

Alcester Academy Weekly BULLETIN



17th January 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Good afternoon. Our headline this week is related to the wonderful news of the schools' position within the Fairer Schools Index. This was published last week, and we are delighted to feature in the top ten schools within the Midlands and ranked 76th out of 3259 schools nationally.

[The 10 best schools in the Midlands named in new list - Birmingham Live](#)

What is the Fairer Schools Index?

The index's researchers measure every school in the country against a series of additional performance metrics to improve on official DfE league tables. It is called the Fairer Schools index as it removes some of the built-in bias against secondary schools teaching children, looking at local contexts and the demographics of schools in far more detail.

As you can imagine, we are extremely pleased to be formally recognised for the hard work of the students and staff.



High Bailiff's Parade and Service

Thank you to the numerous students involved in the High Bailiff's Parade last Sunday. Miss Buckthorp and I were so proud to accompany these students to such an important event. Once again, we offer our congratulations to Tracy Parkes in her new role as the first female High Bailiff of Alcester Court Leet.



What's inside this week...

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Careers Fair

What a wonderful day Wednesday was in school this week with our fabulous Careers Fair. Our Young Reporters have written a longer feature on this later in this edition.

I'm very grateful to all of our exhibitors who took the time to attend the fair alongside the Mayor, Councillor Mike Bowe and Chair of Governors, Mike Dean, and other governors. Thanks to Miss Bartlett for arranging all of this for the entire school.

The exhibitors were:

SAE Institute

Langmans Dental

RAF

Eden Hotel Collection

Alcester Nursey Studio

SJG International

Arcus

Warwickshire County Council

Studley Castle

Chadwick Accountants

Worcester University

Warwickshire Police

Specsavers

Rooftop Housing Group

Heart of England

Kinder Energy

Warwickshire Fire and Rescue

Echobolt

Acton Energy

Updates this week

New Head of English

For your information, Mrs V McCracken is now our Head of English and a member of the Extended Leadership Team.

VickiMcCracken@alcesteracademy.org.uk

Do reach out if you need anything regarding this subject area.



Tesco Express—Hopkins Precinct

I am distraught to have received some recent reports of younger students shop lifting at Tesco Express. Naturally, this causes us all great concern. I'd be very grateful if you would speak to children about this. There is very effective CCTV in operation throughout the store.

Policies updates

We have recently reviewed a number of key school policies that are currently going through the process of being ratified by the full governing body. These include attendance, behaviour, rewards and SEND. I will write to you separately once these are agreed with the specific detail that you need to be made aware of.

Social Media

Again, a reminder that we have a strong policy regarding negative comments made about the school on social media. I really appreciate the majority of parents who show the greatest respect for this—thank you.

[AA Social Media Policy for Parents.pdf](#)

If you ever want to approach the school about any concerns, please do, rather than posting these in the public domain.

Year 9s

We are all wishing year 9s the best of luck for their exams next week.

Parent View

If you haven't had time to complete Parent View yet, please do at:

[Welcome to Ofsted Parent View | Ofsted Parent View](#)

If you have any concerns, I ask that you raise these directly with us at school. Thank you.



Alcester Mayor's Awards Evening

We are sending good luck to Jacob (Oversley) in year 10, and Zoe New, a parent, for their nominations in tonight's Mayor's Awards Evening. These nominations fall into *Young Person of the Year* and *Citizen of the Year* categories. Best wishes to you from all of us at Alcester Academy! I'm aware that there is also a much younger students' sibling nominated. Good luck to Louis also!

Congratulations to...

Morgan (Billesley), in year 10 for being selected to compete in an international swim meet in Lisbon, representing Redditch Swimming Club.

Teddy (Ragley), in year 7 for being our guest photographer at the Careers Fair this week.

And finally, wishing you all a great weekend ahead. Be sure to book your 'Friends of Alcester Academy' bingo places for 31st January. These are selling out fast!

