



Weekly Newsletter 22nd May 2026

Dear members of the Aldercar High School Community,

I want to start off the last newsletter of the half term by saying a huge thank you to you all. My first half term has quite simply been amazing. Although it has flown by, I already feel part of the Aldercar High School community, and I am really excited for our future.

I hope that you all have a fantastic half term break and we look forward to seeing our young people again on Monday the 1st of June at 0820.

Leavers - We are sad to say goodbye to Mr P Aplin. Mr Aplin has been an asset to AHS for many years, but we wish him all the best and wish him good luck for his new venture.

Year 11

Well done to Year 11, who are now over half-way through the exam season. They have received an ice cream today before leaving for the half term holiday. There are some revision sessions over the half term period, and then we have 12 days of exams left. Here is the plan for Year 11 for the week after half term.

	Arrival	AM Exam	PM Exam	Leave
Monday	8.20am	No Exam	No Exam	2.55pm
Tuesday	8.20am	Physics	Polish and Statistics	2.55pm or after exam
Wednesday	8.20am	Maths	Geography	Students who do not do History or Geography to leave at 1.30pm. History students 2.55pm. Geography after exam
Thursday	8.20am	History	No Exam	2.55pm
Friday	8.20am	English Language	No Exam	Students who don't do Biology leave at 11.10am, everyone else leave at 1.30pm

Year 10

Here are the booking details for Year 10 parents evening for Thursday 11th June 2026. Arrival is between 4.30pm and 5.15pm, with the main presentation starting at 5.30pm. Please book your space on the form below so we can ensure the evening is tailored to your child, and if you would like to join us for dinner, here is where you book your dinner also. The evening will finish at 7.30pm.

The revision evening will include:

- Collecting Y10 mock exam results and predicted grades
- An opportunity to talk to class teachers
- What Year 11 will look like for students

- General revision tips for all students
- Specific revision tips for English and Maths
- Wellbeing advice

We strongly recommend all students come to this event, even if parents are unable to attend

[Year 10 Parents Evening Booking Form – Thursday 11th June – Fill in form](#)



Year 10 Work Experience

Year 10 work experience proved to be highly successful, offering valuable insights into the world of work and helping to build important skills for the future. Throughout the week, students have gained hands-on experience, improved their communication and teamwork abilities, and developed a stronger sense of responsibility.

Many were able to apply what they had learned in school to real-life situations, which increased their confidence and motivation.

The experience also allowed them to explore potential career paths, making it easier to understand their interests and ambitions. Overall, it was a rewarding opportunity that contributed positively to both personal and professional development.



UK Maths Challenge

We are delighted to celebrate the fantastic achievement of our Year 7 and Year 8 students in this year's UK Maths Challenge. Their enthusiasm, determination, and resilience were evident throughout, with so many pupils demonstrating impressive problem-solving skills and a willingness to tackle complex questions with confidence. Taking part in such a prestigious national competition is an accomplishment in itself, and our students should be incredibly proud of the effort they have shown both in preparation and on the day. It is especially rewarding to see their growing enjoyment of mathematics and their readiness to embrace challenges beyond the classroom. A special congratulations goes to our highest scoring Year 7 student, Josh S, and our highest scoring Year 8 student, Scarlett E, whose outstanding performances set a brilliant example for their peers. Well done to all who took part—you have represented the school magnificently and should feel extremely proud of your success.



This Week in Food Technology

Measuring, Mixing, Melting

Food tech is an excellent opportunity in which students can utilise and develop valuable skills for school and everyday life. This week in the food room, team building was a key focus as students were paired with peers they may not normally interact with. Students recognised that although they have different strengths and personalities, working together through communicating, and supporting each another, they were able to achieve a shared goal. Building confidence and mutual respect.

Year 7

Theory Lessons

Students have been learning about water- and fat-soluble vitamins



Practical Lessons

Fruity Flapjacks
Students worked together and independently to measure and mix



Year 8

Theory Lessons

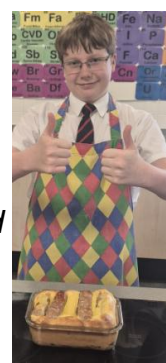
Students have been learning about food labelling, nutrients and their functions and how to design a healthy meal

Traffic light system on foods

Level	High	Medium	Low
15g	20g	5g	1.5g
5g	5g	1.5g	0.5g
5g	3g	1.5g	0.3g

Practical Lessons

Student made *Toad in a hole* & *Chocolate and fruit muffins*



Year 9

Theory Lessons: This week year 9 have been completing work sheets to review and recall content taught this half term

Practical lessons: Students made *Jaffa drizzle muffins*. Appropriate skills and techniques were applied using methods such as creaming (blending butter and sugar with a wooden spoon) , double boiler method, used to melt chocolate. Additionally, students were able to observe how the different consistencies of butter affect the texture of the batter which ultimately determines how the muffins bake. One student commented on how Food Tech is science!



