Alcester Academy WEEKLY BULLETIN

13th December 2024

The Performing Arts Department Takes Over the Bulletin: A Celebration of Creativity!

We are thrilled to take the reins of the bulletin this week!

It's been a jam-packed term for performing arts at Alcester Academy, filled with exciting events, incredible achievements, and unforgettable moments. But the term isn't over yet, and we're still going strong!

Read on to discover the highlights of what we've accomplished so far and a sneak peek at the fantastic events and opportunities still to come. There's something for everyone, and we can't wait to share it all with you.

Mr Hall—
Lead Performing Arts

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Charlie and the Chocolate Factory: A Sweet Success!

This year, Alcester Academy proudly presented *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* as our annual school production, and what a show it was! With a record-breaking 112 students involved, it was a true testament to the immense talent, dedication, and community spirit within our school.

From the magical set design to the detailed makeup and seamless front-of-house management, everything was created and run by our incredibly talented students. Whether they were performing as part of the cast or working behind the scenes, each student played a pivotal role in bringing Roald Dahl's beloved story to life.

A special mention must go to Osian (Ragley) year 11, who made his directorial debut. Osian demonstrated remarkable leadership, creativity, and maturity, guiding his peers and helping to produce a cohesive and professional production. His direction was inspiring, and we couldn't be prouder of what he achieved.
The leading cast delivered exceptional performances, immersing the audience in the whimsical world of Willy Wonka and his factory. Equally, the ensemble worked tirelessly, bringing vibrancy and energy to every scene. Together, the students collaborated to create a visually stunning and emotionally engaging production that delighted our packed audiences across all performances.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the parents and carers for their unwavering support throughout the rehearsal process and show week. From late-night pick-ups to last-minute

costume adjustments, your encouragement made all the difference. We are also deeply grateful to the wider school community for attending the performances and cheering on our students. A special thank you must go to our wonderful sponsors, whose generosity helped make this production possible.

Behind the scenes, none of this would have been possible without the hard work and dedication of our Performing Arts team. Miss Lee, Mrs Austin, and Mrs Haynes were instrumental in guiding the students and ensuring every detail of the production ran smoothly. We'd also like to acknowledge Mr Cooke, our deputy head, who played a crucial role in the audition process back in July. His keen eye and enthusiasm helped set the foundation for this incredible production.

Now, the big question on everyone's minds: what will next year bring? With such a talented pool of students and a growing tradition of excellence, the future of performing arts at Alcester Academy looks brighter than ever.

Stay tuned as we reveal next year's show — and who knows, maybe your child will be the star of our next production!

Alcester Rock Academy's Brit Pop Night Rocks the Greig Hall!

On Tuesday, 26th November, the Greig Hall in Alcester was transformed into a vibrant celebration of 90s Brit Pop as Alcester Rock Academy delivered an unforgettable night of music. Bands comprising students from across all age ranges took us on a nostalgic journey, performing classics like *Wonderwall* by Oasis and *Alright* by Supergrass, capturing the spirit of an iconic era.

The evening kicked off with a special ensemble performance of *Bittersweet Symphony* by The Verve, featuring a collaboration between our school orchestra and members of the Rock Academy. The powerful rendition set the tone for the night, showcasing the incredible talent and teamwork of our students.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Upstage Lighting for sponsoring the show, adding dazzling lighting effects that elevated the performances. Special appreciation also goes to the Greig Hall for their unwavering support and for providing a fantastic venue for our event. But the excitement doesn't stop there! Mark your calendars for our upcoming Acoustic Night on 25th March, this time hosted at Alcester Academy. It's set to be another fantastic evening of music, and we'll be sharing more details soon.

Thank you to everyone who joined us for the Brit Pop Night—we can't wait to see you at our next event!

Find a Soloist Competition Success!

One of the highlights of our performing arts calendar is the annual *Find a Soloist* Competition, which showcases the incredible talent of our year 7 students. This year, the competition was as inspiring as ever, with students bravely stepping up to audition for the chance to perform at our Christmas Concert.

We are thrilled to announce that Violet from Billesley House and Leo from Greville House are this year's winners! Their exceptional performances wowed the judges, and they will have the honour of singing the first verse of *Silent Night* as a solo during the Christmas Concert.
The concert will take place at Alcester Academy Alcester, on Tuesday, 17th December at 6.30pm. We can't wait to see Violet and Leo take to the stage and share their beautiful voices with our school community.

