EMBARK FEDERATION

Every Child Known
Every Lesson Counts
Every Future Unlocked

Aldercar High School

Proud Headteacher: Mr P Smith

Weekly Newsletter 6th November 2026

Dear members of the Aldercar High School community,

Welcome back! I hope everyone in our school community enjoyed a restful half-term break and had the opportunity to recharge. It has been wonderful to welcome our students back to Aldercar this week and to see the school quickly return to its usual sense of purpose, energy and ambition. A new half term always brings a chance to reset, refocus and remind us of the standards and values that make our school such a positive place to learn and grow.

In assemblies this week, I have been talking to students about **aspiration** and, importantly, the young person our students want to become. I asked them to consider a simple question **"What is one thing your future self will thank you for doing today?".** Our futures are rarely shaped by one big moment, they are built through the small choices we make every day including working hard when something feels difficult, attending school consistently, being kind, taking opportunities and refusing to give up on ourselves.

Calendar reminders

Year 10 Parents Evening - Thursday the 3rd of December 2026.
INSET Day Friday the 4th of December 2026

Staffing Update – Mr Blake

It is with mixed emotions that I share the news that I will be leaving Aldercar High School at Christmas to take up the role of Principal at Sherwood Church Academy in Mansfield.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at Aldercar and will leave with many fond memories. I am incredibly grateful for the support of our students, staff, parents and wider community, particularly during my nine months as Head of School. It has been a privilege to lead the school, and I am proud of what we have achieved together.

Over the coming half term, my priority remains ensuring that Aldercar continues to move forward positively. In particular, I am committed to supporting our Year 11 students through their mock examinations and ensuring we are in the strongest possible position for the remainder of the academic year.

Although I will be moving on, this is certainly not goodbye. I will always value my connection with Aldercar and look forward to seeing the school and its community continue to go from strength to strength.

Thank you for everything.

Mr Blake

Year 11 Mock Exams

Year 11 Mocks begin on Monday. Students have had their exam rules assembly this afternoon, and are expected to be in school throughout the whole mock exam season. Students should be in school everyday by 8.20am. Please note exams in the afternoon may run past the schools usual finish time of 2.55pm, so please make alternative travel arrangements if students are normally collected from school.

If there are any issues or questions, please contact Mr Blake or Mrs Larkin on the below email addresses as soon as possible:

Ablake@aldercarhighschool.co.uk

Elarkin@aldercarhighschool.co.uk

Year 11 Mock Exam Timetable

		9:15am	1:15pm
W/C 9 NOV 26		YEAR 11	YEAR 11
09-Nov	Monday	EXTERNAL EXAMS	Biology 1h 45m Combined Science 1h 15m
10-Nov	Tuesday	English Language Paper 1 1h 45	Spanish Writing (H) 1h 15m (F) 1h
11-Nov	Wednesday	Geography (Physical) 1h	Business Paper 1h 45m
12-Nov	Thursday	English Language Paper 2 1h 45	History Paper 1 (Medicine) 1h 20m
13-Nov	Friday	Mathematics Paper 1 & 4 1h 30m	Chemistry 1h 45m Combined Science 1h 15m

		9:15am	1:15pm
W/C 16 Nov 26		YEAR 11	YEAR 11
16-Nov	Monday	Food 1hr 45 mins Geography (Human) 1h	History Paper Paper 2 (Cold war) 55m
17-Nov	Tuesday	Mathematics Paper 2 & 5 1h 30m	Construction (online) 1h 30m
18-Nov	Wednesday	Physics 1h 45m Combined Science 1h 15m	History Paper Paper 3 (USA) 1h 30m
19-Nov	Thursday	Mathematics Paper 3 & 6 1h 30m	Spanish Reading (H) 1hr (F) 45m Listening (H) 45m (F) 35m
20-Nov	Friday	Spanish Speaking 30 mins	Spanish Speaking 30 mins
		Health & Social care PSA	Health & Social care PSA

95% – Every Point Counts!

