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Charitable Giving

Thank you for your continued generosity to our charitable giving opportunities. The response at Christmas to a variety of initiatives was great. We are making some exciting plans for next term which we will tell you more about at a later date.

Mr Warwood's Reflections

We have been delighted with our students throughout this term. Its been a pleasure to see such huge involvement in a massive array of extra curricular events, from the Belgian battle fields to the streets of Paris we have seen students enjoy a wide range of activities beyond the classroom, all of which I am sure will have forged lifelong memories. You will also see in this newsletter the great success that we have had in the sporting arena as well as in extra curricular activities such as reading championships. We are very grateful for how much our students invest in the opportunities that we are able to provide.

Whilst many of us are looking forward to a restful Easter and a break from learning, we wish all of our Year 11 and year 13 students the very best of luck as they continue their revision in preparation for the exams which loom ever closer. We look forward to seeing 265 of our year 11 at Easter school during the first 3 days of the holiday to hone their skills in specific areas of their courses. The exams will become a reality just a week after the Easter break. We couldn't be more confident with both cohorts having worked tremendously over the course of the year to reach this point in a great position to really fulfil their potential.

On behalf of all staff at school we would like to wish you all an enjoyable and relaxing break.

Mr Warwood, Associate Headteacher

Identity Week

We were really pleased to hold our annual Identity Week earlier this term. This year we deliberately coincided it with Lunar New Year, so we could join in and raise awareness of this cultural event. We were really pleased to welcome Rory Chu into school who delivered an engaging presentation alongside our very own Year 11 student Caden Law. The presentation covered what Lunar New Year is all about and also addressed why there has been a recent increase in the migration from Hong Kong. We also enjoyed some lunchtime games and craft activities linked to the celebrations as well.

The week also saw Year 7 joining in a Bhangra Dancing session with the energetic Mr Kailey, the canteen provided food from around the world and many students dressed in cultural dress or red clothing to celebrate the Lunar New Year at the end of the week.

We are very proud of our identity work here at Arden and we will continue the "We are Arden, I am me" project in the coming months.



Arden School Iftar — A Special Evening of Togetherness

On Tuesday, 4 March 2025, Arden Academy hosted its first-ever Iftar celebration during the holy month of Ramadan. It was a heart-warming evening, with over 65 people coming together to share food, community, and reflection.

During Ramadan, Muslims all over the world fast from dawn until sunset as a spiritual practice, and our Iftar was a chance to break the fast with family, friends, and the wider school community. A big thank you to the families who generously contributed dishes, adding a personal touch to the evening's meal. The main catering was provided by Lloyds Indian Restaurant on Station Road in Knowle, ensuring a delicious spread of food, from crunchy pakoras and crispy samosas to flavourful chicken biryani, fresh salad, and even decadent chocolate cake.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all the parents, students, and staff who made this memorable evening possible. Your participation and support helped create a beautiful atmosphere of unity and celebration during this special time.

We look forward to making this an annual tradition at Arden Academy!



Mrs S Malique-Ahmed

Year 11 Belgium History Trip 2025 (13-16 March 2025)

In March, me and eighty other Year 11 History students had the fantastic opportunity to go on a trip to the World War One battlefields. After a half day of lessons, we embarked to Calais on Thursday 13 March afternoon, crossing the ferry over the channel and then reaching Ypres in Belgium in the early hours of the morning.

The next morning (after everyone sleeping in, following the previous days travels!) we went into the town of Ypres, which had been mostly rebuilt since it being largely destroyed following the battles of WWI and the Ypres Salient. We had an hour to look around, go to the shops and familiarise ourselves with the surroundings- then, we returned to the hotel and set off on a two hour journey over to France. Firstly, went to Lochnagar Crater- one of the first mines decimated, beginning the Battle of the Somme in 1916- the crater was absolutely enormous, 21 meters deep and 100 meters wide. Following this, we then embarked to Newfoundland Park Cemetery, a Canadian war memorial, with old trenches, now overgrown but still leaving deep dents in the earth, memorial statues, a small museum, and a graveyard. It was astounding to see, and to add to this, we went to Theipval Memorial as the sun was setting, which was unbelievably beautiful. Theipval Memorial commemorating over seventy thousand war dead with no known graves. Finally, we returned to Belgium in the evening- and were lucky enough to have a filling meal back at the hotel and the rest of the evening to relax and socialise.

The following day began early, departing to Essex Farm Cemetery, where we spent a period of time looking around the graveyard and commemorating the various different people there- and then we went to Lijssenthoek British Cemetery and Visitor Centre. It was home to an interactive museum with, amongst other things, genuine artefacts from the war, a timeline, and a huge cemetery, most of the victims having died there as the site had previously been a casualty clearing station. We then briefly stopped at the Pool of Peace, a large mine crater blown at the beginning of the Battle of Messines, and filled with water to commemorate it.

Into the late morning and early afternoon, we went to the Sanctuary Wood Hill 62 Museum- a privately owned collection of WWI artefacts, huge collections of photographs, weapons, uniforms, and preserved trenches behind the museum. The trenches were authentic- although areas had had to be

reconstructed, large areas were still the same. The area was full of old shell holes, now overgrown with grass, trees and water- a peaceful place, by comparison to the carnage that ensued years before. Most people chose then to get lunch before we again set off to Hill 60 and Caterpillar Crater, where we spent time looking around at the site of battle. We then returned to Ypres.

