

This newsletter is a celebration of the vast array of opportunities that have been available to our students over the past term ranging from Year 7's re-enacting the Battle of Hastings, a variety of year groups taking part in various sports activities and students taking part in writing competitions.

We have been very impressed with how well our Year 7 students have settled into life at Aldercar High School. They have quite clearly risen to the many challenges that their first term at Secondary School has thrown at them.

Our Year 11 students are preparing for their Mock exams in January and we look forward to discussing the progress that students are making with parents in February.

Our Year 13 students are in the process of applying for their next steps in their career, be it at university, to embark on an apprenticeship or starting work. Year 13 are also preparing for their mock exams after Christmas.

With regards to staffing, Mr Appiah (Maths teacher) and Mrs Patter (Art and Photography teacher) are leaving the school as their contracts run out. We have already welcomed back Mrs Fletcher (Head of Maths) after her Maternity leave has ended and we look forward to welcoming Mrs Knowles (Finance Assistant), Mrs Radford (Cleaner), Mr Tomlin (Maths teacher) and Mrs Wilson (Art and Photography teacher) to the school in January.

Finally, we hope that you have a wonderful festive season, and we all look forward to seeing all of our students when they return in the New Year on Tuesday 9th January 2024 at 8.20am.



Mrs Hatto Head Teacher

Post-16 news

This term has been a busy time in Post-16. Year 13 students have been busily applying for university and thinking about what comes next, Year 12 have been getting into the swing of independent study and all of us are looking forward to the new Post-16 areas finally being up and running.

Dress to impress

As is traditional in Post-16, on remembrance day all of Post-16 students were encouraged to 'dress to impress' wearing their smartest outfits as a mark of respect for those who have fallen in conflict. It was lovely to see so many of our students taking part.



New Post-16 area

We are pleased to share that, in the New Year, the new and exclusive Post-16 area will be up and running. After Christmas we will be working hard to ensure that the area is bright and welcoming to Post-16 students and that the new areas are fit for purpose, well equipped and will allow students to develop in their learning. In February, a section of the Phoenix building will be closed to all but Post-16 students, giving them their own areas including the refectory coffee bar, a silent study area with library and wellbeing area, a quiet study area with tea and coffee facilities and a computer room, all of this alongside their own large outside area. Once this is all in place we will be holding an open day so that parents, carers and other students can visit.

Applications and visits

Applications for Post-16 are still open. We are working through meeting with Year 11 students and encourage them all to apply for Post-16 study at Aldercar. Even if students are undecided about their future after Year 11, we can offer them a wide variety of Post-16 options at three different levels to suit their academic achievements. We also welcome student and parent visits, especially for students not currently in Year 11 at Aldercar High School. Contact fcracknell@aldercarhigh.co.uk or cbrighton@aldercarhigh.co.uk for more information.

Post-16 news continued...

Trips

Post-16 students were happy to take advantage of a fabulous trip into Nottingham for the Christmas markets. Plenty of chocolate was eaten and gifts bought from the fabulously festive market stalls. Watch out for details of our next social trips - bowling, the cinema and other ideas have all been put forward by the student council.



Study skills and next steps

We have held a series of one hour lectures for Year 12 students to help them develop their study skills. In the new year this will be combined with our 'next steps' conference where we will start the process of helping students to consider their next steps after Post-16.

Post-16 charity enterprise

Year 12 students were set the task to turn 50p into as much as they could for charity. Some of our students have really impressed - in particular Sam C and friends who organised a fantastic staff vs students basketball match. Students paid to come and watch and although I'd like to say it was a close match, it really wasn't and the staff had a resounding victory. Thanks to all those who took part and came to watch - over £20 was raised in just 20 minutes - fabulous.



Post-16 news continued...

Young drivers

Earlier this term we invited in the police, fire service and Derbyshire County Council to deliver their hard hitting and thought provoking young drivers day. Students found out about all the potential issues when they start driving and were able to hear from professionals about the best ways to stay safe and ensure that they keep each other safe. One or two of us were a little star struck by the police officer - as one of TVs police interceptors he was definitely the right person to be speaking to us!

