Alcester Academy WEEKLY BULLETIN

8th November 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back. I hope that you had a superb half term break. Huge thanks to the staff who took the students to Iceland over the holiday. Their stories are amazing and the group were exemplary. Mrs Sandells has written about this later on. I'm certain that you saw a few photographs on X over half term @AlcesterAcademy.

Miss Bishop was also in Texas over half term and used the opportunity to experience teaching in the USA. This is a fascinating report for your interest later on in this week's issue. What a time to visit the USA as a historian as well!

Thank you School Captains

For taking over the bulletin before half term. I hope that you all enjoyed a very special look into life from a students' perspective for a week.

Thank you MBCC Construction in Redditch for giving up your volunteering time to help us out on site over half term. What a huge difference.

And also, I appreciate your fund raising contributions for the Royal British Legion by sponsoring poppies this week. To date, we have raised £300. With a slightly later half term, this crept up on me suddenly for 2024, and so I appreciate your support with a speedy turn around on these donations. Thank you. If your child would like to subscribe to a free Royal British Legion subscription, please follow this link: Youth Membership | Royal British Legion.

On Wednesday, we hosted a visit from the Regional Schools Commission. This was to meet with key staff as a result of our good practice in this area. We enjoyed speaking openly about the strengths of the school, and highlighting the barriers to supporting children fully with regard to the growth in mental health and SEND needs. I believe that the RSC are visiting a number of schools to glean information around this area. The visit was a fantastic reflection on the hard work of the staff in this particular area.

What's inside this week...

Page 5	***Key dates for this half term***
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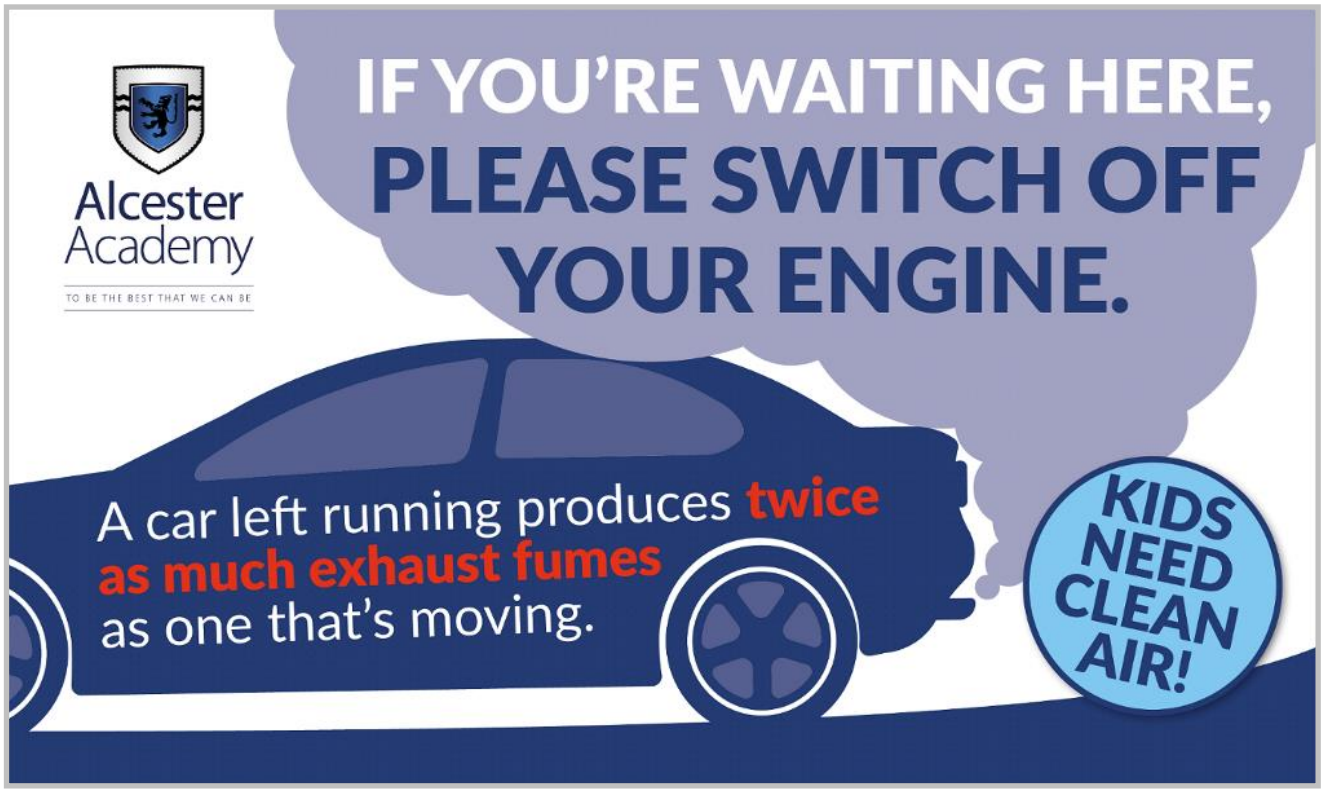
This week, we began a gentle transition to the MIS system Bromcom. Students should not have noticed a huge difference to be fair. We are beginning with the admin side that will be used to take lesson registers and transfer student details. We will keep you updated as the parent platforms get released that you need to be aware of. As a result of the transition this week, Epraise was disabled, and you therefore would not have got your usual reward updates. Hopefully, this will resume next week.