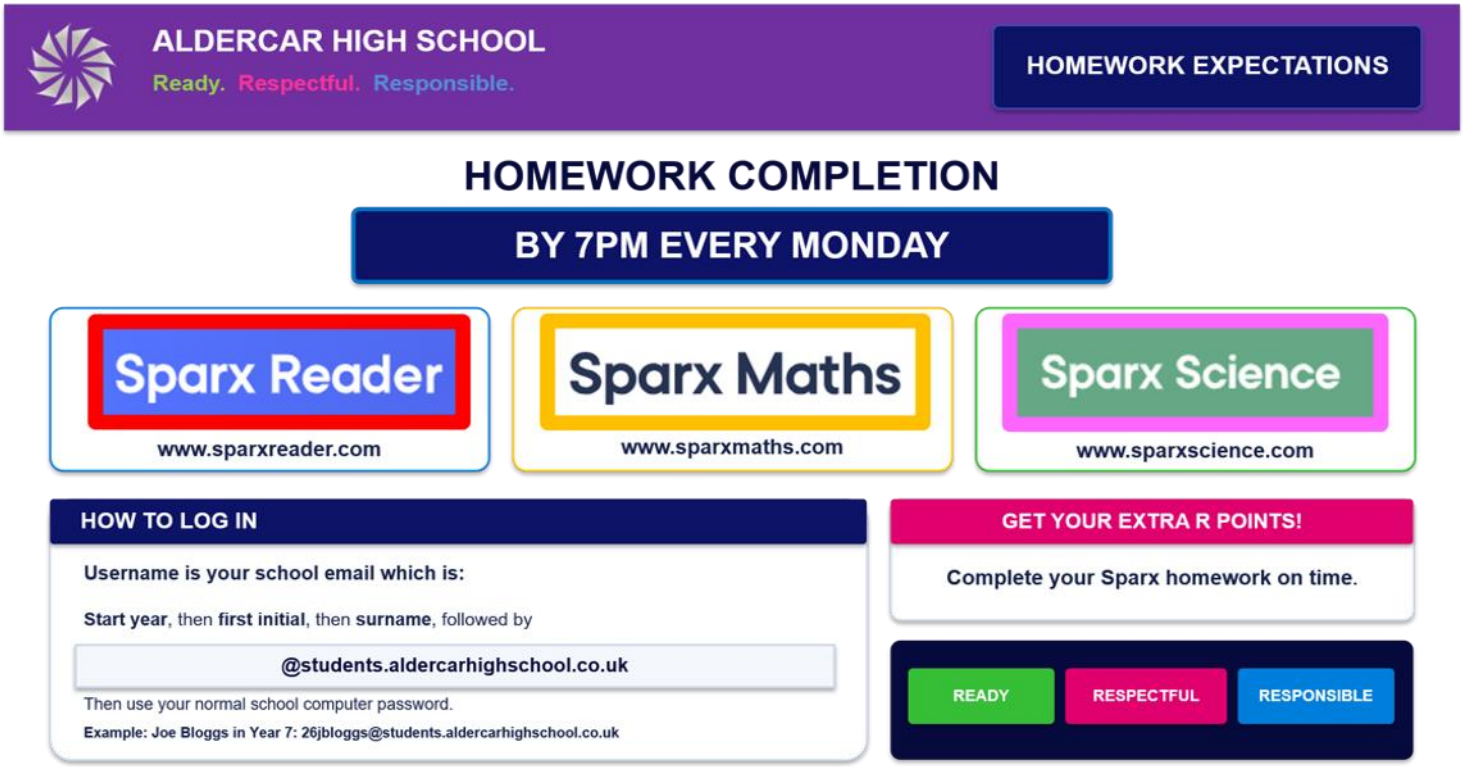
We are really pleased that the majority of our students are currently achieving our 95% standard and continuing to demonstrate what it means to be **Ready, Respectful and Responsible**. A huge well done to those students!

