

Principal's Update

Dear Parents, Carers and Members of the AGS Community,

As we move towards the end of term, school life continues to feel varied and full of energy, with an increasingly festive atmosphere building day by day.

It was a joy to welcome so many parents to our Christmas concert on Wednesday evening, where the talent and enthusiasm of our pupils shone through. Meanwhile, this morning I am very much looking forward to singing carols with all of Year 7 in LIFE.

Alongside these celebrations, Year 11 have worked hard throughout the term, and I look forward to meeting many Year 11 parents and carers next week at our Year 11 Parents' Evening, in order to reflect on their progress and next steps.

5th December 2025

Finally, pupil voice has also been at the heart of recent weeks: in addition to a successful School Senate meeting, more than 1,000 students have taken part in our pupil voice survey. Their insights are invaluable, and we will share a summary of the findings in the new year as we continue to ensure that student voice and perspectives guide our journey forward.

Wishing you all a peaceful weekend when it arrives; please do look out for the final update of the term in a fortnight's time.

Best wishes,

R Thorpe

Ms Rachel Thorpe
Principal, Alcester Grammar School



Assist
Give
Support



Language SPOTLIGHT



Actualización del director

Estimados padres, tutores y miembros de la comunidad de AGS:

A medida que nos acercamos al final del trimestre, la vida escolar sigue siendo variada y llena de energía, con una atmósfera cada vez más festiva que crece día a día.

Fue un placer dar la bienvenida a tantos padres a nuestro concierto de Navidad el miércoles por la tarde, donde el talento y el entusiasmo de nuestros alumnos brillaron. Mientras tanto, esta mañana espero con muchas ganas cantar villancicos con todo el alumnado de Year 7 en LIFE.

Junto a estas celebraciones, el alumnado de Year 11 ha trabajado duro a lo largo del trimestre, y espero con interés reunirme con muchos padres y tutores de Year 11 la próxima semana en nuestra Tarde de Padres de Year 11, para reflexionar sobre su progreso y los próximos pasos.



ags Assist
Give
Support



Spanish

5 de diciembre de 2025

Por último, la voz del alumnado también ha estado en el centro de las últimas semanas: además de una exitosa reunión del Senado Escolar, más de 1.000 estudiantes han participado en nuestra encuesta de opinión del alumnado. Sus aportaciones son inestimables y compartiremos un resumen de los resultados en el nuevo año, mientras seguimos garantizando que la voz y las perspectivas de los estudiantes guíen nuestro camino hacia adelante.

Les deseo a todos un fin de semana tranquilo cuando llegue; por favor, estén atentos a la última actualización del trimestre dentro de dos semanas.

Mis mejores deseos,



Sra. Rachel Thorpe
Directora, Alcester Grammar School



This Fortnight at AGS

Friday morning Life session with Y13 who have learned how to make a quick, easy, healthier and more budget-friendly alternative to expensive pizza deliveries. Great preparation for the independent living many of them will be experiencing next year!



A great day in London for our Year 13 Politics students! They attended a conference with speakers from a range of political parties.



Y8 LIFE - Model COP Competition. Congratulations to all the finalists, and especially to SSV who were the overall winners!

2025 Christmas Concert



This Fortnight in Sport

Y9 Girls Football



Sixth Form Hockey vs Kingsley



Year 7 & 8 Netball

Year 7 Basketball Team



Year 10 Basketball Team



Y9 Boys Football tournament at SuAS.



Year 11 PE



This Fortnight in Sport

Year 8 Basketball Team



Year 9-11 Badminton Club



Year 10/11 Mixed Netball



Year 8/9 Girls Football



Senior Netball



Year 11 mixed Hockey squad





Reading Spotlight



"So please, oh please, we beg, we pray, go throw your TV set away, and in its place, you can install a lovely bookshelf on the wall." – Roald Dahl

Research tells us that one of the biggest predictors of high academic achievement is a student who reads widely and for pleasure.

