

ad altiora

The magazine for Arden's Students, Parents, Staff and the Local Community

Issue Three Spring 2013



ARDEN





WELCOME to the latest edition of 'ad altiora'; Arden's magazine for students, parents, staff and the local community. The aim of the magazine is to give you a flavour of life at Arden and highlight the many achievements and opportunities enjoyed by all our students. It would be impossible to include details of everything that our students are involved in, if you would like to see more, please visit our website www.arden.solihull.sch.uk

Each edition of 'ad altiora' brings with it an opportunity to reflect on the many highlights we enjoy at Arden and the last few months have provided many. Without doubt the results for our Year 11 and 13 students were utterly fantastic; for the sixth consecutive year Arden pupils attained 100% 5 A*-C grades at GCSE, our 'A' Level students also achieved a remarkable 100% pass rate. These results reflected not only the enormous level of hard work and commitment by students but also the outstanding team of staff who guided, coached and inspired them.

In the last issue we covered Arden's celebration of, and commitment to, Olympic values which was an undoubtedly success with visits from some inspirational guests; the gArden Party which brought the community together for the Diamond Jubilee; the stunning performance of Oliver! and countless sporting and musical successes. More recently we were privileged to welcome several leading authors to our 'Inspiring Writing' week which culminated in a poetry reading from award winning poet Simon Armitage. Often referred to as the 'jewel in Arden's crown', our Awards Ceremony was held in November. This was a tremendous night of celebration, recognising the achievements of some amazing Year 11 and Year 13 students. We were honoured to have many distinguished guests attending, all of whom were incredibly complementary about Arden's students – not just the prize winners but those who provided the entertainment; Senior Wind Band, B.A.T.S., Trash, Bang, Wallop to name but a few. Students who addressed the audience spoke with eloquence and humour of their years at Arden, leaving no room for doubt as to how much they appreciated the support and dedication of the staff.

2013 is already promising to be an extremely exciting year for us. Education by its very nature is dynamic and Arden will continue to be innovative in its delivery, ensuring that our students are supported and challenged appropriately to achieve their very best. There have been and will continue to be improvements made to the fabric of the school to enhance the learning environment for our students and staff. There have also been carefully considered changes to the management structure of the school, thus maximising the potential of Arden as a leading provider of education. We are justifiably proud of the many accreditations we have been awarded and most recently, we were honoured to receive a letter from the Minister of State for Schools recognising our outstanding examination results.

The success of a school is measured not only by exam results but by the young people within it and the phenomenal amounts of money raised through the many fundraising activities for charity has proved this is the case within Arden. I cannot thank the Arden 'family' enough for the way these have been supported. Pupils, staff, governors and parents have all embraced events to support, among others, Children in Need, Orchid, LEPRA, Birmingham Mission Toy Appeal and Operation Christmas Child. Amazing amounts have been raised and I thank everyone involved for contributing. Another aspect of this philosophy of care and support is the number of our students who are keen to be involved through schemes such as peer mentoring, leadership team, sports leaders and many more. It is truly humbling to see these relationships develop and the benefits they bring both parties.

I continue to be extremely proud and feel immensely privileged to be the Principal of such a remarkable school.

Martin P. Murphy *Arden Principal*

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Cover Picture: Arden is not just about academic excellence, the school is a positive environment where students build friendships that enrich life.

Ad Altiora

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arden awards 2012

PROUD PARENTS, nervous students and distinguished guests all gathered at Arden on a wintery November night last year for our Annual Awards Ceremony. The evening celebrated the achievements of the classes of 2012; Years 11 and 13. As many will already know, the exam results for both groups were excellent once again in 2012.

For the SIXTH consecutive year, every single member of Year 11 achieved FIVE or more A*-C GCSEs... with a fantastic 90% gaining A*-C grades in English and Mathematics. Special congratulations must also go to the 27 pupils who gained a full sweep of TEN A*/A grades. At 'A' Level, the results were equally inspiring with 99.4% of students gaining an A2 award in one or more of the 26 subjects on offer at Arden. Once again, special congratulations go to the 24 Arden Sixth Formers who gained the equivalent of three Grade As... Or better!

Special Contributions

The Awards Ceremony celebrated not only these fantastic academic achievements, but also acknowledged students who had personally excelled in other areas. These included Michael Bolton (Year 11) and Calam Bruce (Year 13) for their special contributions to the School Community; Winner of the Knowle Society Prize for Service to the Community, Emma Brown; and the Stage 5 Leadership Awards Winners, Jake Smithers and Michael Bolton. Mr Murphy awarded Principal's Prizes to Year 11's Megan Davies and Helen Du from Year 13. 2012 also saw James Doyle, Year 11, receive the prestigious Governors' Cup, on its second outing in the school's history.

Arden was honoured that Jaguar Landrover Operations Director, Solihull, Mr Alan Volkaerts, was able to attend. After a most enjoyable, informative, and indeed candid speech, about the value of education, he personally presented awards to many of the students. Arden was also privileged to see Solihull's Mayor, Councillor Mr Ken Hawkins, and Mayoress, Mrs Janet Hawkins in attendance.

An Entertaining Night

The rich and varied entertainment provided by Senior Wind Band, B.A.T.S., Ardenaires and the innovative Trash, Bang, Wallop was performed to Arden's usual excellent standards. Former Head Boy and Girl, Tom Briggs and Megan Davies, then to the podium to reminisce about their own five years at Arden, taking their peers and audience on a nostalgic, poignant and amusing journey through pat triumphs and misdemeanors! Arden's current Head Boy, Alex Cardall and our Head Girl, Hannah Colbert finally brought the proceedings to a close by offering a vote of thanks to our Honoured Guests, presenting them with gifts on behalf of the school.

The whole evening was, exciting, positive and inspirational. It was a privilege for all of us to join in celebrating the success, hard work and dedication of both the students of Years 11 and 13 and the staff who had supported them. A full list of all the awards can be viewed in the 'Downloads' section of the school website arden.solihull.sch.uk





arden accreditations



Ofsted Reports

Often pilloried in the press, nonetheless Ofsted reports are the best single means of identifying just how good a school is at what it does... On their last visit to Arden in 2008 Ofsted gave the school an exemplary 'Outstanding' approval rating. Whilst this award is now five years old, until our next major inspection we can only say that exam results within the school have continued to rise year on year, as reflected in our 2011 'Outstanding Progress SSAT' award.

The full Ofsted report can be viewed on the website. Quoting from their report on the overall effectiveness of the school, they state that 'Arden is an outstanding school at the heart of the community, where students thrive. They develop into confident articulate young people who trust and care for each other. One pupil described the school as 'a positive place where learning and enthusiasm are encouraged.' A parent commented that 'Arden is a happy and safe environment for my child.'

Applied Learning

'Applied Learning' is a 'style' of learning that equips and prepares people for life, learning and employment. Applied Learning provides Relevant, Engaging, Active Learning (REAL) opportunities for students upon which they can build a deeper knowledge and understanding of the world and develop the essential skills to be successful in it.

Arden's specialism in Applied Learning builds on this strong ethos and the high standards required that are its foundations. The processes enshrined in the specialism enable us to transform teaching and learning, helping us to engage pupils more fully and to help them develop the essential skills they require for their future.

Applied Learning provides the tools needed to personalise the curriculum more effectively; offering flexible pathways to greater personal success by facilitating learning at a pace that best suits a pupil's individual character. This personalised learning forms an ongoing process of advice and guidance throughout a student's time at the school, it is a major factor in Arden's core mission to provide an environment where every pupil can flourish and reach their maximum personal and academic potential.

Artsmark Gold

This Arts Council Award managed by Trinity College, London is offered at five levels; four accredited and one introductory. The awards are a great way for children and young people draw inspiration and enjoyment from involvement in the arts. The Artsmark accreditation provides a framework for learning and sharing new skills and helps develop creativity and leadership skills, as well as helping to build links between young people and creative arts professionals.

Arden's Artsmark Gold Award is the highest level of accreditation, it requires a great deal of commitment from both staff and pupils. It reflects a school culture that encourages and develops young people's creativity, communication, planning, teamwork and leadership skills... These important characteristics of Arden education are also recognised with the all-important the UCAS Tariff, providing 35 valuable points towards the 'desirability' of students by Universities.

Students need to plan their work with an adviser, and keep a record of their concepts, ideas and finished results by creating their own Arts Award portfolio which can be in the form of a diary, video, website blog; or might be a quite different creative solution altogether! The Award encompass two units, Unit 1 comprises 'Personal Arts Development', whilst Unit 2 is centred on 'Arts Projects Leadership'.



Officially recognised accreditations are more than just a batch of logos that appear on the bottom of a school letterhead. Awarded following stringent inspections that ensure a school reaches high standards of education, culture and facilities, they represent an important way of identifying a school's quality of teaching, facilities and the success of its pupils. Arden is proud to be able to display a long list of the most prestigious and desirable approval logos on its prospectus. They are proof of the fantastic opportunities the school has to offer and can also be factors in the potential success our pupils have when applying for Higher Education places; providing UCAS Tariff points that could just tip the balance in your favour.



Leadership Partner School

The Leadership Partner School programme has been developed as a strategic initiative between the National College for School Leadership and the Youth Sport Trust (YST) in response to today's leadership and succession planning opportunities and challenges in education.

This prestigious award recognises exceptional standards in teaching and school operation, making Leadership Partner Schools national hubs for the development of outstanding leadership development and succession planning strategies that other schools can use as a resource from which they can learn best practice solutions.

Sportmark

'Sportmark' is Sport England's accreditation scheme for Secondary Schools. The scheme recognises high quality sport and physical education within the school environment, including extra-curricular sports opportunities. Arden's award was given in recognition of its effective policies and practices which lead to the provision of a well-balanced physical education programme.

Key factors in the accreditation were also Arden's work in developing a comprehensive out-of-school-hours programme that offers a range of opportunities to students, as well as its work in enabling young people to move beyond sport in school into sport in the wider community.

Safety Mark

Arden has been recognised by the National Safety Certification Scheme for Schools, known as SafetyMARK. The award acknowledges Arden as providing a safe environment for staff, pupils, visitors and contractors. To achieve this, we had to undergo a rigorous, independent audit where our very positive attitude to health and safety was acknowledged. We were delighted to be considered as having achieved excellence in our levels of safety compliance.

International School Award

The 'ISA' award is moderated by The British Council as an accreditation framework within which schools can record, evaluate and develop their international work and a means by which they can embed it into the curriculum and whole school ethos. This award gives Arden special access to participation in key international programmes and activities; providing a vehicle through which we can build links with other schools around the globe for fun, friendship, understanding and shared learning.



supporting arden

...a year in the life of the PTA

With the Jubilee Celebrations and the Olympic extravaganza of 2012 now well behind us, Arden's Parent-Teacher Association was quickly back to work planning even more exciting activities for the 2012/13 school year!

As ever the work of the PTA has three core missions; to raise funds to support the teaching and learning environment and enhance the opportunities of students to thrive at Arden; to maintain, and further strengthen, the close ties that already exist between Arden and our local community; and, of course, to enjoy ourselves in the process!

Each year Arden's PTA aims to raise around £20,000 through its activities. This substantial sum is then distributed to the winning project proposals from Arden Department Heads, as well as to associated activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award programme and other charitable groups that provide extra-curricular activities for the students at Arden.