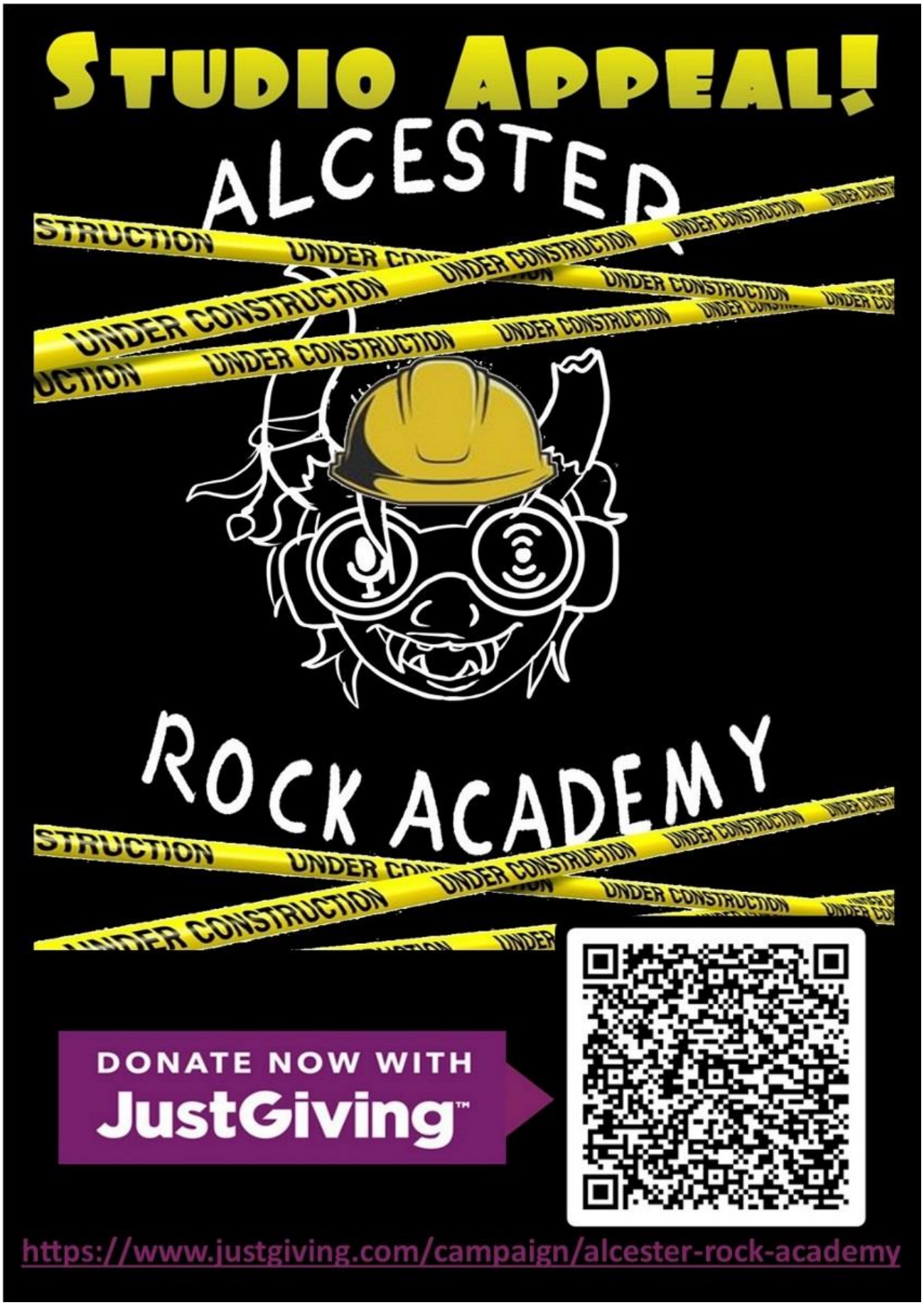
Congratulations to Violet and Leo for their outstanding achievements and a huge well done to all year 7 students who took part. Your bravery and talent were truly inspiring!

St Nicholas Night—A Wonderful Community Celebration

Despite the weather forcing a change of venue, St Nicholas Night on 6th December was as magical and vibrant as ever. While the high street couldn't host the event, the Greig Hall warmly welcomed the community, providing a fantastic space for local businesses, charities, and performers to shine.