Year 9 Super Learning Day— *Working For Marcus*

Loudmouth visited us on Tuesday for a sensitive super learning day entitled *Working For Marcus*.

Working For Marcus is a safe and carefully structured child sexual exploitation prevention and awareness programme written and run by Loudmouth Education and Training. I was so proud of the maturity shown by the students.

We will always write to you ahead of these programmes so that you are aware of any content being delivered in school.



School Uniform

Miss Buckthorp and I had a positive meeting with the new owner of the Alcester National Schoolwear Centre this week. I have written to you all separately about this.

Lockdown

In the event of a full school emergency, the school may have to go into lockdown. I hope that this never has to happen but like me, I'm sure you have seen these incidents on the news over time in schools.

We will be practicing this procedure as a whole school next Thursday during lesson one. Students in years 7-10 have been told about this in assemblies this week by me, and their tutors will follow this up with instructions clearly laying out the procedure during a day next week. Year 11s will be informed of the practice by their tutors.

I will update you again once we have gone through this. Students with additional needs will be supported through this. Please do not worry. Students in years 8-11 are familiar with this drill.

Road Safety

We continue to have to speak to the students about road safety at 3.25pm. Too many children are walking down the road instead of the pathway at 3.25pm.

Could I ask drivers to be slow and courteous at this time along Gerard Road. It will help a lot. Thank you.

We will look at the further staggering of the exit of students to help alleviate this issue. I'll keep you updated.

Ofsted Parent View

If you haven't had time yet, please can you add your thoughts to this very short survey—www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/. Thank you.

If you have any concerns, please do reach out to school about these.

Thank you year 11 parents

We appreciated seeing so many of you at the online Parent Forum on Wednesday to look at key aspects of revision prior to the mocks beginning very soon. This was a recorded event and the link can be found on the website. www.alcesteracademy.org.uk/life-at-alcester-academy/examinations-/revision-guides---techniques

Congratulations to JJ in year 10

Jess competed in the British Open Feis last week for Irish Dancing.

Jess came first and is now an U18 British open premiership champion. We are extremely proud indeed. Well done Jess!

Remembrance 2024

We'll look out for you in Alcester on Sunday as many of the school community represent divisions and organisations for Remembrance 2024. Thank you to our wonderful students for doing this. It makes us all feel very proud indeed.

And so finally, I'll see many of you at the PTA FOAA bingo later. Eyes down! Thank you all for donations on 25th October towards our fundraising efforts. And year 11 join me in school tomorrow morning for the first Saturday School of their important journey towards mock examinations. Thanks to the MFL staff for giving up their time for this. Show rehearsals continue also. What a busy weekend ahead! I'm grateful to the staff team for all they make happen for our students.

Wishing you a peaceful and reflective weekend.