Over the past year we have distributed over £30,000 in funds. Amongst the many deserving recipients in 2012 were; Quizdom Response System Handsets; the purchase of a 12m tri-bond Gymnastics Floor area; funding professional theatre company visits during Arden's Drug & Crime Awareness Week; the supply of Youth Centre iWall Interactive Whiteboards; a multi-purpose LED Lighting system for use during Drama productions; the Q Build modular Stage System utilised extensively during concerts and performances; a portable Yamaha Public Address system; and the purchase of the new C2C Bicycle Support Trailer.

The 2012/13 year started with a bang, as the annual Family Fireworks event got underway! The Arden event is one of just a few fireworks events locally that present two shows; one catering to younger spectators who don't enjoy loud bangs, and a second for older thrill seekers. The rain did not dampen the spirits and a great show, supported by all the side stalls, real ale bar and BBQ pig roast, was enjoyed by over 2,000 attendees.

Pictured opposite: Two large 'banner stands' have recently been specially produced to help promote the excellent work of Arden's PTA group.

If you like to start the Christmas festivities with the opportunity to meet with friends over a sumptuous dinner and dance the night away, then the Arden Holly Bash dinner and dance is for you. 220 revellers, dressed in this year's theme of Red and Gold, enjoyed the 2012 event whilst also raising money by means of a raffle and auction of donated items. The 2013 event promises to be another fantastic night - but it may be just a little too early to make your booking!

Forthcoming events:

- **Fun Quiz Night (date to be confirmed):** Teams of eight will for the coveted title in social surroundings. The supper is included in the price of £8 per participant and of course a well-stocked bar will be available to lubricate the memory.
- **Saturday 11 May, Arden Table Top Sale:** This is a new event which takes the bargain hunting and selling of unwanted items to a new level. Book a table, maybe combine with friends, redistribute those useful items and make some money. Refreshments will be available.
- **Saturday 29 June, The Arden Summer Party:** Hot off the press, this event will combine some of the great ideas of the 2012 gArden Party and a new theme. A ticketed event which will provide superb cuisine and a chance to party at the Arden Oasis.

Other events being supported by the PTA:

- Refreshments at the Alice in Wonderland performances.
- Lower and Upper School Summer Concerts.
- Sports Gala Dinner.
- New Parents Evening.
- The Leavers' Prom, the last major event within the Year 11 Students' calendar, is strongly supported by the PTA.

Sponsors, Resources and Fund Raising

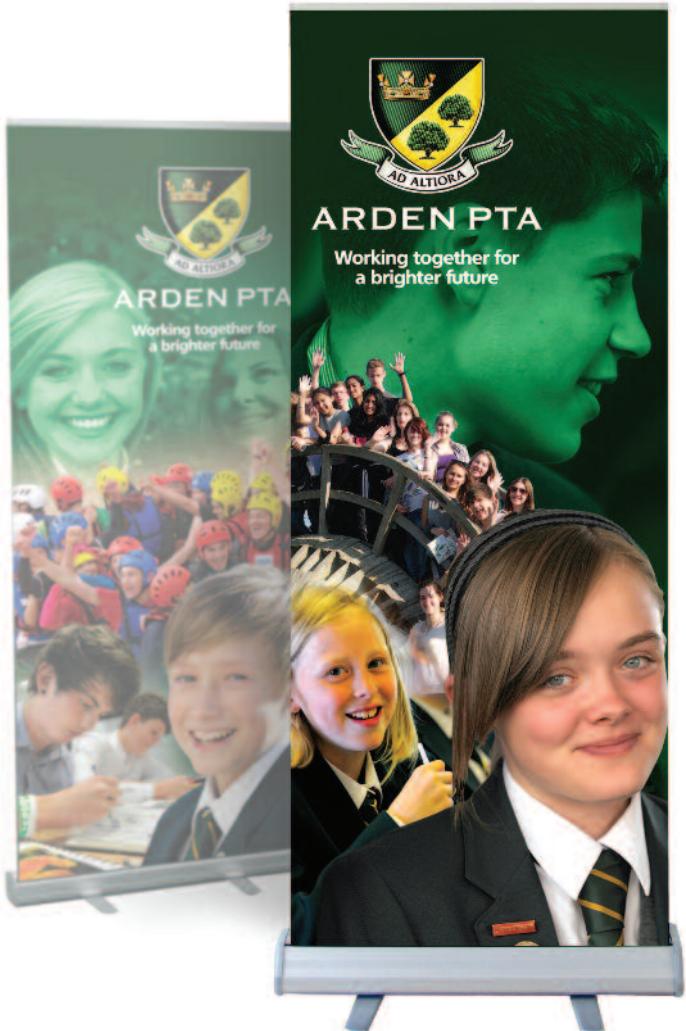
All of the events detailed above simply could not be delivered without the assistance of numerous private and business sponsors and volunteers. Setting up the events, managing the stalls and generally organising and assisting, and then clearing away afterwards, are all labour intensive tasks where the work of volunteers make a real difference. If, as a parent or member of the local community, you can spare a few hours to help out it will be very welcome.

There are three ways in which you can help the PTA without leaving your seat, Charitable Match Funding, Spend and Raise using the website links to major retailers and via the recently revamped Arden PTA Cash Draw (Sub Club) with monthly cash prizes of £50 and the once per school term prize of £200 are won. To enter the Cash Draw, simply fill in the form on the website and pay the small entry payment of just £12.

A big thank you

Finally, we'd like to say a big thank you to all of those who help the Arden PTA to 'make a difference'. Your support really does increase the opportunities presented to Arden's students and help them maximise their potential within the school and beyond.

Further information: For more information about the important work of Arden's Parent Teacher Association please visit the PTA website, www.arden.pta.co.uk or contact Colin Winstone, colinwinstone@ardenpta.co.uk or pop in and ask at the Arden's Reception.



Sixth Formers in the Community

■ Arden Sixth Form students regularly volunteer at Knowle Library, helping members of the community develop their ICT skills.

■ The feedback we get about our students is always very complimentary, but we were particularly pleased to receive a letter from Catherine Basket, Knowle & Dickens Heath Library Manager, regarding the input of James Taylor, one of our Year 12 students.

■ "Over the last 12 months we have had some excellent IT student volunteers from you and the advice and guidance they give is invaluable to the clients. The present batch of students is no exception; however I felt I must tell you how impressed I've been with one of the students this time round. James Taylor has been tutoring an elderly lady, Mrs Smith who had no experience of IT and was being encouraged to learn by her family. Needless to say Mrs Smith was terrified and very nervous, from the minute James arrived he has sought to give her confidence and reassurance and has been very patient with her. I know from speaking to Mrs Smith she has been very impressed with James and is very grateful for the support he has given her. I can only add to this and say having witnessed James in action his interpersonal skills are excellent and he is a great ambassador for Arden School."

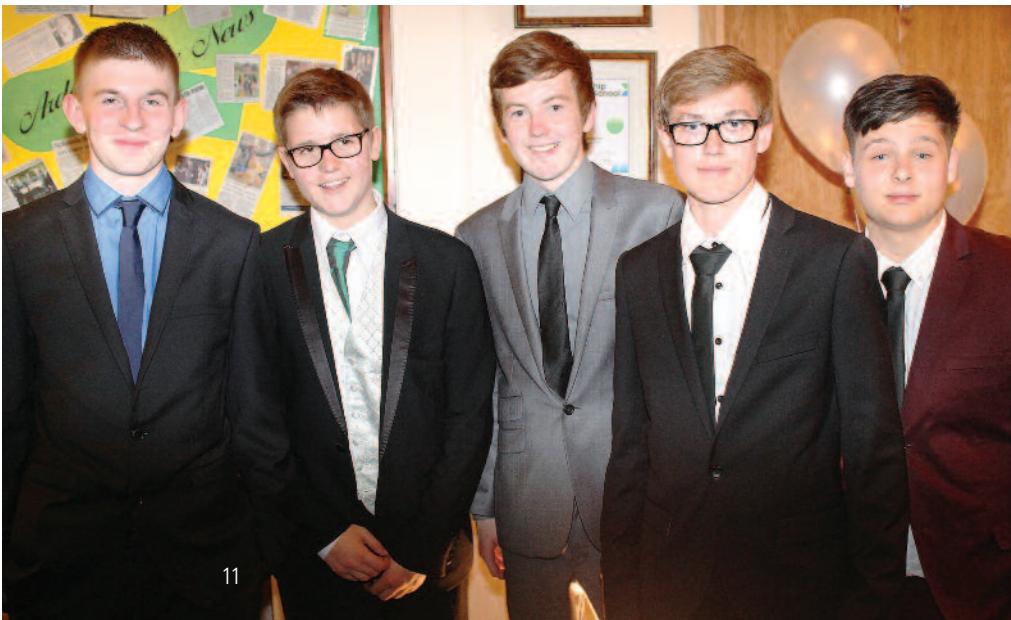
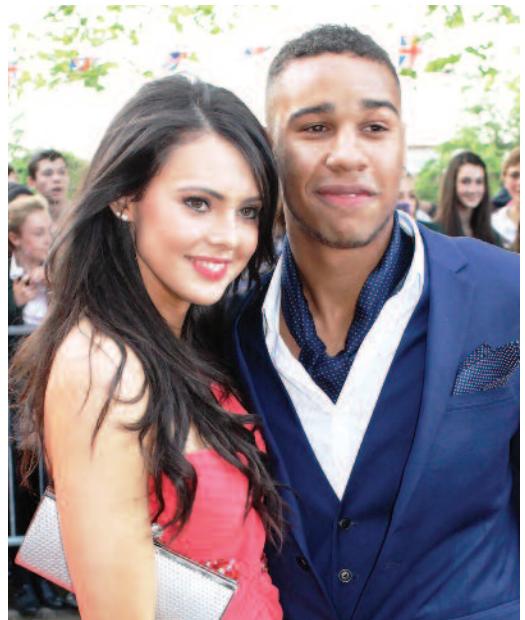
■ Well done James!



Arden Prom

History was made in 2012 when the Year 11 Prom was moved until after the GCSE exams had been completed. Everyone's fingers were crossed for good weather and the day dawned bright and sunny. The red carpet was rolled out and crowds of proud parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters lined the school drive and Station Road to welcome their loved ones to the big night. Year 11 Head, Mr Evans was equally proud as he greeted his students to the event.







Arden Prom

As ever, modes of transport were many and varied – guests arrived in fire engines, mega-trucks, stretch New York taxis and a vintage Rolls Royce to name but a few! None of the vehicles however outshone the students they were carrying – every one of them looked simply stunning! The boys had never been smarter as they accompanied their partners onto the red carpet. The girls looked equally amazing; so many beautiful dresses, so many stunning designs and lovely colours. It was just as though Hollywood had come to Knowle!

After waving, smiling and posing their way up to the school entrance, the students were welcomed by Mr Murphy, the Key Stage 4 team and numerous members of staff. After a welcome drink (non-alcoholic of course), the students mingled in the School Hall, sharing experiences, enjoying the music and dancing. The evening culminated in an 'Awards Ceremony' with the categories chosen by the students themselves along the lines of 'Most Likely to be a WAG', 'Most Likely to Get Married First' and 'Most Opinionated'. When their time at Arden drew to a close, coaches ferried the revellers to Hogarth's Hotel and Restaurant, where they continued their celebrations into the night.

It had been a long, exhausting and emotional day; full of smiles, but also the occasional tear as it began to dawn on many that this was truly the end of an era - their happy association with Arden after five important years had come to an end.

It seems only fitting that two people who have had so much to do with the students should have the 'last word'; Mrs Hill, Head of Key Stage 4 said "I wish you every success in the future but most of all, I wish you every happiness". Mr Evans who nurtured the Class of 2012 through five years at Arden added "You have entertained me, exasperated me, confounded me, worried me and tired me out in equal measure - but above all you have made me VERY proud of the decent, kind and caring young adults that you have become". He also wished every Year 11 student a fantastic life and suggested that, should there be a meeting in a pub at some point in the future, his was a Guinness!