We made our way to the Ypres Exhibition back in the town- a museum holding extensive information about the war. Photos of the war of every kind, art, poetry, artefacts, the stories of people involved, and extensive information on the Ypres Salient, which was of course very relevant to the hugely historical area. We had more time again to go to town following this, and get souvenirs if we wanted too. We reconvened later on to get a hot meal as a group, which was incredibly nice, with ice cream afterwards, proving to be incredibly popular with everyone!

Last, but certainly not least, we had the fantastic and unforgettable opportunity to watch the Last Post ceremony- taking place at 8pm every night at Menin Gate to remember the fallen. It has been run since 1928, and me, and two other students (Seb Frowd and Nathan Large) had the privilege of laying wreath during this ceremony in commemoration of people lost in war. It was an absolute honour to be involved in commemorating immeasurable life lost during WWI, and an immeasurable privilege. It was a poignant, and absolutely stunning ceremony that I felt so lucky to be a part of.

Following the ceremony, we headed back to the hotel for another evening of socialising, and then home the next day. From my own experience of the trip, it was absolutely breathtaking, and nothing but a privilege to be allowed to go. I loved every second of being able to have gone and experience and learn about WWI in such a detailed way, where it happened, seeing as it is an area of history that interests me so much in so many different ways! It was an absolute pleasure in every sense of the word to have had the chance to go to Belgium - I enjoyed every single second of it, in every single way. It was such an enriching trip to be a part of.

The whole of the cohort who went on the trip were immensely grateful for the opportunity to go on such an incredible trip and are unlikely to ever forget it.

Ella Perry (11E)

Art Department

Royal Academy Young Artists Submissions

We submitted some of our best GCSE and A-Level artist's work to the Royal Academy to be considered for their Young Artists Summer Show in London. We find out whether any have been selected in May - finger's crossed!!



Year 12 Exhibition: A Class of Portraits

Year 12 have their very own exhibition on at the Core Gallery in Touchwood from 18 -31 March showcasing all of their fantastic portrait work.

We had our private viewing on Friday 21 March and parents/friends were all very impressed with how professional the work was!



Creative Careers Event

14 of our A-Level students visited an exhibition at the Core Gallery run by Solihull CEP. They sat in on panels with a dozen professionals in each area of visual arts, performing arts, TV and film and gained some valuable insights. We saw some amazing music and dance performances and there were also opportunities for work experience placements introduced in this session. A few of our students brought portfolios to share with professionals in the hopes of securing some of these placements!



Art Department

BCU Fashion Photography Collaboration

A selection of students collaborated with BCU Masters-Level Fashion students and BA Photography students to document their final projects. Our students will be credited in the BCU exhibition and some will win prizes for their contributions!



Art Club

Art Club have been working hard entering all sorts of competitions:

- 'Wonderful Water' competition for Solihull Rotary Club
- 'We Are Solihull' competition for Solihull CEP
- Solihull Council Art Competition

Hopefully we have a lot of winners to share in the next newsletter!

Miss C Finneran

MFL Department

A-Level French Warwick University Trip

On Wednesday 19 March 2025, our A-level French class went to Warwick University for the afternoon to attend a seminar on La Haine, the film that we study as part of our A-level course. We got to practise loads of speaking and listening, as large chunks of the session were done entirely in French, with keywords that we might not have known explained in order to enrich our vocabulary and make sure that we understood. This was brilliant for boosting our confidence and giving us the chance to practice conversational speaking with each other as well as the experts.

I found it incredibly helpful learning about the film whilst simultaneously diving into conversations in French, where I feel my listening and speaking skills improved immensely in just a short period of time. It is interesting to see the difference it makes being placed in a situation where everyone is speaking French and it feels natural to join in freely, giving us a taste of what it is like when you continue to deepen your understanding of the language. Moreover, the different perspectives of every individual in the room regarding the film really helped to broaden my knowledge of French cinema. This really was an excellent experience that I would recommend to anyone.

Jenna Makepeace 12R

Computing Enrichment

F1 in Schools Competition (6-7 February 2025)

Rocket Racing

“This was our second year, and just as fantastic as the last. Once again, we did not make it through, but we enjoyed every second of it. We greatly enjoyed the other teams’ pit displays, displaying creativity in ways we hadn’t even imagined. Everything from cars on racks (that later fell down) to a set up chamber to show air resistance, any ideas were there. It inspired us, not only in F1 but in day-to-day life. We were motivated by successes, no matter how small, and constantly learnt how to do better. Overall, it was a greatly exciting experience and we felt motivated in all endeavours we shall take in the future.”



Horizon Racers

“After months and months of tirelessly working, it was time to race. We left for Aston University early in the morning. We arrived early and set up our pit display, and prepared for the day ahead of us. As we received our schedules, we planned accordingly and enjoyed the experience. This helped with our public speaking as we spent time speaking to judges about our car designs and how we managed our money as a team. We had a very eventful day and made many friends during the experience. The team finished a respectable 14th out of 28 teams.”



Drifties

“This was our first year taking part in F1 in Schools. It was challenging and rewarding at the same time. This was because we had never used CAD software before so we had to learn it as well as try to design our car in the little time we had. One aspect we deeply enjoyed was the social aspect: trying other teams' stalls, listening to their journey of F1 and their struggles. We all agree that this experience was an eye opener to how much you can achieve as a team when you work together. As a team we communicated well and got through our struggles by asking for help as and when we needed it. It taught us how to persevere through hard and challenging times. We walked away with winning the ‘Team Identity’ award and were nominated for the best verbal presentation.”



