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Principal's UPDATE

9th February 2024



Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the half term break, I would like to thank all members of our community for their hard work and focus in recent weeks. Year 11 students have just completed their last set of mocks and Year 13 are busy preparing for theirs which start on 19th February.

In addition to the academic life of the school, as this newsletter shows, so many students have continued to engage in wider aspects of AGS life and my thanks go out to all staff who are taking trips away over the half term break. Next half-term we will share details with you for a revised House System at AGS, which should only further increase the number of broader opportunities available to students - watch this space!

This week Governors and I have been looking at the student survey data - and I was delighted that 98% of pupils said that they were proud to be at AGS and that 96% of them said that they would recommend AGS to another student. Despite such strong statistics overall, we as an SLT are continuing to focus on student engagement in lessons and also more general behaviours often away from the classroom. To assist with this we have appointed two new Associate Assistant Principals - Mrs Hemus and Mrs Shipway. You can again expect to hear more from us in the coming weeks as to how you can support with this.

Finally, it was a pleasure to meet so many Year 7 parents at Parents' Evening this week and I look forward to the Year 9 Parents' Evening on Monday 4th March which will also be face-to-face. More details will follow from Mr Slater and the Hub before too long.

If you feel that as parents and carers, you are keen to be involved in the wider life of the school, please do take a particular look at page 2 of this newsletter.

Wishing you all a peaceful week,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R Thorpe".

Ms Rachel Thorpe
Principal, Alcester Grammar School

AGS Friends



Message from the PTFA

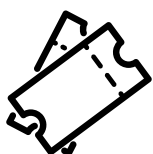
- We now have a PTFA known as AGS Friends – membership is automatic to all parents, carers, guardians and staff at school, all of whom are welcome at meetings.
- Aims are to fundraise to support the school and education of students and to develop effective relationships between staff, parents and school.
- We are in the process of registering as a charity; the constitution, committee and all minutes will be on the [school website](#) so you can see what is happening, and the progress we are making!
- Our immediate plans are to support school events during the summer term and hopefully have a family fundraising event in July – more to follow!
- Please let us know if you can help – our first ask is to identify volunteers to help serve refreshments at upcoming school events. Please email ags-friends@alcestergs.com for more information and to offer your help

Next meeting Wednesday 28th February, 6.30pm, Sports Hall – all welcome

Assist, Give and Support -Can you help?

Here is a reminder of how you can assist, give and support AGS. This initiative asks all in our community to consider 'what support do you need?' and 'what support can you give?'

We have a small number of Year 11 students who will not be able to afford the cost of prom ticket or leavers hoody this year. If you are in the fortunate position to be able to help, would you consider sponsoring them?



Sponsor a prom ticket -£40
Pay forward a Year 11 leavers hoody - £31



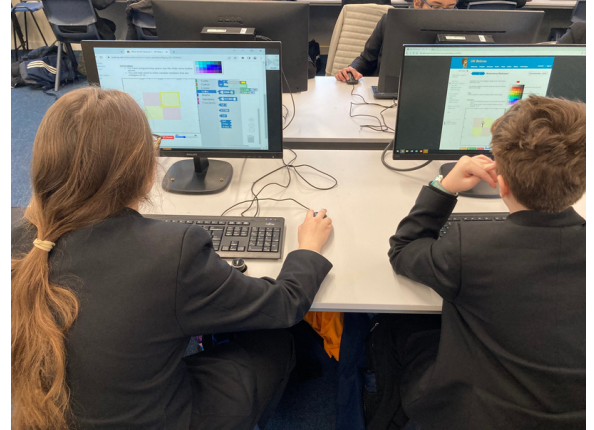
If you feel you may be able to help in any way, please contact Sophie Price, Assistant Principal - s.price@alcestergs.com

This Fortnight at AGS

Oxford University Computing Challenge

In January 65 pupils took part in the Oxford University Computing Challenge (OUCC). These students achieved the top 10% score in the UK Bebras Challenge back in November. Out of the 65 pupils, 10 achieved a Merit.

They should all be very proud of their accomplishment as some of these challenges were quite difficult. We would like to congratulate them on their achievements.



Last week saw Year 9 attempt a skill so complex that even most top chefs admit to 'cheating' and using ready made; Puff Pastry.

Laminating the dough to ensure layers of buttery, flaky pastry is certainly not easy! This week they are turning this pastry into a delicious savoury tart.