With best wishes
Mrs Sarah Mellors—Headteacher



TEXT ACADEMY

Report incidents of bullying, theft,
cyber issues, crime or anti-social behaviour



I'm being bullied - I don't know what to do -
text your message to: **07563130478**
or
email your message to:
textacademy@alcesteracademy.org.uk

07563130478

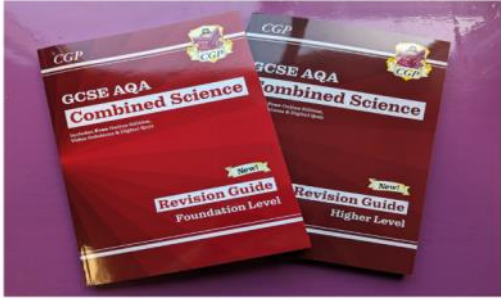

SCIENCE REVISION GUIDES

**Calling all students:
science revision guides are now
in stock!**

**Available from the science
department, get yours
today to help revise for your
upcoming exams.**

Prices:

Triple award: £10 (3 books)
Combined: £6.50 (1 book)
*Please speak to a member of the
department to get yours.*





ALCESTER ACADEMY PRESENTS



Family **BINGO** Night

Friday 31st January

Doors Open 6.30pm – Eyes down 7.00pm

1 Book (6 Games) - £2

6 Books (6 Games) - £10



Bar

Tuck Shop
& Snacks
available

Pre-booking recommended.
Book now online or via the
school office.



<https://friendsofaa.sumupstore.com>

Alcester Academy Hosts Inspiring Careers Fair



On Tuesday we held our biannual careers fair with the support of both local and national industry role models. We also hosted a podcast recording with Chadwick Accountants, the links for which will be in a bulletin coming soon! Throughout the day, each year group was given the opportunity to tour the fair and engage with employers. KS3 students were excited to embark on a *Fact Finding Mission*, whilst KS4 students were tasked with a detailed encounter with a minimum of three companies.

Holding this fair is important to us as an Academy because we have a duty to ensure our students are given the support they require to make informed decisions about their futures. By inviting organisations into school, students have a face-to-face opportunity to enquire about different career paths with role models who can encourage and raise their aspirations. It also supports students' personal development as they learn to interact with peers at a more professional level.

All of this would not have been possible without each and every exhibitor who gave up their time to support Alcester Academy. Thank you doesn't seem enough when we look at the resounding success of

the day. We wish to thank our esteemed visitors, Alcester Town Mayor Mike Bove, Chair of Governors Mike Dean, Vice Chair Tim Harrison and Governor Carole Hodgetts for their support. Mostly, we wish to thank our exhibitors, Alcester Nursery Studio, Ministry of Defence, Warwickshire Fire and Rescue, Warwickshire Police, SJG International, Eden Hotel Collection, SAE Institute, Langmans Dental, Studley Castle, Chadwick Accountants, Worcester University, Alcester Specsavers, Rooftop Housing Group, Kinder Energy, Echobolt and Act On Energy.

Our *Young Reporters* also used this as an opportunity to write their first articles. We will hear from our KS3 students in next week's bulletin, but please continue to read on and see what our *KS4 Young Reporters* made of the day and the career opportunities made available to them!

Miss Bartlett—Careers Co-ordinator



Careers Fair 2025 Review by Lottie and Jess

On Tuesday 14th January our annual careers fair took place. This careers fair provides opportunities for businesses to showcase possible career opportunities to our students, coming from experienced professionals who have acquired knowledge from their field of work. It allows the students to broaden their career options and ask questions themselves expanding current knowledge and allowing time for curiosity.



Firefighters

On one of the stands of the Careers Fair was the Fire Service. The first thing the firefighters explained was that the industry was for everyone, all genders not just men. The firemen then proceeded to explain that if interest flourished and someone wanted to pursue their firefighter career, they would have to be 18 years old, have a maths and English A-level and go on a 13-week training course. After the training course there is a physical, written and medical test. After you have passed those, you are then permitted to start work on the firefighting force. Income can start from £37,000 and will increase after more experience is gained. 80% of firefighting jobs in Warwickshire are full-time however there are some on-call roles available around the county.



Police force and the cadets

Police cadets are a great way for young people to gain an insight into the police force community. It involves lessons, games and overall police morals. Children between the ages 13 to 16 can enrol through the police force website by filling out an application form and then having an in-person interview. According to the police officer, police cadets are "difficult to get enrolled" however it is a great way to make connections with police communities and gain insider knowledge of policing. Although it's not a direct route into being a police officer and doesn't guarantee you a job, the knowledge you gain over the years will increase your chances of standing out to a police employer. Whilst being a good way to start policing, it is also a great way of having fun and creating new experiences. It is significantly cheaper than most clubs nowadays at only £90 a year and it provides a learning source at the same time.



