

# Alcester Academy WEEKLY BULLETIN



17<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Good afternoon. I hope that you had a lovely Valentine's week and you are looking forward to an enjoyable half term ahead.



We are wishing our skiers the very best for their USA trip that starts tomorrow. Stay safe and come back with some fabulous stories. I am feeling very envious! Thank you to those staff giving up their half term for this. I'm excited to see some GoPro footage that will be coming our way on twitter over half term @AlcesterAcademy.

We also wish our year 11s every success as they finish preparations for their second round of mock examinations. These start directly after half term. We will therefore move to 3:2 days in school for a while.

Yesterday, we welcomed our Dunnington young scientists in to school again. They were thoroughly enjoying the experience of learning in an actual lab. The team here put on a fabulous morning for them.

## Year 11 History Trip

Miss Bishop has written about the year 11 revision trip that took place this week later on in this bulletin. It sounded fantastic! I was delighted on Wednesday evening when I received a message from a senior colleague at another school commending our students for their attitude and conduct.

## Year 10 Super Six

Year 10s had their *Super Six* training this week in readiness for their internal exams starting

on 17th April (directly after the Easter break). We do consider these to be the first round of mocks. We are hosting a Parent Forum online in order to give you more details on Thursday 23rd March. Details will be sent out to parents shortly.

## Thank you year 9 parents

Many thanks to year 9 parents who joined us on School Cloud last night for parents' evening. I was delighted to send so many letters of commendation this time around for exceptional year 9 reports.

Many of our year 8 and 9s were part of a *Detective Workshop* today, led by Miss Wincup. More details about this to follow.

## Immunisations

Our year 8-10 students were extremely mature on Monday and Tuesday whilst having their immunisations. We were very proud of them.

## Volunteering

Further to last week's shout out for our secret school volunteers, I'd like to congratulate our *Messy Church* student supporters for their fabulous work in the community.

Congratulations too, on your first anniversary Messy Church.

[St Nicholas Church](#)  
[Alcester | Messy Church](#)



## Year 11 Saturday School dates for your diary

As well as the year 11 lunchtime and after school offer, we will be putting on Saturday Schools in the run up to mocks:

Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup> February	Geography 9-11am History 11-1pm	In school
Saturday 25 <sup>th</sup> February	Maths 9-11am	In school
Saturday 4 <sup>th</sup> March	French 9-11am German 11-1pm English 10-12noon <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Those doing French, go to English from 11-12noon</li><li>• Those doing German, arrive at 10am and do 1 hour of English first</li></ul>	In school



*Court Leet and Court Baron of the Most  
Honourable Henry Jocelyn Seymour,  
Marquess of Hertford DL FRAS*

**Alcester Court Leet Pancake Races**  
**Tuesday February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023**

The High Bailiff of Alcester cordially invites you to the above event.  
Races will take place in Alcester High Street  
on Tuesday February 21<sup>st</sup> between 11.30am and 14.00pm.  
This year's pancake races fall on half term, so we are giving you and  
your parents a heads up.  
We would love to see you at the start line.  
For more information regarding age slots please contact:  
Alcester Court Leet FB page  
[highbailiff@alcestercourtleet.co.uk](mailto:highbailiff@alcestercourtleet.co.uk)  
Or  
[mv.euphoria@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mv.euphoria@hotmail.co.uk)



## Children's Holiday Lunches

At The Depot, Eric Payne Community Centre, St. Faiths Road, Alcester, B49 6AG  
Wednesday February 22nd 12:30- 1:30pm

Family activities available

Complementary fruit and vegetable boxes and snacks

Hot lunch and drinks for parents too!!



## Communication

I am always the out of hours emergency contact for you and will respond to urgent messages [head@alcesteracademy.org.uk](mailto:head@alcesteracademy.org.uk).

For routine emails to staff, please can I ask that you schedule these to be sent within any working day, and not in the evenings or weekends. Thank you. Increasingly, the staff team are receiving emails from parents late into the evening, or on their weekends. It is my duty to maintain a reasonable work/life balance for the staff team as I'm sure you'll understand.

If you are unsure how to schedule emails then send your emails to: [admin@alcesteracademy.org.uk](mailto:admin@alcesteracademy.org.uk) with a clear name 'for the attention of...' Staff will then receive these on the next available working day.

## New sensor system in school

We will shortly be installing new sensors in all of our student toilet facilities. These sensors are sensitive to any changes in atmosphere instantly caused by secret vaping. The system is supported by cameras in our corridors that show very clearly who has entered the toilet at the time the sensor is armed. This will be unquestionable evidence that we will use to deal with any illegal vaping in school. It will also pinpoint when students have entered toilets with any subsequent damage carried out. With sadness this is causing more and more staff time being taken up in school. I hope that the majority of students will be pleased that we are proactively tackling these issues. All of the students were told about this in a whole school briefing yesterday.

## Attendance

We continue to smash the national attendance stats each week however we still have not made 95% post covid on any school week. Let's give this a try after half term together! Thanks for everything you do to get your children in regularly, and on time.



**WARM WELCOME**  
@Warwickshire Libraries

**Free warm bags and toiletry bags**

Warm bags contain:

- Blanket
- Hat
- Scarf
- Hot water bottle
- Gloves

Three different toiletry bags are available:

- Bag 1 - Sanitary towels
- Bag 2 - Toiletry products for children - toothpaste (3 - 8 years), toothbrush (6+ years), shampoo and bubble bath
- Bag 3 - Toiletry products for adults - toothpaste, toothbrush, deodorant, shower gel and soap

Bags are available, for free, while stocks last. Customers collecting a bag do not need to speak to a member of staff.