As always, it was a pleasure for our talented musicians to perform at this cherished annual event. Their dedication and passion added to the festive atmosphere, and we are so proud of how they represented Alcester Academy.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who braved the weather and came along to support not only our young musicians but also the wider community. Your support is what makes events like this so special and keeps the spirit of St Nicholas Night alive.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https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/alcester-rock-academy

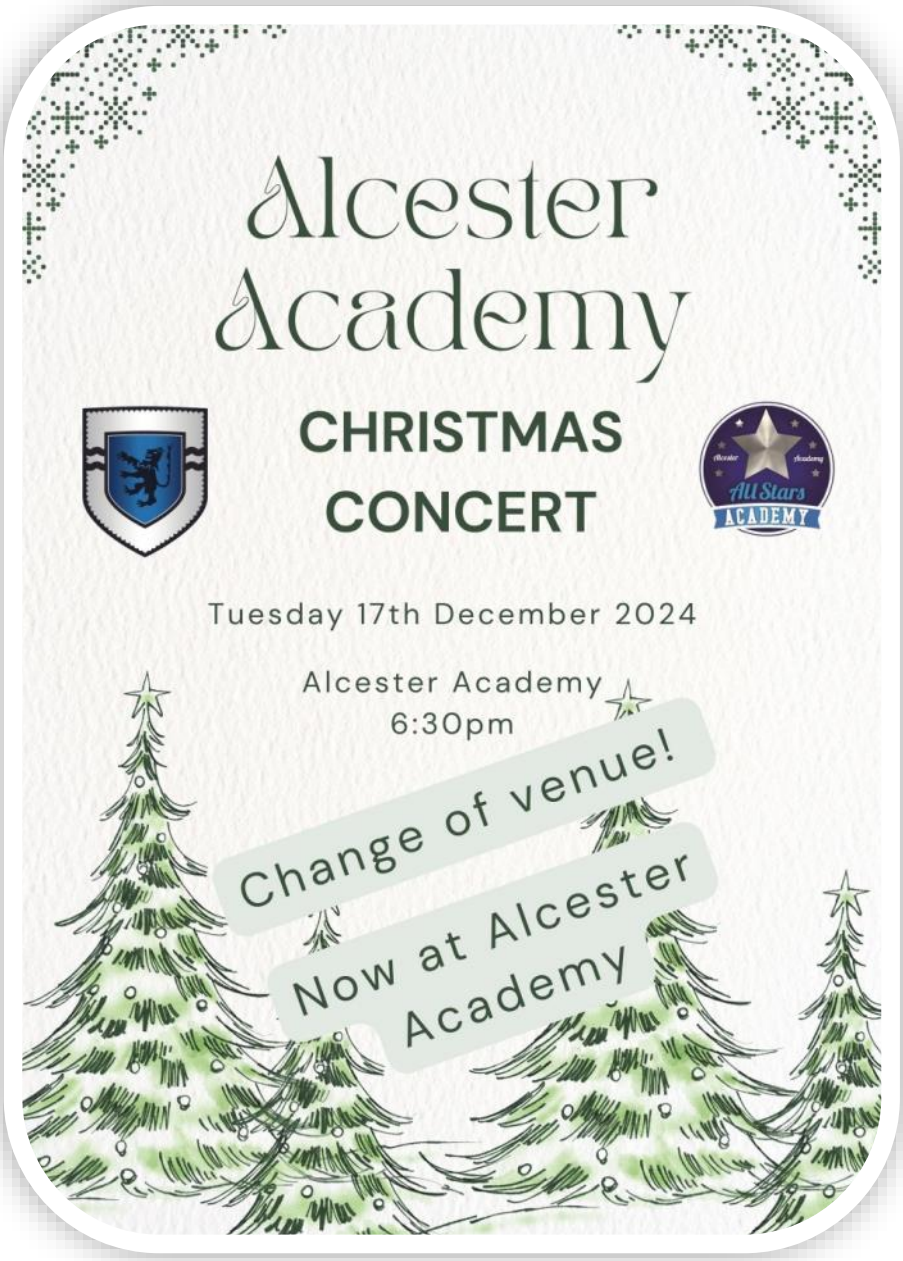
Get Ready for Our Magical Christmas Concert!

We are thrilled to welcome you to our Christmas Concert on Tuesday 16th December, 6.30pm at Alcester Academy. This free event is open to all members of our school community and promises to leave you feeling full of festive cheer!

The evening will include a wonderful mix of carols and musical performances, with highlights such as *Silent Night*, beautifully led by our *Find Our Soloist* competition winner in year 7.

You'll also enjoy performances from our Pop Band, Acoustic Group, Choir and more, with something for everyone to enjoy.

It's set to be a heartwarming celebration of the season, showcasing the incredible talent and hard work of our students. We can't wait to see you here to help us kick off the festive season in style!