The police force course at Worcester University is “the best place to study policing” according to the ex-police officer we interviewed at the careers fair. He described the community to be warm and a great environment. This course provides career opportunities such as branches of investigation including working with people, cyber-crime and media. You could also enrol for the MI5, MI6 or the intelligence services. Wages from these jobs can vary from £30,000 to £120,000 a year depending on which field you choose to pursue.

Law

The courses which the University of Worcester provides includes law with criminology, law with forensic psychology, law with politics or a degree in professional policing (which can lead to you being a police officer). Qualifications required include three Bs at A-level and 120 UCAS tariff points. The course lasts 3 years. The skills acquired include ability to perform public speeches, ability to inquire and ask questions and to be able to conduct a persuasive argument.

Accountancy

Working in accountancy (such as Chadwick Accountants, who had a stand at the careers fair) involves compliance work like tax returns or profits and losses, adversary like helping clients achieve funding and helping them with tax efficiency.

Chadwick Accountants influence positive decisions made by clients. This can include large corporate businesses where fraud is expected and also on personal levels such as divorce. The accountant will recover details of the transactions made by clients and discover if money is being hidden. Salaries for accountants can start from £35,000 for doing jobs such as bookkeeping in a firm, all the way up to £250,000.

In conclusion, we believe the careers fair was a fantastic way of broadening knowledge on possible careers. It was interesting to hear about the details of businesses that may not come to mind when you are thinking about your later career.

By Lottie (Billesley) and Jess (Oversley) —KS4 Young Reports



Epraise Leaderboard—for the past 7 days

Top Students—past 7 days:

1	Ollie	8RO	Billesley	30 points
2	Abigail	7LX	Oversley	25 points
2	Fliss	7WI	Greville	25 points
4	Teddy	7TN	Ragley	24 points
5	Georgia	8AN	Ragley	23 points
6	Paige	7WI	Ragley	22 points
6	Jess	8NA	Oversley	22 points
8	Arturo	10SA	Billesley	21 points
8	Faith	10PL	Oversley	21 points
8	Dylan	10MO	Ragley	21 points

Top House—past 7 days:

1	Ragley	1670 points
2	Greville	1656 points
3	Oversley	1648 points
4	Billesley	1583 points

Top Subjects—past 7 days:

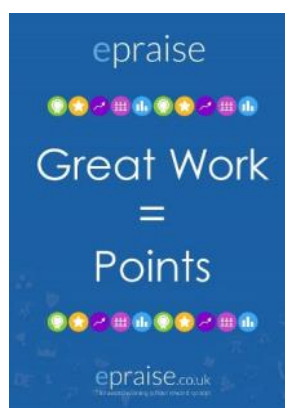
1	English	748 points
2	Art	611 points
3	Maths	483 points
4	Science	461 points
5	History	416 points

Top Staff—past 7 days:

1	Mrs Hirji	610 points
2	Mr Yarrington	558 points
3	Mr Rossiter	346 points
4	Mr Martin	315 points
4	Miss Lewis	315 points

Top Tutors—past 7 days:

1	7LX	328 points
2	8RO	327 points
3	8NA	315 points
4	8AN	301 points
5	8DA	299 points



A Celestial Spectacle: January & February's Planetary Alignment

This winter, the night sky is offering a rare and breathtaking celestial event! Between January and February 2025, our solar system will align in a spectacular way, with five of the planets visible to the naked eye in a stunning display. This planetary alignment is a special event that provides an excellent opportunity for stargazing, learning, and marvelling at the wonders of our universe.

What Is a Planetary Alignment?

A planetary alignment occurs when several planets in our solar system align on the same side of the sun, allowing them to be seen in a straight line across the sky from Earth. While planetary alignments are not as rare as total eclipses, they are still a unique event for skywatchers. During this alignment, you'll be able to spot planets like Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn without the need for a telescope.

When Can You See It?

The alignment will take place primarily between 21st January and 28th February 2025. Although the exact time and best viewing locations can vary, the planets will be most visible in the early morning hours, just before sunrise. If you're an early riser, you'll be treated to a clear view of several planets lined up in the sky.