Find your nearest Warm Welcome location:  
[www.costoflivingwarwickshire.co.uk/home/warm-welcome-locations](http://www.costoflivingwarwickshire.co.uk/home/warm-welcome-locations)

Or scan the QR code

For more information on Cost of Living support visit:  
[www.costoflivingwarwickshire.co.uk](http://www.costoflivingwarwickshire.co.uk)

This offer is in partnership with the Warwickshire Local Welfare Scheme, funded by the Household Support Fund

Warwickshire County Council

LOVE YOUR LIBRARY

**Understanding Sensory Needs in School Aged Children**

1 free online session  
Thursday 16th  
March 2023  
12:30pm to 2:30pm

**RISE** Recovery & Wellbeing ACADEMY

Enrol here: [www.recoveryandwellbeing.co.uk/enrolment](http://www.recoveryandwellbeing.co.uk/enrolment)



## Unusual request

Mrs Hands and I are looking for a traditional red phone box to restore without it costing the school a huge outlay initially. If you know of anyone to help with this, please let us know. Thank you.



Congratulations to Miss Taylor on a milestone birthday over half term!


I'm looking forward to being in school tomorrow with our year 11 geographers and historians for revision. This will be followed by a super event at The Greig Hall as they celebrate the *Grand Opening*. I'll be around to see our fantastic *Alcester Rock Academy* about 5pm. Thanks to staff giving up their weekend for these causes. Also to our maths staff for next Saturday's session.

Isn't it lovely to feel a bit of sunshine appearing this week. I look forward to catching up with you very soon. As ever, thank you for your on-going commitment and support. This is never taken for granted.

Best wishes

*Sarah Mellors*  
Headteacher

1	15	5	77	90	66
H	P	B	Ir	Th	Dy
hydrogen 1.0079	phosphorous 30.97	boron 10.81	iridium 192.22	thorium 232.04	dysprosium 162.50



## Alcester Youth Theatre Company Presents

# THE DRACULA SPECTACULA


A Spooky Musical  
Book & Lyrics by John Gardiner  
Music by Andrew Parr

**The Greig Hall Alcester B49 6AD**  
**10 & 11 March 2023 - 7:30pm**


Tickets available at The Greig Hall box office Tues-Thursday 12-2pm  
 or from PSW in Bull's Head Yard, Alcester

Adults £5  
 Concessions\* £3

\*Concessions apply to anyone under the age of 16,  
or over the age of 60



For more information scan the QR code or email:  
[alcesteryouththeatrecompany@gmail.com](mailto:alcesteryouththeatrecompany@gmail.com)



## The science of crime by *The Detective Project*



*The Detective Project* were in school today delivering a STEM session on forensic science.

Pupils in year 8 and 9 were presented with a crime scene, where they had to gather as much evidence as possible to determine what had happened. Students were shown how UV light and fluorescent powder is used to find fingerprints at crime scenes, and then had the opportunity to mark their own fingerprints using ink strips.

They were given the opportunity to interview a leading suspect, and then had to make their decisions as to what had happened to the victim and who the assailant was.

Such an informative STEM session.

*Miss Wincup*







## History theatre shows for our year 11s...

This past week the History Department have attended three of the School History Scene theatre shows at the Palace Theatre in Redditch, which help aid students in not only knowledge for their GCSE but also exam technique.

Each show consists of a 'grade-booster' workshop, showing students how to improve their exam grades, and an interactive play that dramatises key elements of the specifications. These workshops then lead on to further work back in the classroom which will be undertaken nearer to

their exams. The shows give pupils a sense of immediacy with enhanced historical understanding and a remarkable retention of knowledge that comes with such close engagement.

The students were a credit to the Academy and it's always good to get out and experience History out of the classroom. Thanks so much to Miss Bartlett, Miss Clarke and Miss Green for coming and helping and to Mr Rossiter for organising.

*Miss Bishop*

## Science Desert Island Challenge

On Thursday, the Science Department welcomed back fifteen year 6 students from Dunnington Primary, to complete our desert island challenge. This week their task was to make a water filter from charcoal, sand and pebbles, and make a rope from plastic bags.

### Water filter

The students were given an empty bottle, charcoal powder, fine sand, pebbles and gravel to make a filter to turn dirty water into something that could, in theory, be drinkable. They worked together to put a layer of each into the bottle, then poured the dirty water in. The filters were left to work and eventually clear water dripped out of the holes in the bottom of the bottle and was collected in a beaker. The students then used Universal Indicator paper to test the pH levels of the water – anything between 6.5 and 9 is acceptable as drinking water in the UK. Most results showed that the filtered water had a pH of 8 – a success! The students were also given

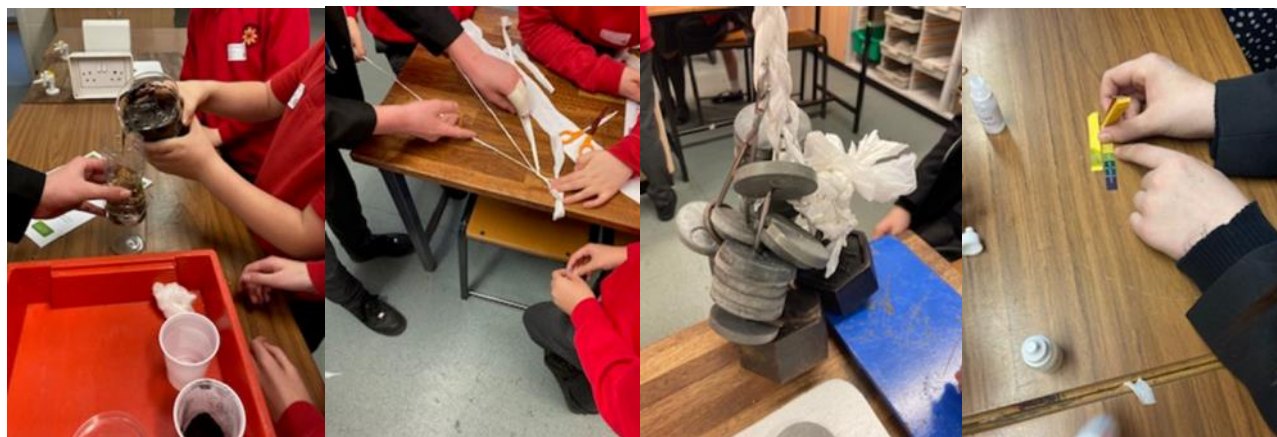
solutions of milk, lemon juice, salt water and sugar solution in order to compare the pH levels.