Peer mentors and PHSE

This term we have started a project to develop some of our Year 12 students as peer mentors. Following two training sessions with Alison Hill from Derbyshire County Council, they are now ready to do a mentoring project with Year 9 students in the New Year. This is a real opportunity to gain some valuable experience plus to give back to other students in the school.

Subject focus: Criminology

Criminology is the study of criminological theories, crime and court processes. It is comprised of half coursework and half exam and allows students to develop their understanding of processes of law, criminal cases and criminal behaviours. It is an excellent course for students wishing to go into the police service but has links with all manner of careers from law, policing, public services and teaching to forensics and psychology. This term students have been looking at 'crime scene to courtroom' and, amongst other things, have created shoebox crime scenes and carried out a mock trial of Superman (he was innocent!!).

If you are interested in finding out more, see Miss Cracknell for more information.



Library news

Bookbuzz

This term we took part in the Bookbuzz programme, a fantastic initiative aimed at promoting a love of reading among children. Bookbuzz is organized by BookTrust, the UK's largest children's reading charity. They are dedicated to transforming lives by promoting reading for children and families.

As part of the scheme, all Year 7 and Year 8 students had the opportunity to choose a book to keep, selecting from sixteen great titles. The Bookbuzz programme is a fantastic way to get our Key Stage 3 students excited about books.



Half-term reading challenge

Over half-term our students were given the challenge to read as much as possible and record their books on our Halloween themed reading tracker. Lots of students enjoyed reading books from our spooky themed reading list and earned house points by taking part.



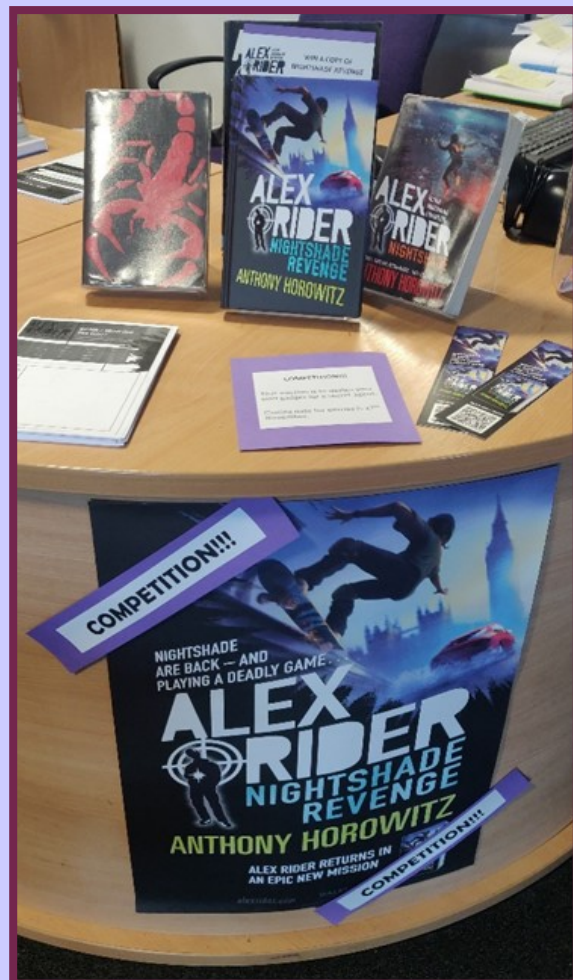
Library news continued.....

Alex Rider competition

Our school was lucky enough to acquire a free copy of Nightshade Revenge, the latest book in the hugely popular Alex Rider series written by Anthony Horowitz and published by Walker Books.

We ran a competition to give the book as a prize to one lucky student. The competition asked students to design a gadget for a secret agent and we had lots of really imaginative and inventive entries.

Our winner in Year 7 impressed the judges with his 'Everything Flask'. Four runners-up all won Alex Rider posters and bookmarks for their fabulous entries. Congratulations to Codey, Daisy, Isabelle and Kanan for all of their fantastic inventions.