Mrs L Mbofana

CyberFirst Outreach Event: A Hands-On Tech Experience



Our Sixth Form students recently took part in an exciting CyberFirst Outreach Event, where they explored robot coding, social engineering challenges, and industry networking — a fantastic opportunity to develop their skills and learn from experts in the field.

Omar, Josh, Zach, Jason, Owen, Harry, Kyle, Ismail, Deep, Meg, Ankita, Isaac, Ben, Henry, and Tom — all studying either A-Level Computer Science or Cambridge Technical IT — had the chance to put their knowledge to the test in a practical, real-world environment.

The robot coding session was a highlight, with students programming autonomous robots to complete complex challenges. Seeing their code in action was both rewarding and, at times, a lesson in problem-solving when things didn't go quite as planned!

The social engineering activities provided a fascinating insight into how cyber criminals manipulate people to access secure systems. The students came away with a much stronger awareness of the importance of digital security.



A key part of the event was networking with industry professionals, where students gained valuable insights into careers in cyber security and had the chance to ask questions about working in the field.



Overall, the event was a fantastic opportunity for our students to broaden their understanding of cybersecurity, develop new skills, and consider potential future careers. We look forward to taking part in

more CyberFirst opportunities in the future!

Mr R Borland

A Magical Trip to Paris

Our recent trip to Paris was nothing short of magical. We enjoyed a delightful boat trip on the Seine, where the city's iconic landmarks unfolded before our eyes. The gentle sway of the boat and the stunning views of the Eiffel Tower, Louvre, and Musée d'Orsay made for an unforgettable experience.

We also spent a day at Disneyland Paris, where the magic of Disney came alive. From thrilling rides to enchanting parades, every moment was filled with joy and excitement. The day culminated in a spectacular fireworks display that lit up the night sky, leaving us all in awe.

The fun continued on the ferry and coach, where laughter and camaraderie were the order of the day. We shared stories, played games, and enjoyed the scenic views as we travelled. Our visit to Notre Dame, which has reopened in all its glory, was amazing. The sight of this magnificent cathedral, restored to its former splendour, was truly inspiring. Its intricate architecture and historical significance left a lasting impression on everyone.

Overall, this trip to Paris was a perfect blend of adventure, magic, and memories. Sadly though, we said a fond farewell to Mrs. Cooper, who has been organising this visit for years. Her dedication and warmth have made each journey memorable, and her farewell was a touching moment for all of us.

Science Department

Celebrating an Incredible Science Week: 10 - 14 March!

What an exciting and enriching Science Week we had! From innovative projects to engaging interactive experiences, our students had the opportunity to explore the wonders of science in a truly hands-on way. Here's a look back at the week's highlights:

We kicked off the week with a fascinating project where students designed mock toilets and learned about the important issue of what should and shouldn't be flushed. A special thank you to all those who generously donated 2L water bottles to make this activity possible.

We are pleased to share that a parent volunteer kindly delivered the bottles to Bentley Heath Primary School for a wonderful conservation project. Your contributions have made a real difference!

The *Science Dome* was one of the standout experiences of the week. Students from Years 7-10 had the unique opportunity to immerse themselves in an interactive show within the dome, exploring the fascinating evolution of the Earth's atmosphere. It was a truly unforgettable experience that brought science to life!



To conclude Science Week, we held an inspiring *Science Fair* on Friday, 14 March. The creativity and quality of the student projects were nothing short of extraordinary. Congratulations to our Winners:

- **1st Place:** Phoebe Sears, Dylan Hardie, and Zara Keery for their project on how different plants grow under LED filters.
- **2nd Place:** Bella Gaskin and Max Ko for their *Plantastic* project, which focuses on creating plastic from plant-based materials.
- **Runners-Up:** Deep Sengupta for his *Fall Detection* project and Anya Lee for her innovative *Density Layers* experiment.



We would also like to acknowledge the following students for their outstanding participation:

- Ihsaan Qureshi, Dharamveer Virdee, Joey Thorley, and Rayaan Khan: Circulatory System
- Emma Powell and Evie Keddie: Exploring the relationship between pH and its uses
- Benjamin Ashworth: Maglev Train
- Rawaan Alkhder, Lamar Al-Muhana, and Martha Morrow: Density Ladders
- Myrto Xyda: Black Holes
- Macus Lau and Eesa Ahmed: Copper Electromagnet
- Alex Malkin, Olivia Kelly, Grace & Stephanie Parkes: Pepper and Water
- Izzy Mills: Aviation and Science

A heartfelt congratulations to all participants for their hard work, dedication, and creativity. The projects showcased during the Science Fair demonstrated an impressive depth of understanding and innovation. We are incredibly proud of our students and look forward to seeing their continued growth in the world of science.

Thank you to everyone who made Science Week a success—let's keep up the great work as we continue to inspire curiosity and creativity in the world of science!

Mrs S Malique-Ahmed

English Department

Year 7 Shakespeare Competition

To complement their work on Shakespeare's Greatest Hits where we look at famous speeches from The Bard, Year 7 were set the challenge of creating a homework project inspired by Shakespeare and his plays. We were blown away by the imagination and creativity of the projects submitted: poems and sonnets; Lego stop-motion films; Shakespearean board games; recordings of famous speeches; models of The Globe Theatre and Shakespeare's home; delicious cakes and so many more! After much difficult deliberation the following pupils were awarded with a certificate and a token for our book vending machine, freshly restocked thanks to the generosity of the Arden PTFA: Ashleigh Evans, Avaani Sandhar, Bella Fratila, Eddie Oldham, Finley Talbot, Isabelle Davies, James Pensom, Jayden Chan, Kavya Goenka, Mavis Lau, Molly Spencer, Neeva Parekh, Oscar Edwards, Phoebe Rowe, Poppy Emerson, Teddy Earnshaw, Toby Richmond and Ben Ashworth.



