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Enrichment Week

We had a fantastic group of reporters that have produced their own newsletter (which comes as a separate attachment) all about the week, with excellent content (especially some reflections on interviews with past students) so please have a read of this.

Charitable Giving

Thank you once again for supporting our recent non-uniform day during Culture & Diversity Week. This raised £1388.89 which will be donated to a charity that the students will vote for in September.



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ISSUE 43

SUMMER TERM 2023

Mr Warwood's reflections

This summer term has really been a term that has demonstrated all that is fantastic about our school and our children. In reading this newsletter you cannot help but be bowled over by the huge and diverse range of opportunities that our students have had on offer. The success that they have enjoyed in all areas of school has been fantastic and wide ranging across all aspects of school life. Writing this it is almost impossible to shortlist the highlights of such a busy term.

The week of our Sixth Form Ball, Year 11 Prom and Year 6 Transition day is always a delightful and memorable week, seeing our Year 11 and 13 celebrate the end of their exams and moving onto their next steps is a pleasure, particularly as you draw on the induction day and remind yourself of the journey that our students take. It is hard to believe that the confident young adults celebrating at the Ball and the Prom were, just a few years ago, nervous eleven year olds starting off on their Arden journey!

Last week, like so many of you, I was wowed by the incredible performance of Beauty and the Beast. The talent of our students never ceases to amaze me, nor does the sheer hard work that goes into putting together a performance of the scale and quality of what we saw. To every student and member of staff involved, you did us and yourselves proud, it was simply stunning.

We wish you all a very happy and relaxing summer break.



Zero Heroes & Celebration Assemblies

A "ZERO HERO" is a student that has managed to go through the whole of the academic year without picking up a single behaviour point. Considering this is over a 39 week academic year and close to 1000 lessons, this is a fantastic achievement.

It was our pleasure to celebrate this achievement with 544 students across all year groups by buying them an ice cream.

The end of year awards ceremonies have seen a triumphant in-person return for the first time in 3 years, where the successes of our fantastic students have been widely recognised. We have been delighted to hand out over 7000 awards to students and celebrate their academic and personal successes.



Arden is part of Arden Multi Academy Trust: Chief Executive Officer, Mr M Murphy and Executive Headteacher, Mr D Burgess



Staff News

We would like to offer our congratulations to the following staff who have had babies this term.

Miss Allport (Science), Mr Brookes (IT support), Miss Hill (Science), Mrs Kaur (Business), Miss Leadbeater (PE), Mr Ord (English), Miss Sheppard (PE), Mr Spence (PE)

The end of term also brings about some staff changes as we see some colleagues retire, relocate, take promotion opportunities and move onto new ventures. We are saying goodbye to Mr Adams (Geography), Mrs Anton (Business), Miss Brook (English), Mr Brown (Site), Ms Fuentes-Zuniga (Languages), Mr Hadley (DT Technician), Mrs Ho (LSA), Mr Hooper (Deputy Head), Mrs Hussey (History), Mr Mahmood

(Business), Miss Rhodes (PE), Mr Shah (RE), Mr Spence (PE) and Mrs Sutton (LSA).

We are also temporarily saying goodbye to Mrs Rowlands (History) who is going to Lode Heath on secondment as Head of History.

We are pleased to be joined in September by Mr Ambris (PE), Mr Burke (Deputy Head), Mrs Crutchley (Languages), Miss Durling (DT & Art Technician), Miss Finneran (Art), Mr Gill (LSA), Mr Lewis (Science), Miss Marjoram (LSA), Mrs Mbofana (Computing), Mrs Parkes (English), Miss Reeves (Geography) and Miss Rowley (PE).

28 years of service!

At this time of year we always say our goodbyes to colleagues that are moving on to different challenges. Rarely do you say goodbye to a colleague that has worked at Arden for 28 years!