Library news continued....

Aldercar Community Library

The Library is open!

We have set up a community library in the reception area for all parents, staff and members of the local community. We would love you to take a book to read. You can either return the book when you've finished or replace it with a different one.

Happy reading!



Accelerated reader news

November's Star Readers - the Word-Millionaire Club.

The following students deserve our congratulations for reaching some mighty reading milestones this half-term. A huge well done to Ollie who is our first word millionaire of the year and to Katie, Bryson, Rockie and Joshua who have all read well over 250,000 words. Praise also goes to Grace, May, Eva, Ewan, Dylan, Tyler, Kezia and Cerys who have all read at least 100,000 words.



Christmas writing competition

This term pupils from across the school have been invited to show off their best creative writing and enter a story into a Christmas competition. Every year group entered and the enthusiasm and quality made the judging a very difficult process. After much deliberation however, the winners have been chosen, all of whom will receive a £20 Waterstones voucher to encourage them in their future writing.

The winner in the Key Stage 3 category was Katie with 'The following snow'. The runner up was Daisy.

In the Key Stage 4 category, Sophie was the winner with Cora pushing her very close.

Finally, in Key Stage 5, Esme emerged triumphant with Eleanor in a very close second place.

A well done to all!

Please enjoy this year's fantastic winning Key Stage 4 story from Sophie:

The story I am about to share with you is neither particularly special nor rather unique, though that is not to say it is not important. It can be set in any town you like: utopia, dystopia, it is entirely up to you. It can even be set in your hometown, if you feel so inclined. So, dear reader, grab your hot chocolate, or your popcorn, or anything else you desire and let me tell you the story of Mr Turner, a man of which is one of many examples of what our elderly go through each lonesome Christmas Eve.

In a modest abode tucked away on the outskirts of a town neither here nor there, Mr Turner embarked upon the ritual of yet another desolate Christmas Eve. The air, heavy with the weight of bygone days, whispered tales of festive merriment as he carefully unearthed the time-worn relics of festivity from a box obscured by the dust of the many years gone by. Each delicate ornament, as if a worn-down sonnet, unfurled a chest of memories, sketching vivid scenes of cheerful celebrations upon the canvas of his mind.

As his fingers traced the corners of the photograph, its hues now aged like a vintage memory, Mr. Turner found himself entangled in the embrace of nostalgia. The image, a frozen scene of a once-vibrant living room adorned with laughter and submerged in the luminescence of a dazzling Christmas tree, stood in sharp contrast to his gloomy reality.

A sigh, a symphony of melancholy, escaped his old soul. His gaze lingered upon the image of his departed wife and their late infant — a personal portrayal of a past era; a time where joy flowed freely. Yet, the halls resonated no more, his boy's laughter now but a ghostly echo. Tears, like glistening dewdrops upon the petals of reminiscence, welled in Mr. Turner's eyes. In this singular snapshot, he danced upon the edge of youthful joy — a fleeting communion with Saint Nicholas himself.

Clutching the aged image, he realised the significance of this temporary experience with bygone joy. In the silence of his lonesomeness, surrounded by the reminders of Christmases already past, he cradled the happiness in his palms—a reminder of love's temporariness in the never-ending, fading glow of time.

Christmas writing competition continued...

From Daisy in Year 8 (Key Stage 3 runner up):