Music at Alcester Academy: A World of Opportunity

Alcester Academy is proud to offer a diverse range of musical opportunities for students of all ages and abilities. Whether you're a budding performer or simply love being part of something creative, there's a place for everyone to get involved and explore their passion for music.

Our weekly clubs provide a variety of ways for students to immerse themselves in music. On Mondays, the Rock Band rehearses at lunchtime in the music hut, welcoming students ready to unleash their inner rock star. If pop is more your style, the Pop Band meets every Friday lunchtime to work on contemporary hits.

For those who enjoy a more relaxed and intimate musical setting, the Acoustic Group gathers every Thursday at lunchtime. This group focuses on creating beautiful, stripped-back renditions of popular and classic songs. It's a fantastic opportunity for vocalists and instrumentalists alike to collaborate and showcase their talents.

Classical music lovers are not left out either, with the Orchestra meeting every Tuesday lunchtime. This ensemble welcomes musicians across all year groups and abilities to explore classical and instrumental pieces together. Music is more than just performance at Alcester Academy; it's about building confidence, fostering teamwork, and igniting creativity. Whether you join a group or simply come along to support our events, we encourage all students to engage with the music opportunities on offer.

For more information, or to get involved, please speak to Mr Badham. Let's make this a term to remember through the power of music!

Peripatetic Music Lessons at Alcester Academy

At Alcester Academy, we are passionate about fostering a love for music and developing students' talents. One of the fantastic opportunities we offer is peripatetic music lessons, where students can learn a wide range of instruments or develop their vocal skills with expert tuition.

Our talented team of visiting music teachers provides lessons across several instruments, including piano, guitar, drums, flute, clarinet, saxophone, and voice. These lessons are tailored to suit all abilities, from complete beginners to advanced players working toward graded exams.

We are thrilled to share that our peripatetic program has helped many students achieve incredible milestones. For example, Ed from Greville House recently earned a Distinction in his Grade 6 Rock School Guitar Exam, demonstrating the dedication and talent nurtured through this program. Alessandro (Billesley) year 7 has achieved his grade 1 piano within 7 weeks of joining the Academy. These lessons not only build skills but also boost confidence and contribute to academic progress.

How do lessons work? Lessons are scheduled during the school day on a rotating timetable to ensure minimal disruption to other subjects. They are designed to be accessible and provide students with the tools to thrive musically, whether aiming for personal enjoyment or professional progression.

Why take part? Learning an instrument or voice training offers numerous benefits beyond musical skills. It enhances discipline, patience, and creativity while providing an enjoyable outlet for self-expression. It's also a fantastic way to earn UCAS points for students working toward higher education.

How to join? If your child is interested in joining our peripatetic program, please contact Mr Hall at liamhall@alcesteracademy.org.uk for more details and to arrange lessons. Spaces fill quickly, so don't delay!

A Final Thank You from the Performing Arts Department

As we wrap up this week's Bulletin takeover, we would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all of our students, staff, parents, and the wider school community for your ongoing support of the performing arts at Alcester Academy. Whether it's cheering from the audience, helping with costumes, supporting rehearsals, or simply encouraging students to take part, your involvement is the backbone of what we do.

The performing arts are so much more than just being on stage or learning lines. They teach collaboration, resilience, confidence, and creativity. Students learn to work as part of a team, problem-solve in real time, and push themselves beyond their comfort zones. These are life skills that will serve them long after the curtains close.

Through the performing arts our students gain a sense of achievement, belonging, and the chance to express themselves in ways they may not have thought possible. It is truly inspiring to watch them grow, not only as performers but also as individuals.

We are proud of what we've accomplished this term and even more excited about what lies ahead. Thank you for being part of this journey with us. We can't wait to share more wonderful performances, events, and achievements with you in the coming terms.

Mr Hall—Lead Performing Arts

* SPORTS NEWS * SPORTS NEWS *

Student Spotlight
Alice (year 10, Greville)

I am very proud to share the success of year 10 student Alice who recently represented the North Midlands Girls U16 Rugby team in a recent fixture against Lancashire. Alice has been excelling in the sport of rugby and to reach the regional standard for the age group above is an exceptional achievement. Many congratulations on your success to date within the sport and we wish you the very best of luck for remaining fixtures this season.

A message from Mr Moffatt

As we approach the end of term I want to thank and congratulate all students for the outstanding effort and commitment to Alcester Academy sport.

Despite the colder weather coming in and losing the light this half term the continued commitment to sport has been brilliant from our students. We hope that you have a restful Christmas as we look to pick up school sport again in the new year.

