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Thank you

We received a lovely letter of thanks from Birmingham City Mission for all the toys which were donated through our Christmas toy appeal.

Through their ToyLink work, Birmingham City Mission were able to visit over 1000 families over the Christmas period to give gifts to over 2,500 children who might not otherwise have received any presents.

As well as the presents, we were able to deliver two trolley's full of food donations to local food banks just before Christmas. We would like to thank everyone who donated food and presents to help these fantastic and well deserved local causes.

A bright start to 2018

We have started the spring term with some appalling weather yet this has not diminished the exceptional enthusiasm of our students and staff. We have had a busy and very successful start to the new year. The students have settled back in to their studies extremely well and this latest newsletter shows just how much goes on in a typical Arden month.

We were thrilled to find that we are mentioned in Tatler magazine's *State School Guide 2018* as one of the best state schools in

the country. This is a fantastic accolade and a real tribute to our wonderful staff and students.

The success of the Arden Multi Academy Trust continues following the excellent examination results last year. A number of schools have expressed a wish to join with us this year and we were delighted to welcome Lode Heath to the trust from January. We are very much looking forward to working with them in the future.

Mr Murphy, Principal

An 'un-Christmas' concert

This week saw the long awaited Upper School Concert which had to be postponed back in December due to the snow. The concert was slightly shorter than normal but never the less it was a delightful display of the wonderful musical talent of the students here at Arden. We were treated to some fabulous ensemble pieces and we would like to thank Dr Seago and his hard working music team for putting the concert together. Congratulations to all of the performers who work so hard to be able to perform to such a high standard. We cannot wait until the Spring concert after this taster!



Mental Health Awareness Information Evening

We were thrilled with the support from parents and carers for our recent Mental Health Awareness Information Evening.

Liam Laughton from SOLAR gave some important messages about mental health issues affecting our young people, as well as practical tips for helping to deal with the pressures of things like exams. He took on the difficult topic of Social Media and talked about the importance of communication between parents and children.

In total nearly 200 parents and carers were in attendance for the evening which is part of the wider work we are doing at Arden to focus on promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. Keep an eye out for future events and information to support you and your children.

More information about SOLAR and the work they do, as well as how you can access support, can be found [here](#)



STEM Day

On Monday 29th January over a hundred eager pupils from Year 8 took part in an Enterprise and STEM Challenge day in the school hall. We were happy to welcome 'Solutions for the Planet', who ran the day, and also engineers from Tarmac UK, Brammer, Buck & Hickman, and the CEO from Green Tomato Cars.

Pupils worked in small groups on a variety of challenges. These centred on issues that an increasing population puts on the planet. Many of the pupils were fired up by the recent 'plastics in the ocean debate' following BBC's Blue Planet programmes. Pupils enjoyed developing their interpersonal skills as well as broadening their application of skills in science, maths and engineering. Their career horizons were expanded by short talks from the visiting engineers, as well as insights into how engineering and STEM related skills impacts on virtually every part of our daily lives, from our morning toothpaste to setting our alarms at night.

In the afternoon session pupils put to use all that they had learnt by: independently choosing an issue they were interested; creating an innovative solution to that problem and; branding their company or product.

This session saw a flurry of creativity as groups chose a diverse range of problems to solve eg. the decline of bees, the funding shortage in the NHS and consequences of fatbergs in our sewers. The culmination of the day came with groups presenting their ideas and mini business plans to the other hundred pupils in the room.

Teams will now have the opportunity further develop their ideas in a fully formed business plan that can be submitted to the national competition.

We look forward to seeing how they get on.



Business Trip

Year 12 Business students visited Cadbury World to support the theory they had been learning in the classroom.

Students' focus was on how Cadbury market their products, using theory to support their decisions, such as the marketing mix, Ansoff's matrix and market mapping. They received a marketing talk from Cadbury's staff illustrating the importance of market research and extension strategies in Cadbury's bid for market domination and leadership.

Students also explored the factory and identified the different production methods used in creating Cadbury's products.

One student said "I really enjoyed the trip (not just the chocolate) and found the marketing talk really interesting. It helped me see how the marketing theory we had been learning actually relates to the business environment".