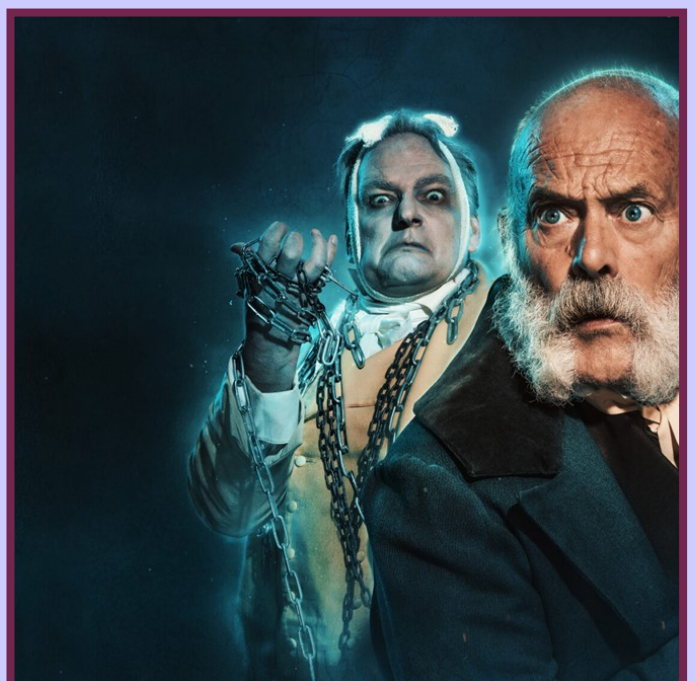
Christmas Day. The best but also the most chaotic day of the year. The smile that appears on my kids' faces when they run downstairs is priceless. I can't wait for them to see the array of presents scattered on the floor, and the footprints I made with icing sugar. I want this day to be magical for them.

Family means everything to me. They're all I have, my support system, my lifeline. All I do for them. My only wish in life is to make them proud that I'm their mother.

I want this Christmas to be special for them. To be different. It should be better for them with their father out of the picture. Not having to constantly worry about what he is doing or saying is so freeing. Everyday, as he arrived home, I greeted him with a battle hero's welcome. I took all his indiscretions in good fun; never wanting to know how deep his dagger in me was. I sit and listened to his rants, although he never asked about my day. I polished plates until they gleamed and glistened, even though he never helped out around the house, and I had enough. Bearing the weight of him was easier said than done. But luckily that's all over now, things are better. Finally, I hear the excited thuds of my children running at an Olympic speed down the stairs and into the living room. "Santa's been!", they cried out. Looking at how excited they are makes me so happy. Even if I have nothing, they're all I'll ever need.

Year 11 trip to see A Christmas Carol at Nottingham Playhouse

A group of our Year 11 students went for an early Christmas treat when they went to see an outstanding production of A Christmas Carol at Nottingham's Playhouse theatre. Keith Allen took on the role of Scrooge, playing the misanthropic character to perfection. The ever-changing set design was amazing and the whole production was full of laughter and light. Our students relished the chance to see the performance and now feel invigorated about the chance to tackle this text in their GCSE Literature exam!



Spelling bee competition

2023 proved a vintage year for Aldercar High School spelling.

Kicking things off in Year 7, spelling bee history was made when Mila put in a faultless performance with the perfect 10 out of 10. Surely a great spelling career lies in store - one to watch!!

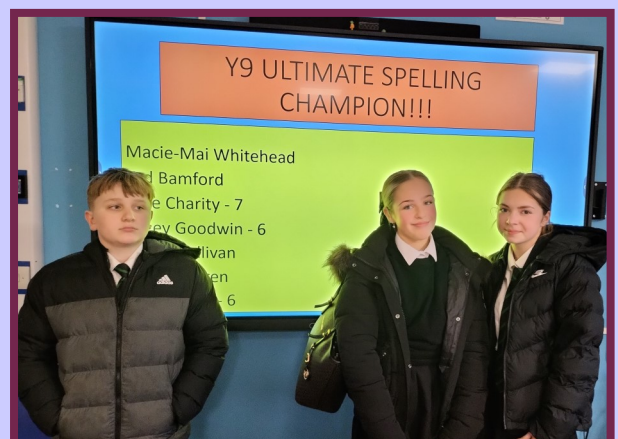
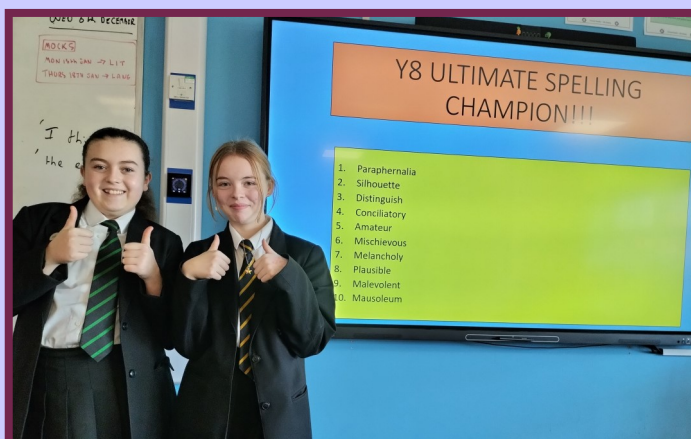
Moving on to Year 8, if it was in any doubt, Daisy has now cemented herself as an all time Aldercar spelling legend. Following up on last years second place (and who could forget that thrilling tie break?) Daisy, showing a never say die spirit, came back for more and left in triumph. What more worlds are there left for her to conquer?!