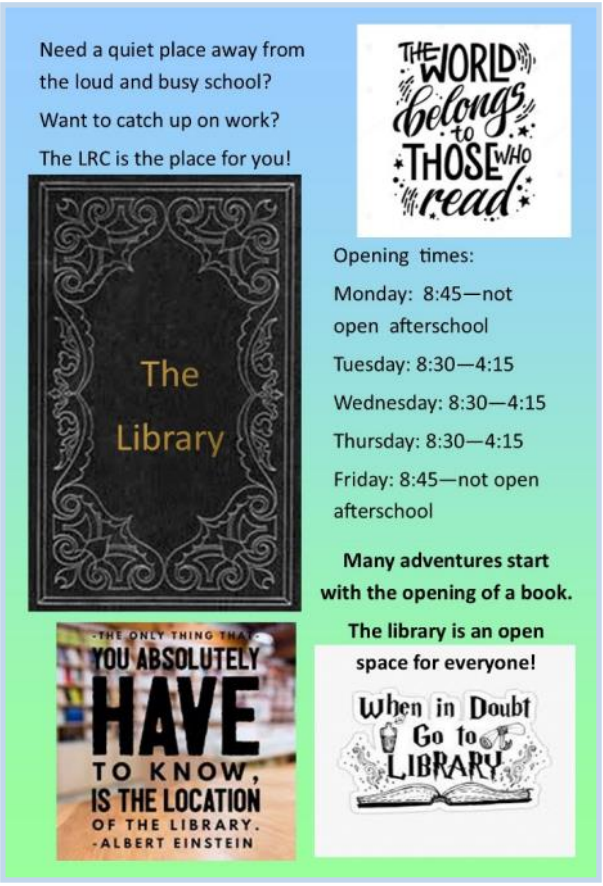
Sarah Mellors—Headteacher

Year 11 Revision Timetable

Day	Lunch 1.50-2.20pm	After school 3.30-4.15pm
Monday	**Sport Studies** *Study space - PE1*	
Tuesday	**Science** *Chemistry Clinic - S1* **Media Studies Catch Up** *Study space - English department rooms*	**English**
Wednesday	**Science** *Science rooms*	**French** **DT** **Computer Science**
Thursday	**ICT (iMedia)** *Study space - English department*	**Maths**
Friday	**Geography, German** *Study space - maths department* (M3)	**Science triple award**

Saturday School dates:

- 9th November - French (H) 9-10.30am
- 10th November - Geography virtual 1-3pm
- 16th November - English 9-10.30am and maths 10.45-12.15pm
- 23rd November - History 9-10.30am and religious studies 10.45-12.15pm



Attendance Updates

Whole School Attendance this week is 92.6%

Top tutors this week:

7RA with 96.2% attendance

8AN with 100% attendance!

9GA with 100% attendance!

10PL with 95.2% attendance

11MR with 100% 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

Some key dates for this half term

Monday 11th November 2024	Year 11 SLD on Revision
Wednesday 13th November 2024	Careers Fair at the NEC for year 11
Thursday 14th November 2024	Friends meeting online 7pm
Week of 18th November 2024	Year 11 exam focus week and start of year 11 MFL speaking exams.
Week of 18th November 2024	Charlie and the Chocolate Factory Show week!
Thursday 21st November 2024	Friends meeting online 7pm
Friday 22nd November 2024	Gloucester Rugby Trip
Monday 25th November 2024	Year 11 Mocks—Day 1. School day changes to 3:2s.
Tuesday November 2026	Rock Academy Night at the Greig Hall
Friday 29th November 2024	*Stars in our School Day* to celebrate support staff
Thursday 5th December 2024	Year 10 parents' evening online
Friday 6th December 2024	St Nicholas' Night, Alcester
Thursday 12th December 2024	Friends meeting online 7pm
Tuesday 17th December 2024	Christmas Concert at St Nicholas Church, Alcester
Wed/Thursday 18/19th December 2024	Reward Trip Days TBC
Friday 20th December 2024	Break up 12.40pm. This will be our fundraiser for Save the Children, with the annual Christmas Jumper Day. Donations will be via the School Gateway.

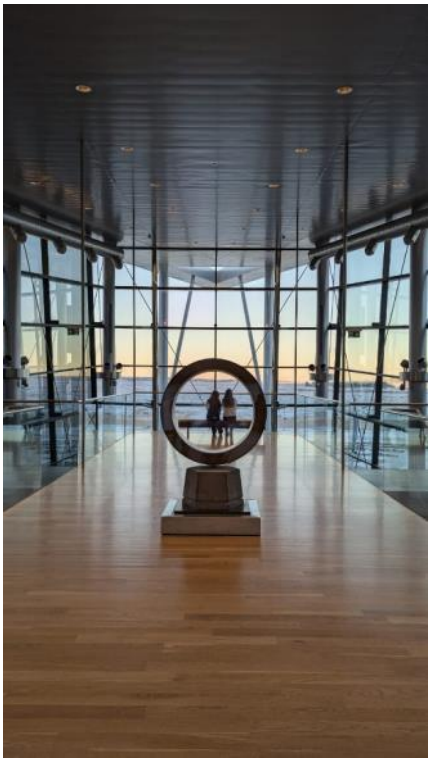
This is not necessarily a complete and final list of half term activities.