Chief Scout Gold Award

Five Scouts from 1st Knowle Scout Group have achieved the highest award for Scouts – the Chief Scout Gold award. This is awarded to Scouts (aged 10½ to 14) who have completed all the challenge awards throughout their time in Scouts, and have gone above and beyond with their commitment to the Scouting Movement. Only about 50 Scouts in Solihull achieved this award during 2017, making it a real achievement and so we would like to say a huge congratulations to all of the boys.

Evan Madurai, Will Rose, Will Topham-Steele, Josh Blood, and Sean Dunnion – all pupils at Arden – attended an awards presentation in the Council Chamber at Solihull Council on 18th December. The occasion was kindly hosted by the Mayor of Solihull, Cllr Stuart Davis, and included Scouts from 4th Knowle Sea Scouts, Dorridge Scout Group, and



representatives from other Scout Groups in the North and South of the borough. The Mayor paid tribute to the dedication of all the Scouts in achieving this award, and the important role played by Scouting in the wider Solihull community.

If you would like to find out more about volunteering as a Leader (no knowledge of knots required!) please contact Piers Bennett via info@1stknowlescouts.com

Appeal for Support

Our Year 10 students are in the final stages of work experience preparations for this academic year. We still have a few students who, despite their best efforts, are finding it difficult to find a placement. If you are able to support a student with a work experience placement, or know someone who may be able to, please contact our work experience co-ordinator (Sharon Butcher-Johns):

sbutcher@arden.solihull.sch.uk

Students are on work experience placements during the week commencing 19th March 2018.



Arden Teaching Alliance



This month has seen another successful School Experience Week at Arden. Eight prospective trainee teachers joined various departments for a unique opportunity to experience life as a teacher. During their week at Arden they: enjoyed observing a range of pupils across different year groups and subject areas; spoke to current trainee teachers; met the teams in their chosen subject area; discussed what it is like to be a learner at Arden with subject ambassadors; participated in a mock interview process; considered the different routes into teaching; were given advice on the teacher training application; and towards the end of the week even taught part of a lesson in some cases.

The candidates were extremely positive about our Academy, commenting on the positive relationships staff have with students and how they are now excited to train to teach as it is 'so fun!'. It was noted that aspects from the School Experience Week would help them in their future career; from behaviour

management techniques to school conduct and lesson planning. Our staff were rated 'top teachers' by them all.

It was a real pleasure for us to welcome such interesting prospective teachers into the Academy. We look forward to hopefully receiving their **Schools Direct** teacher training applications and working further with them in the future.

School Experience Weeks are aimed at:

- Anyone who is interested in training to teach with the Arden Alliance and wants to learn more about us
- Anyone who is considering teaching as a career and wants more information and experience

If you would be interested, or know someone who would be interested, in attending one of our School Experience Weeks we have an upcoming opportunity in April. Please visit our website by clicking [here](#) for

further information.

We also have two **coffee mornings** coming up for anyone who might be interested in finding out more about training to teach with the Arden Teaching Alliance. These drop in sessions will take place on the following dates:

- **Friday 2nd March 2018**
9.00am-10.30am
- **Friday 9th March 2018**
9.00am-10.30am

To register attendance click [here](#)



CERN Physics Visit

The Year 12 Physics students recently visited CERN in Switzerland. Tom Parkin has written an account of their time which you can read in full on our website ([here](#)). Here is a snippet of what Tom has this to say:

'Unsurprisingly, the idea of waking up before dawn in the Geneva Hostel didn't go down well, especially after arriving at the Hostel late in the previous evening. Luckily, the smooth tram ride to CERN (European Centre for Nuclear Research) provided an appreciated rest before the wave of information that we would be tasked to absorb throughout the rest of the morning. Firstly of all, we were given a presentation by an expert working in CERN, outlining what they actually do there, including research about supersymmetry, what they have achieved, for example the discovery of the Higgs Boson, and what they intend to research in the coming future, like research into dark energy and dark matter.

After crossing the border into France, we visited the CCC (CERN Control Centre), where we were shown animations about how the Large Hadron Collider functions, and then we had a tour around the CMS (Compact Muon Solenoid). This is the heaviest and densest of the 4 detectors, and is located 100m below ground level. It is specialised to detect the muons, fragments, and debris from proton-proton collisions inside the detector. It was a really fascinating experience to visit such an important scientific place.'