In Year 9, emotions threatened to boil over in a tumultuous final. In thrilling scenes, Cole vaulted to victory!

A hats off to all the brave competitors!

Key Stage 3 Spelling bee words were:

- 1.Paraphernalia
- 2.Silhouette
- 3.Distinguish
- 4.Conciliatory
- 5.Amateur
- 6.Mischievous
- 7.Melancholy
- 8.Plausible
- 9.Malevolent
- 10.Mausoleum



Engineering competition

At the start of the year Mr Gillies entered Aldercar High School Year 11 engineers into a multi-school competition run by Cullum Detuners, a Heanor-based company who make silencers and air intakes for industrial, military and aerospace organisations, including NASA.

The students jumped at the opportunity, as Cullum are very supportive of Aldercar High School, by providing many students with apprenticeships, work experience and facility tours etc.

The aim of the competition was to produce a Bee Hotel, specifically for a sub-species of bee called the Mason Bees, which are quite scarce. These bees like to make their nests in naturally occurring gaps such as between cracks in stones or other small dark cavities.

Winning hotels were to be installed in a memorial garden for one of their late directors of Cullum Detuners, thus adding even greater credence to the cause.

Back in September, the engineering classroom became a hive of activity, with the workers getting the buzz and working effectively in their swarms. There was no winging-it as the students earned their stripes by producing specifications for three distinctly different hotels - The Cottage, The Factory and The Tower Block. All were to be constructed from scrap/upcycled materials in the spirit of sustainability. They took shape in no time at all thanks to the help of our own Queen Bees - Mrs Holmes and Mrs Feely. Once completed the students added the expert touch, in the form of some CNC-produced personalised messages & decoration.

The panel at Cullum were suitably impressed and we stung the opposition! Not only did we defeat the other schools, the panel at Cullum were that pleased with the final hotels that they decided to award every student the honey, in the form of a £20 Amazon voucher each - a total of £360!

Well done to our Year 11 engineers.



Battle of Hastings re-enactment

Students in Year 7 headed to the school field armed with their swords and shields to re-enact the Battle of Hastings. Students made either a Saxon or Norman sword and shield and the re-enactment took place. Fortunately our battle was not as bloody as the real thing in 1066 but the Saxons were still slaughtered by William who went on to claim the throne of England. Students had great fun and it helped them to understand the battle.

Year 11 and Post-16 Geography field trip

🎵 How we do like to be beside the seaside 🎵

We had a lovely trip with Year 11 and A-Level Geography students to the Holderness Coast today at the start of October. Landform (and seal) spotting and coastal management debates to help with their studies.



European languages day

On the European Day in Languages we celebrated with a big cake bake! There were some fabulous creations and some creative ideas. We also had a French Taster session and a dance class from one of the Spanish teachers. The students were lucky to learn some Mexican dance moves which they really enjoyed. In Maths, Mr Prest taught some of his lesson in German!

We have a sound of the week which students practise in their form time: please encourage students to tell you what the sound is and get them to teach you some new words!

Over the Christmas weeks we will learn some Spanish Christmas carols and we will learn to do some interesting activities to learn how Christmas is celebrated in different Spanish speaking countries.