Where to Look?

Venus, often called the Morning Star, will be the brightest and easiest to spot in the eastern sky. Jupiter and Saturn will also shine brightly, appearing just above the horizon in the southeast. Mars will be visible in the sky as well, giving a distinct reddish hue to the alignment. Mercury, the closest planet to the Sun, will be visible for a short time, right before the sun rises. It can be a bit tricky to spot, but with a clear view of the horizon, it's definitely possible.

Why Is This Special?

While planetary alignments happen fairly frequently, the alignment in January and February 2025 is notable because it involves five planets. It's a perfect time for students and stargazers to learn about the planets in our solar system and appreciate the beauty of our night sky. The alignment provides an opportunity for schools and astronomy clubs to host viewing events or even lessons about space, science, and the movement of celestial bodies.

Fun Facts

Venus is sometimes referred to as the "Earth's twin" because of its similar size, although it's much hotter!

Mars is home to the tallest volcano in the solar system, Olympus Mons, which is nearly three times the height of Mount Everest.

Jupiter is the largest planet in the solar system and has a storm called the Great Red Spot, which is bigger than Earth!

Saturn's iconic rings are made of ice and rock, and they are the most beautiful and easily identifiable feature of the planet.

Get Involved!

To get the most out of this spectacular event, you can:

- * Check astronomy clubs for viewing events.
- * Use a stargazing app to help identify the planets and track their movement.
- * Keep a journal or take photos of the planets each day to document their position in the sky.

This planetary alignment is an exciting opportunity to connect with science, explore space, and experience the beauty of our solar system firsthand. So, grab a warm blanket, head outside, and take a moment to look up—the planets are aligning just for you!

Mrs Passantino—Science Technician



Attendance News

Whole School Attendance this week is 94.2%

Top tutors this week:

7TN with 97% attendance

8AN and 8DA with 98% attendance

9GA with 97% attendance

10PL with 93% attendance

11MR with 98% 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

Attendance Competition!

Keep an eye out for our upcoming attendance competition!

Every pupil who completes a week with no absences will be entered into a draw to win amazing prizes. Stay tuned for more details!



If a pupil is ten minutes late to school or lessons each day, they will miss seven days of learning over a year.



DfE data shows that pupils with more than 95% attendance achieve better GCSE results!

Parents' Evenings 2024-25

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 the online video service

Extra Curricular Timetable

Spring 2025



Alcester
Academy

Monday

Lunchtime

Mathematics Matters (Yr11)- PE1
Acoustic Group- Hut
Y8 Book Club - LRC
ART- A1 & A2

Tuesday

Lunchtime

Pop Band- Hut
ART- A1 & A2
Mr Palmieri's Maths Clinic
Y10/Y11- M1
Learn to Crochet -
Textiles (Student and teachers)
After School
European languages club -L2
(From Spring 2)

Wednesday

Lunchtime

Orchestra - Hut
BBC Young Reporter- E1
ART- A1 & A2
Chess club- M3
Y8/9 Scrabble Club - LRC
After school
Detective Fiction club- E6
Cooking Club -
Alternate weeks

Thursday

Lunchtime

Young Enterprise- IT3
Pride Group- E4
Rock Band- Hut
Photography Club - A1
Year 7 Book Club - LRC
ART- A1 & A2