We decided to dub this trip **'The Queen Tour'** in honour of The Queen's Jubilee ...and of course Freddie Mercury's "I want to ride my bicycle, I want to ride my bike" song!

■ Despite the 19-23 June timing of our trip, given the notorious hill country weather conditions of the route even in mid-summer, I'm not sure if we should have set out with paddles instead of pedals for this one! ■ The bad weather made it an even more challenging ride, but our stoic pupils were all ultimately successful through pure determination and perseverance. ■ The first day's conditions were absolutely perfect, indeed we even had a tail wind most of the time. But the sunshine wasn't to last and the heavens opened on Thursday and Friday; we even broke into the clouds as we topped the gruelling 2,000ft summit of Hartside between Penrith and Alston. ■ Given the nice flat terrain and guaranteed sunshine I'm suggesting perhaps next year's C2C should be across Australia (I'm sure somebody told me it's about the same distance... about 160 miles?). My wife pays good money for a spa treatment – I just go out cycling to 'hydrate' my skin! ■ **This year our team of twelve intrepid Arden cyclists comprised:**

- | | | |
|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| ■ Sarah Parker | ■ Rebecca Hicks | ■ Katie Saunders |
| ■ Rose Tinley | ■ Martha Sanders | ■ Pete Sexton |
| ■ Jenny Cooke | ■ William Taylor | ■ Conor McGoldrick |
| ■ Josh Wharmby | ■ Jacob Lamb | ■ Harry Cyprus |

As ever we owe a huge vote of thanks to the parents who supported us during this fantastic journey – we're very grateful. ■ Contributed by Mr Robinson

In the pupil's own words... a diary of the journey

Day 1, on our way!: We joined the minibus at 1:45 for our 6 hour journey north. Two stops and a KFC later and we were all happy! We arrived at our accommodation, ate our dinners then went to bed. However, our trip had really started before that... We had all worked hard for our spaces on the mini bus; four training rides with the last ones really testing our abilities. We started off with 45 people and the teachers had to cut us down to just 12. As well as testing our physical ability, we had to show we would be able to give clear signals and warn everyone of hazards to keep everyone safe and healthy for the real ride ahead. 14 of us reached the 50 mile ride to determine whether we would get onto the team! Dover's Hill was a push but we all reached the top. Finally we found out the news of who got though, naturally some were disappointed but we all knew we were a strong unit! ■ Contributed by Conor McGoldrick and Harry Cyprus.

Day 2, Whitehaven to Keswick: We rolled out of bed to a mouth watering array of sausages and bacon, with side orders of toast and beans. The first leg of our journey started at the old port town of Whitehaven where we unloaded bikes ready for the off... This involved putting Miss O'Connor's bike back together as we had dismantled it in order to fit it into the trailer! ■ After taking a quick photo, and following the traditional ritual of dipping your back tyre in the water of the Irish Sea at the start of the C2C - you of course hopefully go on to dip your front tyre in the North Sea - we set off. The morning journey was relatively easy going on picturesque roads and along a railway path. ■ After lunch it started to get worse; a section of four little hills started to take some of the energy out of us... But once at the top we realised with relief that whatever went up must go down! After stopping for some cake (thanks to Mrs Jenkins!) we went descended steep downhill two sections of at an average speed of 35mph some of us hitting 40mph. ■ From then-on it was relatively flat and we had completed the first stage of the C2C and had arrived back in Keswick. ■ Contributed by Conor McGoldrick and Harry Cyprus.

Day 3, Keswick to Alston: This second day of cycling is supposed to be the toughest of the route, and it definitely lived up to that reputation! We left the hostel in Keswick at about a quarter to nine and arrived at the other hostel - forty eight miles away - at around six o'clock in the evening. In between a lot went on, including plenty of blood, sweat AND tears. We had an accident early on in the day as one of our cyclists slipped and injured their leg and this slowed us down a bit but overall we made good time. ■ Throughout the day we were soaked by torrential rain but, despite the fact that Mr Robinson claimed it was the worst weather he had experienced in eleven years, it wasn't enough to dampen our spirits! ■ About 7 miles from Alston we hit the notorious Hartside Hill - although it felt more like a mountain as we cycled up it! From the bottom of Hartside it's about 5 miles going steeply up hill to the summit. It took us about an hour and a half to get to the top and, luckily for us, there's famous a café at the top which sold hot drinks and delicious cakes. Everyone was very happy when they got to the top, it was a great achievement! ■ We had

tomato soup, or fruit for starters, and then Fish and Chips or Spag Bol. For dessert we ate homemade ice cream and toffee sauce or rhubarb pie. It tasted great, the views were amazing, and the dining area had a very homely feeling to it. ■ Contributed by Rose Tinley, Martha Sanders and Sarah Parker.

Day 4, Alston to Edmundbyers: Day 4 saw us ride from Alston to Edmundbyers in County Durham. The day started late because we stopped to watch a family of rare red squirrels. ■ The first challenge we encountered was the cobble hill just out of Alston, which was quite steep and slippery due to the weather. We moved on to a flatter road where seven people sped ahead of the group... and missed the turning! The seven speed kings continued the WRONG way until Miss O'Connor received a phone call from Mr Robinson. On being informed of our mistake we made an about-turn and headed back down a very steep and narrow road to a rough track... We then realised this was - again - the wrong way! We finally found the rest of the group after back tracking some way. We regrouped for the 20% (1 in 5) down hill run into Nenthead. ■ Two of the group discovered faults on their bike on this steep run. One of them came discovered he had no back brakes, so once again we had to visit a bike shop, where Dave the mechanic checked them over. The first in the shop turned out to have the back brake pads worn away, the gears were also misaligned; the hanger was bent and the handle bars were loose! The other bike's bearings were shot and the hanger was also bent. Whilst Dave fixed the bike he gave three students an in-depth science lecture on the topic of alloys (including the periodic table). ■ The biggest hill we climbed on Day 4 was Blackhill, which was renamed 'Rainbow Hill' after changing yesterday's climb to 'Fluffy Bunny Hill'! Blackhill was the steepest hill we climbed, and is also the highest point on the C2C. We descended Blackhill in time for lunch, but all had to hide in the van to escape all the mozzies! With lunch finished, we ascended yet another a hill which got us all ready to go again, joining the Main Road shortly after for several miles, helping us notch up pretty decent average speeds. As the A Road stint ended we rejoined the van for a quick stop. During the break Mr Robinson thought that it would be funny to hide Will Taylor's bike... As we got set for the off the look on Wills face was priceless, it took him about five minutes to realise Sir had only put it round the corner! ■ We next encountered the steepest climb on the C2C, this is a gruelling 20% (1 in 5) gradient hill. Once at the top of this steep part, it became clear there was still a lot of climbing to do before the superb long downhill run into Edmundbyers village. That last night en-route we visited The Manor Inn to have a superb meal at the restaurant, the two most popular dishes were the gigantic 'Manor Burger' or the very appropriately named 'Chunky' Fish and Chips. When we got back to the Youth Hostel, Mr Robinson had prepared some spoof certificates; some of these included 'Any signal?' for Peter Sexton, 'Wheels of Change' for Jacob Lamb and 'Triple Flapjack' for Harry Cyprus, marking the end of an extremely eventful day! ■ Contributed by Will Taylor and Jacob Lamb.

Day 5, Edmundbyers to Sunderland and the North Sea:

The alarm went off in the boy's room at 6 45am and no one wanted to get up and turn it off. Peter, Josh and Jacob had to get up early to cook breakfast, only to be sent back up as some of the girls had got up even earlier to make all of our lunches! After a few minutes the girls were all finished and we set to work preparing a spectacular breakfast, including sausage, bacon, beans, mushrooms AND toast! After breakfast we packed our things into the trailer and headed back up the Pennines along the same route we approached the Hostel the night before. ■ Five of us proceeded to go the wrong way - just like the day before! We finally made it to the top of the hill only to see Mr. Robinson coming up the hill on his bike. We instantly knew to get back on the bikes and head back the way we came to find the correct route and an off-road section named 'Waskerly Way'. Everyone with mountain bikes felt glad they had suspension, whilst those of us with road bikes worried about the slippery track. However, despite the fact Will Taylor had a mountain bike he was the only to nearly come a cropper. It was a cold, wet and fast ride down and everyone was thankful when they saw the minibus; even though there were still two stages to 'lunch' most of us had a good bite to eat. ■ We set off again heading down a fairly straight track for much of the distance, not stopping until it was time for toilet break and everyone was treated to a cookie. With the end of the challenge nearly upon us, the Arden cyclists forged ahead on our trusty steeds into Sunderland and 'Lunch Part 2' - we even beat the mini-bus into town! After we polished off our sandwiches, Josh gave Peter a nose bleed with a brutally dangerous cheese and onion crisp! After all the drama died down we made our way towards the River Wear and over first sight of the North Sea! ■ Following the river, we passed the famous Stadium of Light, and spotted our minibus parked waiting for us at the beach. Everyone joined in a last dash to the sea, dutifully dipping their wheels in the salty water. ■ We had done it! We'd completed the C2C challenge in 2012 - despite all the wind, torrential rain, mountainous hills, exhaustion and pain! Celebrations were marked with a quick swim in the sea with everyone forced to give themselves a good ducking! Jenny said NO, but was eventually coaxed into going under. We rounded off the day with an award ceremony of Chocolate Medals and - non-alcoholic - Champagne. ■ Our impressive goal accomplished, it was time to proudly head south towards home, singing Queen's cycling anthem as we bowled down the A1. ■ Contributed by Pete Sexton and Josh Warmby.





Year 7 trip to France!

Day1 On June 20 to June 25 Year 7 were given the amazing opportunity to visit Normandy, France. As you have probably guessed, it takes a long time to get to France, and so the downside was that we had to be at Arden for 6:30! We waved goodbye to our parents and were on our way. With stop offs at Services in both England and France, it took 8 hours to arrive at our accommodation for the next 5 days. On the coach everyone had a good sing-song - including the teachers! There were films to watch and the teachers danced around the coach to a bit of Abba. By the time we had arrived, unpacked and settled in, it was time for tea.

Day2 After we had finally awoken, we had breakfast; French bread and cereal; and learned what we were doing that day. Coach B were going to the Carrefour Supermarket, then see bread being made and finally on to a goat's cheese farm. We had a look around Carrefour and bought what we wanted. At the bread making we had to sit on a bench and then we made our own bread, before eating lunch. At the goat's cheese farm we got to feed the goats and then try some of the cheese they make.

Day3 After another early start, we were off to the caramel factory - yummy! Everyone was very excited. Here we got our own sample of caramel and had the chance to buy some from the gift shop. It was delicious! Then we went to the market and to see the famous Bayeux Tapestry. When we got back to the accommodation we went bowling as a treat. It was great fun.

Day4 This was the last day of the trip before we went home. We went to the beach, the American Wargraves Cemetery and to the 360 degree cinema for a film about the Normandy Landings. It was very sad, but interesting. The beach was great fun, we all had a sandcastle competition! When we got back, we had to pack, before we had a farewell disco and a quiz.