### Rope

The second part of the morning was spent making rope from recycled plastic bags. Imagining that they were making a rope to hold a raft together, the students were tasked with making the strongest rope they could from strips of plastic. There were a variety of methods used, but in the end the rope made by Jack, Jake and Henry was the strongest. They twisted their strips of plastic first, and then plaited each twist. Their rope held a total mass of 5.6kg!

Once again, we had some fantastic year 9 helpers – Jasmine, Charlotte, Zac and Ben who worked brilliantly with the younger students and really were a credit to the school.

*Mrs Passantino*



# Friends of Alcester Academy

## Free Fundraising

We are now registered with Easyfundraising, which means you can help us for free.

It's easy and completely FREE! These donations really mount up, so please sign up to support us at: [Easyfundraising Friends of Alcester Academy PTA](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/support-a-good-cause/friends-of-alcester-academy-pta)

## Diary Dates

Family Easter Bingo—Friday 17th March

Summer Bash—Saturday 15th July

easyfundraising

Our 2023 fundraising target is... **£ 4'500**

Turn your online shopping into everyday magic for **Friends of Alcester Academy - PTA** with easyfundraising

You shop, brands donate towards our fundraising target. It won't cost you any extra.

How to sign up and help us hit our target

- 1 Visit the link below or scan the QR code [www.easyfundraising.org.uk/support-a-good-cause](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/support-a-good-cause)
- 2 Search for us
- 3 Your favourite brands donate whenever you spend with them

Booking.com eBay M&S DEbenhams Argos Tui Huggo

JOHN LEWIS Apple viking ASOS BT JUST SAY 7,000+ online brands

Download the easyfundraising App

GET IT ON Google Play

Download on the App Store

Excellent 3,245 reviews on 11 Trustpilot

## Meeting Dates

**Thursday 9th March 2023**

If you would be interested in joining in with the PTA please email:

[friends@alcesteracademy.org.uk](mailto:friends@alcesteracademy.org.uk).

We meet once a month either online or via Microsoft TEAMS. If you don't have time to commit but would like to help at events as a volunteer please let us know.

ALCESTER ACADEMY PRESENTS

Family **BINGO** Night

**Friday 17th March**

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 via PTA events or via the school office

<https://www.pta-events.co.uk/friendsofalcesteracademy>

**Parent Carer Webinar**  
**Tuesday 28 February 2023**  
**12 - 1pm**

**Coventry and Warwickshire RISE**

Warwickshire County Council

WARWICKSHIRE PARENT CARER VOICE

RISE



## Celebrate La Chandeleur!

In France, La Chandeleur marks the end of the Christmas period. It is exactly 40 days after Christmas Eve. It marks the return of light, a symbol of protection and prosperity. To mark this occasion and to celebrate Shrove Tuesday, the MFL faculty are running a pancake competition.

The task is to make and decorate a pancake, preferably with a French theme and then to attach a photo of your pancake to the assignment on Google classroom.

Teachers will go through the task in lessons.

The deadline for entries is Monday 27 February and there will be prizes to be won!

*Mrs Weatherley*

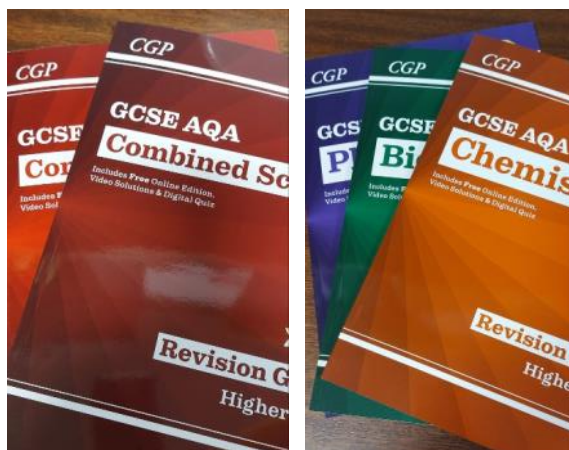


## Year 10 revision guides

Available direct from the science department with a cash payment.

Sets 1 to 3 need to purchase three separate books. Price is £9 in total.

For Sets 4 and 5 there is a combined book. Price is £6 each.



## TEXTACADEMY

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



I'm being bullied - I don't know what to do -

textacademy to 07563130478

with your message

or

email your message to:

textacademy@alcesteracademy.org.uk

**07563130478**



## Photography of the Week



Stratford's ferris wheel captured through the lens by Aidan, year 9.  
This incredible photo explores reflection photography and grey scale editing.

Well done, Aidan!

*Miss Nemeshanyi*

## Useful Diary Dates

Monday 27th March—Year 11 mocks start  
Wednesday 1st March—D of E Silver Training. NEU Strike Day.  
Thursday 2nd March—World Book Day (KS3)  
Saturday 4th March—Year 11 Revision for English and MFL in school  
Thursday 9th March—PTA meeting on line 7pm  
Friday 10th March—Non uniform day for PTA donations to be confirmed after half term  
Weekend of 11th/12th March—Silver D of E and Mock Trial trip  
Monday 13th March—Year 7 Maths trip/Work Experience Week for Year 10  
Tuesday 14th March—Year 8 Maths trip  
Tuesday 14th/15th March—Year 11 Hospitality and Catering Practical Exam  
Wednesday 15th and Thursday 16th March—NEU Strike days  
Thursday 16th March—Year 11 Field Trip to Bristol (geography)  
Friday 17th March—PTA Bingo Night. Fund Raiser  
Monday 20th March—Year 8 Super Learning Day *Talking Heads*  
Tuesday 21st March—Year 11 photo  
Wednesday 22nd March—Year 11c Performing Arts Controlled Assessment Date  
Thursday 23rd March—Year 9 Most Able trip. Year 10 Parent Forum on exams.  
Friday 24th March—Year 11 Music Controlled Assessment Date  
Monday 27th March—Year 10 exams begin  
Thursday 30th March—Sports Awards Evening. Invited students.  
Friday 31st March—End of term. Finish at 12.35pm. One way system on Gerard Road in operation.

This list is not exhaustive.