Feedback and Marking at Arden

Education is a dynamic field to work in; at Arden we constantly evaluate working practices and strive to implement changes that positively impact results for pupils. One of the most effective ways to improve pupils' outcomes is to provide meaningful feedback which can be used to improve work, knowledge and skills.

As part of our ongoing pursuit of excellence the teaching and learning guidelines that underpin how we teach and assess have been reviewed and amended in accordance with new guidelines (such as JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres 2017-2018), educational research (such as John Hattie and Robert Bjork), and the thoughts and ideas of the pupils. Part of this process was to review our feedback procedures; each department within the school has reviewed how feedback is provided and how the children can then act upon that information to make progress. We've followed this with a trial period of implementation over the last few months.

When you look through your son or daughter's books, marking will look different from the traditional 'ticks and crosses'; expect to periodically see pieces of work that have been marked in detail. The focus will be on showing pupils where

they have been successful and which areas require further development. Each subject is different; each class is different, so you will see a variety of approaches with phrases such as STARTlit, EBI, and WWW. Some departments have embraced a technological approach and are producing individually tailored, computer generated feedback sheets based on detailed analysis of both skills and knowledge.

Feedback is most successful when followed by an action. Across the school, verbally and in exercise books, the phrase DIRT has become commonplace. It's not as alarming as it sounds... DIRT stands for: dedicated improvement and reflection time. This means teachers providing time for the students to respond to their marking and for students to complete improvement tasks.

We continue to monitor the application of the new policy by a variety of rigorous quality assurance methods involving staff and pupils, and making ongoing improvements to our procedures. Pupils have said they value the individuality of the feedback and can see the importance of working hardest on what needs improving. Overwhelmingly they also like the reassurance provided, when teachers identify the many, many things they do well.

Teenage Cancer Trust

We were delighted to welcome the Teenage Cancer Trust back to Arden this month. They presented to Year 10 students on a range of issues relating to this difficult topic. Whilst not an easy subject to discuss, the students spoke highly of this informative presentation. We are very grateful to the TCT for visiting us once again.



Table Top SALE

Sun 4th March '18
Arden Academy
Station Road, Knowle,
Solihull, B93 0PT
10.30am to 12.30pm

Sellers: £8.00 - 8ft table; £5.00 - space for rail
Buyers' Entrance fee - 70p
For further information please go to:

www.arden.solihull.sch.uk/PTFA

adminptfa@arden.solihull.sch.uk
01564-732610

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.

ArdenValues
aiming higher

Poppy Pryor (Year 9)

Poppy is an incredibly talented footballer. At the start of the year, she was selected for the England U15 squad. She has already been on a residential training camp with them is also going to Holland with the England team in February. In addition to this amazing achievement, Poppy also plays for the county (West Midlands) and for Birmingham City U14s. To make the most of her undoubtable talent, Poppy devotes a huge amount of time energy to her sport, to ensure that she stays at the top of her game.

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

From being very little, I have always enjoyed being active and have taken part in lots of different sports, as well as dancing. When I was 4, my Dad took me to football training at Norton Lindsay and I loved it. When I was 9, I went for trials with Birmingham City and was selected to become part of their squad. I have been with them ever since.

Do you automatically progress through with Blues, once you are in?

No. I have an appraisal with my coach about once every six weeks. We talk about how my training is going and look at the strengths and areas for development in my performance. Based on that, the coach will decide whether it is appropriate for me to stay with them. I have recently had an appraisal and they seemed to be pleased with me; my coach has said that I should be looking to become part of the U16 squad, which is brilliant.

How much training do you have to do?

A lot, as I am in different squads. I train in the evening for 2 to 3 hours every week day, except Friday. On Saturdays I train or have matches all day and there are often matches on Sundays. My parents have been absolutely amazing, making sure that I can get to all my training sessions and matches. It is a huge commitment for them as well as for me – I owe them a lot.

Describe a typical day.

My weekday training is in the evenings, so once I am home from school I pretty much have to go straight out again

for training. The sessions last for 2 or 3 hours, so I often don't get back until about 10pm, at which point I have a shower and go straight to bed. I have to try to fit my school work in around all of this, so I often get up early to get it done, or I do some of it in the car on the way to my session.



