

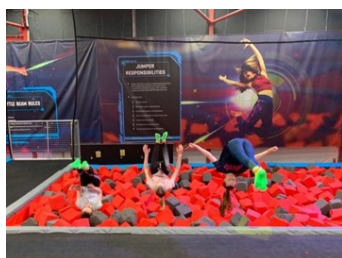
Alcester Academy NEWSLETTER

December 2019



HEAD lines...

I'm delighted to introduce a short summary of this term culminating in some superb activities this week for students and staff alike. Our reward trips to RUSH Trampoline Centre proved to be extremely popular. These are linked to positive behaviour and attendance. Yet again, we had a record number of children attending these. Many congratulations!



The Performing Arts team put together an exceptional Christmas Concert at St Nicholas Church on behalf of Alcester Academy again. All



of the performances were simply outstanding and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the staff and students involved in this; sincere thanks also to Reverend Guthrie for hosting the concert.

Our catering team managed to serve a delicious traditional Christmas dinner to over 350 students and staff yesterday. Wow! It was made even more cheery by Miss Buckthorp assisting with the plating up of each meal; something that most definitely needs to feature next year I think!



Dates for your diary

AUTUMN TERM 2019

Autumn Term ends Friday 20th December 2019 at 12.40pm

SPRING TERM 2020

School closed Monday 6th January 2020 Teacher training day

Spring Term begins Tuesday 7th January 2020

Half Term Monday 17th – Friday 21st February 2020

Back to school Monday 24th February 2020

Spring Term ends (Easter) Friday 3rd April 2020

SUMMER TERM 2020

Summer Term begins Monday 20th April 2020

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I am looking forward to our Christmas Jumper Day for 'Save the Children' on Friday and can't wait to see the array of festive knitwear for 2019! This is such a good cause.



As I take time to reflect upon the calendar year and this academic year so far, I am amazed at the opportunities presented to our students both in school and through our out of hours learning. To give just a small flavour these have included numerous sporting fixtures, Saturday and holiday schools, performing arts events to include Rock Academy gigs, FAME, the panto, the West End trip and the most able group, various Super Learning Days, the Mock Trial, the Bletchley Park trip, Marle Hall, Bear Grylls, German Pen Friends, Friendship Club, Kindness Club, Homework Clubs, Chess Club, Art, Textile club, The Doctor's Show, Geography field work to Stratford and London, D of E, the Careers Show, the Pancake Race, community events and many others. I am



sure you'll agree that this is an amazing offer for the students and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the staff for supporting these, and you also as parents and carers.

There is a definite correlation between the success of young people in terms of positive mental health, confidence and well-being and the additional opportunities that they become involved in.

As featured last week in the parent bulletin, we sadly say farewell to Mr Barker, Maths and Miss Staniland, Attendance. I would like to thank these staff for their commitment to the school and the students over recent years and wish them the very best for the future. Mr Wright, Acting Headteacher, leaves us too in his formal capacity but will remain a close ally to the school and an advisor to me as I take up the reigns fully as Headteacher in January 2020. We have appreciated this support over recent months very much.

Moving forward into 2020, we are keen to welcome Mrs Woodman as our new Director of Studies and Mr Dyer also as our new Second in Maths. Mrs Hale takes up her new post as Careers Advisor; exciting times! On behalf of the staff and Governors, I'd like to take this final opportunity then to wish you all a restful and relaxing Christmas break, and a very happy New Year. This term has been a true privilege and I would like to thank each and everyone one of you for your loyalty and support during this period of transition.
*Mrs Sarah Mellors
Headteacher*

FAME



Students at Alcester Academy produced a truly phenomenal interpretation of Fame the musical last week. Even the slight blip of the cancellation of Thursday night performance due to flooding didn't dampen the mood of this truly high-paced high-energy show. A coming-of-age story amid a world of dance, theatre, music, film and TV; Fame the musical shows the experiences of the teenagers as they learn about relationships, the importance of education and becoming responsible adults.

Produced by the Performing Arts department at Alcester Academy, the show was supported by many of the teaching staff.