Year 8 Dystopia Competition

In English, Year 8 were delving into the depths of dystopia and students had the chance to create their own project inspired by dystopian literature. We had some fabulous artwork, presentations on Animal Farm, more delicious baking and some jaw-dropping dioramas. Congratulations to Ben Conyers, Catherine Rindfuss, Emily Dowson, Jenea Sturgess, Leila Mei Clarke, Sarah Shareef, Vithumitha Premakumar and Charlie Peters who all received tokens for the book machine.



Sixth Form Trip to the RSC

Year 12 and Year 13 English Literature A-Level students had an excellent opportunity to see one of their core texts, Hamlet, at the RSC in Stratford in March. It was a thought-provoking production and provided them with lots of critical interpretation material for their exams but most importantly, it was an enjoyable evening at the theatre! Thanks to Mr Kirby for taking the time to organise it.

English Department

Arden Book week and World Book Day

March is always exciting for the English Department as we get to celebrate all things book-related on World Book Day but one day was simply not enough for us so we extended the celebration for the whole week!

Every student in KS3 and KS4 were given the gift of a short story to read, enjoy and write a one sentence response to to be in with a chance of winning our Arden Book Week Raffle.

There was a scavenger hunt to find the 14 books hidden around the school linked to all the different departments which more than 50 students took part in.

Students could also play Bookworm Bingo to find out the reading habits of staff members from all across the school. Staff were wearing stickers identifying themselves as Audiobookers, Fantasy Fiends, Holiday Readers to name but a few. Students who complete a line on their bingo card were rewarded with a badge declaring them an Arden Bookworm...and a lollipop!



Our popular Book Page Craft made a return and students could make a ribbon charm bookmark, a book page flower or a book hedgehog. The hedgehogs were very popular and a great way to recycle some of our old class texts that has seen better days!

On World Book Day itself, the English Department dusted off their costumes and students had the pleasure of being taught by Lady Macbeth, Victor Frankenstein, Medusa, The Wicked Witch of the West, Hamlet and Three Blind Mice!

So the students did not feel left out, the department ran a Literary Photo Booth at lunchtime where students could create an outfit from our dressing up supplies and have their photo taken.

The most popular event had to be the Bookie making competition which was making a return after the success of last year. More than 70 students put their imagination and icing skills to the test and created a book-themed cookie. What some of the entries lacked in artistic merit, they made up for in quantity of icing and sprinkles!!

Izzy Mills 10S was the obvious winner with her amazing version of Toothless the dragon from the How to Train Your Dragon series of books.



National Storytelling Week

The first week of February saw the English Department celebrating National Storytelling Week with students. Storytelling is a crucial part of developing literacy but also a way of connecting with new ideas in the world around us.

You don't have to write a novel to tell a good story so students had the chance to take part in a 6 Word Story / Ten Word Tale competition, inspired by ideas from the former Children's Laureate, Joseph Coelho. We had over 150 entries and here are a selection of the best entries...I think you'll agree they demonstrate the talent of our writers in such a limited number of words!

Stepped into the carriage. Never returned. (Luke Parkes 8S)

Moonlight revealed hidden paths to hope. (Ihsaan Qureshi 7R)

Looked in the mirror; I wasn't there... (Edith Masson 7E)

Life never gave me a prayer but I stayed. (Dave Hon 7A)

I'm guilty. But they don't know that. Not yet anyway. (Sophie Richmond 8H)

The democracy was no longer democratic. (Tomi Morris 8R)

For sale. Freedom. Cash or Card. (Carys Lorne 8E)

Never look back. It will bite. (Seb Spires 8C)

The week ended. It was a long 10 days. (Will Fallis 8R)

In lessons across the week, our KS3 students became part of an epic storytelling relay using our brand new Story Shakers! Each class had to shake the Story Shaker, listen to sound, make up a line for the story on our online document and then pass the Story Shaker onto the next class. We had to get creative with the sounds which ranged from cows mooing to toilets flushing to bagpipes but our writers were ready and produced fantastical tales about heroic cowboys, mutinous dolphins and evil clowns!

Clink. Clank. Unlock. The steel-chained handcuffs which had suffocated his circulation for years and years and years were finally released from his swollen wrists. Battle worn scars showed after decades in prison. At the front desk of the jail, a clear bag was awaiting him. His belongings that he had been so desperate for. A polka dot jacket, shoes that were clearly far too big, red lipstick, face paint, a shocking fiery wig and a big, red rubber nose. The innocent looking flower, which had once been laced with poison, was the last thing to be handed over. The clown had finally been released.

Trapped inside a bubble of limited air, Steve begged for mercy as he got swallowed whole in a cave of vibrant coral: the deceptive Pink Palace. Deafened by the sound of the wails of the old and young, Steve was horrified as he realised that dolphins were imprisoning humans; cells made of barnacles, handcuffs of plastic can holders and rags of seaweed. A ceaseless roar. A huge shadow emerged from the darkness: flippers as large as boats, teeth as sharp as razor blades, and gleaming white eyes. Guarded by a three-headed dogfish: Cerberus. Its vicious bark was straight from the fires of hell.

