

Press Release – 11th June 2014 - JOINT STATEMENT FROM THE PRINCIPAL OF ARDEN ACADEMY AND THE KNOWLE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

ARDEN WELCOMES GERMAN STUDENTS

There has been some upset caused to a small number of our community following Arden flying the flags of Arden, Great Britain and Germany. We apologise for any upset caused. The flag was raised late on Friday 6th June in order to celebrate and welcome the latest group of German students from Albert Einstein Schule who are taking part in the Year 9 exchange programme. The two schools have been associated for over fifteen years and recognise the many benefits of such an experience both to the students involved and their communities.

Arden and the Knowle Royal British Legion work closely together – no one has complained or made comment directly to the school it appears that someone made contact with the local press. On June 27th Arden is holding a very special World War 1 commemorative event. The Royal British legion will be playing a key part alongside Arden students, the Knowle Society, The Knowle Local History Society, The Rotary Club and members of the The Royal Star and Garter home in Solihull.

The German students have a busy schedule with their partners; the highlight of which is meeting the Mayor of Solihull, Councillor Joe Tildesley in his office. They have also enjoyed many cultural events with visits to The Black Country Museum, Warwick Castle and Stratford-upon-Avon. Indeed it is this immersion into different cultures that underpins the ethos of the programme, along with improving vital linguistic skills for all involved.

Arden's links to the school in Frankfurt reflect those of Solihull – the two towns were officially linked in March 1992 although the twinning committee had been operating since 1984. Both associations seek to cultivate relationships, promoting cultural knowledge and awareness.

Mr Murphy, Arden Executive Principal commented 'one of Arden's stated aims is to teach our students about community spirit and our place in the global world. This exchange programme is an excellent opportunity for our students

to experience this and in doing so become successful citizens of the future'. Ray Warren Chair of Knowle Royal British Legion said 'it is disappointing that some negative comments have been made - these do not reflect the views of the Royal British Legion. We are looking forward to working with Arden and we are delighted to welcome the German students to our community'.

One parent commented 'I am hosting a German student, we were so proud as we drove past Arden on Saturday to see the Union Jack and the German flag flying side by side – it was a very special welcome indeed to our guest from the local community of Knowle'

Martin Murphy
Principal, Arden

Ray Warren
Chairman of Knowle Royal British Legion