Year 7 Residential

We recently took a group of our Year 7 students on a residential to Jamie's Farm in Herefordshire. It was a fantastic week where they had the opportunity to get involved in lots of different tasks around the farm such as feeding the animals, bottle feeding the lambs and tending to the vegetable patch. The students also had a rota for cooking and baking and each day a different group would prepare breakfast, lunch and dinner.

It was fantastic to see them doing jobs which they never thought they would do and eat foods they never thought they would eat. We ended the week with a celebratory get together and we all went home with a Jamie's Farm cookbook, which I know has been used by many already.



Duke of Edinburgh Silver Practice Expedition

All groups began the expedition in high spirits, with the sunshine providing the perfect backdrop as they pitched their tents on the school field in preparation for two nights outdoors.

Group 1 (Kaja B, Elissia B, Leah C, Katie G, Molly M, Ella S, Georgia T, Immie W) set off first with great confidence. This positive attitude continued throughout the day as they followed their route successfully, navigated with ease, and found the walking very manageable.

Group 2 (Henry A, Mia C, Finley H, Summer L, Mia S, Logan T, Evie W) were next to depart. Some early nerves were evident, with a brief stop just outside reception to adjust bags and shoelaces. However, they quickly demonstrated determination and resilience, completing their route—despite a few detours—while supporting one another admirably, even as minor injuries arose.

Group 3 (Brax F, Ollie L, Jamie R, Aiva W) approached the challenge with focus and teamwork. They navigated very effectively and worked well together throughout the day.

Group 4 (Flo B, Nicole B, Amelia H, Lottie I, Daisy R) also made an excellent start. Initially concerned about encountering cows due to previous expedition experiences, they soon relaxed and went on to perform extremely well. Their navigation was strong, although they did report discovering a particularly large hill between the school and Heanor Market Place!

Group 5 (Charlie B, Alfie C, May L, Charlie N, Rufus R) were the final group to leave. They faced a few early navigational challenges, including taking a wrong turn on the way to Heanor Market Place and arriving at Mapperley Reservoir from an unexpected direction. However, these minor setbacks provided valuable learning experiences, and their navigation skills improved steadily as the expedition progressed.

Once all groups had returned and settled into their tents, students enjoyed cooking their evening meals on camping stoves, producing some impressively “gourmet” creations.

After a lively first night—during which a few enthusiastic snorers were discovered—students rose early for their second day of walking. This proved to be a more demanding challenge, covering over 20km, but all groups navigated the route with increasing confidence and skill. Memorable highlights included Ollie's unusual lunch combination of honey and squeezy cheese, as well as Elissia making a new friend in the form of a donkey!

Despite some rain on the second evening, spirits remained high, and students celebrated their achievements following two successful and rewarding days.

On Sunday morning, everyone packed away their tents before heading home for a well-deserved rest, a hot shower, and a hearty breakfast.

I would like to congratulate all involved and I am looking forward to the actual Silver Expedition in September.

Mr Prest, Miss Maxwell and Miss Addison



Toby's Duke of Edinburgh Journey through to his Gold Award

Toby has been a student at Aldercar High School from Year 7 and will be leaving us this year to go to university, during his time here he has worked through the DofE Awards, this is his story;

Throughout my DofE Award I have learnt new life skills within the skills section. At Bronze I learnt how to cook main meals, either from a recipe or just cooking some food and going with the flow. At Silver I did baking, often trying bakes for the first time out of my cookbook. My assessor Mrs Jepson was especially pleased as I would deliver weekly treats that I had baked to prove as my evidence. And at Gold I learnt a completely foreign life skill in driving, with doing lessons for well over 8 months before passing first time in March.

My physical section has helped me to become not only more able and competent at the sports I chose but also to condition myself and my body for the expedition. In Bronze and Silver, I did my physical at my swimming club where I trained for swimming and lifesaving, working my way up the several levels of squads along the way and receiving two awards for being the Lifesaver of the Year. For my Gold, I nominated cycling for my physical, as I have always been a keen bike rider but wanted to get out on my bike more, and so I went out on weekly bike rides with friends or family around the local countryside. Although I was already part of the swimming club and knew how to ride a bike when I nominated it for the physical, this section showed me that taking up new sports isn't as difficult as it may seem and to always try new things along the way.

The volunteering though was the most rewarding part of the sections. For my Bronze and Silver, I started volunteering coaching at my swimming club, shadowing the other coaches and learning the teaching techniques. This lit a spark in me and I have now found a love in coaching and have been coaching at my swimming club for 6 years now, even gaining the relevant qualifications to take lessons on my own now. I have also decided on the career path of coaching and I will be starting at Uni in September on a Sports Coaching course. Because of this, for my Gold, I volunteered at my school during free periods at sixth form in two different classes; I helped in the P.E. Department with their lessons to see what being a P.E. Teacher was really like and then I helped out in Spanish lessons to see an academic subject and to hold onto the Spanish I had learnt at GCSE. Not only has the volunteering section helped to shape my career choices for the future, but it massively increased my confidence by pushing myself outside my comfort zone to experience new things.