As we approach the end of term, we want to encourage everyone to keep pushing towards that 95% target. For those students who are not quite there yet, there is still time to make a difference! Remember, students can earn additional R Points through positive choices and by completing their homework on Sparx. Every point counts, so keep going!

We are also looking forward to our end-of-term Activity Day before we break up for Christmas. Students who achieve our 95% R Points standard will be eligible to take part in the activities as a reward for their positive contributions throughout the term.

Let's finish the term strongly, keep collecting those R Points and make sure as many students as possible can celebrate their achievements on Activity Day!

Sparks Homework



Curriculum Captures: Music at Aldercar High School

Music continues to be a busy, creative and exciting place at Aldercar High School, with students across all year groups developing their practical skills, confidence and musicianship through performance-based learning.

Key Stage 3 Music: Building Band Skills

This term, students in Years 7, 8 and 9 have been developing their instrumental skills through the Musical Futures Online curriculum, a hands-on approach that puts music-making at the heart of lessons.

Year 7 - Ukulele

Our Year 7 students have been learning to play the ukulele and are making excellent progress as they work towards their upcoming assessment performance. So far, they have mastered six important chords: Em, C, G, Am, D and F. These chords allow students to perform a range of popular songs while developing finger coordination, rhythm and ensemble skills.

Next term, Year 7 will move on to an exciting new unit exploring Hip Hop, where they will investigate beats, rhythms, rap lyric writing and music performance techniques.

Year 8 - Guitar

Year 8 students have continued their musical journey by transferring and developing their skills on the guitar. They have been learning the chords Em, C, D, G, Am and A sus4 building towards an assessed performance piece in the coming weeks.

As students become more confident, they are beginning to develop greater independence when rehearsing and performing together. Their next topic will be The Blues, where they will explore the origins of one of the most influential genres in modern music and learn how blues music has shaped the styles we listen to today.



Year 9 - Band Project

In Year 9, students are taking their skills even further by working as real bands. Using a variety of instruments including ukulele, acoustic guitar, electric guitar, bass guitar and voice, students are rehearsing and preparing for their assessment performances.

This collaborative project develops musicianship, teamwork, communication and performance skills as students learn to create successful ensemble performances. Following this unit, students will begin our Band Performance and Song Development Project, where they will start creating and shaping original musical ideas. This project provides an excellent foundation for the creative and compositional skills required for KS4 Music and encourages students to think like composers and performers.



Practising at Home

Although it is not a requirement for students to own or have access to an instrument at home, those who do can continue their learning outside of school using our Musical Futures Online student subscription. Students can access lesson videos, tutorials and supporting resources to help reinforce the skills learned in class.

www.musicalfuturesonline.org

Aldercar High School subscription website please do not share with anyone not attending this school but feel free to browse and use the student section for ukulele, chair drumming, guitar or keyboard development at home.
Username – aldercarmusic
Password - aldercarmusic

School Band Preparing for Christmas

Our after-school band continues to rehearse every Monday evening and is already hard at work preparing for the school's Christmas Show on Thursday 10th December.

Students from different year groups come together to rehearse popular favourites and contemporary songs, developing their ensemble performance skills while enjoying the experience of making music as part of a group. We are looking forward to sharing their hard work with the school community in December.

GCSE Music Update

Year 11 GCSE Music students are putting their finishing touches to their free compositions.
Students are refining their musical ideas, improving structure, developing instrumental parts and ensuring their compositions meet the highest possible standards before submission. At the same time, they are preparing for their solo performance recordings, which will take place during December.

Instrumental Lessons: Learn, Perform, Achieve

Did you know that students at Aldercar High School can also learn an instrument through our team of visiting instrumental teachers?

We currently offer lessons in:

- Drum Kit
- Guitar
- Bass Guitar
- Flute
- Clarinet

Lessons are typically around £12 for an individual 20-minute session and are suitable for beginners right through to more advanced players.