I am going to learn how to fly... high...

Choreography by the wonderful Miss Michelle from Strong Feet Academy allowed the dancing to be energetic and on a great set created by Miss Bayliss and Mr Groom. High school yearbook photos on the back wall made the show sparkle.

The wow factor in this production came chiefly from the magnetic, high-octane renditions of the supremely talented cast. Sophia was dazzling as the young, ambitious Latina 'powerhouse' Carmen, compelling in her delivery of *There She Goes* and *Fame*. As the earnest and dedicated teacher Miss Sherman, Elen is excellent, shining with her rendition in a highly skilled part. The engaging Tom as Nick Piazza, singing *I*



Want to Make Magic; Ami as the lovable Mabel; and the very funny Marcus as Joe. Playing a troubled Tyrone, Dan's hugely professional take on the part shone with not only his dancing skills but his superior acting quality. Other notable performances were performed by Lochie as the enigmatic

Mr Sheinkopff, Bethan as Miss Bell and Mya as Max Myers, without

forgetting the enigmatic Tiago as Schlomo. Finally two wonderful performances by the highly talented Mia playing the unlucky in love Serena and the prima ballerina Iris played by the beautiful Ella.

With well over 70 students on stage Alcester Allstars produced another winning performance.

Miss Sacco



Stratford-upon-Avon
HERALD

Learning Resource Centre News

The Learning Resource Centre (LRC) aims to provide a lively, welcoming and well-resourced environment to support the learning and teaching within the school.



Our Accelerated Reading Millionaire club continues this year and we are proud to congratulate our newest Millionaire Club members – Jessie Coombs, Jefferson Tear-Verweij and Jess Shephard, all from year 7. They were awarded their certificates, badges and book vouchers during celebration assemblies this week.

The LRC and the English Department encourage pupils to develop a lifelong love of reading with Accelerated Reader. Did you know that Accelerated Reader (AR) produces an average of two years' reading age growth in just one year, while promoting reading for pleasure? All of our pupils, from years 7, 8, 9 and 10 who are on the AR system, have been avidly reading and taking quizzes this term. If your child is on the AR system they will be using a software program called Renaissance Place at school. This program has a special feature called Renaissance Home Connect, which your child and you can access outside of school from any computer with an Internet connection. Renaissance

Home Connect is fun and easy to use. It allows the teacher, you, and your child to share information about their progress in Accelerated Reader and the books they have read - please note that your child can only quiz on books while they are in school.

To log in to Renaissance Home Connect:

Website:

<https://Ukhosted26.renlearn.co.uk/1893467/HomeConnect> - this

link must be used to access to our school's data.

User Name: is your child's school computer login ID, for example j.smith or j.smith12

Password: abc

If you would like to receive emails showing your child's quiz or test results, click the Email Setup link in Renaissance Home Connect and follow the directions. To be sure these emails reach your inbox, add homeconnectautodelivery@renlearnrp.com to your address book.



Please encourage your child to read, because...

People who read are more likely to be involved in the world around them: Research shows that reading makes you more engaged in life around you, helping you to make the most of opportunities that come your way in life.

Reading helps your memory: Every time you read something new, your brain 'makes room' to fit it in. With these new spaces, you can take advantage of any

new information. Good news when you have to revise for exams!

Reading helps to boost your analytical thinking: Reading helps you to recognise various patterns that occur in writing. If you are looking for a law or medicine career, this is important! Reading expands your vocabulary: The more that you read, the more words you will come across. The more often you read these words, the more likely you are to understand them, and use them in your own writing and speaking.