Day5 Sadly we had to go home, but we had all had a great time. The journey home was tiring, but we stopped for a McDonald's! Then we turned into Arden and were greeted by our parents. We all had a great time! ■ Contributed by Sophie Corr and Bethany Davis

In Brief

Children in Need 2012

Arden's 'Children in Need' charity day was a week late in 2012 due to a clash with the Awards Ceremony, but everyone thoroughly enjoyed the 'Spots and Stripes' themed day. There were the usual ever-popular events such as cake and chocolate sales, but the undoubtedly highlight was the inflatable assault course located in the Sports Hall. It was a big hit with the pupils and even more so with the staff! There were also games of Twister, trampoline sessions, space hopper races and face painting too - all of which helped raise an astonishing £3542.00! Thank you to everyone who contributed to making it such a successful day. Special mention must go to Mr Singh and Mr Smith who co-ordinated it all.





Arden Questionnaires

Six intrepid Sixth Form students represented Arden in the first Lord Mayor's Sixth Form Mega Quiz, held on Thursday 22 November at Birmingham University. The 'Arden Questionnaires' comprised Tom Hornigold and Joe Wykes from Year 13 and Isabelle James, Maddie Parkin, Hannah Robbins and Chris Cottell from Year 12. ■ The Questionnaires competed with determination and a great deal of flair, showing excellent General Knowledge on a wide range of subjects, finishing a superb sixth place out of 33 teams. ■ The questions were asked by Mark 'The Beast' Labbett from ITV quiz shows 'Who Wants To Be A Millionaire' and now 'The Chase'. We're pleased to say the inscrutable quizmaster was pleased to join the Arden contestants for a proud team photograph. The event was thoroughly exciting and enjoyable and we at Arden look forward to tabling another successful team success next year.

Get Involved!

As part of a 'Get Involved' initiative Year 8 students had the opportunity to take part in basketball and dance sessions with external clubs volunteering their services recently. ■ Arden Basketball Club came in for two after-school sessions, the first being a 'taster' for students who had not really played basketball. The second session placed more emphasis on advanced skills. Over forty Year 8 boys and girls took part in the sessions, with some students enjoying it so much they now regularly attend the school Basketball Club. ■ Around thirty students also took up an opportunity offered by Phoenix Dance School. Led by Vicky Scott, the lunchtime sessions were very popular and thoroughly enjoyed by all those who took part, so much so that several girls seemed keen to join Phoenix Dance.



Farewell to Patti West...

It is with great sadness we announce that Patti West is leaving Arden following nearly twenty years of dedicated and exemplary service. Patti hopes to pursue new career opportunities in the future and we wish her every success. She will be greatly missed and we are very grateful for all she has contributed to this outstanding school.



Isy hits the right notes!

Many people will know Isy James from her amazing performance in 'Oliver!' last year and the way she wowed the audience with her portrayal of 'Nancy'. The Arden Sixth Former has now been given the big thumbs up by judges at the 'TeenStar' auditions, a competition open to teens and pre-teens. Isy made it through to the regional finals and will now be performing at the live stages. ■ Isy evidently caught the Judge's eye and is now in the running to compete for a place in the National Final at the O2 Arena in London as part of the 'Late Teens' category for performers aged between 16 and 19. All types of singers, vocal performers, groups and acoustic singer-songwriters are invited to enter the competition. The latter stages provide acts with the opportunity to display their talents in front of representatives from record labels, talent agencies and the entertainment industry. ■ If you'd like to find out more about the competition you visit www.teenstarcompetition.co.uk and if you are interested in supporting Isy at the O2 you can purchase tickets through the website or from Isy herself. ■ Arden wishes Isy every success in the competition, having seen her perform so well as Nancy we're positive she will really impress the judges with the quality of her performance.



Year 11 Leadership Team

On Thursday 12 and Friday 13 July, the Leadership Team and a select group of Year 9 pupils took part in a Leadership course designed by the University of the First Age (UFA). The motto of this course was 'to train young people to become the leaders of tomorrow'.

The two day course was a mixture of fun and educational tasks which challenged the pupils to lead groups from the front, but also 'from the back'. The aim of the UFA course was to improve the student's confidence and to maintain and build on the high standards of student leadership within Arden. These tasks put the pupils into 'real life' situations which required careful thought and deliberation and vital real world skills. The students excelled at all the team building exercises, which we all thoroughly enjoyed.

The course was run in the Sixth Form block and we often had senior members of Staff drop in to congratulate the participants and leaders on the quality of the course - something that we are all immensely proud of. We feel, as a group, that our aims and objectives were achieved and we know that a new crop of capable new student leaders will now be around to take our place in the Summer.

As a part of Arden's leadership project we would like to thank all the members of staff - especially Mr Pillinger for his admirable and inspiring acting skills - and the Year 9 students for being such a pleasure to mentor.

Pictured: Standing, L-R; Sophie Beale-Burchell, Oliver Mason, Akshay Najran, Robert Billingham and Alex Kirby. Sitting; Holly Sandford, Hannah Stephens and Ophelia Neville.



Leadership Team Reports

Sophie's report: Looking back I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to be a part of the Leadership Team this year. I feel that we have already bonded as a team and have achieved a lot in the few weeks we have been working together. I have already grasped new skills and look forward to the next year working with my teammates to create a bigger, better Leadership Ladder and raise our overall status within Arden. We have had lots of fun, and have already made an impact through conducting the UFA course, which was highly successful. I'd like to thank everyone for getting me to this point - roll on 2013!

Oli's report: "Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other" JF Kennedy. Arden is full of opportunities. To be given one of those opportunities within the Leadership Team is a privilege, and I am delighted to have been considered able to take on the role. Life at Arden is brimming with chances to help others, whether they be your peers, younger pupils or our teachers. I hope I assist as much as possible during my time in the Leadership Team. I believe that if you can make a difference to the world - or at least the school - you should, and that is what I intend to do over the coming year ...Make a difference!

Hannah's report: I felt honoured to be voted into the sixteen-strong Leadership Team by my peers and teachers. Even though I was disappointed not to be selected as a Senior Pupil, I really enjoy being in the Leadership Team and being involved in their meetings. We have had a really successful year with planning the Leadership Awards assembly and running the UFA Leadership course for Year 9s. I hope next year will be just as exciting!

Alex's report: As a Leadership pupil, I enjoy the responsibility of being an example to the younger years and helping every individual to develop their leadership skills. As part of our role, we have undertaken the responsibility of creating and running several training courses to encourage leadership throughout the school community. These have been a great success and have been very rewarding for many students. So far, I have really enjoyed being involved in the Leadership team and look forward to the year ahead.

Akshay's report: The opportunity of being in the Leadership team has been a real privilege, overwhelming and satisfying. Although it is challenging at times, I have enjoyed the responsibility and gained enormous knowledge and experience from the duties I have been given. I also appreciate having the chance to create positive awareness at Arden. The valuable experience gained as part of the Leadership Team has taught me to take on challenges with my fellow team members.

Rob's report: So far, I have thoroughly enjoyed being part of Arden's Leadership team. We've taken to our roles strongly and have strived to develop all aspects of leadership in the school. I must, of course, thank Miss Duerdin and all the senior members of KS4 for helping and supporting us throughout. We have enjoyed great success so far this year and I hope this will continue. Arden Leadership team – fun, fun, fun!

Holly's report: Many of the skills learned in my Leadership training have made it easier for me to speak with greater confidence to pupils from younger year groups and also to large audiences.

Winter Wonderland?

It's certainly been a chilly start to 2013! Hopefully we're now 'out of the woods' and won't have to worry about losing any more study time to the heavy snows that closed the school early in the new year... So it's no more of those unexpected enforced holidays we all hate(?)



Project: John Denaro

In November we were fortunate enough to have a fantastic workshop conducted by well known portrait artist John Denaro. He worked closely with the A Level Art students, much to the excitement of both teachers and pupils! Fascinatingly, the 'Photo-Realist' style he has developed originally came from earning a living by travelling around the country drawing famous faces on pavements.

Mr Denaro started off the day by going through each section of drawing the face step-by-step, helping us to understand his unique methods and to appreciate just how much observation was involved in creating a piece with such incredible likeness. He had also brought in two pieces of his own work, that we found absolutely amazing!

Each of us had been asked to bring in a photograph of ourselves that was suited to our own individual projects. We started working on our own pieces, John's artistic talents and ability to understand our personal style enabled him to help each student greatly.

It was a great day to experiment in a new medium and to work outside of our artistic 'comfort zones', not to mention the pleasure of having John as an honorary member of the group!

Tate Modern Gallery

Before Christmas, several Year 10 students visited London's Tate Modern with Mrs Whaley, Miss Veal and Mrs Astle. After a long journey, we finally arrived at the gallery and everyone was excited to see such unusual art.

The exhibitions were unique and individual; with pieces featuring interesting use of the different mediums. A lot of the art work had hidden meanings which made you think about the artists' emotions at the time and why they chose to portray their feelings in this distinctive way.

We were told to choose our three favourite pieces and there certainly were a lot to choose from! The artists used different media ranging from sculpture to artistic films and from abstract paintings to photography. Once we had selected our favourite pieces we had to draw them and answer a few questions about them; a good exercise that really expanded our knowledge of our chosen artists.

Everyone really enjoyed the interactive activities which were both fun and interesting. We played a range of games, watched various artistic films, and explored interactive multimedia. Many of the students loved the Pop Art as it was fascinating and still very current. Our favourite Pop Artist exhibited at the Tate was Roy Lichtenstein because of his use of diverse colours in a comic book style.

After our visit to the gallery, we went to Covent Garden to do some shopping. Everyone had fun browsing through charming little stalls and vintage shops. There were also street performances such as magicians and singers which were really entertaining to watch. After everyone had eaten crêpes, chips, cupcakes and other delicious foods, it was time to go home. It was a long journey, but our trip to Tate Modern and Covent Garden was a really great experience and such a brilliant day out!





Ice and

As an A Level Geography student, the opportunity to go to Iceland was unmissable, although I was travelling as one of just two Year 13 students - the rest being Year 11 pupils. Even though I didn't really know anybody on the trip before we left, by the time we had got on the plane to Keflavik I had already got chatting with some of the guys on the trip and it was clear I was going to have a really good time. After coming into land we headed straight for the Blue Lagoon, the famous volcanic pool is an incredible sight. During the trip we went caving in lava tubes, walking in Icelandic National Parks, saw a volcanic crater, went Pony Trekking and saw the Bond film 'Die Another Day' location. But the best, in my opinion, was going glacier walking on the Solheimajokull Glacier.

■ In addition, we visited beaches and saw numerous spectacular waterfalls during our time exploring the South Coast. We benefitted from a very good tour guide, who accompanied us throughout the trip, giving us lots of information over the week we spent there. Sadly the only thing we missed while we were there was the Northern Lights. They can be seen further north at the capital, Reykjavík... That would have been incredible, even so we all had a brilliant time! ■ Despite spending a fair amount of time cooped up on the coach travelling between locations, everyone remained in a good mood... Then again, with Mr Singh's quality jokes it was hard not to be! One thing that I found particularly surprising



was the sheer diversity of the landscapes that you travel through, going from grassy plains to moss covered lava fields, to snow and glaciers. It was hard to believe it could all be in the same country. ■ I really enjoyed everything about the trip, and I don't think anyone else who travelled with us to Iceland would disagree with me in saying that. A massive thank you goes to Miss West, Miss Flower, Mrs Jenkins, Mr Halligan and Mr Singh for organising the visit and making everything we did incredibly good fun. For me it was the best trip I have been on during my time at Arden and one I'm not likely to forget. ■ Contributed by Matt Fearon, Year 13



Daily Mail Cup Match: Arden 8 - Heart of England 5

On the 18 October 2012 we hosted an absolute thriller of a rugby game between Arden and Heart of England in the Second Round of the Daily Mail Cup. Arden were focused on winning this game more than ever as it was against our old rivals and it was also in a very important National Cup Match. After an intense training session two days before and an inspiring team talk, we were all pumped up and raring to go.