Mrs Pauline Astle joined Arden in September 1995, after what she describes as a challenging 1st year teaching at another school. She says that she knew instantly this was a fantastic school to work in and 28 years later, she has decided now is the right time to hang up her paint brushes...or not as is actually the case. We asked Mrs Astle for a few thoughts at this significant time.

Q: How long have you been teaching at Arden and what have your roles been whilst here?

A: I joined the school as a Teacher of Art, with Arden being an 11-16 school. I became Head of Department 3 years later and have filled that role for 25 years. Over this time I have seen the love of Art grow within the school. When the school was redesignated as a 11-18 school, we introduced A Level Art and also Photography, which have both become a fantastic part of our Post 16 offer. Over my time here, I have also been a form teacher, which has been a really lovely part of the job. Most recently this role has been as a 6th form tutor, helping write hundreds of UCAS references and guiding students towards their Post 18 destinations. For many years I have also been the NASUWT Union Representative, helping to support staff with wellbeing issues and working closely with many different Senior Teams

Q: What is your favourite memory of this time?

A: It is hard to pick out one. I have loved empowering the children through Art. Being able to see them grow as artists, but more importantly people, has been a real privilege. When I reflect on my time here, I see how much the school and schools in general have had to evolve. Teachers now are so much more aware of the personal needs of the children, which is a really good thing.

Q: What are you most proud of during your teaching career?

A: Seeing how much the department has evolved. From what was quite humble beginnings to the quality of work that is produced on a yearly basis. I am especially proud when we get to hear stories about students that have gone into Art & Design related careers and what they are doing now. I still remember Sarah and Lucy Davies from my first year here that went into the fashion business and interior design. Helping people navigate themselves towards their next step is a really rewarding part of the job.

Q: What are your plans for retirement?

A: My passion is for painting so I want to spend time doing that. I've joined the Lichfield Society of Artists and have set up an Instagram profile (@paulineastle_art) to showcase some of my own work. I enjoy doing semi-abstract landscapes and have done a piece for Arden, which should be appearing on a wall near you soon!.

We, along with 1000s of past and present Arden students are sad to see Mrs Astle leave Arden. However, we

are eternally grateful for what she has contributed to the education of those in her care and wish her all the best for this next stage.



Year 13 Ball

On Thursday 29th June, we said a very fond farewell to our amazing Year 13. This group came through an almost totally online GCSE experience and yet managed to blossom into an incredibly independent and focused year. They have (almost) literally never stopped working including, just before and during A levels, having to be kicked out of the Sixth Form building so the school could shut!

The Ball was a sight to behold with a host of jewel coloured dresses and snappy suits contrasting with the year's colour: purple. The surroundings at Nailcote Hall were admired by all and the beautiful table decorations reflected the purple theme. These were all created, as indeed the whole Ball was planned, by Ruth Kirby. Thank you Ruth for making it so special. Staff and students all had a fantastic time.

As the person who thoroughly enjoyed leading this year group through, all I can say is thank you to the students for being wonderful and to the parents for trusting us with the education of your children. We just need to look forward to August now but, in the meantime #trusttheprocess #teampurple

Mrs Hodgkinson, Head of Year 13



Year 11 Prom

On Friday 30th June, we held our annual Year 11 Prom. The Prom Committee, on the back of the success of the Commonwealth Games, chose Peaky Blinders – A Celebration of Birmingham as their theme. Along with various flat caps and beautiful gowns, our Cadbury block was adorned with a 12ft image of Thomas Shelby. The students enjoyed a seamless entrance and welcome onto the red carpet event at school followed by refreshments and entertainment in the Cadbury block. Coaches arrived to take them to the Hilton Hotel where they enjoyed burgers, loaded fries and waffles! Lots of dancing, laughing and awards later, they returned home having had a wonderful time. A huge thank you to all Arden Staff, PTFA Volunteers and of course the students for their help, support and impeccable behaviour.

We wish all of the students the brightest of futures and look forward to celebrating with them again on their results days in August.