W9BA

W9BA is a book award for year 9 students. This is the first year that we have participated in this award. The shortlist was selected by year 9 students from across Warwickshire by holding 'longlist speed dating' events. Ten books had been selected by librarians at the School Library Service. From this list we were asked to shortlist four books and so back in September nine students took part in a 'speed dating' session – the students were given the opportunity to see extracts from each of the ten books, each student was given 10 minutes to spend with each extract and at the end of the whole session they awarded points to the extracts in order of which they would like to read

more of. Points from across Warwickshire were collated and the four most popular books chosen for the book award were: The Twisted Tree – Rachel Burge, The Truth About Lies – Tracy Darnton, Killer T – Robert Muchamore, The Survival Game – Nicky Singer. During a very busy term the students somehow managed to find time to read these books and voting for their favourites took place on 6th December. The students that took part will find out which book won overall when we return to school in January.



Warwickshire Secondary Book Award

We also take part in the Warwickshire Secondary Book Award which offers year 7 pupils from schools all over the county the opportunity to read six shortlisted titles and review their favourites with their peers. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet with students from other schools and promote the enjoyment of reading. Twelve of our students have committed themselves to take part this year and have already started on their first books, they will be asked to cast their votes at the beginning of March. The winning book will be revealed at an exciting ceremony at the Bridge House Theatre in Warwick, where at least one of the shortlisted authors is present. The shortlisted books for the 2019 award are: The Girl Who Came Out Of The Woods –

Emily Barr; Don't Stop Thinking About Tomorrow – Siobhan Curham; One Shot – Tanya Landman; The Gifted, The Talented and Me – William Sutcliffe; Mud – Emily Thomas; Paper Avalanche – Lisa Williamson.

Dates to note:

Monday 10th to

Friday 14th February

A Scholastic Book Fair will be held in the LRC which will be open to all students at breaks and lunchtimes.

Thursday 13th February

Alcester Schools' Book Award will launch (year 8)

Thursday 5th March

World Book Day

Mrs Hands
LRC Manager

Examination Invigilators

We are currently seeking a reliable person to join our team of invigilators to assist in the conduct of all internal and external examinations at the academy.

Experience is not necessary as full training will be given.

The ability to work in a team, under direction, and to communicate effectively are essential. Invigilators will be required to conduct examinations in accordance with the JCQ and the school's regulations and will play a key role in upholding the integrity of the examination process.

If you are interested in this post please visit the academy website

www.alcesteracademy.org.uk for further information

and an application form.

Christmas Concert at St Nicholas Church



This week saw the annual Christmas Concert take place at St Nicholas Church in Alcester.

The Performing Arts staff were extremely proud of the amazing students we have at the Academy. The theme was A Fairytale Christmas. Our Acoustic Group performed Beauty and the Beast. Polyphonica performed The Dance of the Sugarplum Fairy by Tchaikovsky. Our soloist winners Hannah and Morgan performed the perennial carol Silent Night and sung beautifully. The AllStars Choir, Ukulele Group, G&T Jazz Group all performed suitably festive numbers wonderfully well. Elen, Lochie, Isabel, Aiden, Mya and Poppy recited poetry that paid tribute to the anniversary of the start of WW2 and those who gave their life in service.

Thank you to all who took part and all who came to watch.

Mr Hall, Miss Sacco & Mr Badham

Media Studies - Christmas Apprentice task

During Media Studies lessons this week, pupils have been working on a target demographic design task. They randomly selected a target audience varying from 16-20 year olds to 70 years plus, and had the creative task of designing and planning a Christmas jumper. All entries were brilliant but, after a grueling selection process, Mrs Scott has 'hired' the following three designers:

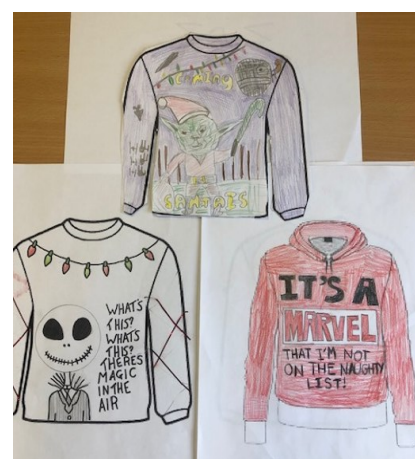
1st place - Oscar and his Stars Wars jumper.

2nd place - Anais and her Nightmare before Christmas jumper.