The game started strongly with some huge tackles from Harvey Grant, Will Cutbill and Dom Freeman helping to put us firmly in control. We looked strong on the ball right from the start with some great carries by Andy Hackett and Will Mather. Our defence was fantastic, setting guards up on every ruck that meant every time the opposition got the ball they were forced to run it into a wall of green shirts eager to regain possession!

Halfway through the first half, a great kick into the corner from Joe Foulkes, combined with a good Lineout throw from Calum Davies forced a penalty just ten metres from their line. A set move then allowed Will Cutbill to crash over for a well deserved try and the first points of the game.

Arden put everything into every tackle they made. Unfortunately after holding Heart of England back on our own line for about five minutes they finally managed to slip through a flagging Arden defence, luckily they missed the conversion which meant it was even at 5 points all going into a tense half time break.

A rousing half time speech re-focused us for what we knew was going to be a tough second half. Once again we did everything that was asked of us, throwing everything into the game. Great play from our flankers, Joe Savage and Jacob Delaney with the added pressure of Callum Allaway forced the Heart of England team to make mistake after mistake. This, together with some big tackles from every Arden player, stopped them scoring again. A thundering tackle on one of their biggest players by Will Cutbill created the confidence that we needed to dig even deeper for the final push.

The atmosphere was electric, the crowd was tense... The next team to score would surely win the game. Some great line breaks by Tyler Wiggins and Harry Street gave us a penalty on their 22 metre line. A good piece of Captaining meant put the pressure on Joe Foulkes to score a demanding penalty kick. The crowd fell silent as Joe stepped up to the ball; with everything level this could make or break us. But with a really good strike Joe put it straight in between the posts – brilliant!

We held on for a tense last five minutes and when the final whistle blew a celebration between all of the Arden team was definitely valid! It was a great performance by everybody on the Arden team and definitely one of the best games of rugby we've ever played! A massive thank you to everyone who came to support the team. There was a great crowd which made a real difference - thank you for your solid support!

Arden v Southam College

Arden Rugby Team visited Southam College for a match on 6 October 2012. Because many players were tied up with other commitments and as a result others forced to play out of their normal position we expected a hard-fought game, but with Will Cutbill and Mr Hooper coaching we knew we could get a solid result. The Team started strongly with some runs by Dom Freeman, Jacob Delaney and Joe Savage. Great defensive tackling by Lewis White and Jacob Knight helped hold the Southam College Team back for most of the first half, until some lucky breaks saw them make a touchdown between the posts.

A successful conversion by Southam saw Arden start the second half 7-0 down, but following a good half time team talk they attacked the second 40 minutes with gusto. Despite Southam gaining another try early in the second half, great team play from Joe Foulkes, Will Jones and Tyler Wiggins together with great driving from Ieuan Edwards, Sam Dugger and Luke Whelan set up Jacob Delaney for a thundering first try in the Southam corner.

We were determined to turn the game around and a late Arden 'sin binning' made us even more driven towards our goal. A great

line out secured by Charlie Kingsley followed by a well structured back move started by Matt Page created the opening on the wing for Tyler Wiggins to run in the final score in the last play of the game, leaving the two teams on even pegging at 14-14 when the whistle blew. Given reduced presence of team regulars, and necessity for others to play out of their normal position, this draw was a really excellent result, well played everybody!



Sixth Form Football

The Sixth Form Football Team enjoyed a winning start to the 2012/13 season, maintaining their 100% winning record so-far.

We are now looking forward to Quarter Final games in both the West Midlands' Cup and the Solihull Cup. Last year the Arden Sixth Form team were knocked out in both competitions at the Quarter Finals stage, so will be looking to improve on that this year.

A record victory; a 14-0 hammering of St George's Sixth Form; resulted in Tom Biddle scoring five goals in a single game - also a record, whilst Ollie Clift and Brad Carpenter also helped themselves to a hat trick. This victory proved crucial, as Arden took on Bishop Challenor in the West Midlands' Cup the following week. Bishop Challenor's are one of the toughest teams Arden have come across and all thirteen lads played their part as we scored late in the game to record a 3-2 victory, Aaron Williams' thumping goal being one of the many highlights of the game.

Several members of the squad will be hoping to beat the all-time Arden Sixth Form goal scoring record, currently set by Matt Stott with 7 goals. Tom Biddle is already on 7 goals for this season alone, whilst Year 13's Joe Wykes and Ollie Clift will also be looking to surpass the record with 6 and 5 goals respectively. With a strong squad Arden should be looking to progress into at least one of the Semi Finals this season and an appearance in a Final is certainly not out of the question!

OU Success for Sixth Form students

Since the end of the AS examination period last summer, ten hard-working Sixth Formers; Doug Bray, Pavan Bhogal, Tom Hornigold, Rebecca Sisman, Holly Morris, Marianna Nicholson, Rachel Fraser, James Smith and Becky Owen have been engaged in study with the Open University.

This has involved them giving up a good deal of time over the summer holiday and autumn term to complete their studies. A range of courses were studied including:

- The Frozen Planet
- Galaxies, Stars and Planets
- Understanding Human Nutrition
- Molecules, Medicines and Drugs
- Human Genetics and Health Issues
- Inside Nuclear Energy
- Design and the Web

We are delighted that all of the students were successful in their studies and all were unanimous that these studies had been beneficial not only to their current A Level studies but also helped them make a very competitive university application.

Pictured below, left to right: Arden OU students, Rebecca Owen, Marianna Nicholson, Holly Morris, Doug Bray, Pavan Bhogal, James Smith, Tom Hornigold.



Tomorrow's Engineers STEM Day

In December the German language half of Year 9 took part in a STEM event run by a company called 'Tomorrow's Engineers'. This enabled students to have the opportunity to engage in an exciting, interactive experience that provided them with a sound knowledge and understanding of the amazing opportunities the world of engineering has to offer. ■ The programme was supported by Rolls-Royce, Jaguar Land Rover, Goodrich, GKN, National Grid, E-ON and Severn Trent. These multi-national companies provided ambassadors to bring real life experience and knowledge to the activities. The programme consisted of the following main components:

Tomorrow's Engineers 'Around the World' Show: A high impact in-school show, delivered by 'Science Made Simple'. This took place in the school hall and demonstrated how Engineers affect the everyday world around us. It kicked off to a great start by the presenter using a Trebuchet to fling marshmallows into the audience! A whole range of fascinating activities and demonstrations followed which kept students on the edge of their seats.

Tomorrow's Engineers Workshops: Delivered by 'By Design', this comprised a series of three practical workshops which highlighted the skills and opportunities for the modern engineer.

Workshop 1: Used robots that had to travel around an arena picking up different objects. Given the option of a scoop, a claw and a wheelie-hand, students had to choose the best 'hand' for the robot to enable it to pick up the most objects. There were a variety of objects ranging from beanbags to tubes and different points were awarded depending on the difficulty of collecting the object. Comments from students included "Amazing, ten out ten" from Lewis Broadhurst and "Really fun, but tricky" by Charlotte Bowen.

Workshop 2: Saw students playing 'Engineers' Top Trumps' where a wide range of Engineering careers were discovered. After that students used iPads to play some engineering games, such as trying to build a bridge to support balls using the least amount of materials. "This was interesting and fun" commented Stuart Crichton, "it gave me a much better idea about what different engineers do" added James Tomnie.

Workshop 3: Working in groups, students designed a speaker and then had to pitch their idea to the rest of the group. "It was really good to have the opportunity to come up with our own ideas, instead of having to design for a particular brief" said Tallulah Greenwood and Genevieve Smikle.



Arden v Trinity

On a wet and windy Tuesday afternoon Arden faced Trinity in a fiercely fought Daily Mail Cup Rugby Match. We started off confidently, thanks to a motivating team talk by Calum Davies. As always, the first tackles are crucial and this time we made them count with bone crunching tackles from Tyler Wiggins, Matt Parker and Andy 'The Hackman' Hackett. We got the ball out quickly at the breakdown, thanks to our Scrum Half, Harvey, and managed to get some brilliant crash balls with Joe Foulkes leading the way.

After some immense pressure from Arden keeping Trinity camped inside their 22, Callum Allaway managed to burst through their lacklustre line with a scorching sprint to the line which just got caught out by a tackle. With strong rucking over from Monty and Joe Savage we finally got the all-important first try with Dom Freeman picking the ball up and stumbling over the line. Sadly, the conversion was missed.

From the kick off again we started well, but this time we got our pods sorted out. Led by Savage, the forwards dominated the Pod area and these plays were soon followed by another SUPER try. Just inside their 22, our Scrum Half picked the ball up, side-stepped one person, then dummying and finally diving over the line for a brilliant second Arden try. The conversion was still to come; straight in front of the post, it just needed a little dink over. Silence, the kicker walked up to the ball, kicks it and it missed! It would have been a perfect football penalty, but no conversion. The score at half time 10-0 to Arden.

At the start of the second half Arden started playing sloppy rugby, giving away way too many penalties from the tackler not rolling away clear. They capitalised on our bad work and scored, but luckily missed the kick. From then-on we were back in domination mode with perfect rucking, scrummaging and tackling.

We capitalised on the situation and got another brilliant try. Halfway in the 22, Lewis White picked the ball from the back of the scrum and ran, just getting tackled before the try line. But then spectacularly our newly found super Scrum Half came, ripped the ball from Lewis' hands and dived over for the try! This time Joe Foulkes stepped up for the conversion, it was right on the touchline and an almost impossible kick, but Joe gave it a thump and over it went! Joe walked back as casual as can be.

The final whistle blew for full time with Arden at 17 points to Trinity's 5. The official man of the match today was Callum Davis for his hard and low tackles. Well done everybody for a hard worked game.

■ Contributed by Harvey Grant

The London Marathon

Three intrepid members of staff will be running in the 2013 London Marathon to raise money for the 'Young Epilepsy' charity. In support this commendable commitment, Arden held a non-uniform day on Friday 15 February which raised over £2,800. The three members of staff are Mathematics teachers Mr Singh and Dr Smye and PE teacher, Mr Pillinger. Mr Singh in particular is no stranger to challenges of this level – he cycled from Edinburgh to London last year in yet another charity challenge! Everyone at Arden is very proud of their dedication and we wish them every success.

"We are three members of staff from Arden who have been involved in raising money for various charities in the past. Arden was contacted by a representative of Young Epilepsy asking for any volunteers to raise awareness and funds for their charity by running in the London Marathon. Even though none of us had ever run a marathon before, we all took the plunge and have been training hard ever since. We've spent most of our careers working with children and young people and we were touched by the great work done by Young Epilepsy. If you can sponsor us then please do at www.ardenmarathon.co.uk. Any donations will be most gratefully received. And if you see any of us out running around Solihull, please give us a cheer!" commented the three runners.

Three cheers for three very special Arden ambassadors!

Year 11 Basketball success

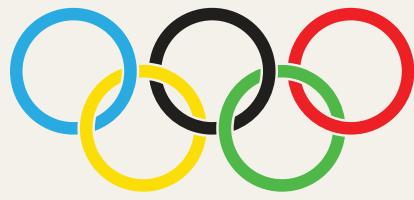
Year 11's Basketball Team have had another successful season, finishing Runners Up in the Solihull Borough league. They will now go through to represent the South in the Warwickshire Games. The boys qualified for the Final after comprehensive victories over Light Hall, Langley and John Henry Newman schools in the Borough Tournament.