Mr Moffatt, Head of PE

This Week's Sport

Well done to all students who have been selected to represent the school in end of term sports fixtures:

Year 7 Football

Year 7 Basketball

* SPORTS NEWS * SPORTS NEWS *

Year 8 Netball

Year 11 Basketball

Year 11 Football

Year 9 Netball

Year 9 Girls Football

* SPORTS NEWS * SPORTS NEWS *

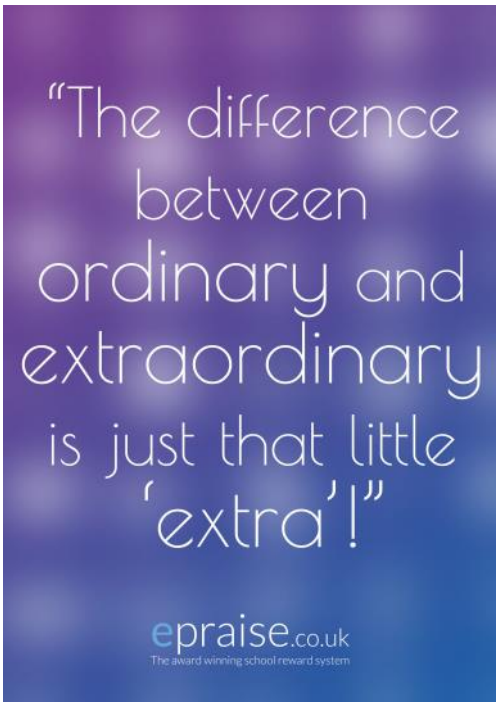
Next Week's After School Clubs

****THIS WEEKS SPORT**:**
W/B 16/12/24

Day	Extra-Curricular Club & Staff	Location
Monday	No Clubs – Staff training	
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday	Year 10 Netball v AGS	AGS

All other Academy sport at both lunchtime and after school will resume in the new year starting in Spring term—Week 2 (Monday 13th January).

The PE department wish you a restful Christmas break!



Teacher of English

Starting Date: Subject to current post and terms
MPS/UPS
Closing Date: Friday 7th February 2025
Interviews: Week commencing 10th February 2025

ADVERT ON THE SCHOOL WEBSITE

A vacancy has arisen to become part of an outstanding English department within a high performing and friendly school. Alcester Academy enjoys a strong reputation locally and nationally as a result of our caring ethos and excellent academic performance.

The successful applicant will join an ambitious and thoroughly supportive teaching team who work in collaboration with a highly successful English department. At Alcester Academy, teachers enjoy the freedom to deploy their individual skills, and talents, whilst conveying a passion for their subject and delivering excellent outcomes.

The English department is proud of the progress that students make. A cohesive group of 6 teachers and one specialist teaching assistant and a team who have an established record of excellent results. 2024 results far exceeded National Averages:
English Literature 4+ = 80% 7+ = 25%
English Language 4+ = 86% 5+ = 69% 7+ = 34%

This is a permanent post (subject to a successful probation period).

Applicants will be considered from all points of experience, including early career teachers. If you feel that Alcester Academy could be for you, please contact the Subject Leader, Vicki McCracken, for an informal discussion, or simply complete the application form.

For more details regarding this post please email: admin@alcesteracademy.org.uk, or visit the Alcester Academy website.

Alcester Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.
Enhanced DBS disclosure is required for appointment to this post

Alcester Academy

Headlines from Mrs Mellors

I hope that you enjoyed the huge round up from the performing arts team this week. What a busy time of the year with so many students involved in school events! It is wonderful. We're looking forward to seeing those of you who can make it to the *Alcester Academy Christmas Concert* next Tuesday, in the school hall, starting at 6.30pm. Many thanks also to Mr Anderson for taking over the reins last week for our Online Safety edition. I hope that it was useful for you all.

Arden Food Bank

Thank you for your generous donations last Friday for the Friends of Alcester Academy Arden Food Bank drive. We valued your input with this very much indeed.

For a different approach, it was super to see the collection done as Academy House groups rather than year cohorts.

If you might need to access the Arden Food Bank over Christmas, follow this link: https://arden.foodbank.org.uk/get-help/
Equally the Warwickshire Welfare Scheme is available to local residents: https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/localwelfarescheme

Thanks Rock Academy

Our bands played at the Grieg Hall on Friday for St Nicholas' Night. I'm grateful to the students for the joy that they continue to bring to the community.