3rd place - Isabelle and her Marvel themed jumper.

Congratulations on some fabulous designs!

Mrs Scott



Updates from questionnaires completed at Parents' Evenings

We are grateful to you for recently completing questionnaires during Year 11 and Year 9 Parents' Evenings. Thank you. We have received feedback that as parents, you would like further detail about the sequencing of curriculum themes across each academic year and then key stage. I'm delighted to say that this work is almost complete for each subject area and it will shortly be uploaded to our new look website.

School Statistics

Attendance Percentages - Week Ending 13.12.19

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Whole School
96.7%	95.9%	96.5%	95.4%	95.4%	96%

Well done year 7 - you have the best attendance! Miss Staniland

Kindness Club News

Throughout the month of January, the Kindness Club are launching an appeal to support the charity Crisis who give much needed help to the homeless. We are looking for people to donate new or second-hand hats, scarves, gloves or blankets to help keep the homeless warm through the cold weather in February. We thought this would be a good time to let you know in case anyone had any new scarves, gloves, hats etc. for Christmas, and are looking for a home for the old ones. Or, perhaps, you have received some for Christmas that aren't quite to your taste!

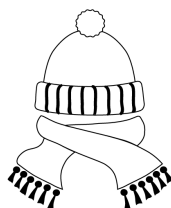
Crisis provides vital help to thousands of homeless people every year, and helps people to rebuild their lives out of homelessness for good. Whether it's settling into a new home, finding a new job, or helping people with their mental wellbeing, Crisis gives people what they need.

Donating just one old scarf or pair of gloves, could make a massive difference to someone living on the streets.

To help, please send your donations to Miss Bayliss, or hand in to the front office.

Thanks so much for your help.

Jess Year 8



Parent View

Ofsted Parent View gives you the chance to tell Ofsted what you think of your child's school, including how happy your child is at the school

Thank you to those parents and carers who have recently completed the Ofsted questionnaire about school; [Parent View](#).

We would appreciate it very much if more parents can afford the time to do this. If you have been dissatisfied with anything within school, we would also appreciate you bringing this to our attention in order that we can consider future developments if appropriate.

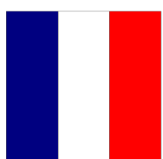


Fantastic Fun with Words

An excited and enthusiastic group of year 8s visited Alcester Library with Mrs Hands and Miss Watson on Thursday 17th October, to meet Ann Evans who is a multi-published, award-winning author and feature writer. Ann talked to the group about books, stories and writing - giving an account of her own journey to becoming a published writer. The students listened intently to Ann's inspiring story and had lots of questions for her at the end of the session and a long list of books they want buying for the library!



Language Idiom of the Week



French: Avaler des couleuvres

German: Seinen stolz hinunterschlucken

English: To swallow grass snakes

(to put up with a lot, to swallow one's pride)



European Day of Languages

Year 8 students were treated to a special super learning day celebrating European languages. Students were able to see all the benefits which learning a language would have for them.



Pantomime Fun!

Three groups of Performing Arts year 9 students put on a great pantomime for our year 7 students earlier this week. Some wonderful talent is coming through.

Performing Arts students from Alcester Academy had a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon at the Spa Centre Leamington Spa watching the pantomime Snow White last week.

Miss Sacco



Reminder about mobile phones

As a reminder for students, mobile phones are banned within the academy. We are grateful to parents/carers for supporting us with this in order that we can safeguard students and protect staff as well. We have had to remind several members of the lower school about this in recent weeks.



Christmas Cheer

In December, our intrepid year 7s ventured to the Frankfurt Christmas market in Birmingham. A great time was had by all.

Miss Sacco



The awesome Alcester Rock Academy delivered Blues and Country classics to their biggest audience yet on 25th November. A big thank you to all who performed and supported the event.

Mr Badham

TEEP Teaching and Learning at Alcester Academy Update December 2019

The Academy was recently fortunate to be invited to present our TEEP (Teacher Effectiveness Enhancement Programme) journey at the SSAT National Conference in Birmingham. The Academy is now in its third year of programme which has helped to further improve the excellent quality of teaching enjoyed by our students.