Learning an instrument offers far more than just musical skills. Students regularly develop:

- Confidence and self-esteem
- Perseverance and resilience
- Concentration and focus
- Creativity and self-expression
- Teamwork and communication skills
- Time management and self-discipline

Instrumental lessons can also support students' progress in classroom music, provide opportunities to perform, and create pathways into extracurricular ensembles and GCSE Music.

If your child is interested in learning an instrument, please contact the Mrs Greenwood for further information about lesson availability.



Celebrating Musical Success

Congratulations to Noah Biggs, who has recently achieved an outstanding result in his Trinity Rock & Pop Grade 3 Guitar Examination.

Noah passed with Distinction, achieving an impressive 88/100 marks. This excellent result reflects the hard work, commitment and regular practice he has dedicated to developing his guitar playing skills. Achieving a Distinction at any grade is a significant accomplishment and demonstrates a high level of musical understanding, technical control and performance confidence.

Everyone in the Music Department is incredibly proud of Noah's achievement and we look forward to seeing his musical journey continue in the future.

Well done, Noah!

Duke of Edinburgh

Bronze DofE

Everyone who returned a reply slip has been offered a place on the scheme. The cost of registration has been added to Arbor. The first meeting will be on Thursday 12th November for all students doing Bronze DofE, the meeting will take place at 3pm in the hall and will last 45 minutes. We will then meet every Thursday for 45 minutes in the hall.

Silver DofE

Everyone who returned a reply slip has been offered a place and the cost of registration has been added to Arbor, there are still places available if anyone else is interested. The first Silver meeting will be on Wednesday 18th November at 3pm in W02. Meetings will then be every 2 weeks.



Key Stage 3 Football

This afternoon Mr Holloway had the privilege of taking out 6 Key Stage 3 students to take part in a football competition at Swanwick Sports Collage. All students represented the school brilliantly and had a great afternoon.

We came away with 1 win, 1 draw and 1 loss. Stand out performance was from Sammy.



Under 15 Girls Futsal

On Thursday night we held a fixture at Aldercar for the Girls U15 Futsal. There were 5 teams in total.

The scores on the doors for the evening were as follows:

AHS 4-0 Belper
AHS 0-0 Ecclesbourne
AHS 1- 0 DNP
AHS 0-0 Flammy

These results are the best results that these girls have achieved since year 7 and they were extremely happy at the end of the evening as they were awarded 2nd place 🥈👏👏👏.

Miss Tyrrell is extremely proud of the girls for their conduct and performance throughout. It was 5 a side, we had 5 players and each game they played their hearts out.



PE Activities and Kit Information

As we begin a new half term in PE, I would like to provide an overview of the activities students will be taking part in and remind parents of the kit required for lessons.

Activities This Half Term
Year 7

- Netball
- Football (3G)

Year 8

- Pickleball
- Handball (3G)

Year 9

- Pickleball
- Handball (3G)

For all Year 7, 8 and 9 students, **3G football boots/trainers suitable for our artificial surface are required** for lessons this half term.

Cold Weather PE Kit
As the weather begins to get colder, **netball, football and handball lessons will continue to take place outdoors** wherever possible. We encourage students to come prepared for the conditions whilst still being dressed appropriately for PE.

Students should continue to wear their normal PE kit but may also wear:

- Base layers underneath their PE kit
- Plain black leggings
- Plain black tracksuit bottoms
- A suitable jumper or the AHS PE jumper
- A sports coat or lightweight rain jacket that does not restrict movement
- Gloves for handball lessons if they wish to wear them

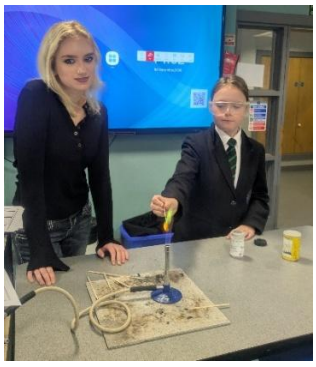
Please ensure that all additional clothing is suitable for physical activity and allows students to participate safely and comfortably.
Thank you for your continued support in helping students arrive at lessons prepared and ready to take part.
The activities above will change for 2 weeks due to mock exams taking place in the Sports Hall week commencing 9th November to November 20th.