Miss C George

Wicked Writers Competition

As part of National Storytelling Week, pupils were encouraged to submit entries for the Wicked Writers Competition. The topic they were given was writing about a change that they would like to see in their local community. The best entries have been submitted to the national competition so fingers crossed! The overall winner was Ava Gilham 7L and her entry is featured below. Congratulations to our other winners: Anya Lee 7H, Joe Waterhouse 7E, Izzy Westley 8R and Charlie Hutt 8S.



Is rugby sexist?

Fortunately, my experience with rugby so far has been amazing. I have enjoyed playing the sport, made lots of new friends and learnt a lot about how to play. Although I have loved doing it, it is not the same for everyone. Men have told innocent, young girls that they cannot do it and, in consequence, have given up. You should not be ruining girls dreams because of their gender.

Secondly, if you watch a men's rugby match, only occasionally will there be a female referee. In a women's match, only occasionally there will only be one gender. That is just unacceptable. It should be more regular that they get the same job opportunities and pay. This way it would be more fair for men and women.

Let it sink in that we are all children of Adam and Eve, we should all be treated equally no matter sex, race, ethnicity or capability.

Also, 30,000 spectators in a women's match is a crazy amount. However, for a men's match it is disappointing. Moreover, in an average women's six nations match, there are 27,168 spectators. Although in a men's match, there are 64,291. Keep in mind that the difference is 37,123 people. Also, women's matches are played in stadiums where not as much money is put into it but the men always play in Twickenham (the most expensive stadium in England).

Should it be more equal? Can people change it? Do they change it? No. The RFU has the power to change it but they don't do anything. They have grown up in a world surrounded by sexism so they don't know anything better. We can change the world to impact centuries to come. We need to do it before it is too late. We are the new generation, soon the world will be put on our shoulders. If we can use our voice and speak out, people in decades will say 'Never, ever again'.

Ava Gilham 7L

Student Leadership

So it comes that time where Easter celebrations are gearing up, people awaiting flights to sunny destinations, our Year 11 and 13 peers preparing for GCSEs and A-levels. It's an exciting and rewarding time for many, so with that, we as Head Girl and Head Boy want to share some highlights and climaxes of our teams this term!

On 28 February, our Senior Pupil team had our final student conference of the year. The theme of our final presentation was 'How do your teachers make lessons engaging, and how do they help you retain knowledge?'. To create our final presentation, we gathered pieces of students' work, interviewed pupils in all years, and took videos of engaging methods of teaching our staff wonderfully use. We discussed how our teachers push us in lessons and how they then help us remember that knowledge throughout all key stages and presented our ideas to the other senior students in the Arden MAT. After sharing all of our presentations, we spent the afternoon working with our own schools to create another presentation. The theme was based on what makes our school so great, where we shared our views on our dedicated teachers and hardworking students who make up our ever-growing Arden family. We had a wonderful day working collaboratively within the Trust and sharing valuable experiences that we hope will have a profound impact upon Arden.

This year, Arden has re-introduced a new and improved School Council system to ensure that student voices are heard and echoed effectively across not only our peers but also staff and Senior Leaders. Representatives from each year group have been meeting regularly with their form captains to discuss important issues varying from litter around school to how we improve and celebrate individual success, all issues are raised by students across the school. These meetings are a great platform for students to speak out and suggest positive change that will indefinitely benefit themselves and our local community. Next week, the School Council will also have the opportunity and pleasure of meeting with the Mayor of Solihull, allowing us to engage in wider discussions about student representation and school improvements. Through this new system, we hope to strengthen communication between students and the school, making Arden an even more vibrant, enjoyable, and community-spirit-filled atmosphere for everyone.

Now as some of you may know, this will be our last few weeks of being Head Girl and Head Boy until May Half term and we both want to passionately express our thank yous and gratitudes from the support of the community in the uptaking of our roles, whether it be Knowle Church and their generous press of our roles all the way to parents and community members joining our school events, We both want to say thank you, for helping define our Arden Experience and your help in truly perfecting our Arden Family, we owe you a deep gratitude that we hope to pay back and to continue to give back within our Arden Family!

However, we both strongly realise that our jobs would be impossible without our wonderful team, whose unwavering dedication and passion for improving our school as a Student Leadership Collective has been truly admirable. Their commitment to fostering inclusivity, unity and inspiring change within Arden has uplifted and benefited our whole community, and they have all made an impactful and selfless contribution to Arden, a legacy of which we are both proud of for them. We are truly honoured to have had them all as our Student Leaders, and it has been our privilege and pleasure to stand alongside such passionate, kind, and remarkable people!

We will thoroughly miss all our duties! Thank you to all of the amazing Arden Staff for allowing us the opportunity to widen our horizons and better ourselves for our life journeys! Girl and Head Boy, we wish everyone at Arden the Best of luck in life and potentially upcoming exams. It's been our pleasure to serve and improve your Arden Experience. We hope to still see everyone around as we broaden our horizons in Arden's Sixth Form.

With the Best of Luck, Thank you!

Lola, George, Evie, Tabs, Cleo, Teddy, Caden, Will (Senior Pupil Team)
Zak and Aleena (School Council Chairs)
Rohan, Max, Dan, Carter, Ella, Zoe, Josie, Anniyah (Leadership Pupils)

Eco Club

The Eco Committee has had a wildly successful and busy term in helping our local community and environment. Whether it be the Active Trave Ambassadors Program, our initial start on a Climate Action Plan, or Litter Picking Mondays, we've been truly busy!