As part of Gold I took on my residential, which for me entailed taking part in 5 days of outdoor activities and staying in camping pods. I entered the experience knowing absolutely nobody and throughout the week I made friends and tried some new experiences that I wouldn't have particularly chosen to do otherwise.

And of course, the expedition... the bit everyone hears about. Each expedition from Bronze through to Gold was entertaining, draining and remarkable to look back upon. Bronze was short but sweet, and it encouraged me to want more from the DofE experience. So next came Silver; one day and one night longer and wow it felt longer. We had a few more setbacks and I had a personal issue with Silver as I walked the three days with an infected toe to much discomfort. I got to the end of Silver and said "never again!". And yet here I am, after completing Gold which was once again one day and one night longer than the previous. I did my Bronze and Silver with school but I did Gold through an exterior DofE group with one of my friends. We did the expedition in the Northumberland countryside which was beautiful but painful with lots of elevation gained. We had plenty of navigational issues and great memories at camp during the evenings, and after the expedition we did our big presentation on: How castles and tourism affect the local areas?

Duke of Edinburgh has been an experience like no other, teaching me so many new skills for life, not only from my sections, but also key skills like navigation, teamwork, resilience, confidence and much more. It has been such an amazing experience, and it even managed to allow me to visit Buckingham Palace to celebrate the achievement, in which I actually spoke to HRH Duke of Edinburgh!



Rewards Lunch with Mr Blake

On Thursday, Mr Blake served lunch to the students who had the highest number of house points since Easter. Students were able to choose the lunch they wished, and Mr Blake donned his pinny and hat to serve these wonderful students. Students who were unable to take part in the lunch celebration were recognised with a reward ensuring their fantastic achievements were celebrated too. Well done all!



Staying Safe This Half Term

As we finish for the Spring Bank holiday, we hope all our students and families enjoy a well-deserved break. With warmer weather forecast, we would like to remind everyone of a few important safety messages to help keep children safe over the holidays:

☀ Sun Safety

- Encourage children to wear sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher) and reapply regularly, especially if playing outdoors.
- Hats, sunglasses, and light clothing can help protect from the sun.
- Try to avoid being outdoors during the hottest part of the day (11am–3pm) where possible.
- Staying hydrated is essential — please ensure children drink plenty of water throughout the day.

💧 Water Safety

- Open water (rivers, lakes, reservoirs, canals) can be dangerous, even in warm weather. Temperatures are often much colder than they appear.
- Children should never swim in open water unsupervised.
- Remind children not to jump or dive into unknown water and always be aware of strong currents and hidden hazards.

Rail Safety

- Please remind young people to stay well away from railway tracks and not to trespass on the rail network.
- Always use designated crossings and follow safety signs and signals.
- Headphones and mobile phones can be distracting — staying alert around railways is vital.

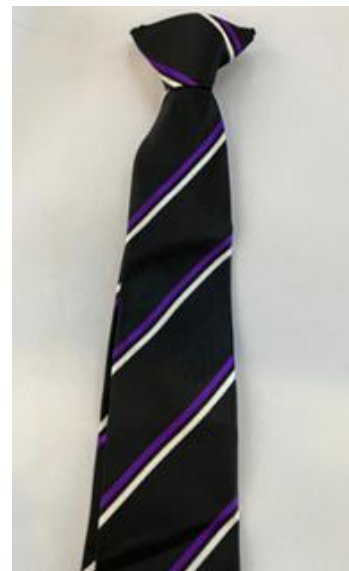
We kindly ask families to support us by reinforcing these messages at home.

School Ties

We would like to inform parents that, from September, a new school tie will be introduced for all incoming Year 7 students. This tie will form part of their standard uniform and reflect the next stage in our school's development.

For students in other year groups, the new tie will be optional, and they may continue to wear their existing house colour ties if they prefer.

We hope this gradual introduction will ensure a smooth transition while maintaining flexibility for current students.



Diary Dates

Monday 1st June - Return to school

Thursday 11th June - Year 10 Parents Evening

Thursday 25th June - Transition evening for new Year 6 students

Friday 26th June - Inset Day - no students in school

Thursday 2nd and Friday 3rd July - Y6 Transition days in school

Friday 3rd July - Y11 Prom

Thursday 9th July - Careers Fayre

Tuesday 14th July - Shipley and Howitt Celebration Evening

Thursday 16th July - Gregg and Ormonde Celebration Evening

Thursday 23rd July - Break up day

Kind Regards

Phil Smith

Proud Headteacher Aldercar High School

'Every child known, every lesson counts, every future unlocked'

Chair of the Inclusion Strategy Group

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