## HOUSES AT ALCESTER ACADEMY

### Winners of Maths House Competitions

#### Year 7 designing a piece of art involving tessellation:

Winners: Jasmine (Ragley), Grace (Billesley), Emma (Greville),  
Harry (Ragley), Harry (Oversley), Seb Cox (Ragley), Eva (Ragley),  
Aiden (Billesley).



#### Year 8 and year 9 both competed in a maths relay race, against the other houses.

For the year 8 relay race:

- 1st Billesley
- 2nd Ragley
- 3rd Oversley
- 4th Greville

For the year 9 relay race:

- 1st Overlsey
- 2nd Ragley
- 3rd Greville
- 4th Billesley

Well done everyone!

*Miss Kavanagh and Miss Home*



## Epraise Leaderboard—this week

### Top Students—this week:

1	Ted	11BR	18 points
1	Luke	11BR	18 points
3	Finley	11BR	17 points
4	Charlie	7TN	15 points
4	Annabelle	7LE	15 points
6	Ashton	11BA	14 points
6	Ashlyn	8MO	14 points
6	Ollie	8MO	14 points
6	Sophie	8MA	14 points
6	Lottie	8MA	14 points

### Top Staff—this week:

1	Mr Bastock	487 points
2	Mr Martin	410 points
3	Miss Burgess	278 points
4	Mrs Weatherley	260 points
5	Mr Bowater	238 points
6	Mr Yarrington	232 points
7	Mr Rossiter	230 points
8	Miss Lewis	194 points
9	Mrs Scott	185 points
10	Mr Jones	177 points

### Top Tutor—this week:

1	11BR	268 points
2	7LE	245 points
3	8MA	237 points
4	8MO	213 points
5	8BI	169 points
6	7KA	163 points
7	8NE	159 points
8	9HL	156 points
9	11BA	152 points
10	7WI	146 points

### Top Subjects—this week:

1	Maths	625 points
2	Science	563 points
3	Geography	406 points
4	History	303 points
5	IT	279 points
6	English	276 points
7	French	261 points
8	Art	165 points
9	Computing	92 points
10	Media Studies	90 points

## HOUSES AT ALCESTER ACADEMY

Congratulations year 9 **Oversley** for scoring the most House points for your debate competition!

Thanks to Maths for their House competitions with year 7, 8 and 9 this week.

Well done to all of the entries for the Valentine's Day House competition.

Winners will be announced in the bulletin on the first week.

Keep your eyes peeled next half term for our Easter House competition!

**Top House this week:** **Oversley**

**Top House this half term:** **Greville** (What an amazing half term, well done Greville!!)

**Top Epraise points this week:** **Greville**

**Top Epraise points this half term:** **Greville**

**Top students on Epraise this week:**

**Billesley** – Annabelle (7LE)

**Ragley** – Luke (11BR)

**Greville** – Ted (11BR)

**Oversley** – Sophie (8MA)

*Miss Lewis*

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

### UPDATED INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

The Supreme Court recently reached a decision in the case of *Platt v Isle of Wight Council* which has clarified the law on unauthorised leave, including holidays, during term time. The parents of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that they attend school on a regular basis. The Supreme Court has made clear that attending school 'regularly' means that the children must attend school on every day that they are required to do so. As such, the parents of any child who is absent from school without authorisation for any length of time are likely to be considered as committing an offence under s444 of the Education Act 1996.

Head Teachers retain the ability to authorise leave in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. When considering such requests for a leave of absence, the school are obliged to act within the law. Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. If the leave is granted, head teachers are able to determine the number of school days a child can be absent for.

It is for the Head Teacher to decide what is 'exceptional' and it is at their discretion if the circumstances warrant the leave to be granted. The school can only consider Leave of Absence requests which are made by the 'resident' parent.

*Each application for a leave of absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.*

Where applications for leave of absence are made in advance and refused, the child will be required to be in school on the dates set out in the application. If the child is absent during that period, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence, which may result in legal action being taken against the parent(s), by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Failure to make an application for leave in advance can also result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued to the parent(s).

All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service, part of Warwickshire County Council.

**It is important to note**, Fixed Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each absent child, (for example 2 children and 2 parents, means each parent will receive 2 invoices in the amount of £120 each, totalling £240 for both children, this is reduced to £60 per child if paid within 21 days).

Where a Fixed Penalty Notice is not paid within the required timeframe as set out on the notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal proceedings under S444 Education Act 1996.

Fixed Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Warwickshire County Council's Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices.

**Your child's progress academically as well as socially is our shared priority**

**Warwickshire School pupils recorded 37,021 half day sessions of absence due to holiday in the Autumn/Spring terms 2021/22.**



## Attendance News

**Whole School: 93.2%**

**Top Tutors:**

**7LE—97% - Top across the whole school**

**8MO—94.2%**

**9SO—96.4%**

**10YA—96.6%**

**11BR—95.9%**



**“Attend today, and achieve tomorrow.” Mrs Taylor—Attendance Officer**

### Term Dates

#### SPRING TERM 2023

**Back to school**

Spring Term ends (Easter)

**Monday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 at 12.40pm

#### SUMMER TERM 2023

**Summer Term begins**

May Bank Holiday

Bank Holiday

Half Term

**Back to school**

Summer Term ends

*School closed*

**Monday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Monday 29<sup>th</sup> May – Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2023

**Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

Friday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2023 at 12.40pm

*Monday 24<sup>th</sup> & Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> July 2023*

*Disaggregated teacher training days*

#### AUTUMN TERM 2023

*School closed*

*Friday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023*

*Disaggregated teacher training day*

*Monday 4<sup>th</sup> & Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023*

*Teacher training days*

**Autumn Term begins**

**Years 7 and 11 only**

**Years 8, 9 and 10 only**

All students back

*School closed*

**Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

**Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2023

*Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2023*

*Teacher training day*

Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October – Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2023

Half term

**Back to school**

Autumn Term ends

**Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2023 at 12.40pm

## Magnificent Maths and Phenomenal Physics Event: Open Day

Saturday 18 March 2023

10:00 AM - 04:00 PM

Location: Elm Bank, Coventry University, Mile Lane, Coventry, CV1 2LQ

Cost: Free

<https://www.coventry.ac.uk/research/about-us/research-events/magnificent-maths-and-phenomenal-physics-event/>

Ever wondered what maths and physics researchers really do? Interested to see how science at Coventry University is changing lives? If so, then our Magnificent Maths and Phenomenal Physics event is for you.

