of Maths and has been at the school for 12 years now. Her favourite topic in maths is circle theorems as it uses problem solving rules and algebra. Miss Whitworth grew up locally in Sale before going to Sheffield Hallam University to study Maths and education as well as joining the cheerleading team there. She has hung her pom poms up now and in her spare time enjoys volunteering in GMP as a Special Constable as well as supporting her local rugby team Ashton-on-Mersey Rugby club.

Mrs Jones is the Second in Department and has been at Altrincham College for 14 years. She grew up in Kent, before moving to Manchester to go to university. Her favourite topics in maths are sequences and series, and applications of calculus to mechanics, as it allows a real-life application of abstract concepts. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, making things, and looking after her two young children.

Mr Moroney is the Deputy Headteacher and has been at Altrincham College for nearly two years. His favourite topic in maths is geometry as it he sees it as solving puzzles. He went to university in Lancaster and has taught across Wythenshawe, Tameside, Salford and now Trafford. As he grew up in Trafford he feels right at home here now at Altrincham College. He is Man City fan and enjoys all sports.

Miss Bragg is a teacher of Maths and has been at Altrincham College for 4 years. Her favourite topic in Maths is anything involving algebra because of the problem solving involved. Miss Bragg spent most of her childhood growing up in Sale where she attended Ashton on Mersey Secondary School before studying Mathematics at the University of Manchester and completing a PGCE at Manchester Metropolitan University. She is a life-long Manchester City fan and in her spare time, enjoys going to watch Manchester City Ladies.

Mrs Hodson has been a Maths teacher at Altrincham College for three years. Her favourite maths topic is algebra manipulation and solving equations. Mrs Hodson, who is from North Wales, went to the University of Manchester to study an undergraduate masters in Maths and then went on to work at the university for a few more years. Before AC, she worked in an international school in Abu Dhabi which gave her the opportunity to travel with her husband. She now enjoys family life with her one-year old daughter.

Mrs Hudson-Kirkham is a mathematics teacher and deputy safeguarding lead. Her favourite topic in maths is algebra, but she also enjoys statistics and wrote a thesis on

dyslexia and mathematical recall. She grew up near Chester and went to university in Birmingham and Liverpool to study Education, Psychology and maths. She enjoys sport, particularly lacrosse, rowing and running.

Mrs Oates is now in her third year at Altrincham College. Mrs Oates grew up in Manchester and studied Maths & Computer Science at Manchester University. After spending 14 years working as a computer programmer & project manager, she took a career break before starting her first teaching post. In her spare time, she enjoys reading fiction books, or non-fiction books about mathematics. Her favourite author is Terry Pratchett, and her favourite mathematical authors are Simon Singh, Ian Stewart & Alex Bellos. Her favourite area of maths is problem-solving, especially solving puzzles.

Mrs Witchalls is a maths teacher and Head of Year 8 and has been teaching at Altrincham College for the last 14 years. Her favourite topic in maths is algebra but it's hard to pin down which bit because it's all so good...but probably solving really hard equations that go all the way round her wrap around board! Mrs Witchalls grew up locally and went to Altrincham Grammar School (with Miss Diffley!) then to Loughborough University where she played lots of netball and learnt a bit more maths too. She travelled round the world after leaving university and then worked for a local engineering firm before taking some time off work to stay at home and raise her family. Once her children started school she went back to university in Manchester (with Mrs Jones!) and qualified as a maths teacher and has been at Altrincham College ever since.

As term draws to a close....

We will say 'Goodbye' to three members of staff next week who are leaving the profession entirely: Mr Smith (Head of History), Mr Samulewski (Head of Business Studies) and Mrs Jones (Second in Maths). We will be very sorry to see these highly regarded, experienced and knowledgeable staff leave Altrincham College but wish them every success in their future ventures. A huge THANK you for all you have done to support our students!

We will be therefore welcoming three new staff to our school and we are very excited about these new appointments! Mr Gillan will be our new Head of History and joins us from Wellacre, Mr Mahmood is our new Head of Business Studies and joins us from Kingsway School and Mr Mohammed is our new Second in Maths who joins us from The Derby High School.

Star of the Week



Nominations for Student Star of the Week for working hard, being polite and respectful are all in Year 9: Josh S and Lamar W in 9.1, Lizza F in 9.4, Bianca C in 9.5, Tyler C and Damian

A in 9.6 and the winner this week is.....**Charlotte T in 9.1!** Well done Charlotte, a certificate is on its way to you!

Staff Stars of the Week

Our two staff stars (yes, two again!) this week are Mrs Blewitt and Mrs Shields! They were nominated for the way they have gone over and above time and time again. Your dedication to our school and students and staff in it is very much valued and appreciated!



Christmas Fun!

Don't forget!

Wednesday 15th December: our “Dress Festively” Day and students will be allowed to wear a festive top over their school uniform for a £1 donation to charity. This doesn't have to be a shop-bought Christmas jumper but can a top they have decorated themselves with tinsel. This will also be the day we have our **Christmas Dinner** with music and crackers!

Thursday 16th December: our Christmas Concert will take place in the evening. Tickets are free and will be allocated on a first come first served basis. The concert will start at 6.30pm and we highly recommend the wearing of face masks.

Friday 17th December: we finish at 12.30pm as it's the last day of term and school buses will still be running to bring students home.

Thank you for your continued support of our school!

Ms K Earle
Headteacher