The Final, which took place at Arden, saw us hosting John Henry Newman in what proved to be a very close and competitive encounter. After a conceding a few sloppy baskets, Arden hit back with James Gavigan, Matt Gardner, Mike Thomas, Nathan Cottrell and Morgan Dawes all scoring baskets.

The John Henry Newman squad, which boasts an England Under 16 Team member, began to pull away; establishing a 12 point lead going into the last quarter. Arden continued to fight until the final whistle with James Gavigan hitting a 3 pointer with 20 seconds remaining to bring the scores to 49-48 in John Henry Newman's favour.

Unfortunately for the boys the visitors were scored in the dying seconds putting the game beyond our reach. A superb game of basketball played by both teams; further mentions go to Alex Richard, Olly Knight, Harris Tooke, Dan Hughes and Ben Russell who also played their part with superb defence and rebounding.





Olympic Guard Of Honour

On the 27 July 2012, myself and seven other girls from Arden school were privileged to be selected as 'Guards of Honour' at the opening ceremony for the London 2012 Olympic Games. Being a Guard of Honour involves lining the entrance to the stadium cheering on the athletes as they made their entrance.

Each of the schools involved were asked to design a banner for one of the countries taking part in the games. The country we were given was Ethiopia. On our banner we had the Ethiopian flag merged with the Union Jack and traditional Ethiopian flowers. I must admit, it was a sight for sore eyes!

We were sponsored by a company called Proband - the complete computer company. Their company name was printed on the back of the gorgeous bright red jackets we were given. They each featured an Arden School logo on the breast, beneath the logo was some beautiful embroidered writing which said 'Guard of Honour 2012'. We all felt so proud to be wearing them and representing our school in a place where the whole world was watching.

And they're off...

At nine o'clock we met up with teachers, Miss Heard and Miss Hull, at Birmingham International train station. We said goodbye to our parents, and by ten we were on the train. The train was busy but that was nothing compared to Euston Station in London. There were people everywhere, crashing into you from all angles - a sea of red white and blue. The highlight of my experiences at the station was when walked out and formed a group; our bright red jackets attracted a lot of attention from tourists who got out their huge cameras hung on strings around their necks to nab a photograph with the 'British Athletes' - or so they thought!

After we left Euston, we headed for Camden Market. It was simply amazing - the most interesting place I have ever shopped. I couldn't believe the range of shops there, it was just phenomenal. We decided to spend an hour or so wandering round the market to give us a chance to grab a bite to eat. There were so many different cultures and types of food on offer to sample and taste. Italian, Chinese, Malaysian, Japanese, British, French and many more.

I think my favourite, favourite place to eat there was the cake and cookies shop. You could smell the freshly baked slices of heaven from a mile away! After many questions from passers by about our jackets, we really began to appreciate the importance of what we were doing. We were all so excited to go to the park, we could hardly wait!

The Olympic Park

We caught the tube to the Olympic park. We had to wait for a few minutes to get in but we were lucky; the queues for people who'd bought tickets to see the ceremony was massive and began much later on in the day. When we went in, we had to throw away any aerosols, liquids and metal items - much like in airport security. We walked into an area where our coats and bags were scanned and we then moved over to allow more people to pass through. We were all handed a bottle of water and a Cadbury's chocolate bar as a snack until we had our dinner later in the evening.

We all had a number four sticker on our shirts identifying our guide group. A man came bounding up to us enthusiastically in T-Shirt that also had a large number four on the front. He was our tour guide and led us around the whole park. It was a great tour, the only downside was that we weren't allowed to go inside any of the arenas because they were being prepared for the following day.

Whilst on the tour, we spotted a helicopter above with a large French flag on the bottom, we later found out they were filming for French television. Our best television experience was when two muscular American men strode over and pointed a microphone in Miss Hull's direction. She was interviewed about our Olympic experience as we stood proudly holding our Ethiopian banner so the camera could get a good view of our hard work. These men were broadcasting for NBC.

We finished our tour at the Copper Box, the handball arena. Here we were given our dinner of a chargrilled vegetable sandwich, two Cadbury's chocolate bars, two Nature Valley bars and a bottle of water. The sandwich was much nicer than it sounds! We spent three very enjoyable hours there. I was interviewed over the phone by the radio station BBC WM about the atmosphere at the ceremony. I thoroughly enjoyed talking to the presenter and was told I have a good voice for the radio. We also had our photos taken with the mascots; Wenlock and Mandeville. In that time we were also given our Guard of Honour bags and shirts. The shirts were long sleeved and white with gold, silver and bronze medals on the front with the words 'Guards of Honour 2012'. The long sleeves turned out to be a challenge in the hot weather but we soon realised how to turn this to our advantage. The navy blue drawstring bags carried a matching slogan.

The Ceremony

At 7:00pm, the moment we had all been waiting for finally arrived. We were all asked to put on our shirts and bags and make our way out of the Copperbox and find a spot along the silver barriers. We jumped straight in to ensure we could see everything. We could hear all the music blaring out of the arena and see the paratroopers drop from the sky, of course at the time we had no idea what was going on! We waited for what seemed like forever until we spotted some people making their way over the small hill that lay before us. Greece. As the founder country of the games they had the privilege of walking in first. This was when it hit us. We had been given activity packs to keep us busy, these packs included biros - our tops were long sleeved. We all suddenly began flailing our arms and thrusting our pens at the athletes who kindly autographed our shirts. As the night went on, more countries past us and our shirts

were becoming thick with signatures. We had to wait until the very last moment for Great Britain to enter the scene. We were buzzing with excitement as many previous medallists including Tom Daley and Chris Hoy strode past us. It was phenomenal just to see them walk by and we were all starstruck. The night flew by and soon it was time to leave, but we decided to stay to watch a few of the fireworks. They were beautiful. A great end to the best day of the year!

Back Home

Finally at 11.00pm, we suddenly realised we had just 20 minutes to get back to the Euston Station. We tried as hard as we could to get to the platform in time, we even sent the cross country runners amongst us to run ahead to try to stop the train's departure. Unfortunately none of our efforts worked and we finally arrived, puffing and panting to a deserted platform!

We were sat on the floor dejected when a woman dressed in a Virgin Atlantic uniform came over. She took pity on us and led us into the first class lounge where we were offered food and drinks while we watched the rest of the fireworks on the television. Finally, at 1.00am, the train pulled up at the station. We assumed this was the end of our first class experience - but we were wrong! The kindly women arranged for us to ride First Class for our journey back to Birmingham! We thanked her as she waved us off as we began our journey home....

What a fantastic experience, it will never be forgotten!

■ Contributed by Deana Taheri, Year 10



Rotary Club Competition

Arden was privileged to host the area round of this prestigious cookery competition organised by The Rotary Club. Students from Kenilworth, Stratford and Leamington came to compete at Arden. The challenge was to cook a two course meal for two people in 90 minutes and lay a table as it would be in professional restaurant. The chef judges were very complimentary and that the standard this year was exceptionally high, commenting that the skills of the students were as good as some of the college students they teach.

We were delighted to be able to announce that Arden's own Alex Kirby won the heat, he will now go forward to the District Final in March. Alex was mentored by a former pupil Neil Steyn who now works at the Michelin starred Turner's Restaurant in Harborne. His menu comprised Sea Bass on crushed New Potatoes with Spinach, Popcorn, Sweet Corn Puree and Wild Mushroom Puree. For dessert he prepared Banana Towers with a rich Chocolate Tart. The judges said the dessert alone was worth a gold medal!

We're sure everyone would like to congratulate Alex and wish him luck for the next round!



Chef's Special

A few weeks ago during Creative Arts & Technology Week, we enjoyed a visit from a former Arden student and professional chef, Neil Steyn. He joined a Home Economics lesson and cooked three dishes. Mr Steyn currently works at the well-known Turner's Restaurant in Harborne, Birmingham which holds a highly coveted Michelin Star - so the food he cooked was of an extremely high standard.

For his first dish, Neil cooked a pumpkin risotto made with lobster stock and topped with foam. He served it in a coffee cup so that it looked like a cup of coffee! We all got to try a bit and I don't think there was a person in the class who didn't like it!

He then cooked mackerel with an orange foam that was amazing! Finally he showed us how to butcher a quail and cook it. This was accompanied by a range of vegetables. The lesson was very different to our usual and was enjoyed by the whole class, as we got to try the gourmet food and learned new skills such as how to peel an orange with a knife.

The session was a more involved way of learning which we really appreciated and we'd like to thank Neil for such an interesting and inspiring lesson.

Photographs: Below, Neil with students. Bottom, Mayoress of Solihull; Mrs Janet Hawkins, Mr Martin Murphy, Arden Principal and Mayor of Solihull; Mr Ken Hawkins



Peer Mentoring

"It's a great way to help the school and give back to a vital part of Arden", "I want to be there for Year 7's as a friendly face, someone they can approach for help and they know that I've been through it and know what it was like"...

Just a couple of the sentiments expressed by our current Year 10s who applied to become peer mentors back in September last year. Over 100 boys and girls from the year group wrote a formal letter of application to join the scheme. This overwhelming offer of involvement is indicative of the care and support that is offered between pupils of all years at Arden. Following the letter of application, the pupils underwent a process of training that was delivered by a

group of last year's Peer Mentors. The training touched on important issues like confidentiality, child protection, being a good role model and discussion on how to be a good mentor.

The team of Peer Mentors work with a variety of children across a range of settings, we have pupils who specialise in working on a one-to-one basis with Year 7 or Year 8 pupils, providing help, guidance and someone to talk to. The ability to talk to an older member of the school who can draw on their own experiences is something that pupils tell us they really like. We also have pupils involved in our Reading, Spelling and Maths Clubs. These pupils work hard alongside our Learning Support Assistants to help ensure that all pupils are given the opportunity to build these vital skills needed during their Key Stage 3 curriculum.



All of our Year 7 form groups are supported not only by their Form Tutor, but also by peer mentors who join form periods to assist in handling questions on homework, helping organisation and assisting with tutorial worship topics.

The generosity of our Year 10 pupils is outstanding, they give freely of their time to help and support the youngest members of our school community, helping to ensure that the transition up to Arden is as easy as possible. The success of the scheme is amply demonstrated by the high number of pupils wish to be a peer mentors themselves in Year 10 - recalling the positive effect that their own mentor had on them in their early days at Arden.

"Peer mentoring is something I am very proud to be a part of. I do one-to-one mentoring which involves pairing up with a younger pupil in the school and meeting up with them every Friday form period. At the start of the year the pupils that we help were very nervous and

didn't want to talk to us! However, after getting to know each other by doing various activities, they're now much more confident. Not only do mentors help them with problems they have in school, we are there as friends as well. I am very privileged to be involved in it."

"Maths and Spelling Mentoring: I take part in three sessions of mentoring every week; twice for spelling and once for maths. I feel that I am contributing and giving back to the lower years of the school. Doing the lessons and teaching the children not only improves their knowledge, but creates a partnership between pupils which makes the lessons more fun and very beneficial to both of us. Since the sessions began, both of my pupils have made big improvements in their subjects. I think that the mentoring lessons that happen at Arden are a great success for both mentors and their charges" Charlie Corden 10D.



Geography Club

Arden's Geography Club has recently seen our Year 7 members writing to their new pen pals from the Anuban Ngao School in the North of Thailand.

