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Speed Check

Sixteen year 7 and 8 pupils recently worked with the local authority in capturing road traffic data along Station Road. The work was completed as part of a consultation over traffic calming and additional crossing points for use along the road. The pupils that took part did a terrific job in supporting the capture of important data about road usage and speed of travel, although the time spent capturing the data was reduced given the arctic conditions!



Christmas Events & Happy New Year

We were saddened this week to have to cancel our dedication services at Knowle Parish Church, and our Upper School Christmas Concert, due to the weather. However, we still managed to get in to the festive spirit through a number of events which have taken place this week. This included me helping out to serve Christmas lunch on Wednesday, a charity Sixth Form Christmas Jumper day on Friday, and Christmas year group concerts.

member of the Arden community for their support over this past, very busy term. I hope you have a wonderful festive period and we all look forward to seeing you in 2018!

Mr Murphy
Arden Principal



We have also been carrying out our annual toy collection in aid of Birmingham City Mission and we have been delighted with the donations received. This year we have also been collecting food donations which will be sent along with the presents. We would like to thank everyone for their generous donations. May I take this opportunity to thank every



Arden in the snow

We would like to thank you for your support and understanding during the weather disruptions this week. Our site staff and our contractors were amazing and worked tirelessly throughout Monday and Tuesday clearing snow to enable Arden to open on Wednesday. This was an enormous task given the amount of snow which was over 12 inches deep in places. Can you please remind your children to continue to take care since the wintry conditions are likely to continue for some time.



Knowle Friendship Club

To me Christmas really starts when I take students down to Knowle Friendship Club to serve Christmas lunch. It was again an absolute pleasure to serve lunch to eighty-four members of KFC. After the lunch, Dr Seago and some Year 12 and Year 13 students entertained everyone with festive songs, solo instrumental performances and carols. Celebrating friendship, enjoying lunch and chatting to the Year 10 Catering students made for a very special lunch time.

Mrs Herbert



A special farewell

At the end of this term we will be saying goodbye to a number of members of our cleaning team. Some of them have been part of the Arden family for more than twenty years and so we wanted to give them a special send off. Mrs Herbert and Mrs Bennett organised a special meal in their honour last week. They were served a delicious feast of chicken with bacon and a creamy sauce, roast potatoes, parsnips, carrots, peas and onions, followed by tea cup trifle. Mr Murphy and Mr Hinsley also joined the party to say goodbye.

With a total of 150 years of cleaning at Arden between them, the Staff Room Association presented them with a poinsettia plant and a bottle of wine each. Special mention has to go to Paul Weale who has been at Arden for over 40 years. We would like to extend our thanks to all of the team and wish them well in their new ventures.



Craft Club

Pupils from Craft Club had a great trip to The Grove residential home as part of their Craft Club community project. The children were fabulous with the elderly people and really enjoyed the visit. The pupils gave the residents biscuits they had made as well as Christmas cards. They also sang some Christmas songs for them. Claudia Williams in 8D was the absolute star of the visit! The manager commented on how well behaved they were and the pupils have all been invited back next year.



Lord Jordan

Politics Club and Year 12 and 13 Politics students were treated to another special visitor this month. Lord Jordan came to Arden as part of the Peers in Schools programme.



Students listened to Lord Jordan's fascinating

stories of his life as a Peer before



being able to ask questions. The students again found the experience really useful to help them to contextualise their learning. We would like to express our thanks to Lord Jordan for making the time to come and visit us.

Ceramics Club

Ceramics Club this half term has been transformed into a winter wonderland full of decorative Christmas trees of all different shapes and sizes. Ready for the festive season, the Arden Ceramicists have created various Christmas decorations and gifts. These ceramic Christmas trees have gone through several stages to reach the finished look. Made out of wet clay, the tree had to dry out and harden up before entering the kiln for the first time, turning the clay from earthenware to bisque ware. These ceramic creations have to be glazed with a variety of different colours, before entering the kiln for a second time to achieve their finished state.

The students have had a wonderful time this term making and creating. If you'd like to try your hand at some ceramic work, feel free to pop down to M6 on Tuesdays after school.

Merry Christmas from the Arden Ceramicists.