So, we have recently started to make a larger attempt to on rubbish in our school, as it can pose a threat to wildlife when left out or not disposed of properly. To do this, we introduced "Litter Picking Monday," where any Eco Committee members free and willing would be equipped with litter pickers and a bin bag supplied by the AMAT to go and pick up rubbish around the school campus. "It's relaxing to do, and it lets me have a good time with my friends while still doing good for the planet. After all, we only have one," said a committee member. This project has already made a noticeable difference in the school and is expected to carry on for a long time. Come to the Eco Committee in Dance Studio 2 on Fridays at Lunch to get more info!



Another recent occurrence in Arden's various ecological projects is that of the ATA campaign junction event, where our idea was voted the best by the wonderful judges, and we were given an extra £50 to further progress our travel campaign. This is intended to be used to full effect to, as all our projects do, make Arden a better and more eco friendly school, and further help our success in getting peers to travel more actively to Arden.

If you would like more information on our Eco Committee, feel free to come by Dance Studio 2 on a Friday, from 12:30 onwards, or see Mr Goldenfeld.

George Burns (11N) and Alex Reid (8D)

Staff News

We would like to offer our congratulations to the following staff who have had babies this term: Mrs C Hanbury, Mrs K Harris, Mr M Lloyd, and Mrs S Pratt.

The end of term also brings about some staff changes as we see some colleagues relocate and move onto new ventures. We are saying goodbye to: Mr J Merino Gonzalez (Teacher of Computing Science), Mrs A Venables (Teacher of English), Mr A Shaukat (Assistant Site Manager), and Mrs L Preussner (Learning Support Assistant).

We are delighted to be joined in April 2025 by:
Mr A Teviotdale (Head of Business/Economics)
Mr R Young (Teacher of History)
Mrs A Palmer (Learning Support Assistant).

Welcome to the Arden Family!

PTFA News

Arden's PTFA is dedicated to supporting our school and pupils. The primary goal of the PTFA is to fund crucial educational resources that enhance the learning experience for all students. Over the past few years, we have been able to provide a lot of valuable resources for the school, thanks to the hard work and dedication of our members and volunteers. Some of the items we have funded this term include reading pens, wood rasps, science knowledge organisers and photography studio equipment. There is also an exciting project underway with the PE team for some new equipment and a more functional and usable fitness area for pupils. More on this to follow.

Our aim is to raise between £15,000 and £25,000 each year to meet these commitments and continue to support our school. One of our most important events is the Fireworks Night, which is taking place on 8 November this year. This event raises the most money for our school, but we need volunteers to help make it a success. If you can spare some time to volunteer, please do so. It's a great night, and we all end up at the pub afterwards if you need an added incentive!

Another way we raise funds for school is via our pre-loved uniform service where you can purchase replacement items for a fraction of the cost of buying new uniform. Our service is available throughout term-time and you can contact us via Facebook and pre-loved email address. We will also be holding a couple of uniform sales in the school hall throughout the academic year. Dates are yet to be confirmed but we will let you know when they are as soon as we can.

Our committee meetings will be taking place at school on the second Monday of each half term from September, and we are always looking for new members and volunteers to join our team. If you fancy coming along, our next meeting will be on the 12 May at 7:30pm at school.

Even if you can't commit to regular meetings or taking on a specific role, you can still help by getting involved in the many fundraising events throughout the year. Volunteering for just one event or even just attending our events makes a huge difference.

And don't forget to get involved in the Big Cash Draw, details can be found on ParentPay. For an annual subscription of just £12 you could win between £50 and £200 per draw. But you have to be in it to win it, so get involved!

Finally, we are in need of a treasurer, so if you have a knack for numbers and are interested in taking on this role, please let us know via the PTFA Facebook/Instagram page or PTFA email address. Your contribution would be invaluable and greatly appreciated.

Please consider joining the Arden PTFA, come along to a meeting, volunteer when you can, and help us continue to make a positive impact on our school community. Your support, no matter how big or small, is greatly appreciated.

Dates of PTFA meetings:

- Monday 12 May 2025, 7:30pm Arden Academy
- Monday 14 July 2025, 7:30pm Arden Academy

Upcoming PTFA events:

PTFA Ball, Saturday 10 May, 7pm The Forest, Dorridge (*this event is sold out*)

Car Boot Sale to be held in school car park, more details to come but if you need a clear out at home this will be a great opportunity to do so! Follow us on Facebook or Instagram for more details.

Annual Fireworks Display, Saturday 8 November, Arden Academy.

Get in touch: ptfachair@arden.solihull.sch.uk

National Reading Champions Quiz

After a fierce in-school competition against two hundred students, nine students across Key Stage 3 earned places on Arden's National Reading Champions Quiz Team:

Arden Team A - Year 7

Georgina Reed, Imogen Letters, Leo Dimmick, Oscar Edwards & our reserve Lucy Bates-Gamble



Arden Team B – Year 8/9

Alexander Reid, Eva Movassaghi, Sophie Richmond & Charlotte Howden

We competed against 25 other schools across the country in a challenging quiz of 75 questions over 8 rounds on topics such as Siblings, Dark Tales, Book Design and Brainteasers.

I am pleased to announce that our Arden Team B **achieved 10th place** and our Arden Team A achieved an **impressive 2nd place** winning themselves a £20 book voucher per teammate.

Our success was highlighted from a letter from Saqib Bhatti MBE MP who congratulated the school and students for “demonstrating their love for reading, knowledge and working as a team”.

Congratulations to both teams!