The event sees Coventry University's research Centre for Fluid and Complex Systems (FCS) open its doors to the general public for the first time, with experiments, science shows, talks, and more. Visitors can observe the "little earth" experiment, understand how we predict storms and weather patterns, get a glimpse into the revolution of quantum computing, and the mathematics of social interactions.

Anyone with a passion for science is welcome (Recommended Age 12+). Come and meet our scientists and explore the world through their eyes for one day only. Feel free to drop in at any point during the day to explore the world of maths and physics.



## Congratulations on completing your training...

Well done to Jess, Em, Jacob and Charlie who have worked really hard to complete their Student Librarian training—they have learnt about the role of the library, the stock areas and how they are stored, how to issue and return items.

They are friendly, helpful and polite to other students and visitors and attend regularly to help me in the LRC.

Well done and thank you!

*Mrs Hands*

Learning Resource Centre Manager





## In science news this week...

### Hidden layers of melting rock found lurking beneath Earth's crust

Just recently, researchers discovered something new about the layer of partially molten rock that sits just beneath Earth's cold outer skin, and it could help us better understand the mechanisms behind the churning flow deep under our feet. This flexible band of hot material is known as the asthenosphere, and it is generally considered mostly solid, with some liquid material that weakens the overall structure. A study led by researchers at the University of Texas has identified distinct qualities in the flow and density of a thin section of the asthenosphere, resolving boundaries to zones within the layer that could extend around the world. Having a clear map of differences in the echo of seismic waves passing through Earth's guts could help us pin down the activities that drive the movements of the tectonic plates floating on the planet's surface.



### US shoots down Chinese surveillance balloon: what can they actually see?

These days, imaging is conducted across different regions of the electromagnetic spectrum. Humans see in a certain range of this spectrum, the visible spectrum. And so if you have a camera and you take a photograph of your dog, that's a visible photograph. That's one of the things spy aircraft do. They take regular photographs, although they have very good zoom capabilities to be able to magnify what they're seeing quite a lot. But you can also gather different kinds of information in other parts of the electromagnetic spectrum. Another fairly well-known one is infrared. If it's night time, a camera operating in the visible part of the spectrum is not going to show you anything. It's all going to be dark. But an infrared camera can pick up things from heat in the dark.



### JWST has accidentally detected a tiny asteroid 'hidden' between Mars and Jupiter

Using Failed observations of a specific target using the JWST have resulted in something way more interesting. In the belt of asteroids that drifts between Mars and Jupiter, the space telescope spotted a previously unknown, and exceptionally tiny, asteroid. The yet-unnamed chunk of rock measures just 100 to 200 meters across and is quite probably the smallest object yet picked up by the JWST. It's not only a magnificent demonstration of the JWST's capabilities, it suggests those capabilities can be harnessed to better categorize the millions of pieces of rubble lurking in the Main Belt.

### Scientists discover a weird new form of ice that may change how we think about water

Scientists rattling normal frozen water around in a jar of ultracold steel balls have discovered a previously unknown form of ice, closer to liquid water than any other ice yet. This is amorphous ice, a form not found in nature on Earth. That's because its atoms are arranged not in a neat repeating crystalline pattern, but jumbled up all higgledy-piggledy, an atomic omnishambles. The amorphous ice emerging from the team's experiments, a process called ball milling, is unlike any amorphous ice ever seen. Researchers led by chemist Alexander Rosu-Finsen, formerly of University College London, have named the new form medium-density amorphous ice (MDA).



## NEW for World Book Day® 2023!

Following feedback from schools, young people and parents, the World Book Day £1/€1.50 book tokens will be changing from paper to digital tokens for secondary schools.



SCAN the QR CODE  
to get your World Book Day  
DIGITAL BOOK TOKEN

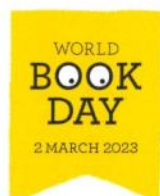
Distributing and exchanging the digital tokens will be easy - your school will be emailed their digital book token which can then be forwarded on to students via email or your school app.

To exchange the digital book token for a free World Book Day £1/€1.50 book or to get £1/€1.50 off a full price book or audiobook costing £2.99/ €3.99 or more, simply scan the barcode using a mobile phone/ tablet at the checkout.

Not all retailers will be able to scan the digital barcode and some may require a printed version of the book token, please check with your nearest participating retailer.

Find your nearest participating retailer at: [worldbookday.com/participating-retailers](http://worldbookday.com/participating-retailers).

We look forward to celebrating World Book Day with you on Thursday 2 March 2023.



## £1 Book Token

Secondary Schools (UK)

World Book Day® changes lives through a love of books and reading. Our mission is to promote reading for pleasure, offering every child and young person the chance to choose and have a book of their own. We hope you will join us in celebrating the joy of reading. Visit [worldbookday.com](http://worldbookday.com) for reading tips, videos, activities and brilliant recommendations from your favourite authors. Your £1 book token is available below.

The World Book Day £1 books are a gift from booksellers, who fully fund the cost of the £1 book token redemptions. Check with your local bookseller what plans they have in place for World Book Day. Please note:

- Only **ONE TOKEN** can be used per transaction.
- Token is for young person's individual use.
- Offer valid **16 February 2023 – 26 March 2023** inclusive.
- The book token barcode can either be scanned from your phone/tablet screen or printed out and shown in-store. Please check with your local bookseller before visiting if they can accept the barcode on mobile devices.
- The digital £1 book token cannot be redeemed online.

Visit our FAQ page to answer all your questions:  
[worldbookday.com/about-us/frequently-asked-questions](http://worldbookday.com/about-us/frequently-asked-questions)  
To contact the World Book Day team, email [wbd@education.co.uk](mailto:wbd@education.co.uk)

**HOW TO TRAIN YOUR  
DRAGON  
20 YEARS**

**WIN A FIERY FAMILY ADVENTURE!**

Celebrate 20 years of Cressida Cowell's magical series with a chance to win a trip to Heide Park in Germany, the theme park that is home to an entire *How to Train Your Dragon* land. PLUS lots of extra goodies to be won.