After School

Art Club (GCSE only)- A1 & A2
Dance Club - Drama

Friday

Lunchtime

Youth Speaking- E4
STEM/Science- T2
Year 11 Year book-H4
ART- A1 & A2

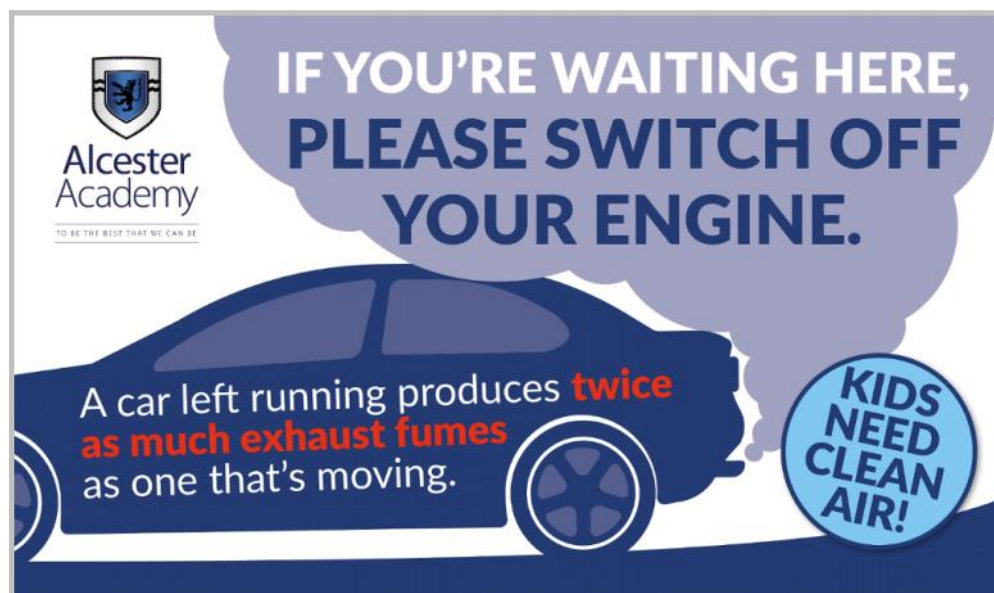
Alcester Academy Term Dates

SPRING TERM 2025

<i>School closed</i>	<i>Monday 6th January 2025—Teacher training day</i>
Spring Term begins	Tuesday 7th January 2025
Half Term	Monday 17th – Friday 21st February 2025
Back to school	Monday 24th February 2025
Spring Term ends (Easter)	Friday 11th April 2025 at 12.40pm

SUMMER TERM 2025

Summer Term begins	Monday 28th April 2025
<i>School closed</i>	<i>Friday 2nd May 2025—Teacher training day</i>
May Bank Holiday	Monday 5th May 2025
Half Term	Monday 26th – Friday 30th May 2025
Back to school	Monday 2nd June 2025
<i>School closed</i>	<i>Friday 27th June 2025—Teacher training day</i>
Summer Term ends	Friday 18th July 2025 at 12.40pm



Year 11 Revision Timetables—Week A and Week B



WEEK A	Lunch 1.50-2.20	After school 3.30-4.15
Monday	Biology Clinic in S6 <i>Study space - PE1</i>	
Tuesday	Media Studies Catch Up <i>Study space - English department rooms</i> History	English
Wednesday	Science - sets 3 and 4 <i>Science rooms</i>	French DT Computer Science
Thursday	ICT (iMedia) <i>Study space - English department</i> Religious Studies	Maths German (Higher)
Friday	Geography intervention <i>Study space - maths department (M3)</i>	Physics triple award sets 1 and 2

WEEK B	Lunch 1.50-2.20	After school 3.30-4.15
Monday	<i>Study space - PE1</i>	
Tuesday	Media Studies Catch Up Chemistry clinic in S1 <i>Study space - English department rooms</i> History	Art/photography for exam prep
Wednesday	Science - sets 1 and 2	French DT Computer Science
Thursday	ICT (iMedia) <i>Study space - English department</i> Religious Studies	German (Foundation) Art/photography for exam prep
Friday	Geography intervention <i>Study space - maths department (M3)</i>	Physics triple award sets 1 and 2

These timetables may be subject to change.

Saturday School dates

Saturday 1st March and Saturday 8th March—with subject sessions to be confirmed.

* SPORTS NEWS * SPORTS NEWS *

Cross Country—Good luck!

This Saturday will see a number of our cross country runners compete at the WSAA Cross Country Championships. Wishing the very best of luck to all Athletes running and to Mrs Powell for supporting with officiating at the event.

Poppy (year 7)
Dexter (year 7)
Isabella (year 8)
Toby (year 9)
Will B (year 9)
Marijke (year 10)
Will H (year 10)

Year 9,10 and 11 Girls District Basketball tournament

It was brilliant to have three of our girls basketball teams in action this Wednesday with them competing at the annual South Warwickshire Basketball tournament.

Congratulations to all selected to represent the school at this event. Some impressive performances on the court led to us coming away with winning one age group, a 2nd and 4th place. Well done to all involved!