Miss E O'Brien



Year 9 students praised for their maturity

We were thrilled to receive the following email from colleagues from Umbrella who came to speak to our students about sexual Health:

My Colleague and I would like to extend a heartfelt thankyou to the year 9 pupils who participated in the recent contraception sessions delivered in collaboration with Umbrella. We were genuinely impressed by the pupils' maturity, respectfulness, and thoughtful engagement throughout. Their questions showed curiosity and consideration, and their behaviour was exemplary.

As we hadn't delivered these sessions to this age group in some time, we approached them with a degree of apprehension. However, the positive attitude and engagement of year 9 quickly put us at ease.

Thankyou once again, year 9, you were a pleasure to work with.



Year 12 Futures Conference

On Tuesday 8 April 2025, the whole of Year 12 spent the day off timetable in order to participate in this year's Futures Conference. This is a brilliant opportunity that the sixth form puts on for Year 12 every year to get us thinking about our next steps and give us the opportunity to hear from people across a wide range of areas regarding post-18 options.



Over the course of the day, there was a variety of talks done on employability skills, life and financial skills, university, apprenticeships, industry insights and gap year plans. The range of options was extensive and covered a multitude of different pathways that people would be interested in. This meant that there was something for everyone and we were encouraged to use the day to learn about and explore new options that we hadn't before, as well as deepening our understanding of current areas of interest.



All of the speakers who came in to deliver the sessions, from Arden alumni to industry

professionals, were engaging, friendly and delivered incredibly interesting, eye-opening talks. Not only this, but they were more than happy to answer our questions and share their experiences and expertise with us, making the talks a great chance for networking. In the past couple of years, students have ended up securing apprenticeships and contact details for support and mentoring from meeting people at the futures conference, so we will see if anything emerges from this year!

Overall, this was such a valuable experience as it really makes a difference hearing from people who have lived out the options that you're considering for your future. Both for students who aren't sure what they want to do after A-levels and those who already have a route in mind; this day was vital for getting us to think about our futures.

On behalf of all of Year 12, I would like to say a massive thank you to Mrs Hyde for organising the whole day and managing to procure such a brilliant mix of individuals and companies to come in for us in order to cater to our interests.

Jenna Makepeace (12R)

Year 8 World of Work Event

To celebrate National Careers Week 2025, students in Year 8 took part in a World of Work Event on 5th March. All students had the opportunity to take part in three career talks or workshops offered by a range of professionals including music producers, football managers, construction experts, engineers, health protectors, software designers, chartered surveyors, doctors, fashion designers, business managers, people managers, solicitors, pharmaceutical experts, physiotherapists, armed forces personnel, AI and robotics specialists, insurance specialists, beauty therapists, drone and automated vehicle specialists, social media marketers, architects, civil servants, writers, TV editors, retailers, hairdressers, career specialists, interior designers, carers, electricians, and cybersecurity experts! The idea behind this event was to expose students to as many careers as possible, and **broaden their horizons**.



They really have to see it, to be it!

We asked the students to reflect on the event and 95% said they enjoyed it; and 96% said they got a better understanding of skills needed in the workplace, citing communication, teamwork, leadership, numeracy skills, creativity, IT skills, problem-solving, hard work and more! Students attending the Football Manager's talk even received tickets to the next Solihull Moors game! All in all, the event was very worth while and together with their follow-up assembly on Post-16 Journeys and Future Planning, they have started to think more about their future. Did you know... students who visualise their future, set goals and plan are more likely to engage in school and achieve better outcomes...



Mrs S Butcher-Johns



Solihull Parenting Team

Support, advice and signposting for all parents and carers in Solihull



SUMMER TERM 2025
Open to all Solihull parents and carers

BEING A PARENT GROUPS

Led by trained parent volunteers, the groups provide you with the tools to help manage challenging behaviour, improve communication, and build a positive relationship with your child.

The Being a Parent groups start with a welcome session & then run weekly for a further 8 sessions:

TUESDAY	Virtual via Microsoft Teams	6pm – 7.30pm	6/5/25 – 8/7/25
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UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD

Led by Solihull professionals, the group aims to help you to manage challenging behaviour and improve communication, as well as building and understanding your relationship with your child. The group target age is 4-11 years unless specified, delivered face-to-face for 10 sessions:

TUESDAY	Shirley Heath Outreach Hub (B90 3DS)	1pm – 3pm	29/4/25 – 8/7/25
WEDNESDAY	Three Trees Community Centre (B37 7TR)	5pm – 7pm	w/c 28/4/25 – 7/7/25

FIVE TO THRIVE

For parents with children aged up to 2 years, the FIVE TO THRIVE building blocks explore practical things you can do to enhance your child's brain development, increase confidence in parenting and meet local parents.

TUESDAY

The Bridge, Shirley (B90 3AG)

12.30pm – 2.30pm

7/1/25 – 11/2/25
25/2/25 – 1/4/25

Book your place now, or find out more by contacting Solihull Parenting Team at: bsmhft.parenting@nhs.net or book via the Eventbrite QR code below:



UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD SOLIHULL APPROACH

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Sports News

National Schools Squash Championships

Arden's first ever entry into the National Schools squash competition resulted in a win in the KS3 mixed plate. This is a fantastic result from a school with no squash courts, up against some top private schools from across the country. Playing at Edgbaston Priory club, Arden played 3 matches and won 3 in a strong performance amidst tough competition. We look forward to building on this success and entering next year! Well done to the following who took part across different stages of the competition - Constance Regan-Elson, Lily Gannaway, Pearl Barker, Lucas Askey, Jacob Askey, Ed Burrows and Jude Mason.