We are delighted to have a flourishing Library at the heart of our school. This is our Reading for Pleasure hub and each lunchtime it is filled with avid readers from Year 7 & Year 8. Mrs Thomas is our Library Lead and is supported by an excellent team of Sixth Form student librarians from Years 12 and 13. These older students are responsible for the vibrant displays, monitoring the AGS Reading Challenge entries, acting as reading mentors for the younger students, and completing the daily routines of stock control and loan management.

Book loans this term: 400

Most popular books this term:

XOXO by Axie Oh

The Hunger Games: Catching Fire by Suzanne Collins

The Maze Runner by James Dashner





Jonathan Stroud - Stratford Literacy Festival

This month we have welcomed bestselling author Jonathan Stroud to talk to 300 of our lucky students about his work. The event was organised in collaboration with Stratford Literary Festival. All students in Y7, Y8 and Y9 were then invited to a book signing of Lockwood & Co: The Screaming Staircase.



Warwickshire Secondary Book Awards 2026

Year 8 students should look out for the invitation to participate in the Warwickshire Secondary Book Awards 2026. There is competitive demand for a place on the team; participants will read all 6 of the shortlisted books, participate in the voting and be invited to a live awards event with the authors themselves. Last year our team were fortunate enough to pick up a number of individual awards for their contributions to the challenge.



We have plans afoot for our older students as well. Later in the year, we hope to invite renowned Everest explorer and Young Adult writer Matt Dickinsons (no relation tour Head of DT!) to lead workshops for Y9 students. Also for Year 9 there will be a Dystopian Fiction wider reading challenge which is a collaboration between the English department and the Library. We are planning to further develop an Independent Study and Fiction area for Y9 - Y11 students in Dobell Study.

What about beyond the library walls?

Did you know... there are approximately 1 million words in the English Language?

Did you know... the average vocabulary of a native adult English speaker is 20,000-35,000 words?

Did you know... a young person needs to be familiar with 50,000 words in order to thrive at secondary school?

How do we help?

The importance of reading spreads far beyond the Library; it is a crucial skill across the school curriculum and beyond. Our classroom teachers train students to learn and use sophisticated vocabulary and teachers model effective reading skills. Reading is embedded in the Personal Development Programme (in Life and tutor times). **But we need your help too.** Reading can be seen by teens more as work than fun, and they may stop reading for pleasure or stop reading at all. You can help by keeping reading alive at home. Encourage your students to use the AGS library, local library and/or e-library. Leave books lying around the house, and talk together about what you are reading. Perhaps read something together; it does not have to be fiction. If you would like to buy the gift of a book, do look at the recommendations below (Please be mindful that books recommended for older age groups may contain content unsuitable for younger readers)

<https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk/category/secondary-ks3-ks4-reading-lists/>

Happy reading!

Helena Tingle - Assistant Principal



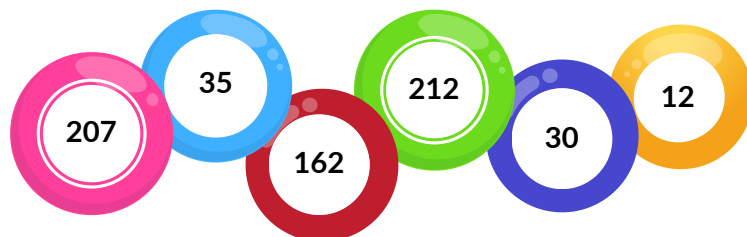
AGSF News Update

Here's the Top 5 of what we've been up to this fortnight...



- LOTTERY:** Big thank you to our new players and those who renewed their tickets - we now have 219 players, which means more prizes!! Our first lottery draw of the new year was held in November, and the winners were;

1st prize - £80 - number 207
2nd prize - £60 - number 35
3rd prize - £60 - number 162
4th prize - £40 - number 212
5th prize - £40 - number 30
6th prize - £40 - number 12



We also had a final super-draw for last year's lottery where one lucky winner won £103 - well done to number 47! **You can still join the remaining draws of the year** by buying a 'Rest of the Year' lottery ticket via Sumup - [here](#).



- BINGO:** It definitely was a full house with over 100 tickets sold, for a great night of family entertainment on Friday 21st November. With samosas and a bar, raffle and games, a great atmosphere and fabulous prizes - we raised over £1300. Thank you to everyone who came, and to Kath, our amazing bingo caller!