In the letters they have included their name, age, hobbies and have asked the pupils what they like to do. They have had to use very basic English, as the pupils in Thailand have only just begun their English Language studies. The pen pal project will help the Thai students to progress in their English, as well as enabling both schools to develop their knowledge and understanding of other cultures, offering a new and exciting experience for everyone involved. The Geography Club students are really enjoying the chance to learn about new cultures and to make new friends.

"This is a great opportunity to talk to new people" Kelvin Tsan, Year 7.

"I enjoy having a pen pal because I enjoy learning about what they like to do and how it's different to our life in the UK!" Phillipa Hinds, Year 7.

■ Contributed by Amy Allen & Sarah Walbaum, Year 10 Geography Club Leaders.



European Commission's Young Translators' competition

On Tuesday 27 October, three Year 12 students took part in the European Commission's Juvenes Translatores competition. This high-profile competition requires entrants to translate, with the aid of a dictionary, a passage in their chosen foreign language to their own language.

This meant that Isabelle James tackled the German text, whilst Hannah Robbins and Maddie Parkin attempted the French one. The competition was hard and a real challenge of our language learning. We hope that you keep your fingers crossed for us when the Winners are announced in February. The Winner from each participating country across Europe receives an all-expenses-paid trip to Brussels to visit the European Commission Headquarters and receive their prize!

■ Contributed by Isabelle Jame, Hannah Robbins and Maddie Parkin.



Arden's Digital Leaders help to develop Global ICT reward scheme

On 17 January, six of our Year 9 Digital Leaders joined their counterparts from John Henry Newman Catholic College at Mozilla HQ in London to take part in a workshop developing 'Open Badges' for Digital Leaders. Open Badges will be a global reward system that identifies and recognises a wide range of skills, particularly within ICT. Students were involved in developing badges that will be part of the scheme and some of them were asked to test some of the new software currently in development by Mozilla for the scheme. This was an exciting opportunity for both the staff and students involved and you can read about it at digitalleadersarden.blogspot.co.uk/?p=1547 you can also see a video of students at the Mozilla Open Badges event at makewaves/story/461933/title/whatisanopenbadge

The ten students from Year 9 who were selected to become Arden's Digital Leaders just before Christmas are also now involved in 'quadblogging' with schools in America. Through Quadblogging.net Arden joined a group of four schools which can view each other's blogs and start dialogues about the learning that is happening across the world during January, February and March this year. The blogs are centred on a variety of topics, while many are subject-based, ours is about the work that the Digital Leaders are carrying out.

You can also join in at digitalleadersarden.blogspot.co.uk the site also has links to the three American schools participating. If you would like more information on the Digital Leaders scheme, please speak to Mrs Allton, Assistant Principal.



German Exchange

On the 19 January, fifteen members of Year 9 met at the airport ready for their week-long German exchange, and I was lucky enough to be amongst them. Many were excited, but also nervous because they didn't know what to expect.

The flight to Frankfurt was an hour and a half long, but when we got there it seemed like it had only taken ten minutes. We were all soon with our exchange families. Over the first weekend we all got up to different activities, including bowling, laser tag, swimming, sledging in the snow and visiting museums.. In fact the only thing we had all done was to make a great friend in our exchange partner!

On the first day in School we visited the Mayor of the town, which was really interesting. We asked lots of questions in German and found out lots of interesting facts about the town. Then we went back to school and spent the rest of the day with our partners in their lessons. It was really exciting to see how different their school is to ours. They still use blackboards and their projectors are much older than ours in the UK. They do not connect to a computer either and they also don't have exercise books like ours, but use note pads they organise themselves. German schools also have different ending times each day, depending how many lessons the students have that day - the shortest day is a one o'clock finish!

On the Tuesday we went to a local chocolate museum, when we were there we made our own chocolate from cocoa beans - it was the nicest I have ever tasted. We also got a tour of the town gardens, which represented different places of the world. Later we had some free time to go shopping in the town, some then went straight home, but others had more lessons with their partners.

The next day we visited an interactive museum with our German partners. It was really fun because there were lots of interesting attractions. My favourite was a 'blind bar' where it was completely black - like you were blind. There was also a blind maze, as well as a set of optical illusions and some weird instruments. The afternoon was spent back at school before returning to our German homes.

Thursday saw us visit the nearby city of Mainz. Here we went to a printing museum, it was really interesting to see! Our final full day, Friday, was spent in school where we joined in drama and line dancing lessons, which were great fun. That night we had a farewell disco, it was great end to the week. The entire German year group were invited, so we got meet all of our new German friends one last time!

Saturday was our last day and by quarter to five we were on the plane home. Everyone had a great time and cannot wait for their partner to come here in June! Do welcome them when you see them around our school - they looked after us really well. ■ Contributed by Annie Seaward

PE is changing at Arden!

For many older people PE lessons at school are remembered with mixed feelings - usually either of excitement or fear. These feelings are usually rooted in how able you were at sports such as Rugby or Netball. For decades many pupils were turned off PE because they didn't have the physical skills to access or achieve in sport.

However, PE has come a long way since those days, with participation and healthy active lifestyles gaining greater focus, though development of specific physical skills remains at the heart of the curriculum. Educationalists have long been aware that PE has the potential to develop the 'whole child', but still chose to focus the curriculum on learning how to play a range of sports; hoping that they also developed other skills as part of that experience.

PE staff at Arden have been busy collaborating with Physical Education experts in reviewing the overall curriculum. As a result there is an overhaul underway that will ensure we remain at the forefront of innovation in PE. The aim of the new curriculum is to not only create great athletes, but to look at the wider picture and to guide students towards becoming well rounded, balanced human beings. The current Year 7 pupils are the first year to have been taught under this curriculum and it has been such a great success Year 8 and 9 will follow from September 2012-2013. The aim and vision is to teach pupils the values and respect that will assist them, not only in other lessons but also in their life outside of school.

We have been delighted with the enthusiasm and progress pupils are displaying in Year 7 where PE is being taught mixed gender and ability groups. Ye-Ji Kim is currently in Year 7 and has shared her experience of PE so far this year "In my PE lessons at Arden, I learn new skills which can be used, not only in one particular sport but, in all areas of sport. I like PE at Arden as we learn new things in every lesson. The key skills we develop are; agility, social, cognitive, teamwork and many more. We don't just learn how to develop our own skills but also learn how to help, encourage and improve others".

Pupils now get assessed in a range of areas, including:

- **Social:** This is about how well you work as an individual, and how you communicate and work with others.
- **Cognitive:** Centred on your thinking skills - how well you understand and solve problems, apply skills and make appropriate decisions.
- **Creative:** How successfully you explore ideas, express yourself, and use your imagination to develop your own solutions.
- **Physical:** This refers to the 'quality' of someone's motor skills and their ability to combine and transfer those skills across a range of sporting environments.
- **Personal:** Centred on someone's attitude and approach to learning and how confident and motivated they are.

Traditionally PE is built around a specific sport or activity in a block where there is a focus of improving the pupil's physical skills and the

skills listed above are improved as a by-product. Historically this worked OK for those that were gifted in sport, however the pupils that do not find physical activity easy were not improving their skills as well as they could. Conversely, the Arden PE Department believe that physical activity should be used as a vehicle to develop every pupil's cognitive, creative, social and personal skills in young people, as well as health and fitness understanding.

The five areas intermesh like a set of gears. All five need to be running at the same level to see accelerated progress and for the system to run at its smoothest. If there is a weak cog, improvement will not run seamlessly

and the pupil will not develop as quickly. The teacher looks at each pupil's skillset and can identify areas requiring individual development, this then informs their planning; creating opportunities for pupils to work on and improve areas of weakness.

When all five areas are working in harmony at a high level the pupil can be classed as 'Gifted and Talented' in Physical Education. For each lesson the learning objectives are based on improving one aspect of the gearset, as well as helping pupils gain mastery within the activity area.

"I enjoy PE at Arden because it allows you to try a range of sports, which helped me discover talents I didn't know I had. Lessons are always fun and provide opportunities to work on your physical, creative, cognitive, personal or social skills" commented Josh Craven.



When the new pupils first arrived in September they participated in 'FUNs' lessons. During these activities pupils explored the 'Fundamental skills' that are needed in physical activity. Balance, Agility and Coordination form the foundations for pupils to be physically successful in sport and physical activity. Balance, agility and coordination are self-assessed in a range of practical trials increasing in difficulty. Pupils successfully identified their own areas for development and were able to gain an understanding of where these skills are needed in sports.

In carrying out this activity pupils take ownership of their progress and were trusted to learn independently. Along with FUNs lessons, pupils had taster sessions in the wide range of sports on offer at Arden. Pupils are given the basic skills and processes to take part in numerous sports and activities. Pupils are now offered a wide range of activities from the traditional sports such as Netball and Hockey, to more unusual activities like Lacrosse and Ultimate Frisbee. They are also encouraged to join extra-curricular clubs to continue to develop their interpersonal skills, as well as their physical skills.

The PE Department have found that this modern style of teaching has increased pupil's confidence and attainment and has helped remove barriers to participation that pupils may previously have had, such as lack of experience of a sport or shortage of the Fundamental skills required to take part.



Sports Leadership at Arden

At Arden Sports Leadership starts in Key Stage 3 PE lessons where pupils are given opportunities to develop their skills in a variety of roles such as choreographer, referee, coach etc. Many pupils also take this further by helping out at the extra-curricular clubs run by the PE Department.

For the past six years Arden has also run a Leadership Academy. This has been open to all pupils from the Easter term in Year 9. During their first year, pupils are given the opportunity to go into local primary schools and help younger pupils in a wide range of activities. Feedback from the primary school staff has always been very complimentary, resulting in increased confidence and understanding for our pupils. From helping 6 year-olds to master a forward roll to running a Year 6 Tag Rugby competition, our pupils discover and enhance their organisational and personal skills. Most continue to volunteer both at school and in the community after the first year.

Participating students log their hours with the Youth Sports Trust on a certificated scheme called 'Step into Sport'. Fifty hours of volunteering results in a Bronze Certificate, 100 hours Silver, and 200 hours Gold. They can continue to log volunteering hours until they leave either in Year 11 or Year 13. Certificates to be awarded this academic year to-date are:

Bronze:

Callum Davies	Dan Hughes
George Woodbridge	Katie Saunders
Phoebe Bosco	

Silver:

Will Cutbill	James Gavigan
Luke James	Maddie Gardner
Tim Naylor	

Gold:

Chris Bull	Zack Nolan
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Double Gold:

There is also a highly prestigious Double Gold Award which is awarded by Youth Sports Trust when a student achieves 400 hours. It is a rare achievement and Arden is delighted to announce that Will Norris has achieved impressive award within two years of joining the Leadership Academy - a remarkable feat!

The Leadership Academy creates a positive relationship between our students, the PE Department and our local primary schools. Our students gain skills and experience and the PE Department enjoy the help of committed and often very knowledgeable young leaders, in fact many extra-curricular clubs could not function without their support. Not only do staff from our feeder schools benefit, but the children meet 'big' Arden students in a friendly environment, helping their transition into Year 7.

Extra-Curricular Sport at Arden

Arden's PE and sport vision is that every pupil has the opportunity to achieve their full potential. We believe that pupils should leave Arden as confident, well rounded people with a passion for sport that will nurture a healthy, active lifestyle.

The PE curriculum supports pupils working on their creative, cognitive, social, personal and physical skills. Extra-curricular activities also play an important role in encouraging development within these five key areas. Arden maintains a broad range of exciting and enriching activities that are ideal both for naturally talented pupils wishing to maximise their development and for those who simply wish to take part in an activity they enjoy.