Mr H Goldenfeld

Cross Country

The cross country runners have done amazingly well this season – we have had a busy season with 6 races in total including the Albutt Relay Races. Some of our students have raced in every single race and have been scoring points across the season as a result. We wanted to share all of the students that have scored so many points that they have won an award at the Solihull Cross Country awards evening. Cross country can be lonely and cold, running out there on the wet and muddy fields, but these students have shown amazing dedication and commitment to their cross country running.

- Molly Spencer – came FIRST overall in the Year 7 girls competition.
- Joshua Baylis – came FIRST overall in the Year 7 boys competition.

- Emmie Spencer – came FIRST overall in the Year 8/9 girls competition.
- Niamh Williamson – came THIRD overall in the Year 8/9 girls competition.

- The Year 8/9 girls team came first overall!

- Luca Woodley – came FIRST overall in the Year 8/9 boys individual competition.
- Will Rogers – came THIRD overall in the Year 8/9 boys individual competition.

- Lola Barker won every single one of her races this season and therefore finished first in the individual competition.

- Will Irvine also won the individual boys competition for 10/11 boys.

Miss E Blenkinsop

Rugby Report—A Fantastic Half Term of Sevens!

This half term has been a fantastic period for our rugby teams across Year 7, 8, and 9. The students have embraced the exciting challenge of sevens rugby, which provides a much faster-paced, dynamic version of the game compared to the traditional fifteen-a-side format. It's been incredible to see how quickly our players adapted to the different style of play, bringing a new level of energy to each tournament.

Throughout the term, our teams participated in a number of sevens tournaments, where they displayed a great deal of skill, sportsmanship, and determination. There were moments of superb rugby, with the teams demonstrating their tactical awareness and individual flair. One of the highlights was having the opportunity to play against a team that went undefeated at the prestigious Rosslyn Park tournament. It was a great test for our players, and they stepped up to the challenge admirably.

All of our rugby players this year should be incredibly proud of their efforts. Not only have they represented the school with pride, but they've also made impressive strides in their development as athletes. The progress they've made in such a short time has been remarkable, and we look forward to seeing them continue to grow and improve next season.

Speaking of next season, we are already looking ahead with fixtures lined up and plenty of opportunities for the students to continue their rugby journey. A big thank you goes out to the parents for their ongoing support throughout the term—your encouragement has made a huge difference, especially when providing transport to help make sure fixtures went ahead! We would also like to express our gratitude to Mr. Hughes (both of them!), Mr. Lidgate-Taylor, Mr. Parkins, and Mr. Gowen, whose dedication and hard work to help run training sessions after school have helped make this rugby season such a success.

We can't wait to see what the next season holds!

Stay tuned for more rugby action in the upcoming term!

Mr B Weaver

Student Achievements

Andrew Irvine (9N)

We were thrilled to hear about Andrew's recent athletic prowess. He took part in his first pole vault competition at Vault Manchester and vaulted above the England Athletics qualifying standard (2.4m) with a respectable 2.62m. He qualified for the England Athletics U15-U17 Indoor Championships in 60m hurdles with a new PB of 8.96sec and qualified for the final, coming in a respectable 5th place. He also competed at the Indoor Combined Events Championships in Sheffield. He achieved 4 new PBs in Long Jump, High Jump, Shotput and 800m, which gave him a total of 2,221 points and 6th place overall. Well done Andrew!



Year 9 Football

The year 9 football team have had another productive term. They have reached one final and are into the last 16 of another which has the final at St Andrews, Birmingham. Highlights included playing a National Cup semi-final against a strong academy team from Manchester on a hired pitch at SILS with officials from the FA. They took them to extra time after a tight 0-0 match, but the opposition defeated a resilient if understrength Arden side in the end. They have done remarkably well to get so far. Max Campton remains their top scorer whilst several players have emerged into the side this season including Oliver Pates in a defensive midfield role. Well done to all the players and those who attend training every week, and good luck after easter!

Dr J Cannadine

Year 7 Glow in the Dark Dodgeball Festival

Our amazing Year 7 dodgeball team have had a wonderful evening by winning a Glow in the Dark dodgeball festival. This event involved competing against Coleshill, Alderbrook and Smiths Wood School in a dodgeball tournament. There was also the added excitement that it was Glow in the Dark! Our students were absolutely fantastic and they showed excellent values of honesty, respect and teamwork.

Huge well done to Edward Terry, Lizzie McArthur, Nat Beecham, Rina Bove, Siena Malchose, Georgina Reed.

Miss E Blenkinsop

It is not always possible to include the details of every sporting fixture which takes place in school in the newsletter. May we take this opportunity to thank parents / guardians for supporting our co-curricular sports offer.

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition

Nick Lyons visited our class to teach us how to properly portion a chicken. He talked us through each step and gave us useful tips on handling meat safely and efficiently. We got to see the professional techniques used by butchers to portion a chicken. He showed us how to remove the thigh, breast and drumstick. It was a great opportunity to develop a practical skill that we can apply in our cooking coursework, especially when preparing dishes that require different cuts of chicken. Learning from a professional made the experience even more valuable. Thank you Nick Lyons.

Molly Hallworth (100)



Thank you for reading! Parents/Guardians are welcome to share any news of student achievements made outside of school. We love to hear about them and feature them in the newsletter. If you have anything to share, please send to us by email (Newsletter@arden.solihull.sch.uk).