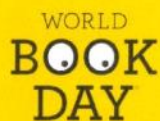
To enter and for full terms and conditions visit [worldbookday.com/HowToTrainYourDragon](http://worldbookday.com/HowToTrainYourDragon)



Changing lives through a love of books and reading

World Book Day® is a charity sponsored by National Book Tokens  
Registered charity number 1079257 (England and Wales) | Registered company number 03783095 (UK)




 WORLD  
BOOK  
DAY

## WORLD BOOK DAY 2023

### SECONDARY DIGITAL BOOK TOKEN INFORMATION SHEET

#### HOW TO DOWNLOAD

##### THE £1/£1.50 DIGITAL BOOK TOKEN:

- Click on the relevant button to [download the book token](#) in pdf format.
- Forward the digital book token link or downloaded pdf to students/parents by email or via your school app. The book token pdf can be printed out for students who don't own a mobile device. Please ensure each child only has one token.
- Students can also download the token by scanning the QR code on the World Book Day poster sent to your school. Posters are also available to download and print [here](#).

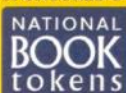
**REMINDER: THE WORLD BOOK DAY DIGITAL BOOK TOKENS ARE  
VALID FROM THURSDAY 16 FEBRUARY TO SUNDAY 26 MARCH 2023**

#### HOW TO REDEEM

##### THE £1/£1.50 DIGITAL BOOK TOKEN:

- Show the digital book token on your mobile phone/tablet at the checkout to exchange the book token for a free World Book Day £1/£1.50 book, or to get £1/£1.50 off a full price book or audiobook costing £2.99/£3.99 or more.
- Not all retailers will be able to scan the digital barcode and some may require a printed version of the book token, please check with your [nearest participating retailer](#) before visiting.
- The digital book tokens are 'single-use only' and should only be used once by each student. Teachers should forward the same digital token to all students which will work for all students within the school.
- The digital book tokens cannot be redeemed online. For more information please visit our [FAQs](#).

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Changing lives through a love of books and reading

World Book Day\* is a registered charity sponsored by National Book Tokens  
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## World Book Day fun at Alcester Academy

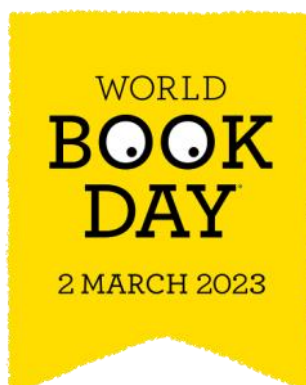
World Book Day is on Thursday 2nd March and we have an array of exciting activities planned for our KS3 students. Year 7 and 8 pupils will all need a competition entry card (to be handed out by tutors) on the day.

### Guess the Extract

We are running a *Guess the Extract* competition. During your lesson, numerous extracts will be read out by teachers and students. You will then write down on your entry card which book you think the extract is from. Clues MIGHT be provided!

### Guess the Character

The entry card will also have fifteen character descriptions printed on it. Fifteen members of school staff will be wearing a badge which matches the description of the characters!



Just guess the character, and then find the member of staff with the relevant badge!

### Dressing Up—Non Uniform

All pupils in years 7 and 8 are welcome to wear non school uniform on World Book Day. There will be prizes for the best dressed book character. Staff will of course dress up too! We are charging £1.50 and all proceeds will be

used to buy more books for the English department and the LRC.

Mrs Farnell  
Head of English



## Pancake Perfection

'Year 9 have designed, made and presented pancakes this week. We have had a focus on presentation techniques. Some of these look amazing. I hope they make some more for their family and friends in half term next week, I know I will. *Mrs Megee*





# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) SOLUTIONS

AI solutions are becoming increasingly popular. Trained on vast datasets of text (such as books, articles and websites) in order to learn patterns and relationships, AI solutions can generate text, images, audio, video, code or synthetic data, and can be used for things such as crafting poems or books, creating digital imagery or delivering video content. Recently there's been significant discussion in relation to the benefits and risks of AI solutions, with many undecided on whether it will be a force for good or potentially reduce the need for some job roles.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### ROOM FOR INACCURACY

AI solutions, such as language models, generate their responses purely based on the data they've been trained on, which often comes from sources on the Internet. Whilst questions will often illicit relevant responses, if some of the information they've been 'fed' is incorrect, it follows that the answers too may contain factual errors or inaccuracies.

### REINFORCING BIAS

AI solutions, such as those generating content or images, can perpetuate existing biases present in the data they were trained, whether through the algorithms written by humans or the content taken from the web. This could easily lead to biased responses and potentially reinforce existing stereotypes, such as those around gender, race or disability.

### IRRELEVANT INFORMATION

AI solutions don't have the ability to understand the context or meaning behind a question or a user request. Although highly advanced, the AI relies entirely on the data it's been exposed to and is devoid of independent thought or reasoning, which could lead to irrelevant or even nonsensical responses to queries.

### LACK OF ACCOUNTABILITY

Fundamentally, AI solutions are machines or technology programmes that don't have the ability to take responsibility for the responses they generate. This could lead to confusion or misunderstandings in certain cases if the answers are taken as given. For instance, image-generative AIs can lead to output clearly derived from other peoples' content but without any attribution to the original source artist's work.

### STIFLING CREATIVITY

One of the potential risks of children and young people continually using AI solutions for things (such as their homework) is that eventually, they might become reliant on it. In the long term, this could potentially impact their development and hamper their ability to think creatively or solve problems independently without the aid of an AI tool.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

If possible, try to be around when your child uses any type of AI solution and employ content filters to try and reduce the chance of profanity or age-inappropriate subjects appearing in responses. As with any kind of technology, it's important to ensure that children are using AI solutions responsibly and to be there to enable opportunities to discuss their use as part of a safe environment.