The FOAA PTA were then around the Conway Estate on Saturday with the Alcester & Stratford District Round Table Santa Run. I am grateful for the time dedicated to do this. Thank you to all of the parents who joined last night's end of the year meeting also.

What to do if your child is ill

Please ask your child to report to LSU if they are feeling unwell rather than text you directly. We can monitor their wellbeing much better this way.

Thank you footballers

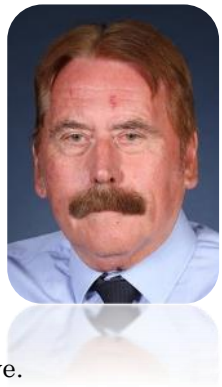
I held a fantastic rewards break time with the year 9 boys, and year 10 girls' football teams after recent successes at local tournaments. I thoroughly enjoy hearing about the winning games with Mr Moffatt, Head of PE. Congratulations to everyone involved!

Save the Children— Christmas Jumper Day 2024

Next Friday, 20th December is our fundraiser for *Save the Children*. Many staff and students do choose to wear Christmas jumpers. The School Gateway is open for your financial donations to *Save The Children*, with thanks.

Staff Leavers

It is with deep regret that we say a farewell next week to Mrs Farnell, Head of English. Mrs Farnell joined the school in 2017. Her work has made such a positive contribution to Alcester Academy staff and students. Mrs Farnell's work was pivotal during covid, and most recently, her leadership of English across the school has helped to steer some fantastic outcomes for students. We will all miss Mrs Farnell very much, but we wish her well in her new, promoted role within the Central Region Schools Trust. Thank you for absolutely everything Mrs Farnell.



And, finally, I close this week's bulletin with a sincere and very difficult farewell to Mr Millen. Mr Millen joined Alcester High School in 1997 as Deputy headteacher. Please see the separate special article today. It is certainly going to be a tough week for everyone here next week as we prepare to say a heartfelt goodbye.

Do have a good weekend everyone. I hope that it isn't getting too overwhelming with Christmas planning at the moment for you and you find some time to relax. We head into a final busy week here then at Alcester Academy to conclude 2024. This includes Christmas dinners, ice skating trips, our fabulous year 9 panto, the Christmas Concert and a few more treats along the way to reward a fantastic year for the students.

Kind regards
Sarah Mellors—Headteacher

Year 7 RE Role-Play Activity at St Nicholas Church

I am grateful to St Nicholas church, Alcester for hosting year 7 on Monday 2nd December for a fabulous start to the festive season. Volunteers from the church and Crossteach ensured our students were immersed in costumed role-play and more as they prepared for roles in a production at the end of our visit.

Students and staff, enjoyed our roles as audience members, cheering, booing, and applauding. There were some memorable student angels too; which left us all feeling very ready for special Christmas activities at school next week, and with our families over the break.

Mrs Kowal, Head of Religious Studies

Attendance Updates

Whole School Attendance this week is 91.9%

Top tutors this week:

7LX with 97.2% attendance

8RO with 96.9% attendance

9PA with 95.5% attendance

10BW with 95.3% attendance

11ES with 98.3% attendance

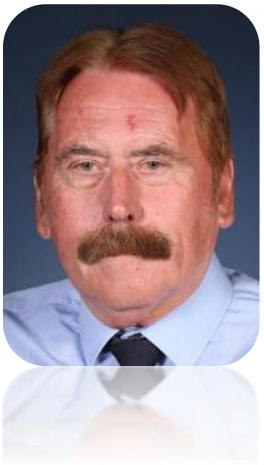
If your child is absent from school, please inform the Attendance Officer, Mrs Louise Hatcher, of the reason before 9.30am each day.

This can be done through SchoolComms, by calling 01789 762285, or by emailing louisehatcher@alcesteracademy.org.uk. Thank you, Mrs Hatcher

Farewell Mr Millen!

Next Friday, we all say a sad and very difficult farewell to Mr Millen who has worked at the school for the last 27 years. Mr Millen joined Alcester High School in 1997 as Deputy headteacher to Miss A Guyver. In 2011, Mr Millen stepped down in this role and made the transition to Cover Supervisor. In this role, he has managed the daily operations of the school ensuring that learning takes place as usual, and he has worked tirelessly behind the scenes to facilitate school trips and collapse timetables so that our students can experience a wealth of opportunities outside of the classroom.

Mr Millen is always there to help school events, and has ensured that we have tuck shops and drinks to buy at all of these. Finally, he has proved that he is the most amazing bingo caller and many of us have enjoyed fund raisers at school with him. I hope to be able to persuade him to return in this role once he is retired!