A Scientific Christmas

The Science Department have been getting themselves in to the festive spirit with their very own Christmas tree which the technicians made out of various pieces of chemical glassware. It just shows what you can do when you use a little imagination!



Lower School Christmas Concert

The Lower School Concert was held on Tuesday 5th December and was a fantastic evening which really helped us all get into the festive spirit. We were treated to a number of beautiful solo and group performance and once again the concert was a real celebration of the wonderful talent of our young people.

Well done to all involved and a huge thank you to Dr. Seago and the music team who work so tirelessly to make these events happen, and to parents for their continued support.

We were really disappointed to have to cancel our Upper School Concert and we are currently looking at our calendar to see when we can reschedule this.



Art Ambassadors

Mr Fletcher set the Art Ambassadors a festive challenge as part of the of their Art Ambassador Club which is held on a Friday Lunchtime in M6. This stunning festive 'Google Doodle' was created by one of our Year 8 students, Sebrina Stain.

If you wish to practise your artistic skills in a constructive and useful manner, come and join the Art

Ambassadors club and you never know, you may find your artwork featured in next month's newsletter.



One of the strands of ArdenAIM is 'Excellence Students'. Tying in with the Arden Values, this aims to highlight and celebrate some of the astounding achievements made by Arden students, in a range of different activities, outside of school.

We are very proud that a number of our students have received recognition for their outstanding talents in the arts and in sport at local, national and international levels. They are truly inspirational role models.

Every month, we shall be shining the spotlight on one of our Excellence Students to find out exactly just what it takes to excel in their field and to achieve such success.

Rhys Edwards (Year 13)

Rhys is an extremely talented musician and plays both the trumpet and the euphonium, the latter being his main instrument. He plays in a range of ensembles, including Bedworth Brass, the Solihull Youth Wind Orchestra and the Solihull Senior Brass Ensemble. As a member of these groups and as a soloist, Rhys has performed in numerous concerts and also toured in Barcelona. Rhys has recently successfully auditioned for the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain, a hugely impressive achievement.

When did you first realise that you were such a talented musician?

I started playing the trumpet when I was about 7 or 8, but tried the euphonium for the first time only about three years ago. I immediately realised that I was more suited to it than to the trumpet; it felt much more natural and more appropriate to my playing style.

How much practice do you have to do?

I do two hours of individual practice every day, as well as daily ensemble rehearsals, which are up to two hours each.

Describe a typical day.

I always try to use one of my study periods in school for my instrumental practice and then do another hour as soon as I get home from school. I usually then have to travel to one of my ensembles, either in Bedworth or in Solihull.

You are in Year 13, which is such an important year. How do you fit all of your work in?

It's not easy, but music will always come first for me. Having said that, I make sure that I am conscientious with my school work. I have to be very organised and make sure that I keep on top of all of my deadlines. Unfortunately this can mean I have some late nights to ensure that I get all of my work completed to a high standard.

Apart from the time commitment, what else do you have to do to maintain your success as a musician?

I listen to a lot of solo euphonium and brass band music so that I can understand and replicate the style of the

musicians and find alternative ways of interpreting pieces. This helps me to become an increasingly more accomplished and well-rounded player.

Who is your musical inspiration?

A man called Dan Thomas, who plays euphonium in the Black Dyke Band. His background and musical development have been very similar to mine, in that he has worked through the peripatetic system via school, rather than attending a specific music or performing arts academy. I hope that I can emulate his success.

What is your ambition?

I would love to get into one of the top Conservatoires and go on to become a successful professional musician. I have recently auditioned for the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and am hoping to hear some good news from them soon – fingers crossed!

What is your motto?

Don't just practice until you get it right; practice until you don't get it wrong again.

UPDATE: Since this interview we have been delighted to hear that Rhys has been offered a place at the Royal Northern College of Music, which is one of the leading conservatoires in the world, following a successful audition. What fantastic news. Well done Rhys!



Sports News

For all the latest news about all things sports related don't forget to follow the Arden PE Department on Twitter

 @ArdenPE

Gymnastics

Congratulations go to Corey Allen (Year 10) who won the West Midlands Tumbling competition on Saturday 2nd December.

Corey competed in the Over 14 category and he achieved the highest score of the competition overall with a score of 27.8.