Wow.... Apart from that incredible time commitment, what else do you have to do?

I have to be careful about what I eat and steer clear of fizzy drinks and junk food. I need to try to gain weight, so that I am stronger on the pitch and so have to have a diet with lots of protein. I get to have a full English breakfast every morning! As well as specific football training, I also have to have a gym session once a week, to work on general strength, stamina and fitness and I have to complete 'home studies', in which I have to study football skills and techniques.

What is your ambition?

I want to keep progressing and becoming a better player, especially through the England squads. I would love to be good enough to play professionally one day.

Who is your Footballing inspiration?

A lady called Karen Carney. She is an amazing footballer and plays for England. She is so determined to be the best she can be. She is really committed to the sport, works hard and never gives up.

What is your motto?

I really like the motto we have at Blues; 'Hard work will beat talent, if talent doesn't work hard'.



Poppy with the England U15 squad at their recent training camp

Sports News

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

 @ArdenPE

Rugby

It was four out of four wins for the Arden Rugby teams against King Edwards Camp Hill this month. The teams played brilliantly in some very difficult conditions. Well done to all the players.



GCSE Revision

GCSE PE students are encouraged to sign up for a free revision series for this summers PE exams using the link below.

If enough students sign up it will give us access to a range of free revision resources which will help the students in their forthcoming examinations.

For more information students are encouraged to speak to their PE teacher.

Registration can be completed by clicking [here](#).

Football

The Year 11 team played against Lyndon this month and won 4-3. It was a great victory as it was a double header. We were drawn against one another in both the Birmingham and Solihull cup and therefore, the winner really did take all.

We have now reached the quarter final in the Birmingham Cup which sees us play a home fixture against Kingshurst CTC (Solihull) and the semi-final of the Solihull Cup which see us play a home fixture against our close rivals Lode Heath.

Goal scorers were: Fraser Ramsay (2), Kyle McLaughlan and Charlie Calcutt.

Congratulations on a fantastic performance.

Basketball

It has been a really fantastic month for our basketball teams.

Our Year 11 boys' team took part in a basketball school games competition representing South Solihull against seven other schools in the county competition. The boys topped their group stage against three other schools, so progressed to the semi-final. They breezed to a 19-5 victory and faced Alcester Grammar in the final. Unfortunately Arden couldn't compete with their speed, strength, power and overall basketball ability losing 19-7. However, it was still a great achievement for the team. Special mention to **Miles Frampton** who was the highest point scorer of the whole tournament and hit seven 3 pointers!

The Year 7 / 8 girls basketball team went on an away fixture to play Heart of England and Smiths Wood schools. They even came away with two awesome wins which is an amazing start for the team.



The Year 7 & 8 team

Indoor Rowing

We recently had the opportunity to send a team of girls to an Indoor Rowing competition at Langley school. It was a great opportunity for the girls to try something a little bit different and a great time was had by all. We may have some more future Olympians in our midst!



The Year 11 team

The Year 8 / 9 girls team also put in a fantastic performance this month, winning the Solihull Basketball tournament!



The Year 8 / 9 team

Last, but no means least, the Year 8 boys beat Coleshill 25-10 to progress to the Solihull finals. What a truly amazing set of results!

Taekwondo

Congratulations to Charlie Watson in Year 12 who has been selected to represent England in Taekwondo. This is a truly fantastic achievement for Charlie who trains with the Knowle & Solihull



Taekwondo club. We look forward to hearing about his achievements in the future.

Well done Charlie!

Ski Race

Arden saw another great set of results in the latest ski race at Ackers. Nineteen students took part and, once again, we had the highest number of students from any one school.

We had individual success in the following age categories:

U16 boys - Scott Johns won gold

U14 boys - Luke Reid won Silver and Dominic Warner-Heelas won bronze

U12 boys - Kai Turner won bronze

Well done to the boys!

Badminton

Congratulations to our KS3 Girls badminton team. They won the South Solihull Schools Sports Partnership competition this month, the first round to defend their national title that they have won for the last two years.