Summer Music Concert

It was a joy to see the huge amount of musical talent we have here at Arden in the recent Summer Concert—it was a fantastic display of performances.

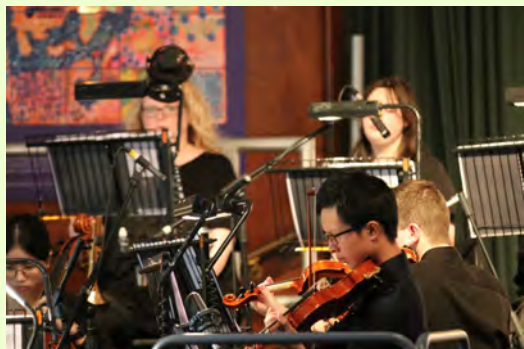


School Production—Beauty & The Beast



This year's school production was Beauty & The Beast. A cast, crew and full band made up of over 150 students rehearsed for months and months, but it was all worth it when it came to showtime. Putting on 6 shows over 4 days is a tough feat for any professional West End star— a feat our Arden students were more than ready for. This was a real team effort with

students from years 7 up to 13 and even two returning ex-students (Thanks Tom & Hannah!). The expertise that went into putting this show together was amazing and special thanks go to the staff that made it all happen. Mrs Warrender, Miss Jones, Dr Seago, Miss Butler and Mr Hodgetts are superstars in their own right! Anyone that came to see the show will know how utterly fantastic it was and praise is deserved for all involved.



Year 10 Work Experience

We thought we'd share with you some comments from our Year 10 students about their recent work experience. When we asked what was their favourite task, here are some of the comments we received:

- *My favourite task was creating care plans for future residents of the care home*
- *My favourite task was helping in Reception. I really enjoyed every aspect of it especially as the children were younger so I had a lot more responsibility and more tasks to complete. My favourite was helping with craft sessions.*
- *Working with the Listers Audit team because there was a very energetic and motivating dynamic to the team which was nice to be around*
- *Going onto site and seeing the houses they build in person*
- *Helping with valuations and sitting in meetings with clients*
- *I enjoyed working with the ECO Lab team*
- *Completing the accounts on the xero system and serving the customers*
- *My favourite task was using a CAD software to generate a 3D model of a bridge. This included learning multiple new tools such as 'extrude along'.*

Over 95% of our students said that their communication skills and confidence had improved over the week; 96% said they felt like part of a team; 95% said it gave them some understanding of the world of work; 98% said it was a useful/very useful experience and 99% viewed the week as overall a positive experience.



The Rotary Club of Solihull—Solihull Young Artist Competition

Our students in Years 7-13 were invited to take part in the competition and it was judged by a local professional artist; the theme was 'Sunrise and Sunset'.

Each entrant received a certificate of commendation; the winning entry in each age category in their local competition received a gift card for £25 for painting materials (with a £50 voucher for their school) and the runner-up entry received a gift card for £15 for painting materials (with a £25 voucher for their School).

Images shown are of some of the Arden students who entered and also the runner-up and competition winner. Arden students did brilliantly and thank you to all those talented artists who entered.



Junior Maths Challenge

Following the success of the intermediate challenge earlier this year it was finally time for year 7 and 8 to have their turn! A great number of students received certificates in recognition of their success with the maths challenge but six students qualified for the next round: William Wu, Isaac Lee, Kaylee Ho, Chloe Fan, Maya Bansal and Dylan O'Donnell. All students did exceptionally well to get this far but a special mention has to go to William and Isaac for their merit award in round two.

Routes into Languages Competition

Congratulations to Lida Belikova who was highly commended by University of Warwick in a Routes into Languages Competition. This is one of many competitions which Arden students have entered over the course of the year. We have had over 300 entrants in all competitions and the standard has been very high. Examples of competitions have included writing a poem in a foreign language, researching a poem in a foreign language and writing a summary in English as to why it is poignant. We have also held an internal competition based on identifying numbers from multiple global languages and seeing if there are links between French/German/Spanish and other languages. We are looking forward to organising many more linguistic competitions over the course of the next academic year in liaison with Warwick University.