Thank you for your continued support

PE Department

Nurture Club

Students attending the after school Nurture Club were making sparklers and fireworks using metals. We were looking at how fireworks are made and students got to experiment and make their own.






Mr Prest’s Puzzle

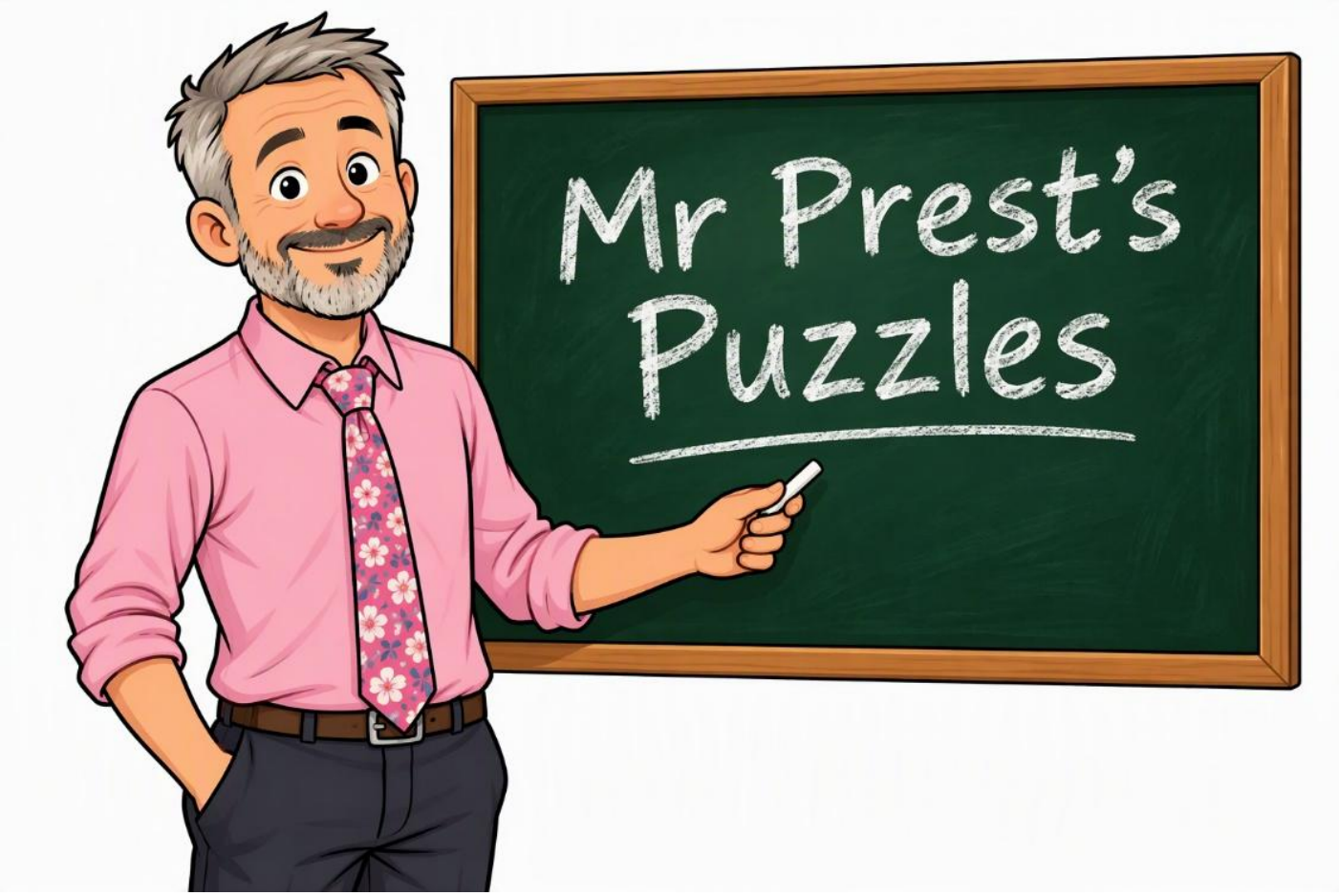
Each week Mr Prest will set a puzzle for you to solve, if you think you have the solution, write the solution, your name and your year group on a piece of paper and put it in the entry box in W02, before next Thursday. Each correct entry will earn 15 R Points. The correct solution will be posted in next week's newsletter.