The range of Extra-Curricular Sporting activities at Arden currently includes:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| ■ Girls' and Boy's Hockey | ■ Netball |
| ■ Hurdles | ■ Dance |
| ■ Girls' and Boy's Basketball | ■ Trampolining |
| ■ Rugby | ■ Football |
| ■ Skiing | ■ Table tennis |
| ■ Ultimate Frisbee | ■ Zumba |
| ■ Badminton | ■ Cricket |
| ■ Athletics | ■ Tennis |
| ■ Rounders | ■ Gymnastics |
| ■ G&T circuit/mentoring | ■ Volleyball |

The Arden Vision

Our vision for provision in extra-curricular sport is equality, participation and excellence. We strive as a Department to allow all pupils' access to a variety of clubs in order to improve their skills within and beyond the curriculum. We also encourage as many pupils to participate as possible, as teachers we feel our primary concern is to educate young people about the benefits of living a healthy, active lifestyle.

"When I joined Arden I was overwhelmed by the amount of sports clubs I had the opportunity to attend and join... I decided to join Rugby, Basketball, Gymnastics, Trampolining and Football... The Rugby

Club is fun to attend, and the teacher Mr Marlow who runs it is really nice and teaches the sport well. I found I loved the trampolining SO much that I joined another club outside of school, this is how much Arden has inspired me" Harry Llewellyn, Year 7.

Arden also provides specialist coaches in certain sports such as Trampolining, Cricket and Hockey, building good links with local sports clubs and allowing our pupils access to these organisations, helping further develop their skills outside of the school walls.

"I have been playing basketball for a year and a half now. My highlight would be scoring three baskets against a very strong Heart of England team. We train on a Friday morning with Mr Pillingar and three sports leaders; Luke James, Alex Richards and James Gavigan... In Year 7 I captained the Cricket team, it was amazing to have that opportunity and it really helped me to improve my leadership. We train on a Monday with Complete Cricket Coaches. This has helped me to improve my leadership qualities by mentoring the less experienced. I played my first game for the school half way through Year 7 against a very strong Solihull School Hockey Team. We train on Wednesdays before school with Chris Davis, a Coach from Stick 2 Hockey. His training sessions are good - intense, but fun" Nick Rice, Year 8.

Optimal Health and Fitness

We also want our pupils to compete and achieve excellence in their chosen sport. At Arden we are proud of our reputation as fierce competitors; locally and nationally across a range of sports and believe that it is the combined dedication of the staff and pupils that allow us to achieve this. The school also provides an invitation only club for our





gifted and talented pupils who are mentored by Ed Hull, Personal Trainer – Optimal Health and Fitness, every Tuesday morning before school.

"These sessions have had a major impact on my sporting life, and also my day to day life. They have really helped me to vary the type of exercises I can do to get to my end goal. The experience I have had with Ed is priceless. I definitely want this again next year" Dan Hughes, Year 11

"These sessions have really helped me with my Rugby because they have given me new ideas on how to keep fit; it has helped me to improve my game - not only in Rugby but in every sport that I play" Will Cutbill, Year 10.

"The fitness sessions have really helped us because we need to be very fit for running and it has improved our fitness a lot. We'd never have done the workouts that we do now and also its great fun. It pushes us hard and has strengthened all our muscles. Thank you very much, we would like to do this next year as well!" Caitlin McDonald and Elvie Cox, Year 9.

"The sessions have helped me because before I joined I had no sprint pattern or arm strength, now after these sessions I can do multiple pull ups, push ups and lift heavier weights. I have also learned to accelerate better. This has helped me for Rugby, I sprint a lot and needed upper body strength to take on my opposition, I have been to every session!" Harvey Grant, Year 10.

Leadership

Some of our Upper School pupils are encouraged to support the extra-curricular programme by becoming actively involved in leadership activities and coaching of sports teams and dance. As staff we recognise and develop many pupils to become confident and talented leaders. Many of the lower school pupils will benefit from their excellence in their chosen sport and have role models to look up to.

"Currently, I coach the Year 7 and 8 boys' Basketball - a total of three sessions a week. I get a lot of satisfaction from coaching both teams as they improve quickly and their development is very obvious. I have learnt to manage and adapt my time within sessions more effectively and have learnt to communicate with younger students far more efficiently. It has given me a lot of experience in terms of leadership over the last couple of months, I really enjoy coaching and find it very rewarding. When I was in Lower School I looked up to Leaders and being a Leader allows me to give something back" Alex Richards, Year 11.

"I participate in Sports Leadership with children at various local primary schools. I coach Year 7 Netball and the mixed aged girls' Basketball team. It has encouraged me to want to coach younger children... Arden has given me opportunities to lead and coach" Hannah Wilkinson, Year 10.



creative Shrapnel 2012

Arden has run a Creative Writing Week for gifted and talented pupils for the last two years, inviting in published authors to work with a small group of pupils to help nurture their writing. In 2012, we decided to extend the project and so Arden's 'Inspiring Writing Week' was born.

This year, we decided to involve far more pupils; the whole of Year 10; a significant number of Sixth Formers and as many of the Lower School's pupils as wanted to be involved. We invited in four successful authors; Martyn Bedford, author of 'Flip'; Gillian Cross writer of the 'Demon Headmaster' books - amongst others - and Winner of The Carnegie Prize for Children's Fiction; we also welcomed Susan Price, another Carnegie Prize Winner and internationally acclaimed poet, Simon Armitage, whose work is already studied by the majority of GCSE students.

Over 300 pupils joined workshops with a professional writer who helped them to create an original piece of work. Many pupils also took the opportunity to join a workshop with an experienced Sixth Form student. Feedback from both sets of events was very positive, as illustrated by the following comments:

"It was interesting and enjoyable to meet such well known authors, the Creative Shrapnel Week was a good idea" Becca Hicks ■ "I liked the workshop and how it helped us to be more imaginative in our writing. It was fun and different and it was nice to try something new"

Ellen Hoad ■ "Great experience. I surprised myself with the characters/stories I created as a result" Gemma Mychaluk ■ "He has managed to inspire my creative work and has shown me how to create the weird into my work. I found the activities very useful and I'm sure everyone would benefit from it"

Katie Wyatt ■ "Really enjoyed the session. It changed the way that I think about my coursework, things that were written (or) inspired by that session are better than anything I wrote before. The only negative being IT WASN'T LONG ENOUGH!" Beth Lomas ■ "It was interesting to listen to the different techniques the writer used and the feedback from him about our writing piece was really useful to use in our next creative piece" Beth Walters ■ "Although no justification is needed for inviting some of Britain's most exciting and talented writers into Arden, a few words of thanks must be said. The week in which all the events took place and the run up to it was quite simply brilliant. I truly believe that I have benefitted from all the author visits, and those who did not attend Simon Armitage's workshop or reading

have missed an opportunity that allowed our poetic minds to be both nurtured and creative. Although I am only able to speak for myself on the matter, I must infer that all of my fellow students who I have seen attending any of the workshops, have, at the end of the session, exited with their minds exercised, and their hands ready to write down the extents of their imagination, whether it be in the form of prose or poetry. Nevertheless, all who participated will surely agree that the week was a triumph, and will subsequently thank all those who arranged it and made it possible. My writing has most certainly been inspired" Miranda Yates.

Everyone from Year 10, plus English students in Years 12 and 13 and one, very lucky, Year 8 group had the opportunity to attend a poetry reading with Simon Armitage. Simon doesn't visit many schools these days as he has a very busy schedule, he said that there was something about the original email to his agent that must have attracted him to Arden. In fact, all the authors made a point of saying how impressed they were that Arden was nurturing Creative Writing at every level in the school, apparently we are rather unusual in their experience!

People lucky enough to attend the poetry reading were also given a very valuable piece of advice, in answer to a question from Marcus

Madurai about how he achieved his extensive vocabulary, Simon answered: 'Read', which, let's face it, is the answer we, as English teachers were very happy with! He continued with, You only get out what you put in. Put rubbish in, that's what comes out. You NEED to read. Fuel up with the good stuff! If there's a message to take away from the week - THAT'S IT!

We hope to publish an anthology of work inspired by the week, Creative Shrapnel III in the Spring.

■ Contributed by Lisa Hodgkinson

Opposite: Simon Armitage

Below: Martyn Bedford with Year 9 pupils.

Below left: Simon Armitage with L-R: Chloe Cardin-Stewart, Nicholas Lawrence, Miranda Yates, Bradley Stonehewer, Christ Cottell, John Oxnard, Tom King, Callum Beddoes, Ben Morris and Harry Robinson.

"I loved how involved we were - really hands on ...Loved it all!"

Ellen Walker, Year 12



Germany 2012 Report

On Sunday 25 June 2012 we went on a once-in-a-lifetime school trip to Germany. We had to arrive at school at midnight, so that we could arrive at our destination in good time. After saying our goodbyes, we set off on a 16 hour journey south. We travelled by coach to the beautiful white cliffs of Dover. The coach trip was great fun as everyone was excited for the week ahead.

Once the coach was loaded, we went up to the main decks of the ferry to go shopping and have a drink and a quick snack at one of the many cafes. Undoubtedly though, the best part of the crossing was going on deck, even though it made your hair stand on end. Getting back to the coach was amusing as Sir went down too many levels, so we couldn't find the coach! After finally tracking it down we set off through France en-route to Bad Hönningen in Germany. We arrived at the hotel after a long, exciting journey, dropping off our bags in the dorms before making our way to the main hall for a welcome talk and our first German meal.

On one of our days we went on a cruise down the River Rhine. It was very relaxing and a lot of fun. At first we stayed below deck, but then we decided to go up and enjoy the breeze and the scenery whilst having drinks and eating pretzels. Another day we went to one of the German vineyards. It was a great experience climbing the steep vine covered hill and visiting the cellars piled high with crates of wine. The best part of vineyard trip was taking part in grape juice tasting, it was definitely one of our favourite activities.

The group also visited the Rüdesheim music museum. This was a super trip as we got to see many amazing musical contraptions, some of which made beautiful noises. The best were the ones where you could see the parts moving inside, they were fascinating. Our trip on the cable cars over the river Rhine was a brilliant activity, the view from the top was beautiful and a perfect spot to eat our packed lunches.

There were more stunning views at the Lorelei where we had the chance to shop and then watch a German film. The walk top the famous rock outcrop above the Rhine gave us the opportunity to take photos and learn the story of the Lorelei. Later our trip to Cochem Castle was packed with interesting facts to learn. We threw water down the well and could hear it land, but we weren't so keen on the hundreds of stuffed hunting trophies decorating one of the rooms!

During our Germany visit we had plenty of time for souvenir shopping and to buy presents for our families, as well as sampling some of the local food. The BLUE ice cream was very popular! We also did lots of evening activities; bowling which was funny, another night we played group activities in the park by the river, other evenings were taken up by a quiz and watching the Italy versus Germany football international which was fun, even though Germany lost.

The meals were a bit different to the ones we have in England. For breakfast we had a choice of bread rolls, ham, cheese, salami, muesli, a hardboiled egg and jams. We had packed lunches which consisted of a Super Kick chocolate bar, a red Apple, a Capri Sun and a sandwich with a filling of either cheese, ham or salami. Our dinners consisted of a three course meal, the starter was a soup that I must admit I didn't much like with vegetables or noodles in it. The main course consisted of meat, some sort of carbohydrate and vegetables. Dessert was ice cream wafers, a hazelnut chocolate in wafers or some chocolaty treat. While we were in Germany there were four birthdays in the party, so we also got some delicious cake.

The journey home passed quickly as we were all so tired. It was a great trip that will be remembered for a long time.

■ Contributed by Hannah Plumby



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