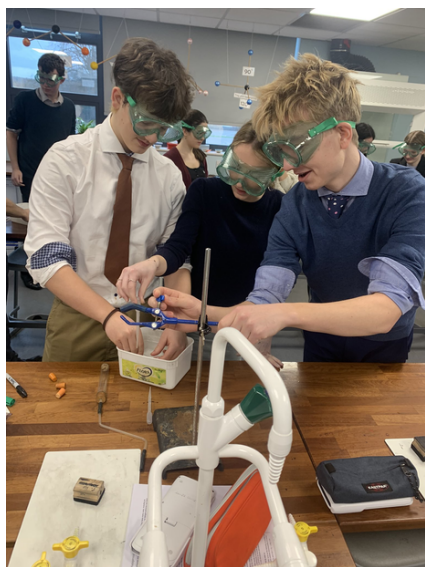
This Fortnight at AGS



We had a brilliant evening of athletics at the South Warwickshire indoor championships. Our year 7 and year 8 teams finished 2nd and 4th respectively.

Huge congratulations to all!

Year 12 elimination reactions, as shown by a positive bromine water test for alkenes!

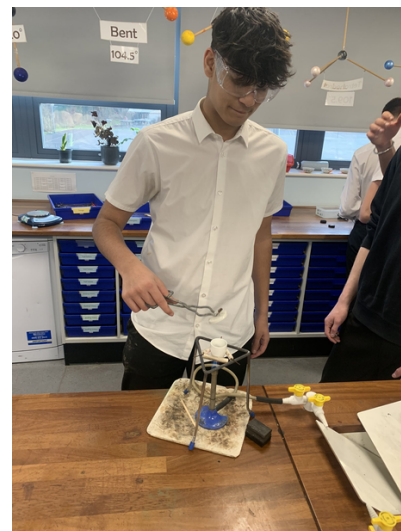


Year 13 are learning about transition metal complexes and enjoyed themselves when carrying out some colourful ligand substitution reactions!



Year 10 have recently been learning about quantitative chemistry and calculating expected product amounts!

They put their theory into practice by carrying out a thermal decomposition of copper carbonate.

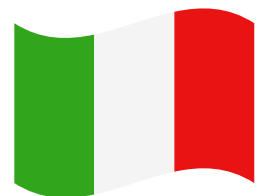


MFL News

Translation competition

Please check the information on a translation competition that Ms Blud has added to Satchel 1 (show my homework) for all year groups for French, German and Spanish, as well as Italian and Mandarin. The competition involves translating texts into English and they are organised according to different levels of competence. Please note that any entries need to be sent to Ms. Blud by **29th March**.

As you might remember Martha Pearson was the regional winner last year and Maja Laskowska was a highly commended entry the year before. So there's plenty of reason to participate!



University of Sheffield - School of East Asian Studies Competition 2024

Please note that the annual University of Sheffield School of East Asian Studies Essay Competition for Year 10, Year 11 and Year 12 students in the UK is now open. If you are interested in participating and would like more information, please follow the link below:

[East Asian Studies Essay Competition](#)

University of Leeds - MFL residential

The University of Leeds is offering free residential to Year 12 students of French, German and Spanish who would like to experience what it is like to study languages at university. If you would like more information about this and how to apply, please follow the link below:

[Linguastars at the university of Leeds](#)

Simona Florea

We would like to say goodbye to Miss Florea who has been with us this half term, as part of her teacher training placement with Birmingham City University. She has worked closely with the Spanish department producing a range of lessons for students in year 7-10. She has worked very hard to get to know the students in such a short time.

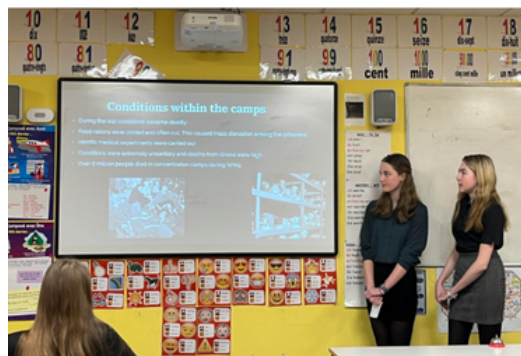
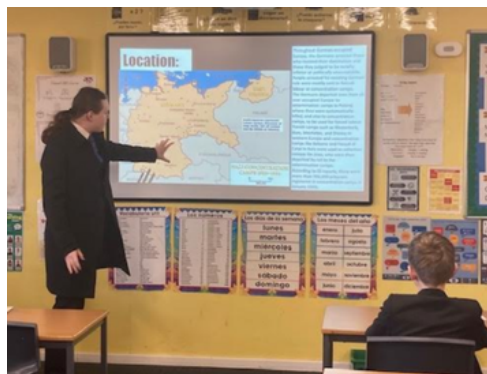
We wish Simona all the best in her new placement and her future career as a teacher of Spanish.