### PROMOTE CRITICAL THINKING

Explain to your child that AI solutions can be used as one of many tools to help them research and learn, but that they shouldn't simply accept the responses they receive as the truth. Encourage them to question, verify and think critically about the information they get back – all of which apply equally to any website or platform they use.

### DISCUSS BIAS

Talk to your child about the potential biases that may be present in the data that AI solutions are trained on, and how these viewpoints might find their way into the responses that AI generates. Again, with many things children might read online, it's healthy for them to consider whether the information is factual and presented fairly.

### ENCOURAGE HUMAN INTERACTION

Not only should children supplement any use of software like AI with additional resources such as books and reputable internet sites, but they also should remember what they can learn from interaction with other people. Discussing things with teachers, relatives and friends isn't just an important and often invaluable aspect of learning – it's an essential part of life, too.

### CHECK SCHOOL RULES

Make yourself aware of any rules or guidance your child's school might have about the use of AI solutions. Most software is still extremely new, so many schools may not yet have a policy, however, it's important to make sure your child is aware of how to use it appropriately and will be using it for the right reasons.

## Meet Our Expert

Gary Henderson is the Director of IT at a large boarding school in the UK, having previously taught in schools and colleges in Britain and the Middle East. With a particular interest in digital citizenship and cyber security, he believes it is essential that adults and children alike become more aware of the risks associated with technology, as well as the many benefits.



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#WakeUpWednesday

Source: <https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/> | <https://generativeai.net/> | <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/mckinsey-explainers/what-is-generative-ai>



[www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com)



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## Calling all 4 to 21 year olds in Warwickshire!

We're inviting children and young people in Warwickshire to submit their ideas on what it means to be child friendly, as part of the Child Friendly Warwickshire competition run by Warwickshire County Council.

The competition is open to any child or young person who is in full-time education and lives or goes to school within Warwickshire. All they have to do is answer one simple question, which is:

**What does being child friendly mean to you?**

One winner from each of the four age categories will be chosen after the 27 February deadline to receive £2,500 from Child Friendly Warwickshire for their school or college to spend on projects related to our five outcomes and the themes from recent engagement with children and young people.

The themes covered are climate change and the cost of living, a desire for more open green spaces, access to mental health support, more opportunities such as clubs and activities and careers advice, and to see progress on the Safer Streets programme.

The prize money could be used for something like planning a visit to a local nature reserve, improving an existing play area, hosting a wellbeing day with yoga classes, or even purchasing new equipment for clubs and activities.

The winners and runners-up in each category will also have their work showcased at the 2023 Warwickshire Youth Conference, to be held in November.

Organised by young people, for young people, this event will offer a friendly and empowering environment to discuss important topics that are facing them today with the organisations who are making a difference in the community, amplifying the voices of tomorrow to help shape the county.

This competition is a way for children and young people to learn more about Child Friendly Warwickshire through creativity, and for their contributions to be heard so they themselves can be advocates for positive change. They can enter by submitting any form of artwork or media by the deadline of 27 February.

**More information can be found on our website:**

**[www.childfriendlywarwickshire.co.uk/childfriendlycompetition](http://www.childfriendlywarwickshire.co.uk/childfriendlycompetition)**

**COMPETITION TIME!**

**Calling all change makers**

Tell us what being child friendly means to you and you could win £2,500 for your school!

Submit a piece of media by email to [childfriendly@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:childfriendly@warwickshire.gov.uk) with your name, age, your school's name and address.

Closing date: 27 February 2023

For more information visit [www.childfriendlywarwickshire.co.uk](http://www.childfriendlywarwickshire.co.uk)

CHILD FRIENDLY

Warwickshire County Council

# SPORTS NEWS \* SPORTS NEWS \* SPORTS NEWS

## Lunchtime Sport for Spring 2

### Lunchtime Sport

Lunchtime clubs to start w/b Monday 27th February on a 2 week timetable:

Date:	Schedule
27/02/23	WEEK 1
06/03/23	WEEK 2
13/03/23	WEEK 1
20/03/23	WEEK 2

Sign ups can take place upon attendance at first practise

### Lunchtime week 1 – 1.45-2.15pm

Day	Extra-Curricular Club & Staff	Location
Monday	Year 8 Indoor Football - MO	GYM
Tuesday	Year 9 Indoor Football - PW	GYM
Wednesday	Year 11 Indoor Football - MO	GYM
Thursday	Year 7 Indoor Football – PE	GYM
Friday	Year 10 Indoor Football – MO	GYM

### Lunchtime week 2 – 1.45-2.15pm

Day	Extra-Curricular Club & Staff	Location
Monday	KS3 Girls Indoor Football - MO	GYM
Tuesday	KS4 Girls Indoor Football - PW	GYM
Wednesday		
Thursday	KS3 Girls Indoor Basketball - PE	GYM
Friday	KS4 Girls Indoor Basketball - MO	GYM

# SPORTS NEWS \* SPORTS NEWS \* SPORTS NEWS

## Extra-Curricular Sport for Spring 2

### After School Sport

- For this half-term there will be no 2-week sport timetable
- Sports clubs will be advertised in the bulletin each Friday for the week ahead
- This is due to the large amount of fixtures organised each week
- **Lunchtime clubs will continue to run on a two week timetable**

## Fixtures for Spring 2

Date	Fixture	Type	Location
28/02/23	Year 10 Football v Studley	Cup R2	AWAY
01/03/23	Year 7 Football v Studley (TBC due to IA)	Cup R2	HOME
02/03/23	ALL years Girls Rugby @ AGS	Friendly	AWAY
02/03/23	Year 10 Football v Malvern College	Friendly	HOME
06/03/23	Year 10 Football v Southam	League	AWAY
07/03/23	Year 7 & 8 Girls Football tournament (SS)	Tournament	AWAY
08/03/23	Year 9 Football v Studley	League	HOME
08/03/23	Year 7 and 8 Basketball v StBedes	Jr. NBA	HOME
09/03/23	Year 10 Football v Campion	League	HOME
09/03/23	Year 8 Netball tournament (SS)	Tournament	AWAY
13/03/23	Year 7 Football v Campion	League	HOME
14/03/23	ALL years Girls Rugby @ AGS	Friendly	AWAY
14/03/23	Year 9 Football v Henley	League	HOME
16/03/23	Year 8 Football v Studley (TBC due to IA)	League	HOME
20/03/23	Year 9 Football v StBenedicts	League	HOME
20/03/23	Year 10 Football v AGS	Friendly	AWAY
21/03/23	Year 11 Football v Malvern College	Friendly	HOME
21/03/23	Year 8 Football v Henley	League	AWAY
22/03/23	Year 7 Netball tournament (SS)	Tournament	AWAY
26/03/23	Year 8 Football v Henley	League	AWAY