This is an absolutely fantastic result for Corey who will now compete in the Nationals on Saturday 5th May. We look forward to hearing how he gets on.



Swimming

Enormous individual congratulations go to Deen Ahmed in Year 9 who has broken in to the top 25 swimmers in the country for his age group in six different disciplines! He has just edged in to position 25 in both the 50m and 100m

Water Polo

Huge congratulations to Rhys Tippings in Year 9, who was chosen to represent the West Midlands (13 boys were selected across the region) at an Inter Regional Water Polo Tournament which took place at Walsall Gala Baths over this past weekend (9th-10th December). There were 10 teams which took part including teams from Scotland, London, South East, North East & West, East and East Midlands.

On Saturday 9th, the team started out at 10:30am and arrived back at 9:30 in the evening. They team won 3 out of 4 group games which then entered them into the semi-final which was on Sunday 10th. An early start was needed and they were back on the road at 7:30am

due to the weather to return to Walsall where the team won the Semi-Final 8-6. It was then on to the Final which they won 5-1.

This is a fantastic achievement by Rhys, not only to represent the West Midlands but also to come away with a Gold Medal after competing with so many teams from across the country.



Rugby

Our Year 10's game against The Kings School kicked off with the biggest crowd seen at an Arden School match. The vociferous support for the home side clearly had an impact on the Arden boys in the opening exchanges with us turning over possession cheaply off the kick off and then conceding a soft try shortly after. We were back in the game from the kick off though; a moment of brilliance from Ethan Walton saw him stroll in under the posts unopposed leaving the score at 7-7. For the next 20 minutes Arden found it difficult to get out of our own half. Kings, and their increasingly noisy supporters, had their tails up and scored two tries to go 19-7 up. Some cleverly taken 'injury' breaks and some calming words from key players got Arden back on track. Ethan Walton again crossing before half time to make it 19-14.

Soon after half-time Ethan had split the defence, offloaded the ball and then when the ball was recycled was on hand to dummy his way to a hat trick score, the conversion

was narrowly missed and the scores were tied at 19-19. That's how it stayed until the last 15 minutes. Unfortunately for Arden the Kings' dangerous outside centre used his electric speed against some tiring legs to set up a score for their winger and again to go under the posts himself. Arden rallied and put pressure on the home team until the final whistle but we just couldn't get over the try line. Final Score: Kings 33 – 19 Arden

While Ethan was clearly the star of the show with 3 scores it really was a team effort, on a wide pitch that Kings used to the maximum, all of the boys had to put a shift in. Big mention to the forwards, led by Ben Garside, who dominated their opposition at both scrum and breakdown.

The boys have done so well this year; beating local rivals and private schools such as Rugby school. They were gutted at the final whistle but should be really proud of how they played.

What an incredible achievement for Deen who will now be training hard in the coming months as he works towards the English nationals competition which will be taking place in August.

Well done Deen!

Table Tennis

Arden came runners up out of 10 teams at the South Solihull table tennis championships held on the 5th December. The teams did well, with the Year 11s narrowly missing out in the final to a quality Lode Heath team. A Year 9/10 team also did well and came third. Well done to all of the boys involved.



The Year 11 team:
Harry Jenkins,
Charlie
Richardson, Akash
Sharma and Fraser
Ramsey



The Year 9/10
team: Faaris-
Mohammed
Aslam, Henry
Belcher, Sam
Hurley and
Josh Taylor

Ski Race

There were 17 competitors for the ski race which was held at Ackers on Friday 8th December. Once again this was the largest number of entrants from any one school.

In the U14 Boys category Jamie Hyde won Bronze and Luke Reid won Silver.

In the U16 category Scott Johns won Gold.

This is a fantastic achievement once again and our congratulations go to all of the students who took part.

The next two races will take place on Friday 12th January and Friday 2nd February. Students can still sign up if they are interested in taking part.

Students should see Mr Pillinger for details.

The full list of competitors was:

Martin Aamodt-Leeper
Noah Aamodt-Leeper
Thomas Duckers
Gregory Gahan
Jamie Hyde
Scott Johns
Maxwell Lilly
Josiah Malcolm
Joseph Munns
Joseph Pemberton
Luke Reid
Gabriel Schroeter
Clara Stride
Kai Turner
Abigail Wheelhouse
Rex Winslow
Erin Winslow

Kind Donation

We were absolutely delighted to receive a kind donation from Sally Matthews, mother of Bella Trett in Year 12, as a thank you to the PE Department for all of the support they have given to Bella over the years.