Junior Ambassadors

Junior Ambassadors Update
S.Valera

The Junior Ambassadors for School Programme is developing extraordinarily well thanks to our very committed Year 12 students who have researched, planned and delivered a variety of sessions to our Year 9 classes during LIFE on Friday mornings.

In commemoration of the Holocaust Memorial Day, students delivered an amazing and insightful presentation on Friday 26th. Year 9 students learnt about the causes and consequences of the Holocaust. Year 12s passed on their knowledge passionately and Year 9s were hanging on every word. They learnt of the horrors of the past and the importance of preventing such atrocities in the future.



On Friday 2nd February students were busy competing on a quiz that was prepared by the Junior Ambassadors. The quiz was based on European landmarks, festivals and traditions. The winning teams even received some sweet prizes!



On Friday 9th students will be busy learning about some European artists such as Leonardo da Vinci, Matisse and Picasso. They will also have the opportunity to imitate their art by producing single line drawings. More information about this and images will follow soon.

Many congratulations and special thanks to the following students who are participating on this programme and are working very hard to deliver these fantastic sessions:

Amber Aslam, Gracie Day, Bella Stokes, Zoe Summers, Hannah Sherratt, Jasmine Thind, Bella Brocklebank, Chloe Kearney, Maia Sivell, Kevan Kaur, Amelia Bowen, Ellie Salter, Emily Flower, Sophie Woodhead, Jess Kirk, Annabelle Butler and Bridget Jones.

News and Notices



AGS Signs of Spring!

The Royal Society of Biology are running a nationwide Signs of Spring survey and the AGS Science department are getting involved!

The Signs of Spring survey encourages us to look out locally for the changing seasons. [Click here](#) to be taken to the Signs of Spring RSB page for more information and to submit your findings. Signs to look out for include bluebells, bumblebees and daffodils!

In school, there will be a Signs of Spring photoboard in the Science/Maths quad - we'd love to receive your pictures to celebrate the changing seasons - please email all photos to a.richardson@alcestergs.com, make sure to include your name and form.

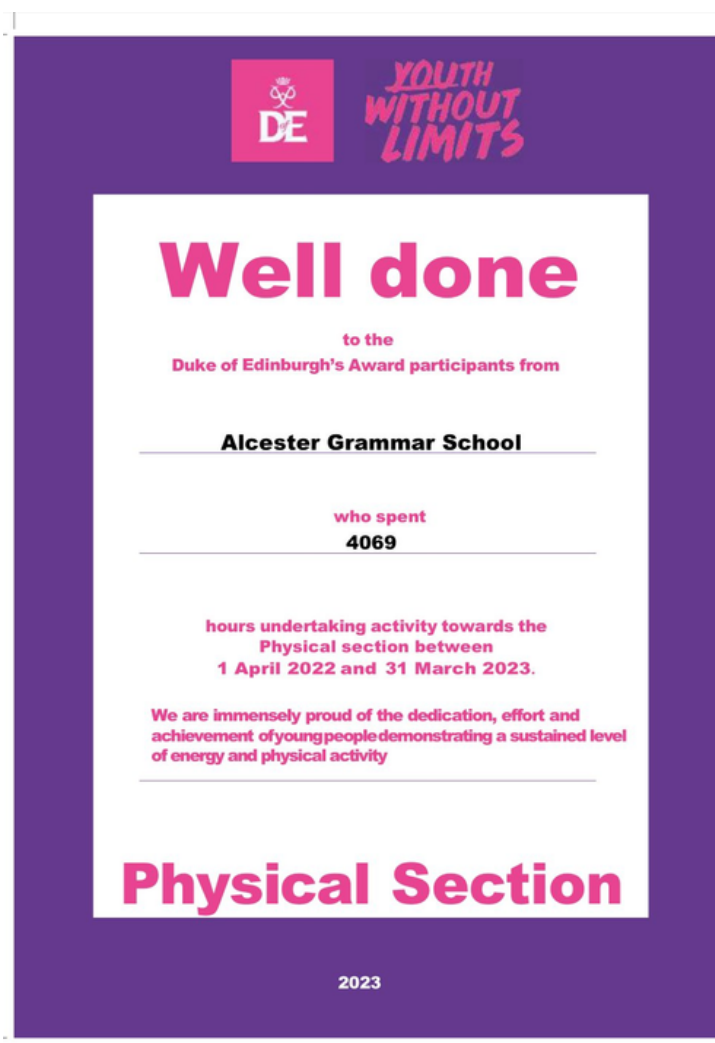


Exams Update

Well done to our year 11's who have completed their last set of mocks. Planning now begins for the summer GCSE's! Summer timetables are now on your AGS portal.