## SPORTS NEWS \* SPORTS NEWS \* SPORTS NEWS

### Confirmed fixtures for w/b 27/2:

Tuesday 28/02 – Year 10 Football v Studley (AWAY)

Wednesday 1/03 – Year 7 Football v Studley (HOME) – Fixture TBC on Monday 27th due to IA on this date

Thursday 2/03 – Girls Rugby evening at AGS

Thursday 2/03 – Year 10 Football v Malvern College

### After School practise for w/b 27/2:

<u>Day</u>	<u>Extra-Curricular Club &amp; Staff</u>	<u>Location</u>
<u>Monday</u>	Year 8 Netball – Mrs Powell	Courts
<u>Tuesday</u>	Archery (Selected - Bowmen of Alcester) – Mr Powell	Gym
<u>Wednesday</u>	Year 11 Football – Mr Moffatt	Field
<u>Thursday</u>	Girls Rugby – Miss Watson Boys Rugby – Mrs Burgess Year 7 Netball – Miss Hammond/Mrs Powell	Field Field Courts

### Alcester Repair Cafe Bicycle Workshop

2pm - 5pm  
4th Thursday of the Month

Eric Payne Centre, B49 6AG

Make sure your bike is safe to use with our free check-up and maintenance workshop.

Volunteers will give your bike a check up and show you how to maintain it. Including puncture repair, chain lubrication, gears etc.

We can make sure you are riding in the correct position.

Some basic bike parts are provided for free.

<https://www.facebook.com/RepairCafeAlcester>



A bike workshop is taking place during half term—at the Alcester Repair Café—on Thursday 23rd February, where children will be shown how to look after their bike!

## SPORTS NEWS \* SPORTS NEWS \* SPORTS NEWS

### Student Spotlight:

Well done to Jessica in year 8 who participated in Irish Dancing at Wiltshire Feis in Swindon last weekend. Jessica came away from competition with a 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 8th place in the dances she participated in. An outstanding achievement from Jessica up against some strong competition from dancers across the country – well done!

Congratulations to Martha in year 10. Martha has passed her Level 1 Netball Umpires course.



### Reviews:

#### Basketball

Our year 9s played Studley on Wednesday in the semi-final of the SW Basketball Cup. After a competitive, even scored first quarter, things went slightly awry in the second with, seemingly, Studley hitting every shot and ours lipping out with regularity. This left us with a 14 point half time deficit to overcome.



Post half time the boys were magnificent. They got their defensive play sorted, restricting Studley to shooting from long range whilst we managed to create some good opportunities inside and gradually began to reduce the arrears. As time ticked down we continued to charge but, alas, at the buzzer we were five points short.

Although to lose a semi is heart-breaking, the boys should take great confidence from their second half performances and, as always, they were a credit to the Academy!

POM Kobe - Drove with power and rallied the team.

#### Netball

Year 9 (blue bibs) and 10 (purple bibs) both played Shipston at home on Monday. Two really good games and some excellent play by all.

Year 9 lost 7 - 14.

Year 10 lost 11 - 18.



## Vacancy—Deputy Headteacher



**Deputy Headteacher**

**Scale: DHT 16-21**

**Closing date: Friday 17th March at 12 noon**

**Interview date: Wednesday 29th and Thursday 30th March 2023**

**Starting: September 2023**

Are you an ambitious senior leader looking for a new challenge in a school of hard working and well behaved students? Could you inspire a team of teachers determined to deliver an engaging curriculum and secure the best possible outcomes for our committed students? Are you a leader who will develop staff, including the leadership team, and help them realise their own ambitions?

Alcester Academy is a high performing 11-16 school in the south of Warwickshire with 648 students on roll and a proven record of GCSE success. The Governors of Alcester Academy are seeking to appoint an inspirational and highly motivated senior leader, with the ability to work with energy and commitment to support the new Headteacher to work towards continued excellence. The provisional Progress 8 score for summer 2022 is +0.46

Please complete the standard Alcester Academy application form. Please be succinct and concise using Arial 12 font. Your application form should be submitted electronically to [admin@alcesteracademy.org.uk](mailto:admin@alcesteracademy.org.uk). The application deadline is 12 noon on Friday 17th March 2023. Interviews will provisionally take place on Wednesday 29th and Thursday 30th March 2023. If you have any questions with regard to this vacancy or wish to visit the school, please contact: [admin@alcesteracademy.org.uk](mailto:admin@alcesteracademy.org.uk) by email or telephone the school office on 01789 762285. We look forward to receiving your application.

*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.*

**ADVERT ON THE SCHOOL WEBSITE**



## Vacancy—Teacher of English



**Teacher of English**

**Starting September 2023 MPS/UPS**

**Closing Date: Friday 24th March 2023 at 12 noon**

**Interviews: Week commencing 17th April 2023**

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. 2019 results far exceeded National Averages and the department has a consistent and achievable target of 90%+ at grades 9-4, 70%+ at grades 9-5 and 40%+ at grades 9-7. The English results in 2022 placed us within the top 25% of schools nationally, with the school falling into the "well above" and "above average" P8 categories in whole school, English, Maths, Ebacc and Science.

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, Hayley Farnell, for an informal discussion, or simply complete the application form. More details regarding this post and an application pack is available by emailing: [admin@alcesteracademy.org.uk](mailto:admin@alcesteracademy.org.uk).

*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.*

**ADVERT ON THE SCHOOL WEBSITE**