Mr Millen is a fantastic friend and colleague to us all. As a community, we have all appreciated his vast experience and support in numerous ways. He quietly reassures everyone and shows tremendous patience. He also has a fantastic sense of humour.

In his teaching time, Mr Millen imparted essential geography knowledge to numerous students (some who might now also be Academy parents). He has led and raised terrific funds for the school during his volunteering with the former school PTA.

Parents' Evenings 2024-25

Thursday 9th January 2025	Year 11 second Parents' Evening. Live in school
Thursday 6th February 2025	Year 8 Parents' Evening SchoolCloud
Thursday 3rd April 2025	Year 9 Parents' Evening SchoolCloud
Thursday 1st May 2025	Year 8 Options Evening. Live in school
Thursday 12th June 2025	Year 7 Parents' Evening SchoolCloud

SchoolCloud is an online video service

Epraise Leaderboard—past 7 days

Top Students—past 7 days:

1	Leo	7LX	Ragley	32 points
2	Ollie	10MO	Oversley	26 points
2	Fliss	7WI	Greville	26 points
4	William	7RA	Billesley	23 points
4	Lucy	10PL	Billesley	23 points
4	Immy	10PL	Greville	23 points
7	Alessandro	7RA	Billesley	22 points
7	Quinn	7RA	Greville	22 points
7	Min-Seo	9GA	Oversley	22 points
10	Martha	7KO	Greville	21 points

Top House—past 7 days:

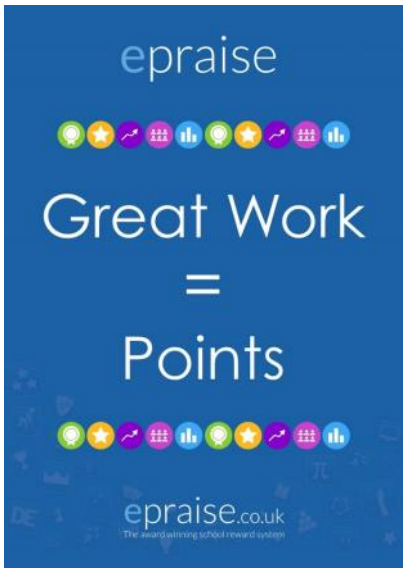
1	Ragley	1553 points
2	Billesley	1511 points
3	Oversley	1453 points
4	Greville	1441 points

Top Subjects—past 7 days:

1	Science	786 points
2	Art	533 points
3	Maths	483 points
4	History	402 points
5	English	394 points

Top Staff—past 7 days:

1	Mrs Marshall	514 points
2	Mr Yarrington,	456 points
3	Mr Rossiter	392 points
4	Mrs Gorner	272 points
5	Mrs Hirji	271 points



Top Tutors—past 7 days:

1	7RA	327 points
2	7LX	320 points
3	7TN	312 points
4	11MR	299 points
5	9PA	289 points

Our Teen Book Award Experience

On Wednesday we got to watch the live final of the Warwickshire Teen Book Award, and finally find out which book was voted as our favourite. Students were allowed to wear Christmas hats and were treated to hot chocolate and snacks, while we watched. The authors of all the books we read were also online (some from America) and answered any questions that we had for them.

Hester (year 9, Greville) wrote a blog about her experience of the award and won a prize.

Then the most favourite book, as voted for by all the Warwickshire schools that took part, was announced. It was also our favourite—*Thieves Gambit* written by Kayvion Lewis.

We have written about the award below.

My review—Alice

In the Warwickshire Teen Book Award, we went through a shortlisting process at the start. We got given nine books and had to pick our favourite four. Then, the votes were counted up throughout Warwickshire. After all of the votes were counted the four books that were chosen, were: *We Don't Swim Here, Thieves Gambit, Northern Soul, and Seven Million Sunflowers*. We then had a set deadline to read them by. My favourite book was *Thieves Gambit* and when we had our first meeting I found out that there was a sequel and after I finished the other three I read it. In my opinion (much to the distaste of Hester) I did not like *We Don't Swim Here*, but that is just a personal opinion.