Probability Fair

Year 7 students spent the last couple of weeks of maths lessons designing and creating probability games in teams to test their knowledge of odds, expectation and luck! The games had to be cunningly designed to have a low probability of winning but still be tempting enough to draw in the punters. The students calculated exactly how many people they expected to win their games to try and make the most money possible in an hour.

On game day the students took it in turns to peruse the fair, playing each other's games to try and win some cash - spinners were spun, counters were selected, cards were drawn, marbles were rolled and dice were thrown. Some teams went bust having been cleaned out by some early lucky winners, others were triumphant and raised a fantastic amount of money. Cheering throughout, year 7 raised £132, which will be going to charity. Congratulations to Lula, Eli, Niamh and Stephanie whose brilliant game made the most profit in the year group (a whopping £12.36!) Well done to everyone in Year 7 for their contributions and special thanks to Mr Tongue, Probability Fair Guru, for his hard work in organising and running the event.



Year 7 English

Lots of Year 7 students have been studying the novel, *Coraline*, by Neil Gaiman this term and it has inspired them to do some seriously spooky pieces of writing. Miss Riley and Miss George's class really impressed with some terrifying descriptions of being trapped behind a mirror, inspired by a moment in the novel, and gave us all nightmares with descriptions of monstrous creatures that lurk in the darkness that were based on the very short story *Shadder*, also by Neil Gaiman. I would recommend reading these with the lights on...and not just before you go to bed!!

I am invisible.

Mirror: icy, suffocating, always there, the mirror is my only light, the only thing keeping me from insanity. It's never gone, it's there, I can feel it against me, pressing on my weak bones. If I try to escape, it bites back and cuts me on its sharp edges, presses me even closer like a snake coiling around its prey. It's choking me. I can see everyone but they can't see me. I can hear everything but nothing can hear me and my screams. I can feel nothing, nothing except the cold, dark glass but still nothing can feel me. Strange things appear at night: long and thin, tall and round, small and threatening. Whatever they are, they arrive and disappear before the sun, before they think anyone can see them. Will they ever find me?

I am invisible. (Annabel Hotten, 7H)

I am invisible.

Cold, dead, a nobody, I can see everything everybody else can see. I can hear everything outside and I can hear my voice echo, echo, echo. The glass is like prison bars; when I touch them, I feel spiky condensation. Glass: smooth, unbreakable, deadly. It kills me. A golden light, deadly and warm, illuminates the mirror.

I am invisible. (Edward Brownjohn 7O)

I am invisible.

Trapped behind the glass that has become my prison. Misty, cold and dark, the glass seems to get closer every day. When I call out for help, answers never come. The silence is deafening, surrounding me. Dust gathering is the only evidence that time has not stopped. I doubt anyone remembers me.

I am invisible. (Hannah Baker 7H)

I am invisible.

Echoing, horrifying, frightening, it is so quiet. I can't even hear my own voice. As I am banging on the glass, horrified, I feel like it will never break. All I can see is people getting on with their day as I feel worthless and heartbroken that no-one is looking for me. All I can do is stare. The thin glass on my fingertips is sucking the warmth from me. I feel worthless: all I can do is stare and gaze as the days drag by. Screaming, petrified, claustrophobic, I am in another dimension and split apart from the world. I am worthless.

I am invisible. (Luca Woodley 7O)

I am invisible.

Glass: strong, cold, dense, the mirror makes me feel used to claustrophobia. Like a prison, no-one notices, no-one cares and I'm stuck.

Faint voices travel to my brain from the world outside or the other souls trapped with me, kicking, screaming and banging.