- CHOCOLATE:** Orders have flooded in for the amazing Henley Chocolates with AGS branding, perfect for gifting. Last few days for orders to be guaranteed before Christmas, so please don't delay if you want to place an order - [click here!](#) And if you get chance to pop in to their shop at Yew Tree Farm, Wootton Wawen, they'd love to see you!



- CHRISTMAS CONCERT:** We fed over 40 children before the Christmas Carol Concert on Weds 3rd Dec - a logistical challenge to get the pizzas through the traffic jams and roadworks in time for final rehearsal and warm-up, but we did it! Still some improvements to be made for next time, but we're definitely getting there, and everyone was very appreciative of the warm food. Interval service of coffee, tea and mince pies was equally welcomed!

- AMAZING CHRISTMAS RAFFLE:** The team have worked tirelessly to secure some great prizes, including our star prize of £200 sponsored by Mathnasium of Worcester, an AGS family business. Sales close at 9pm on Thurs 11th Dec, [so get your tickets here!!](#)

Thanks to the whole team of volunteers - and you for your support!
Von and the PTFA Team

House News



Alder



Birch



Hawthorn



Oak



Willow

Things are heating up in the competitive yet friendly battle of the Houses as we come to the mid-point of the House year. (Each House year runs from Easter to Easter.) Alder House have now snuck into 1st place and are holding their position with grit and determination! There is everything to play for over the next few weeks, particularly with several festive competitions on offer.

At this time of year it is traditional to think even more deeply of others and give more widely to charity. There are two upcoming House charity non-uniform days: Hawthorn- Christmas Jumpers Thurs 11.12.25, and Birch Fri 19.12.25, to look forward to, as well as Birch's Festive Fair and Hawthorn's candy cane sale. All proceeds go to Macmillian Nurses (Birch) and Hawthorn's chosen charity- Water Aid. Oak House are also busy compiling their gifts for Arden Food Bank and designing Christmas cards and competitions for a local meals on wheels organisation, giving someone an additional reason to smile during the festive period.

Do also look out for the Y7 History build a castle competition results, Y7 and Y13 Advent door decorating, Inter-House athletics, best Science Fact and volleyball competitions!

Wishing a wonderful Christmas and thank you for all the support of the House System,

Mrs Bremner-Smith

House News



Birch

JOIN US FOR A
FESTIVE
NON-UNIFORM DAY
19TH DECEMBER
2025

Help raise money for
**MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT**

Alder Birch Hawthorn Oak Willow



Christmas Jumper
NON-UNIFORM DAY!

Support **Hawthorn** House in raising
money for

WaterAid

THURSDAY 11TH DECEMBER '25

Alder Birch Hawthorn Oak Willow



EDIBLE PRIZE FOR 1ST PLACE

**Y7&Y13
form room
door
decorating!**

**WED 17TH
DECEMBER**

LOTS OF HOUSE POINTS AVAILABLE

Alder Birch Hawthorn Oak Willow

Parent Governor Vacancy

We're currently looking to strengthen our board with a parent governor, ideally someone with experience in secondary education, the legal profession, or diversity and inclusion.

Please [click here](#) for more information.

Applications close at 8am on Tuesday 23rd December.

If you would like to talk through the role prior to application, then please do not hesitate to contact Clare Cockbill, Chair of Governors at c.cockbill@alcestergs.com.



Support for Young Carers at Alcester Grammar School

Club starting January 2026!

At AGS, we are committed to supporting all our students, including those who take on the important role of a young carer. We understand the challenges these students may face, balancing their responsibilities at home with their studies and social life. That's why we are excited to announce that, starting in January, we will be launching a Young Carers Support Group in partnership with Caring Together Warwickshire.

The group will meet every Monday in RE2 and is designed to provide a safe space for young carers to connect with others who understand their experiences. Through this support group, students will have the opportunity to share, gain advice, and access emotional support while also learning about resources available to help them balance their caring role with their education and well-being.

If your child is a young carer or you think they may benefit from this group, please encourage them to come along. The group is open to all young carers, whether they are already part of the Caring Together Warwickshire program or new to seeking support.