This week's puzzle is ....

There are 4 people (Miss Maxwell, Miss Sutcliffe, Mrs Philbin, and Mr Prest) who want to cross a bridge at night.

- Miss Maxwell, Miss Sutcliffe, Mrs Philbin, and Mr Prest take 1, 2, 5, and 8 minutes, respectively, to cross the bridge.
- There is only one torch with them, and the bridge cannot be crossed without the torch.
- There cannot be more than two people on the bridge at any time, and when two people cross the bridge together, they must move at the slower person's pace.

What is the least amount of time they can take to cross the bridge?



Aldercar High School

Remembrance Service

Wednesday 11th November 2026

We will be coming together as a whole school community for our annual Remembrance Service to reflect, remember and honour those who have served and sacrificed.

Uniformed Service Clubs

Students who attend uniformed service clubs (e.g. cadets) are welcome to wear their uniform on Wednesday.

Poppies on Sale

Poppies will be on sale next week during break and lunch.

Please bring cash into school.

As a school, we will gather together at **10.50am** for our Remembrance **Service.**

READY | RESPECTFUL | RESPONSIBLE



Derbyshire County Council Outdoor Engagement Programme

5 of our Year 8 students are currently working with staff from DCC on the outdoor engagement programme. The aim of the programme is for students to develop their skills in communication, teamwork, resilience and personal development.

Our pupils braved the cold for a fantastic outdoor cooking session. Using the fire pit, they made their own delicious pizzas and enjoyed a well-earned cup of hot chocolate to keep warm!

The group showed great teamwork, resilience, and enthusiasm throughout the session, proving that a little cold weather is no barrier to outdoor learning and fun. What a brilliant afternoon of food, friendship, and fresh air!























EMBARK FEDERATION

CHRISTMAS 2026

Have fun creating!

Calling all young artists!

Christmas Card Design Competition





We're inviting children from across all our Embark schools to design a very special Christmas card.

The two winning designs will be professionally printed as our official Christmas cards this year.

Closing date: Friday 20th November 2026

Need ideas? Try...

- Snowmen
- Robins
- Stars
- Presents
- Snowy houses
- Trees
- Reindeer
- Snowflakes

Prizes

Two winners will be chosen from all entries.

Both winning designs will be printed as our official Christmas cards.

Each winner will be recognised and celebrated across the schools for their creativity.

Open to every pupil at an Embark school.

Design rules

- A4 or A5 white paper or card
- Portrait or landscape is fine
- Bright, bold colours
- Keep it fairly simple so it prints clearly
- Your own original artwork
- Pencils, crayons, paint or collage
- No glitter or bulky 3D decorations

Key dates

LAUNCH
Early November

CLOSING DATE
Friday 20 November

JUDGING
Week of 23 November

WINNERS ANNOUNCED
By Friday 27 November

CARDS PRINTED
Early December

How to enter

Hand your finished design to your class teacher by **Friday 20 November**.

On the back of your design, write:

Your name _____

Age / Year _____

School _____

FAMILY – INTEGRITY – TEAMWORK – SUCCESS

Love Learning, Love Life

We can't wait to see your creativity!