Exploring Iceland: A School Trip to the Land of Fire and Ice

Hallo! (hello in Icelandic)
It has been my dream to run a school trip to Iceland for some time, and it really did not disappoint. The land of fire and ice showed us its awesomeness in all its glory. Its always a little overwhelming taking thirty students through an airport but the students were brilliant despite the early start and we managed an efficient check in at Stansted airport on Saturday. The flight was uneventful and as we started to glimpse our first sight of the Icelandic landscape below, excitement began to build!

Landing in Reykjavik, we took the coach to the hotel and immediately got settled at the hotel before taking a walk in to Reykjavik, the capital. Reykjavik is a tiny city really and the students commented on how tiny it felt and also how industrial it was. There's a lot of change going on in the city centre at the moment so it was hard to get a feel for the culture and cosmopolitan side of its population. However, we soon stumbled upon the most important things—an Icelandic supermarket, souvenir stores and bakeries. Students were keen to spend some Icelandic krone! It was certainly entertaining handing over 900 Icelandic krone for a bar of chocolate (about £5)!

On the Saturday we awoke to the most beautiful blue cloudless skies with temperatures around minus two, and we couldn't wait to get on our coach tour of the Golden Circle. First stop, Heleidi Geothermal power plant. What a fascinating place. It was interesting to consider that this awesome natural power gives the Icelandic people this amazingly cheap and renewable energy, but with the ongoing risk of course of volcanic eruption! 20% of all Iceland's energy comes from geothermal power and 80% from its water. They really have harnessed their natural power sources to their advantage. After the power plant, we then took in other sights along the Golden Circle including Geysir (geothermal vent), the amazing Gullfoss Waterfall and the Thingvellir National Park, where we walked between the Eurasian and North American Plates! WOW! Along the way we took in some other cultural sights too including an Icelandic dairy farm where we sampled some ice cream, and an Icelandic horse farm.



After a long day of amazing sight seeing, we were soon back to the hotel and ready for our evening entertainment, a visit to a local geothermal swimming pool. In Iceland, local pools are free for children up to the age of 16 and this shows how much they value and love their children. This was a great experience and allowed the students to blow off some steam before venturing back to the hotel.

Out final day on Monday brought a very different set of weather conditions, but Iceland is still beautiful in its bleakness too, with rain, wind and cold temperatures. Our first stop was the sulphurous and smelly mud pots and geothermal vents at Seltun. We had a fascinating visit to the Reykjanes Peninsula where all the recent volcanic activity has taken place and we saw the recent lava flows, many of which were still emitting hot steam. As part of understanding the impact of this recent activity we stopped at Grindavik, a fishing town on the coast, which has been evacuated in the recent eruptions and is now entirely abandoned. It was so strange to drive through such a big town and see no one, with no open shops and no lights or signs of life in the homes. It is said that people will never be allowed to return here.

I can honestly say this has been a truly inspiring and wonderful trip and for many of the students, this was a real eye- opener. I had so many brilliant questions from the students whilst we were there as they soaked up their surroundings and made sense of their environments.

Thank you so much students for your participation and superb positivity even at 2.30am to catch our flight! And also takk (thank you) so much to Mr Bowater and Mrs Weatherley for giving up many days of their half term to make this trip what it was. □

Bless bless (good bye)
Mrs Sandells

My experience teaching History across the Atlantic

I recently had the unique opportunity to travel to the United States and visit Stratford High School in Houston, Texas, where I taught a one-off history lesson. As you can imagine, teaching across the Atlantic was an incredible experience!

The students were enthusiastic and eager to learn, bringing a different energy to the classroom that I thoroughly enjoyed. Walking into an American-style classroom, decorated with flags, medals, and sporting memorabilia, felt like stepping into a scene from a film—it is just as you'd imagine.

One of the highlights was seeing the excitement around the upcoming US election. The students were buzzing with opinions and questions, and discussing the political landscape with them was fascinating. They were curious to hear a British perspective and particularly interested in learning about the differences between our political systems. Being in the US during election season was incredibly interesting, as it's a much larger affair than we're used to back home.

Another memorable experience was attending an American high school football game. Stratford's team spirit was unlike anything I've seen! The entire school seemed to come together to cheer for their team, the Spartans. The cheerleaders, marching band, and the massive turnout of students, parents, and teachers created a truly unforgettable atmosphere.

All in all, it was an enriching experience, both culturally and professionally. I'm looking forward to bringing some of these insights and experiences back to Alcester Academy and sharing them with our students.

Miss Bishop

Tickets are now on sale!

We're excited to share that tickets for our upcoming school production of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* are now available to purchase!

Tickets are priced at £10 per person and will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. To secure your tickets, please make your purchase through the School Gateway. Once the purchase is complete, your child will receive a physical ticket in tutor time, which will be sent home.