A few weeks ago all of our Key Stage 3 students learnt how languages can help them in their future careers when they listened to an inspirational speech by Misha Glenny, a journalist and broadcaster who became successful thanks to learning languages! Some students even got to ask some questions!



Sports news

At the start of the academic year all Year 7 students took part in a cross country house competition, they all ran the course in their P.E. lessons and the results were:

| | |
|--------------|-------------|
| 1st - Gregg | 3rd Ormonde |
| 2nd - Howitt | 4th Shipley |

Over seventy students stayed behind after school to take part in the dodgeball house competition in October, which as ever is played with great determination.

The results were:

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1st Gregg | 3rd Ormonde |
| 2nd Shipley | 4th Howitt |

The Year 9 netball team went to a tournament at Belper School at the beginning of October and our students performed brilliantly. They came second overall. The results were:

Aldercar 3-2 Belper
Aldercar 2-7 Ripley
Aldercar 1-0 Heanor Gate



It was a tough evening for the school's Year 11 and Year 10 football team when they went to play at Belper school in October. They lost 2-0 but it was a great game and could easily have gone either way. The students showed great spirit and didn't stop for the full 90 minutes.

The Year 8 football team went to Belper school to play the first round robin games. They did the school proud, sticking together and never giving up. The students gave it their all and we are very proud of them, despite the results:

Aldercar 0-2 Ripley
Aldercar 2-2 John Flamsteed
Aldercar 0-4 Heanor Gate.

The stand out performances came from Rufus and Archie.



Sport news continued...

Selected Years 7 and 8 students competed at Belper School in the middle of October against all the other school in the borough. In each race around forty students took part and two of our Year 7 students, Bonnie and Isabel, qualified to represent Amber Valley at County level. All students deserve a massive well done and all ran really well.

A very high standard of Futsal was played on October 23rd against Heanor Gate (2 teams) and John Flamsteed. Our boys Freddie, Mason, Dylan, Oli and George all worked their socks off.

John Flamsteed won the tournament overall with our lads drawing to Heanor gate 1 (1-1), losing to John Flamsteed (2-1) and then finally beating Heanor Gate 2 (2-0).

Also in October the Year 8 and Year 9 Futsal team played a tournament. The lads deserved first place with the determination and effort they put in, it certainly was 'one that got away tonight'. They should have won the tournament. We came 2nd overall. Mr Briggs was gutted for the boys but proud of their determination. That's the way it goes sometimes.

We played a 6 team tournament with the results:

Aldercar 1-1 David Neiper

Aldercar 2-1 Swanwick

Aldercar 1-1 John Flamsteed

Aldercar 2-1 Ripley

Aldercar 2-1 Heanor Gate .

An absolutely fantastic performance from the Year 7 boys to round off the first half term of the year. They left as champions winning all 4 games!

Results were;

Aldercar vs Heanor Gate 1-0

Aldercar vs David Nieper 1-0

Aldercar vs John Flamsteed 2-1

Aldercar vs Ripley Academy 2-0



Sports news continued...

In November the Key Stage 3 girls took part in a Futsal tournament at Alferton. The girls played so well and worked so hard in each and every game. They came fourth overall.

Results were;

Ecclesbourne A 2- 1 Aldercar

Swanwick 2-2 Aldercar

Ecclesbourne B 1-1 Aldercar

David Nieper 1-1 Aldercar

The Year 7 girls football team were supposed to be competing in a futsal competition on November 9th, but unfortunately all schools apart from David Nieper dropped out. David Nieper school kindly offered to host us a fixture at their school, so we went down and the girls did really well. Final score was 6-4 to the opposition but the girls were buzzing and did really well.



Mr Briggs and Mr Hollway took the Year 7 boys football team to a tournament at Ripley Academy. The boys did really well on a cold Tuesday night in December!