I can feel the smooth, perfect glass; shadows form from my pain inside and something in my head pictures them breaking out. I am tired: constant banging, constant screaming, constant crying.

The mirror, that makes me lose my soul, is making me sick; the darkness is in my throat and strangling me. I have been forgotten.

I am invisible. (Mujtaba Siddiqui 7O)

Crawly

Some creatures move in the deepest depths of the darkness, some creatures lurk in the hallways but Crawly does it all and on all fours. Whilst you sleep in utter darkness, a creak in the hallway comes closer.

It creeps and squeaks and watches the sun go down, preparing to pounce. Crawly does not chase, it waits, waits for the right moment. Pointed, sharp fangs sink into your skin.

Crawly prepares your tomb years before his attack, in a wooded forest, dark and deep, directly under the moon. You are his dinner. His food. You are his.

Lurking, waiting for the right moment to pounce. Eyes blood red, with a blade for a smile; fangs on each corner covered in scarlet. A lonely dark figure blending in with the trees.

(Tiah Redmond 7C)

Mutt

There are creatures that lurk mysteriously under your bed, that wait until midnight to pounce. The Mutt do not wait. They do not need to. They pounce when they want then destroy the evidence. If you say their name, they're coming for you. They appear in the places you feel the safest. Their claws pierce your heart, your hope, and drain the happiness from your life. The darkness surrounds you like a cold, hard blanket. It's a warning. If it turns dark, run. Although, it's already too late. Just remember: don't say the M-word.

(Eliza Dunne 7H)



A Level Art & Photography Trip



Year 12 Art & Photography students recently went to the National Gallery, National Portrait Gallery and the Tate Modern to seek inspiration for the second year of their courses. An inspiring day was had by all.



Croatia Trip

In July 2023, a group of 15 year 12 students and their teachers (Dr Cannadine and Mrs Bennett) will be participating in the Operation Wallacea terrestrial and marine expedition to Croatia. The students have had to fund raise to pay for the opportunity and during their time there, they will be carrying out a variety of research tasks in order to survey species such as birds, bats, wolves, tortoises and insects. With over 37,000 known species in Croatia, this project is vital in providing the researchers in Croatia with the information they need about the health of the populations there. They can then work with local and national governments to identify areas of vulnerability and ensure that the habitats and biodiversity there are protected for future generations. Dates of trip are 27 July to 9 August. Look at their website if you want to find out any more <https://www.opwall.com/>

Dr Cannadine and Mrs Bennett

100km Bike Ride

On Wednesday 21st June, 12 year 9 students cycled 100km from Arden down to Stratford-upon-Avon and back to raise money for their chosen charity – Teenage Cancer Trust. They were all fantastic on the ride, helping and guiding each other, calling out hazards and riding safely. They, and the staff, thoroughly enjoyed the challenge.

We cycled through Balsall Common and Kenilworth before reaching our first stop at the Hatton Arms. On the second leg, after a brief stop at Wellesbourne Airfield to refill water bottles and use the toilets, we powered on to lunch in Stratford-upon-Avon. After lunch, we came across a ford which Mr Fletcher and Mr Cole decided to cycle through. All of the students took the sensible decision to go over the bridge! We then had our final stop at the picturesque Sambourne. The last section was the hardest and hilliest. All of the students tackled the terrain fantastically and never gave up. When we started getting signs for Knowle, all of the students got a second wind and almost sprinted all the way back to Arden where family and friends had gathered to welcome them back.



This entire ride and all the training that came before was to raise money for Teenage Cancer Trust., a charity the students chose themselves. So far they have raised £4,713

completely smashing their target of £2,400! There is still time to donate to support them by clicking here <https://www.justgiving.com/team/y9arden2023>

Huge congratulations to Daniel Baker, Lola Barker, Saoirse Cole, Maelie Dubreux, Daniel Heald, Alice Henderson, Nathan Large, Zoe Lewsey, Daisy Newey, Mia Perry, Samuel Underwood and Max Warrender.