My review—Molly

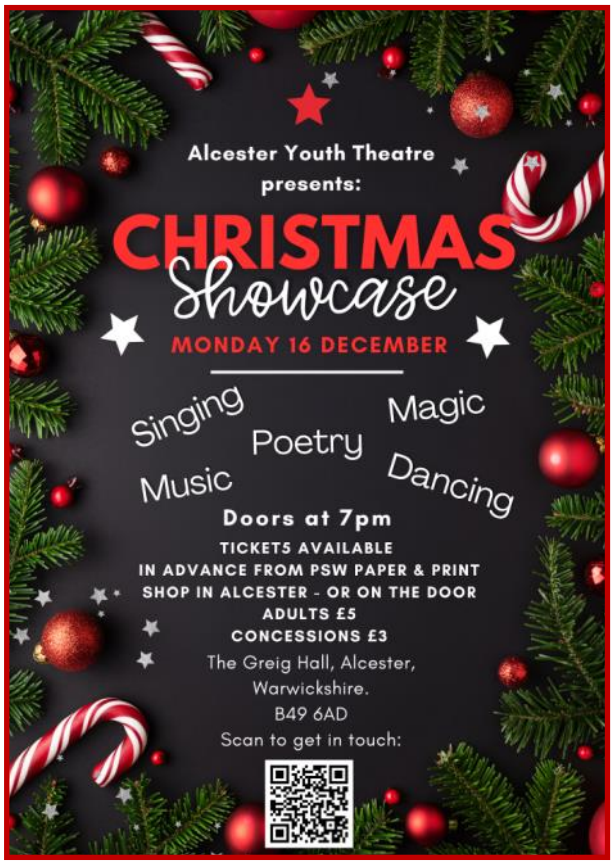
I loved doing the Teen Book Award. I've done it almost every year and I would highly recommend it to anyone wanting to read more, have a good experience with their peers, and learn secrets from the authors! Though I didn't read all the books, I read most of them and loved every second, and every book is different; a different genre, a different author, and different opinions.

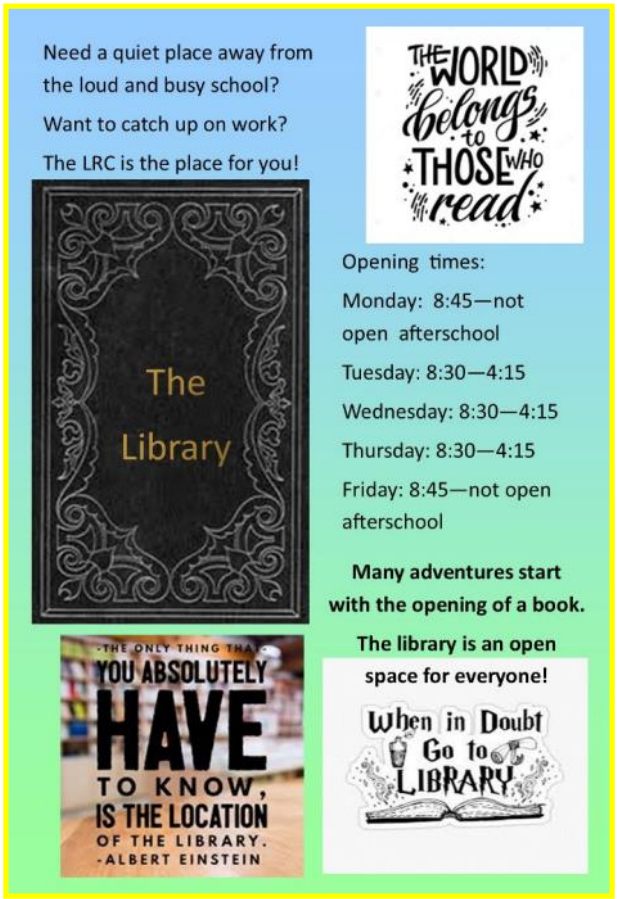
My review—Amelia

I loved taking part in the Warwickshire Teen Book Award, it was my third year in a row. However, this year we were able to choose the books and decide which we would most want to read, which I enjoyed doing.

Thanks!
Hester (year 9, Greville), Lily (year 9, Oversley), Amelia (year 9, Billesley), Maeve (year 9, Greville), Eshal (year 10, Billesley), Faith (year 10, Oversley), Dylan (year 10, Oversley), Alice (year 10, Greville), Molly (year 10, Ragley).

CONNECT WITH OUR COMMUNITY





CONNECT WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Learn hands-on trade skills
Boost your confidence
Make new friends

Learn from professional tradespeople
Earn City & Guilds accreditations
Support with CSCS card and careers

Project: Exhall and Wixford Cricket Club
Location: Alcester, B49 6EA
Dates: 6th January - 24th January 25
Work: Carpentry

14-24 year olds
Flexible placements - min. 3 days to achieve accreditation
Support with lunch and travel available where needed

To register on a VIY project contact: jess@teamviy.com

City & Guilds Dulux SPORT ENGLAND TP