Extra-Curricular timetable

The Spring extra-curricular timetable has been finalised and can be viewed [here](#). There is a wide range of events and clubs on offer and we hope that the students find something of interest. We are always looking for new ideas and would welcome suggestions from the students.

Gymnastics

Both the West Midlands floor and vault competition and the Milano Team competition took place in January 2018.



Arden entered four teams in the floor and vault, U14 boys, girls and mixed teams and an U19 mixed team.

The girls U14 team won bronze medals in a strong group and should be really proud of their achievement.



The U19 mixed team won their group quite easily and look set for a good result in May when they go forward to represent the West Midlands in the National finals.

The U14 mixed team were placed second and our U14 boys team came also came in first place!



We now have 2 qualifying teams going forward to the British Schools Finals in May, competing against Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and other English regions!

In the Milano competition we entered three teams; U16 boys and mixed teams in U16 and U19. Their routines were outstanding and we won all three categories. They will go forward to the National Finals on 16th March



Arden also had individual medal success: Corey Allen won U19 boys, Matt Bambrook won bronze in U14 boys and Anna Bambrook won silver in the U14 girls.

It was a long day but we all had a fantastic time, and we are so proud of all of the gymnasts for what they have achieved.



Alumni News

Matt Fearon

Former student Matt Fearon recently got in touch to update us on his post-Arden journey. You can read Matt's full story [here](#) and this is a snapshot of what he has to say.

'Having studied Geography, Politics and Psychology at A Level, it was Geography which I went on to study at Liverpool John Moores in September

2013. My undergraduate degree helped to encourage me to pursue the environmental field further. This led me to stay on at LJMU to complete a Postgraduate Diploma in Water, Energy and the Environment in November 2017. In January 2014 I applied for Camp America, which resulted in spending the summer of that year working at Happy Hollow Children's Camp in Indiana, USA. This really was a life-changing experience, as in August 2017, I moved to Indiana and married my wife, who I met during my first summer at camp. I am

currently awaiting a work permit, and 'Green Card', but hope to begin a career in either Town Planning or Environmental Science in the coming months. I am very grateful to all of my teachers at Arden who helped me on the path I am on today. My time at Arden gave me a great foundation to build on and I am very appreciative of all the staff that helped me along the way.'



Vacancies

Part-time flexible vacancy for Clerk to the Trust Board

Are you a confident administrator who is interested in providing effective clerking at Governing Body meetings across the Trust? This is a flexible post which could be ideal for the right candidate. For more information please contact the school or see our website - [here](#)

New Staff Welcome

We are delighted to welcome the following new members of staff:

- Mr Allport, Assistant Curriculum Leader for MFL
- Miss Le Saint, Head of Spanish
- Mrs Hill, Teacher of Drama and Media Studies
- Mr Ray, Teacher of English
- Miss Emma O'Brien, Librarian

Inset Dates

The following inset dates have been agreed for next academic year 2018-2019:

- Monday 3rd September 2018
- Tuesday 4th September 2018
- Friday 21st December 2018
- Monday 7th January 2019
- Friday 15th February 2019
- Monday 22nd July 2019

Important dates for February

Thursday 1st February	Intermediate Maths Challenge (By invitation only) 6:30pm Year 13 UCAS Information Meeting for parents/students
Wednesday 7th February	Year 1 Primary Gymnastics festival
Thursday 8th February	Year 9 IRAIL Stem Event Year 7 Parent Consultations (2.45pm-6.30pm) <i>* School closes to all students at 2.15pm No parking on school site</i>
Monday 12th February 2018	Year 12/13 Drama Trip to Midlands Art Centre – 'Metamorphosis'
Friday 16th February	Year 7-12 OsoSicll Mass Orchestra Rehearsals and Concert, Warwick Arts Centre
Friday 16th February to Saturday 24th February	Year 10 residential Ski Trip to Austria
Sunday 18th –Thursday 22nd February	Year 11 residential Geography visit to Iceland Year 10-11 residential MFL visit to Berlin/Krakow
Monday 19th February to Friday 23rd February	Half Term
Monday 26th February to Wednesday 7th March	Year 13 Mock Examinations
Monday 26th February	Year 8 & 9 Knife Crime & Gangs Assembly
Wednesday 28th February	Year 9 'Higher Tour' Presentation