We're here to help ensure that every young carer at Alcester Grammar School feels supported, valued, and empowered. If you have any questions or are unsure if your child is a Young Carer, please feel free to reach out to Mrs Powell on r.powell@alcestergs.com.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us create an inclusive and caring environment for all our students.

Mrs Powell



Exams Notice

Year 12 mocks are taking place from Thursday 11th December to Thursday 18th December in Newport Study and classrooms. Normal lessons resume on Friday 19th December except for those taking Thinking Skills, this exam is at 915am.

Students should check their exam timetable on the MyAGS portal using their AGS login. Once logged in, select assessments and then examination timetable. Please check the end time of exams as alternative arrangements home may be required if your exam is going to finish after school ends and you catch transport home.

Everyone taking an exam must have ID, anyone without ID will be asked to leave the exam room. Please see the IT technician for a replacement ID card if needed. Registration will start 20 minutes before the start time of the exam so all pupils must be outside the exam room ready to go in.

Any queries please email exams@alcesterags.com

Good luck

Mrs Silcox
Examinations Officer

Sixth Form Admissions – Subject Sampling Evening

Subject Sampling Evening is an important part of the application process for Sixth Form. All year 11 students wishing to apply for Sixth Form should apply to be part of this event which takes place on Thursday 5th February 2026.

Existing Year 11 AGS students: You should have received an email with a link to register. *You do not need to scan the QR code*

External applicants: Please scan the QR code or [click here](#) to register.

The deadline to apply for subject sampling is Friday 12th December 2025



ags ALCESTER GRAMMAR SCHOOL
SIXTH FORM

SUBJECT SAMPLING EVENING
THURSDAY 5TH FEBRUARY 2026
4:30-8:30PM

A large, friendly sixth form community built upon decency, ambition and a thirst for learning

SCAN HERE TO REGISTER



SEND Help!
 @ The Gap Community Centre, 10:00-12:00

Once a month on the following dates in 2025:
10th December.

An adult led SEND support group for parent's/carers, whose child(ren) may or may not have a diagnosis.

Facilitated by Family Support Workers.

A chance to meet people who may be going through the same things as you.

Signposting to helpful services & professionals.

Have open and honest conversations, in a safe space.

Please contact Family Support Worker, Sylvia Mckenzie at sylviamckenzie@warwickshire.gov.uk for more info/to book.

Warwickshire County Council



Between now and Christmas

Arden Foodbank
 Together with Trussell

Oak House communication and Outreach project

FOOD TIN COLLECTION FOR ARDEN FOOD BANK

You can HELP

ONLY Soups and stews,
 Canned or dried beans, Canned fish, meats, canned vegetables

Please bring any donations to the 7 to 11 hub



AWARD WINNING

CKMA FAMILY KARATE

CONTACT US TODAY FOR YOUR 2 FREE TRIAL SESSIONS:
 07817 712536 / www.ckmakarate.co.uk
ckmakarate@gmail.com

INCLUSIVE ANY AGE / ABILITY
 (3 yrs plus)
 as featured on BBC CWR

LOCATIONS:
 AGS Dance Studio- Wednesday, 18:00-19:30
 Stratford upon Avon, Alcester, Norton Lindsey, Coventry, Balsall Common, Warwick, Ettington, Henley, Wellesbourne...

Facebook icon, Instagram icon



2025/26 Term Dates

Autumn Term

Term begins: Wednesday 3rd September 2025 - Years 7 and 12 only
Thursday 4th September 2025 - All students return
Half Term: Monday 20th October to Friday 31st October 2025
Term ends: Friday 19th December 2025

Spring Term

Term begins: Tuesday 6th January 2026
Half Term: Monday 16th February to Friday 20th February 2026
Term ends: Friday 27th March 2026

Summer Term

Term begins: Monday 13th April 2026
Half Term: Monday 25th May to Friday 29th May 2026
Term ends: Friday 17th July 2026

Inset Days (No school for students)

Monday 1st September 2025
Tuesday 2nd September 2025
Monday 5th January 2026
Friday 6th February 2026
Friday 22nd May 2026
Monday 20th July 2026