The money has been used to purchase Tchoukball equipment such as that pictured below.



We would like to thank Sally for her donation and continued support of Arden.

The PE Department are excited to get

started with the new equipment next term and are pleased to be able to offer yet another sport here at Arden.



PTFA Christmas Ball

The Arden Christmas Ball was a huge success with record numbers attending what is widely thought to be the best Christmas Party in town! Party goers were not disappointed – much merriment was had by all. A huge thank you to Gourmet Foods for laying on a super 3 course Christmas meal; Mat Bullock (Power Leisure) for compering and playing the best Christmas party music ever and of course a massive thank you to the PTFA for organising this fun, fabulous and festive event. The highlight of the evening included a Gin Bar and a party photography studio (what a great idea PTFA!)

Some comments on the night included:

"I brought along some family friends and they couldn't believe what a fabulous night it was, they really enjoyed boogying the night away"

"Very reasonably priced drinks and friendly bar staff"

"Great atmosphere, really kick-started our Christmas!"

We are already looking forward to next year! The next PTFA event is a table top sale which will be held on Sunday 4th March at 10:30am in the School Hall. We hope to see you there.

Alumni News

Michael Penny

Following an appeal on Twitter for Alumni information, we were delighted to hear from former student Michael, who left Arden in 2012. Michael has been on a really interesting journey since leaving Arden. After achieving fantastic A-Levels (AAB), Michael went off to the University of Southampton to begin working towards an MEng in Ship Science. However, personal

circumstances ended up taking Michael on a completely different journey and he ended up leaving university before completing his degree.

Michael is now working as a firefighter for Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service down in Southampton. He also works part time during the summer as an RNLI lifeguard on the beaches of Poole and Bournemouth, plus he volunteers for both South Central Ambulance Service and St John Ambulance.

Michael is a great example of a

student who has ended up in a totally different place to where he thought he would go when he left school, but he has learnt so much along the way and is very happy with the choices he has made. You can read more about Michael's fascinating story [here](#).



Alumni Appeal

We are always looking for Alumni stories. If you are a former student or are in contact with one then please ask them to get in touch and tell their story. Please contact Mrs Collett, Assistant Principal:

ecollett@arden.solihull.sch.uk

Fond farewells

We will be saying goodbye to some teaching staff who are moving on to new ventures in January. We would like to thank them for their commitment to Arden and wish them all the best for their future careers. Miss Aldridge (English) will be joining Bromsgrove School and Mrs Kavanagh -Kenny will be joining the WMG Academy for Young Engineers

teaching from Year 10 upwards. Miss Wardle (MFL) is moving on for promotion as Head of Department at Foxford School in Coventry and lastly, Miss Kouhi is venturing abroad to teach Drama in an International School in the Netherlands. We look forward to introducing you to our new staff in the January newsletter.

Important dates for January

Tuesday 2nd January	Inset Day
Wednesday 3rd January	Students return to school
Thursday 4th January	Parent meeting for Trip to Berlin/Poland (6.30pm, Atrium, Smart Centre) Parent meeting for Trip to Iceland (6.30pm, School Hall)
Friday 5th January	Year 11 Mock Product Design Examination
Monday 8th-Tuesday 9th January	Year 11 Mock Art Examination
Monday 8th January to Friday 12th January	Year 9 Examination Week
Thursday 11th January	Year 8 Parent Consultations (2.45pm-6.30pm) <i>* School closes to all students at 2.15pm No parking on school site</i>
Tuesday 16th January	Year 10 Parents Meeting – Numeracy (7.00pm)
Tuesday 23rd January	Year 11 Progress coaching (8:45-9:05); all other Years start at 9:05am Mental Health Awareness Evening (6.30pm), School Hall
Thursday 25th January	Year 11 Parent Consultations (2.45pm-6.30pm) (2/2) <i>* School closes to all students at 2.15pm No parking on school site</i> Year 12 residential Physics visit to CERN, Geneva (TBC)
Friday 26th January	Year 7 Knife, Crime and Gangs Assembly (Form time)