With over 100 students involved, it promises to be a truly spectacular event, so don't miss your chance to support our talented cast and crew!

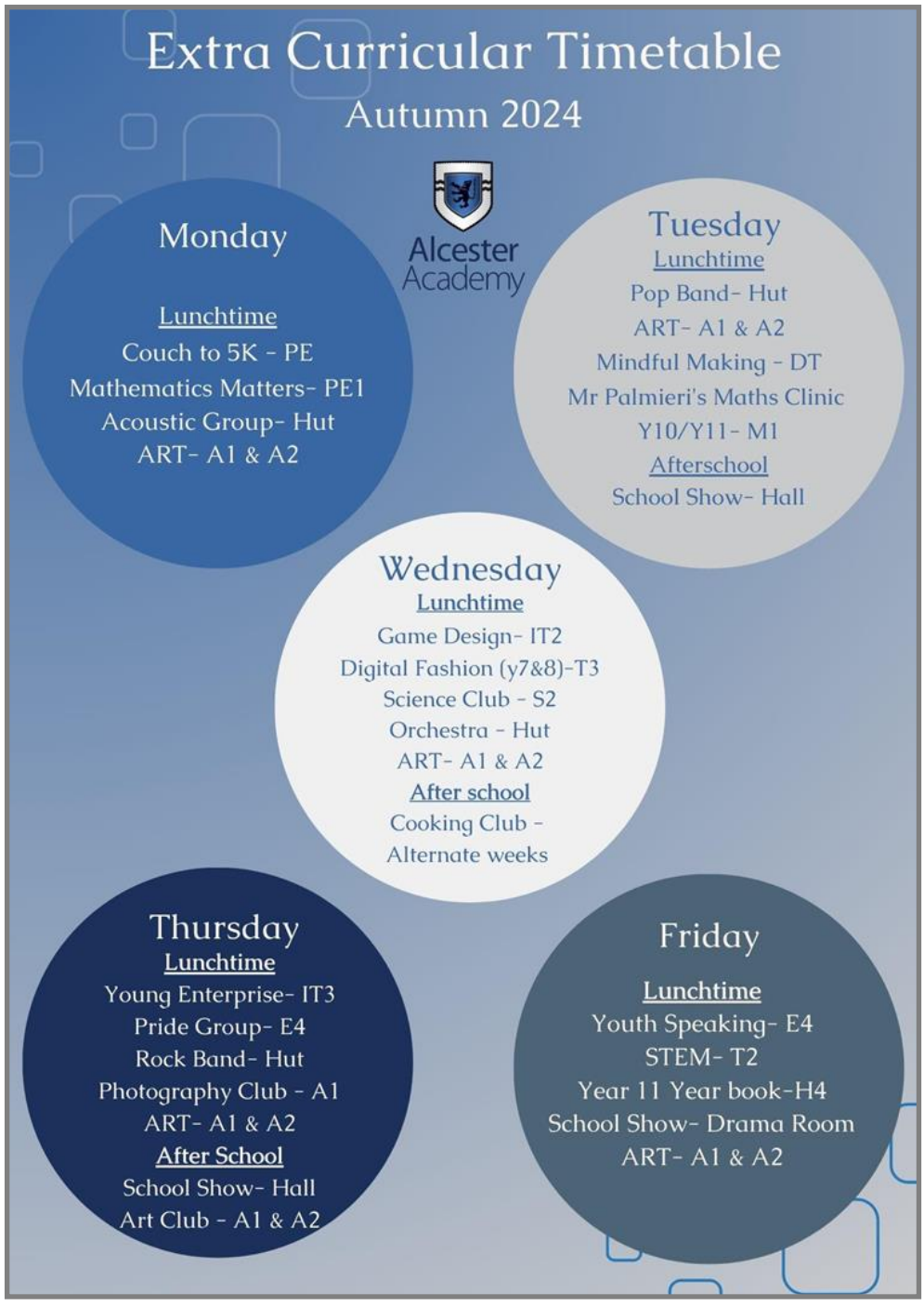
Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to welcoming you to the show.