Many thanks to all the staff who have helped support the rides this year by either marshalling or driving the support vehicle: Mrs Hyde, Mr Dhaliwal, Mr Cole, Miss Blenkinsop, Mr Fletcher, Mr Humphries & Mr Goldenfeld.

Special thanks to Arden's own Maillot Jaune for his superb organising and enthusiasm for this trip —Mr Singh.



Arden values: Determination : Excellence : Courage : Inspiration : Friendship : Equality : Respect

Poetry Slam FINAL

After a successful in-school poetry slam, six Year 7 students: Adam Aamodt-Leeper, Bethany Edwards, Daisy Bird, Daniel Shooter, Luke Minto and Nev Wilson were selected to perform at The Palace Theatre, Redditch competing against thirteen schools across the West Midlands on Wednesday 29th March.

The students had been working for weeks on their lyrics and performance and the day arrived. Accompanied by Miss O'Brien, the team had a last-minute practice before heading to the audience to await their moment on-stage.

The show began with poet and host, Spoz, reminding students about their fantastic achievements to get this far and how wonderful it is to see young people so enthused about poetry that they are able to find the courage to perform in front of an audience.

The order of performances were drawn from a hat and Arden was the twelfth school, so we had a bit of a nervous wait, but the Arden team were incredibly polite and enthusiastic for all the other schools performing.

Finally, Arden were called and our team rushed to the stage. The team began with a chorus in unison, reminding the audience that they need to save the creatures and the trees, "you can't find honey if there ain't no bees!" Every student had a solo line, Beth and Luke were up first, with lyrics about pollution being a terrible crime, and if people don't sort it, they will go on "STRIKE!". Daniel jumped up with a rap about plastic waste contributing to animal extinction. Daisy (who had asked for her own microphone for her ultimate popstar moment) was followed by Nev, complete with flower props,

finally Adam jumped in with some cheeky lyrics that certainly woke the audience up. Let's just say, it was made clear where methane gas comes from...

After the performance, we then had an exciting wait for the final result. We didn't make Top Three this year, but as Arden's first ever year competing at the Poetry Slam, we have learnt some lessons to take on-board for future and I am very lucky that these six wonderful, energetic, bright students have agreed to coach our next team if we return in future.

Miss O'Brien



Dalguise Trip

During Enrichment Week 218 Year 7s joined 23 members of staff on a massive expedition to a PGL centre in Dalguise, Scotland. After a mammoth coach journey they got stuck in to a range of outward bounds activities from morning till night. They all came back exhausted but with memories that will last a life time. Huge thanks are due to Mr Gethins and the staff group that left their own families and homes for the week to make the trip such a success.



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Author Visits...Part 1

This academic year, we have been lucky enough to have a variety of author visits for both whole school talks, and more intimate workshops during library lessons or at lunch with co-curricular clubs. We have also been fortunate in benefitting from the Arden Trust, by hosting other schools at Arden to attend our AIM High Days, or by visiting schools in the trust for inspiring author visits. In this article, our librarian, Miss O'Brien introduces the array of author visits have taken place since our last newsletter.

Seth Burkett: Inspiring Students through Creativity and Football

Children's author and professional footballer Seth Burkett recently visited Arden to deliver an unforgettable AIM High Day. The event aimed to inspire talented Year 7 English students and included participants from other schools in the trust and the region.

Seth, known for his accomplishments in football and writing, shared his expertise in crafting engaging advertisements. Drawing from his work with top brands like Nike and working with celebrities such as Lady Leshurr, he provided valuable tips and anecdotes to captivate the students. The session concluded with an exciting kick-about on the field, where students learned from a professional player.

Seth Burkett's presence left a lasting impression on the students, inspiring them to pursue their dreams in writing and sports. We extend our gratitude to Seth for his invaluable time and thank the participating schools for making the day even more special.