9th November 2026

Book Reviews

Mirror Mirror: A Twisted Tale by Jen Calonita

★★★★☆

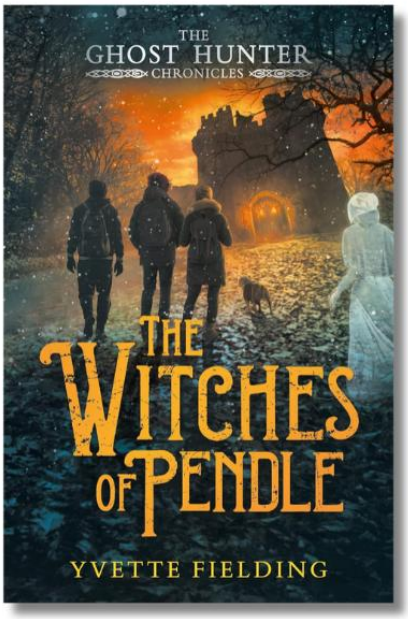
Now it's Snow White's turn to rescue her husband, the Prince, and to prevent the Evil Queen from ruining the Kingdom forever.



What did you think of the book?

It was very descriptive and had many plot twists.

The Witches of Pendle by Yvette Fielding



A team of young ghost hunters must take on the spirits of powerful and ancient witches.

What did you think of the book?

I liked when the witches did witchcraft, it was interesting.

Brooke B, 7A

★★★★☆

Got an opinion about something you've read?
See Miss Bell in the library

GRAPHIC NOVELS - COMICS - MANGA - ANIME - GRAPHIC NOVELS - COMICS - MANGA - ANIME - GRAPHIC NOVELS - COMICS



COMIC CLUB

NEW!

ALL AGES WELCOME

A NEW Comics Club: for fans of manga, anime, comics, graphic novels, and more.

Starting in October, Thursdays 3–4pm in the library

- *write and draw your own comics*
- *how-to videos*
- *reviews and recommendations*
- *games and crafts*
- *fan fiction*
- *tasting parties*
- *author profiles*

THURSDAYS 3-4PM IN THE LIBRARY

マンガエル

TELL Miss Bell in the library
if you want to come

MANGA - ANIME - GRAPHIC NOVELS - COMICS - MANGA - ANIME - GRAPHIC NOVELS - COMICS - MANGA -

Aldercar High School

FREE PERIOD PRODUCTS

Collect your period products from:

- Mrs Salt in Student Services
- Mrs Wayne in Reprographics
- Learning Support
- Reception



We've got you.

READY | RESPECTFUL | RESPONSIBLE

READY | RESPECTFUL | RESPONSIBLE

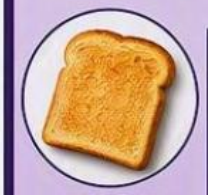
Aldercar HIGH SCHOOL

BREAKFAST CLUB

FREE BREAKFAST EVERY MORNING

IN THE PHOENIX BUILDING

INCLUDING:


TOAST


BAGELS


JAM


CHOCOLATE SPREAD



BISCOFF SPREAD


JUICE


FRESH FRUIT



THE BEST WAY TO START THE SCHOOL DAY

EVERY CHILD KNOWN

EVERY LESSON COUNTS

EVERY FUTURE UNLOCKED

Diary Dates

Monday 9th – Friday 20th November – Year 11 Mock Exams
Wednesday 11th November – Remembrance Day/Dress to Impress
Friday13 November – Flu immunisation for all students – keep a look out for the email from NHS
Wednesday 2nd December – Year 10 Parents Evening 16:00-19:00
Friday 4th December – Inset Day
Monday 7th - Friday 11th December – Rewards Assemblies
Thursday 10th December – Christmas Talent Show
Wednesday 16th December – Activity Day 1
Friday 18th December - Last Day of Term

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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Aldercar HIGH SCHOOL

EMBARK FEDERATION

INCLUSION PARTNERSHIP
Because school means more