Important Dates to Remember

Parents' Evenings

Thursday 5th December 2024	Year 10 Parents' Evening SchoolCloud
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



The Endangerlings:
Alcester Academy's Newest Hope in the 2025 Young Enterprise Competition

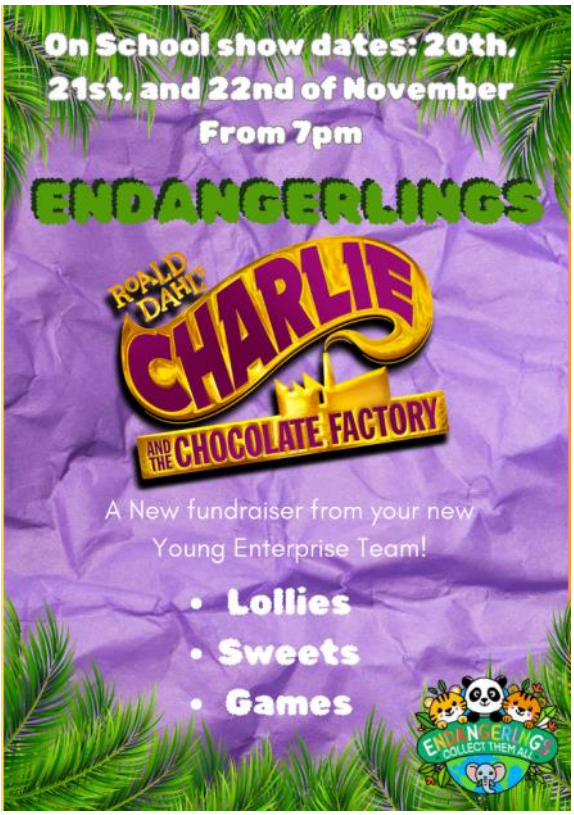
The Endangerlings are the latest Alcester Academy team to be taking part in the 2025 Young Enterprise Competition.

Our brand is focused on making sustainable and eco-friendly products to sell, which are themed around Endangered Animals. Our various products are designed to appeal to children of various ages and for animal enthusiasts alike. We aim to also educate people on the dangers these animals face, and therefore teach why they are so endangered.

At the upcoming school shows in late November, we will be selling sweet treats, and running *Guess the number of sweets in the Jar* games, in order to compliment the theme of the Charlie and the Chocolate Factory show whilst raising money that will fund the Endangerlings products.

Please support us!

The Endangerling Team



ALCESTER ACADEMY PRESENTS
Family
BINGO
TONIGHT
Night
Friday 8th November
Doors Open 6.30pm — Eyes down 7.00pm
1 Book (6 Games) - £2
6 Books (6 Games) - £10
HTTP://FRIENDSOFAA.SUMUPSTORE.COM/
SUPPORT US BY VISITING THE 'FRIENDS' ONLINE SHOP
Bar
Tuck Shop
& Snacks
available
Pre-booking recommended.
Book now online or via the
school office.
https://friendsofaa.sumupstore.com

Subject Lead for English

Member of the Extended Leadership Team
Salary scale: Leadership Group 2 (6-10)
Easter 2025 start or earlier
Closing date Friday 29th November 2024 at 12 noon
Interview date to be set

ADVERT ON THE SCHOOL WEBSITE

The Post

This is an exciting opportunity for a strong middle leader with a proven track record of personal, exemplary student outcomes. The successful applicant will be able to demonstrate experience of effective leadership and management in a middle leadership position, and a willingness to contribute to the whole staff team. Flexibility and the ability to innovate are desirable qualities, along with energy and capacity for hard work. The successful candidate will have a good understanding of what effective teaching and learning looks like for children of all abilities and be committed to enable all students to access the curriculum in order to fulfil their academic potential. They will be able to engage and enthuse students of all aptitudes. Resilience and drive are desirable qualities in order to ensure that students at Alcester Academy are provided with the very best life opportunities possible. The school currently offers numerous extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities, and for year 11s, numerous lunchtime, after school and key Saturday sessions.

The additional role within the extended leadership team will be determined around the successful candidates' strengths and the needs of the school at the time of appointment. Responsibilities will include the ability to contribute to the design and planning of interventions to promote outstanding progress at GCSE.

The Application Process

Please complete an Alcester Academy application form which can be found on our website www.alcesteracademy.org.uk/academy-information/vacancies. A written statement in support of your application is also essential. We do not consider CVs. Please email your completed application and any supporting documents to admin@alcesteracademy.org.uk. The application deadline is 12 noon on Friday 29th November 2024. An earlier shortlist may be created if there is an overwhelming number of applications.

If you have any questions with regard to this vacancy or wish to visit the school, please contact: head@alcesteracademy.org.uk

We look forward to receiving your application.

Alcester Academy

* SPORTS NEWS * SPORTS NEWS *

Student Spotlight

Lottie-Dot, year 9, Ragley Cheerleading

I am delighted to share with you the outstanding achievement of Lottie-Dot in year 9 who following a successful trial, has secured a place on Team England for 2024-2025.