Results were as follows:

Aldercar V Ripley 0-0

Aldercar V Belper 0-0

Aldercar V Swanick 0-4

Aldecar V David Nieper 2-1



Breakfast Club trip

Our breakfast club students were invited to go for breakfast at Asda for a full English, which went down a treat with them. They loved it. They were smiling from start to finish and were a credit to the school. One student in particular has never been out for food before.

We run breakfast club every morning from 7.45am onwards. It is always very well attended and it sets the students up for the day.

With the amazing work that the breakfast club staff have done, the club is completely run on donations from Asda, foodbank, funding from local council and Warburton's. Even this morning the amazing Sharon from Asda paid for the bill. Some Asda staff even worked the morning for free to do the catering.

We also had a special guest, Matt Crawford, Embark Trust Leader, who joined us for a full English breakfast. Thank you to Matt for giving up his time to come and see the work we have done. He was extremely impressed and we look forward to seeing him at breakfast club in the future.



Chess Club competition

Back at the very end of July, just before we broke up for the summer, twelve pupils from across the school took part in the Aldercar High School chess championship 2023. In a thrilling final, Toby beat last year's champion Kayden to the grand prize. He has now the prestige of looking after the famed Aldercar chess champion trophy until next year.



Army day

In July some members of the Army came in to show our students what a career in the Army is like. The students really enjoyed it and they found it extremely interesting. Students learned about cyber and social media careers in the Army and also learnt about the equipment used when on tour.



Macmillan coffee morning

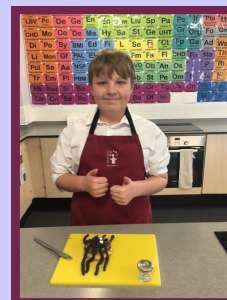
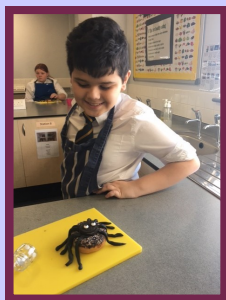
The Macmillan coffee morning raised a total of £220.59

Thank you to all the students and the members of staff who came to support this very worthy cause.



Craft club

The Craft Club did some spooky baking for Halloween. They meet every Tuesday after school and make all sorts of seasonal crafts.



Street Safe Food box appeal.

Kristina and Kelsey in H10 have been busy collecting for the Christmas Shoe box appeal. The ERF unit have done an excellent job, donating lots of items.

Street Safe in Derby are a Community based group that dedicate several nights a week to feeding the homeless and vulnerable.

They have paired up with a housing company to encourage the homeless to get off the streets and access help. Alongside this they provide them with hot and cold food and drinks, toiletries, sleeping bags etc. as these are vital for survival for those sleeping rough or those in need.

They are currently helping around 60-70 people and 5 dogs with the Shoe Box Charity.



ERF remembrance day celebrations

Aldercar High School ERF were busy decorating outside the Phoenix unit for the remembrance day celebrations. They made a beautiful display.



Diary dates

| Event | Date |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Inset day | 22nd December |
| CHRISTMAS BREAK | 25th December-5th January |
| Inset day | 8th January |
| Students return to school | 9th January |
| Year 13 parents' evening | 10th January |
| Year 13 UCAS deadline | 17th January |
| Year 11 mock exams | 15th-26th January |
| Year 9 options/parents' evening | 25th January |
| Year 11 Post-16 application deadline | 26th January |
| Year 12 York University trip | 30th January |
| Year 11 mock exam results | 6th February |
| Year 11 parents' evening | 8th February |
| Year 9 options deadline | 14th February |
| Last day of half term | 16th February |
| HALF TERM | 19th-23rd February |
| Students return to school | 26th February |
| Year 13 finance evening | 27th February |
| Year 11 photographs | 28th February |
| Year 9 Geography field trip | 29th February |
| Post-16 ERF Centre Parcs trip | 4th-8th March |
| Year 12 Derby University trip | 6th March |
| World Book Day | 7th March |
| Year 12 Coventry University trip | 13th March |
| Year 8 parents' evening | 21st March |
| Last Day of Term | 28th March |
| EASTER BREAK | 29th March-12th April |


Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year