Results:

Year 9 basketball—Runners Up. Well done!



Year 10 basketball—Winners! Congratulations!



Year 11 basketball—4th Place. Great work!



Student Spotlight

Poppy (year 7, Ragley)

Our tennis superstar in year 7, Poppy has had a busy Christmas break with continued achievements and hard work developing her play on the court. Poppy has now moved into her first year in the U14 age group and even managed to win the U14 Grade 4 title at Derby.



To add to this Poppy also won the U16 Grade 4 a few days later. Poppy also continues to develop within doubles play where she placed 3rd with her doubles partner Sophia at the U16 grade 3 held at Shrewsbury.

We are very lucky to have such a talented tennis player attend the Academy and we cannot wait to see you out on the Alcester Academy court in summer term. Congratulations on your continued success within the sport as a result of your hard work and dedication.

Mr Moffatt

* SPORTS NEWS * SPORTS NEWS *

This Week's Sport

Well done to all students who attended a sports club in the first week back. Remember, there is no need to sign up for a sports club you can just turn up on the day advertised:



THIS WEEKS SPORT: W/B 20/1/25



Day	Extra-Curricular Club & Staff	Location
Monday	No clubs - Staff meeting	N/A
Tuesday	U16 Girls SW 7-a-side Football tournament – MO/NA	Stratford School
Wednesday	Y8 SW Girls Basketball tournament (4 a-side) – PE/MO	SGGS
Thursday	Year 11 Netball v AGS - PE Year 7 and 8 Basketball - NA	AGS Sports Hall Gym



SPRING 1 LUNCHTIME SPORT



- Lunchtime sports clubs to start w/b Monday 13th January on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
- Lunchtime sport will follow a set timetable each half-term and run from 1.45-2.15pm (4:1)
- PE kit is not required to participate but you must have suitable footwear to be allowed into the gym

w/b	MON- NA	THURS - MO
13/1	KS4 Basketball	Y11 Indoor Football
20/1	KS3 Basketball	Y11 Indoor Football
27/1	KS4 Basketball	Y11 Indoor Football
3/2	KS3 Basketball	Y11 Indoor Football

CONNECT WITH OUR COMMUNITY



After School Drama Clubs

Come and join us for a free taster session.
We run weekly Drama Clubs for young people
In Stratford-upon-Avon.

ENROLLING NOW

Stratford Youth Theatre

"Pure Drama"

07591 346080

www.stratfordyouththeatre.com

*A message for children and parents
about risks of ice and never to go onto ice from the RoSPA*

The link below offers useful safety advice:

<https://www.rospa.com/leisure-water-safety/water/advice/ice>



CONNECT WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Message from Alcester Town Court Leet

Following on from the success of last year's event, the Court Leet and White Hart Morris Men will be holding a traditional Wassail at Alcester Community Orchard on Saturday 18th January 2025.

There will be a torch lit procession from the Eric Payne Centre. We will gather there at 4.00pm where you will have an opportunity to make your own nature crown, sing some traditional Wassail songs, watch Morris dancing and meet the Winter Queen and Holly King. The procession will begin at 5pm led by the Morris Men.

The ancient tradition of the apple wassail is to awaken the trees from their Winter sleep and to bless them in song and rhyme so that they will bear a good crop for us later in the year. This year we are pleased to say we had a bumper harvest! We will adorn the old apple tree with ribbons and hang cider-soaked toast in the branches and make lots of noise with pots and pans.

Please come to this joyful event for families with your homemade nature crowns. There will be a prize for the best children's crown.

Hot dogs will be on sale for the adults. Alcester Town Council have kindly agreed to sponsor us so that we can provide a free hot dog for the children. There will also be cider, beers and juices. It is essential that you dress in warm clothes and wear wellies. Please bring a torch for the walk back from the orchard. The orchard will be lit with festoon lights.

Bring a pot or saucepan to bang with a spoon to make some noise. Wassail!
(Good health!)

Best wishes
Rosa Burden
Court Leet Wassail Committee



CONNECT WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Purple Spider, The Learning Bus

Craft Fair

22nd March 2025

The Greig Hall, Alcester, Warwickshire

Where: The Grieg Hall

When: 22nd March 2025

Time: 10am till 1:30pm