Lottie has written a summary of her experiences below:

'I have been a cheerleader since I was three years old and I have always wanted to be on Team England. I have been out to Florida and watched Team England compete at the World Championships three times now, twice with my sister on the team. I sat in the ESPN Arena, desperate to one day compete on the team. After getting to the very last stage of the trials in 2022 and 2023, I nearly didn't have the courage to go this year, as I couldn't face not making it again. But this time I went in with a completely different mindset, knowing I may not get in, but if I didn't try I certainly wouldn't make it.

On Saturday, I checked myself in to the London-based gym, Talent Central, with some of my friends. After a bit, we all started warming up, and I had no expectation at all. Everyone was asked what position they were and they put us all into groups. The coaches were swapping athletes around and eventually I got a solid stunt group with a flyer and two boys underneath. Me and that group had been working really hard the whole session and were told to move on from what everyone else was doing to work on some harder things that they were thinking of putting in the competition routine.

We got invited back to day 2 and we were finishing where we left off. After a while, we moved on to doing 'one mans' where the strongest person in a stunt lifts up the flyer on their own. It wasn't an easy skill and everyone was struggling with it, but I used all of my power as I knew if I could do this well I should make the team.

At lunch time there was another cut and the majority of people left the trial in tears. After another gruelling session that afternoon, I got told that I had made the official Team England Cheerleading team 2024/25.

Now, the hard work really begins, with weekly training sessions in preparation for going to Florida, America to compete at the World Championships against different countries from all around the world. I never gave up on my dream.'

Well done from us all at Alcester Academy. We are very proud of your achievement and the resilience you have shown. We can't wait to follow your journey progressing towards the World Championships next year!

Jessica (year 10, Oversley) Irish Dancing

Jessica in year 10 put in an absolutely outstanding performance at the recent British Open Feis. Jessica is now an U18 British Open Champion after finishing in 1st place. What a fantastic achievement for Jessica and particularly when judged within the U18 age category. Many congratulations from us all at Alcester Academy on this achievement.

* SPORTS NEWS * SPORTS NEWS *

Dylan (year 10, Oversley) Football

Congratulations to year 10 student Dylan and the U15 Warwickshire County football team who played out a recent fixture versus Shropshire County. Dylan contributed to a fantastic 3-2 victory for Warwickshire in a fiercely contested and physical match held at Stratford Town FC before half term—well done!

Warwickshire Cross Country runners—Good luck!

Good luck to our three Alcester Academy county cross country runners who will be representing Warwickshire at an inter-county event held in Dudley this weekend. A brilliant achievement from Keegan, Marijke and Will to reach this standard—congratulations and good luck!

Fixture round up for the week

Our half term sport kicked off with our year 9 basketballers heading off to the SW District basketball tournament and our year 10 girls football team participating in the district football competition held at Stratford School.

Our year 9 entered two teams into the SW District basketball tournament. Both teams put in some fantastic team performances up against some strong competition from our local district schools. Our U14 A team finished in 3rd place overall and our U14 B team finished in 6th place. Well done to all students selected to represent the Academy at this event.

Congratulations!

Many congratulations to our U15 Girls Football team who won the South Warwickshire football tournament this week. Well done on this superb achievement girls!

* SPORTS NEWS * SPORTS NEWS *

Archery Coaching

A huge thank you to the Bowmen of Alcester for taking a group of our students through Archery coaching this half term. We look forward to resuming in the new year with a new group of students. It was brilliant to see the progress made from our students throughout their time working with the coaches and we look forward to resuming this opportunity for Alcester Academy students in the new year.

Next Week's After School Clubs

****THIS WEEKS SPORT**:**
W/B 11/11/24

Day	Extra-Curricular Club & Staff	Location
Monday	No clubs – Staff meeting	N/A
Tuesday	Year 10 + 11 Boys Basketball	Gym
Wednesday	Year 8 Basketball Tournament Year 7 and 8 Netball	AGS Courts
Thursday	Year 7 Boys Basketball Year 9, 10 + 11 Netball	Gym Courts