Year 13 mocks begin week commencing 19 February. Pupils should know their timetable and start to queue for registration 20 minutes before the start time. Please make sure they have ID for their exams.

Thank you
Mrs Silcox



Futures and Parents' Information Evening - Year 12

Wednesday 13th March 2024

In March we are hosting our annual year 12 "Futures and Parents' Information" Evening.

This important event is **compulsory for all year 12 students**. The careers fair provides the opportunity to talk to representatives from a variety of careers, universities and apprenticeship providers.

There are optional talks on apprenticeships, Oxbridge/competitive applications and student finance as well as a compulsory talk on moving into year 13 and planning for life beyond AGS.

Year 12 "Futures" Evening Wednesday 13th March 2024



Careers Fair in the Studio, Dobell Study & Classrooms 5.30pm - 8.00pm

Meet **40+** exhibitors from major employment sectors, local and national apprenticeship providers as well as universities / higher education institutions, including the most popular destinations of recent AGS students.

Parents' information talks
Compulsory
for year 12 students
6.00pm & 6.45pm
in the Theatre

**Ticketing in advance only,
via link in student / parent
email**

Higher/Degree
Apprenticeship talks in
DO2
Optional
**6.00pm, 6.45pm &
7.30pm**

Talks conducted by Work
Pays, on behalf of the
National Apprenticeship
Service.

'Aim High' Higher Education talks in SC1
Optional
5.30pm & 6.00pm
For Oxbridge & Russell Group applications, medics,
dentists, lawyers and vets

Student Finance talks in DO1
Optional
5.45pm & 6.30pm
How the student finance system works, tuition fees,
student loans etc. Talks conducted by Warwick Uni.



AGS Friends

PTFA Meeting

Wednesday 28th February 6:30pm
AGS Sports Hall

Anyone connected with the school is welcome to attend.

ags-friends@alcestergs.com

SPEND

Support for **P**arents of children with
Educational needs, **N**eurodiversity and **D**ifficulties.

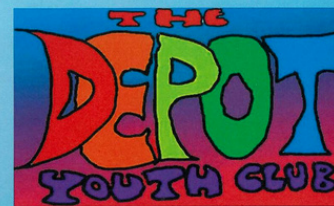
SPEND is a monthly parent/carer support group for people caring for children with additional needs who feel isolated or overwhelmed in Alcester, Bidford, Studley and surrounding villages.



Come and spend time with people who understand.

**NEXT MEETING: FRIDAY 9TH FEBRUARY 2024 - 9.45-11.15AM
AND ON THE 2ND FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH**

The Depot, Eric Payne Community Centre
off St Faith's Road, Alcester, B496AG



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

At The Depot Youth Club



Passionate about helping young people?

Interested in sport, mentoring, music, or games?

Would you like to make a difference to young people's lives?

Available on a Thursday evening between 6.30 - 8pm?

Contact Wendy for more information:

info@alcester-tc.gov.uk Tel: 01789

766084 or just pop along on either a Tuesday or Thursday evening and ask for Becky

No experience necessary, just enthusiasm

Bring the family to the
Kids Lunch Club

Wednesday 14th February
at The Depot, Eric Payne Community Centre, off St Faith's Road, Alcester B49 6AG

Doors open at 12.30pm
12.30pm - Hot lunch
1.00pm - 2.00pm - LEGO workshop
1.15pm - Pizza making for the kids
1.30pm - Purple Spider, the Learning Bus

Limited number of food bags available with ingredients to make a great pasta dish at home, plus a few goodies thrown in!
Orbit will be holding a Better Days Event in the adjoining rooms from 12.30 - 4pm with activities and support

orbit

Alcester Give and Take

Bring along your unwanted toys, books and games
Pick up any new ones that take your fancy!
No need to bring an item to take one

Saturday 10th February
10am - 12pm
Alcester Baptist Church
Church Street
Alcester
B49 5AJ

Any queries please email -
alcestergiveandtake@hotmail.com