On the 6th December I arrived a little nervous, but also so excited to be able to share the Academy's achievements with schools up and down the country, and in one case Northern Ireland! The event started with a performance from the Severndale Specialist Academy Makaton Choir whom were a joy to watch - the students gave it their all and were just awe-inspiring! I am so proud of the achievements of our staff and students and was also able to hear from inspiring speakers. One which really touched a nerve was Carmel McConnell MBE who is the founder of www.magicbreakfast.com. Carmel came from a background of working in management at BT, and after a chance conversation with a headteacher about the impact hunger was having on students, set up her charity in 2003. Magic breakfast now supplies 350,000 breakfasts to chil-

dren in food poverty every day, and I would highly recommend a read of her book "Change Activist" if you have needed a boost to act on your own ideas for change.

On Monday 9th December the Academy also held its first ever TEEP presentation evening at Alcester Town Hall. This was organised to present staff with their Level 1 certificates with both the Mayor of Alcester and Corinne Settle from the SSAT in attendance. Corinne spoke at length about the benefits of TEEP and how the pedagogy is evolving, as well as congratulating staff on their hard work. Staff enjoyed a well-deserved treat with Alcester Academy cupcakes and a surprise raffle! As someone who has been involved in the development of the programme over the past three years, it was a very proud moment and confirmed TEEP's place at the heart of the Academy's teaching and learning philosophy. What a lovely way to welcome in the festive season!

Lastly, Tuesday 10th December saw the Academy host its first ever TEEP Open Day. The school was granted SSAT TEEP Ambassador School status in November in recognition of our commitment to TEEP, and the impact it has had on teaching and learning. Several Warwickshire and Worcestershire schools sent representatives including Stratford High School,



Ridegway, and Birchensale Middle School and they enjoyed a presentation from the SSAT, Mrs Farnell and myself about the school's experience with TEEP. Colleagues also enjoyed a tour of the school and a learning walk which saw some fantastic student work and effort in Art, Maths, and History- some of the student responses just were superb! Feedback from the event was overwhelmingly positive and I am sure it is just the first of many that will be held to showcase the Academy's excellent attainment, progress, and practice.

Miss Cotterill



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 Secondary School pupils recorded 10,017 half day sessions of absence due to holiday in the Autumn/Spring term during academic year 2017/18. This is an increase of 1,122 on the previous year.

SPORTS NEWS ** SPORTS NEWS ** SPORTS NEWS



As ever it's been a whirlwind term of sport at the Academy across a range of activities.

Both boys and girls have been involved in a myriad of fixtures and tournaments. We are looking forward to picking these up again in the New Year, starting off with the always popular Sports Hall Athletics meetings.

All teams have been performing creditably with some excellent performances in the District Rowing, Table Tennis, Football, Netball and Basketball competitions.

The students have been fantastic this term, making some fantastic progress, and the PE Department would like to thank all students who have been involved with sport at the Academy.

Here's to a successful 2020!

Follow us on Twitter: @AAcademy_PE

Mr Powell



Photograph of the Week



Following the introduction of GCSE Photography within the art department, we are amazed by the outstanding photography our students are producing. We have decided to share some of the exceptional work with you to celebrate their skills and talent. This weeks photo is by Tilly who recently visited the Forest of Dean.

SPORTS NEWS ** SPORTS NEWS ** SPORTS NEWS

House Competitions

There have been some great competitions on the sporting front so far this year and we are looking forward to a range of activities across all departments in the New Year. These include History Castle Building, Music African Chant Competition, Science Egg-landers and Art Photography. It promises to be a fierce year of House Competition and Billesley, Greville and Oversley will be working hard to overcome Ragley House who have held the trophy for two years straight. Good luck to all! Current overall scores:



House Rowing

BILLESLEY	GREVILLE	OVERSLEY	RAGLEY
228	221	214	212

The Staff and Governors would like to thank you for your continued support and wish you all a very Merry Christmas!