Next Week's Lunchtime Clubs

- Lunchtime sports clubs to start w/b Monday 4th November on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
- Lunchtime sport and intervention 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	MON - MO	WED - PE	FRI - TU
4/11	BOYS BASKETBALL (KS4)	SPORT STUDIES INTERVENTION–ICT3	GIRLS BASKETBALL (KS4)	YEAR 8 TABLE TENNIS
11/11	BOYS BASKETBALL (KS3)	SPORT STUDIES INTERVENTION–ICT3	GIRLS BASKETBALL (KS3)	YEAR 8 TABLE TENNIS
18/11	BOYS BASKETBALL (KS4)	SPORT STUDIES INTERVENTION–ICT3	GIRLS BASKETBALL (KS4)	YEAR 8 TABLE TENNIS
25/11	BOYS BASKETBALL (KS3)	SPORT STUDIES INTERVENTION–ICT3	GIRLS BASKETBALL (KS3)	YEAR 8 TABLE TENNIS
2/12	BOYS BASKETBALL (KS4)	SPORT STUDIES INTERVENTION–ICT3	GIRLS BASKETBALL (KS4)	YEAR 8 TABLE TENNIS
9/12	BOYS BASKETBALL (KS3)	SPORT STUDIES INTERVENTION–ICT3	GIRLS BASKETBALL (KS3)	YEAR 8 TABLE TENNIS

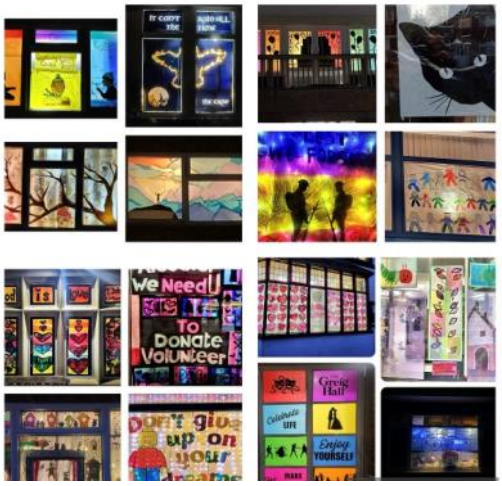
CONNECT WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Get ready to light up the dark winter evenings!

Join us in creating a magical outdoor gallery in Alcester, as Window Wanderland returns.

Window Wanderland is back in January 2025!

Join in the fun and create a magical window display in your community. This free event is for everyone!
Find out more and get involved here:
www.windowwanderland.com/area/alcester/



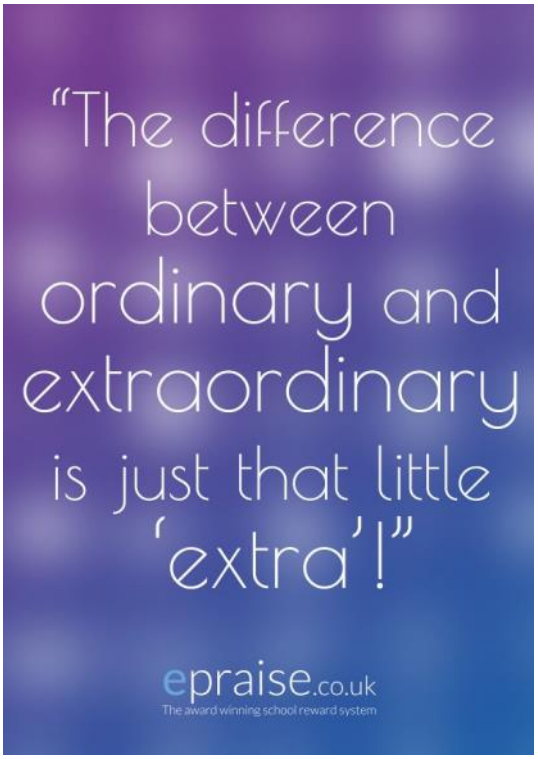
Free Workshop on 16th November!

We're hosting a creative workshop for 20 people on November 16th at 2pm in Alcester. If you're interested in joining us for a fun crafts afternoon, reserve your spot now: https://bit.ly/3AsTr4q
We hope to see you there!

The National Saturday Club is a partnership programme between Birmingham City University's College of Jewellery, Fashion and Textiles. It is aimed at giving 13–16-year-olds the opportunity to explore their creativity, discover their talents, develop their skills and study subjects they love for free, at their local university.

The National Saturday Club will run over sixteen sessions, where club members will have the opportunity to develop a range of creative craft and making skills. They will have access to BCU's Fashion, Textiles, Jewellery and Art and Design facilities with sessions led by inspiring BCU staff.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS CLICK:
Saturday Club, 'Make, Do & Mend' | Birmingham City University



CONNECT WITH OUR COMMUNITY

CONNECT WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Alcester Give and Take

Bring along your unwanted toys, books and games.
Pick up any that take your fancy.
No need to bring an item to take one.
A great way to find some Christmas gifts!

Saturday 9th November 10am - 12pm

Alcester Baptist Church
Church Street, Alcester
B49 5AJ

For more information contact alcestergiveandtake@hotmail.com