Author Adam Connors: Combining Literature with Environmental Discussions

Teen author Adam Connors, whose sci-fi adventure book *The Girl who Broke the Sea* was recently longlisted for the Warwickshire Teen Book Award, has captured readers' imaginations in a recent visit to Arden.

Adam engaged our students through thought-provoking talks in library lessons and a joint session with the Eco Club and Science Club which raised some lively conversations around the potential, and potential risks, of deep-sea mining.

Andrew Irvine, Year 7, impressed Adam so much, that he even sent some book recommendations to continue to inspire Andrew's love for reading and science.

Local author Cathie Kelly introduces students to hidden histories!

Cathie Kelly joined a Year 7 and Year 8 class to deliver a world building workshop. Cathie invited students into a discussion about which books have in-depth world building, such as *Harry Potter* and *Lord of the Rings*. Students were then invited to create their own worlds by drawing maps and planning all aspects of their worlds – from the foliage and raw materials, to the societal rules and laws. Providing students with the framework for their worlds encouraged students to have creativity in their writing, which students were inspired to continue.



Year 7 Students meet author Tom Palmer



Our Year 7 students recently had the privilege of visiting Park Hall Academy to meet children's author Tom Palmer alongside other schools in our Trust.

Tom Palmer, known for his football stories and historical fiction, shared his writing journey and offered students the opportunity to ask questions his writing. The day concluded with a book signing, further enthusing Arden students as they had their

books personally dedicated to them.

Thank you to Mrs Kirkbride at Park Hall for organising the event and inviting us!

Author Visits...Part 2

Bodyguard and Samurai, Chris Bradford visits Arden



Students in Years 8 & 9 were treated to an exciting and dangerous event as acclaimed author, trained bodyguard and samurai swordsman Chris Bradford visited Arden. Known for his Bodyguard and Samurai book series, Chris brought an electrifying twist to the world of reading.

On Wednesday, 28th June 2023, our Year 9 students became immersed in a thrilling performance, starting off with a literal bang as Miss Dreznin introduced Chris to the students, suddenly bangs and lights fired and Chris hurriedly ushered Miss Dreznin off the stage in a faux bodyguard incident, which certainly woke the students up and they responded with a round of applause.

The assembly continued as Chris demonstrated his bodyguard skills, performing a section from his book, using Arden students to assist with some bodyguard secrets.

The show ended with the 'One Inch Death Push' as Chris invited Year 9 student Freddy Smith-Twigger onto the stage. With a mere flick of Chris's finger, the student fell onto a safety mat, captivating the audience and demonstrating the impressive control and precision involved in bodyguarding techniques.

After the session, Nathan Large said that he enjoyed, "the recreation of scenes from his book", whilst Martha Glennan learned that, "more female bodyguards are in demand".

In the afternoon, Chris had a change of clothing and transformed into a Samurai. He delivered an intimate session with the Year 7 creative writers and student librarians where they were able to see his katana up close, and Chris taught them some self-defence moves. The main one: run!!



Following this, Chris performed his Samurai skills for the Year 8s. With each swift swing of his katana, the audience could hear the exhilarating whistle, a testament to Chris's impeccable technique. Through this enthralling display, the students not only glimpsed the artistry of swordsmanship but also realized the profound connection between the path of the samurai and the path of the reader. Both paths demand unwavering dedication and an insatiable thirst for knowledge, propelling them on extraordinary journeys of self-discovery.



Year 9 student Annika Lemke said they, "enjoyed the book readings" and learned "that anyone could be a Ninja if they trained".

In a thrilling display of action and storytelling, he revealed how the arts of bodyguarding and samurai and the magic of literature intertwine. The students actively participated, becoming part of the adventure, and realising that books hold the power to transport them to exhilarating worlds.

Past student achievements

Peter Fitzroy was a student here from 2011—2018 when he left to pursue a degree in Medicine. It was great to be sent his graduation photos recently. Well done Peter!



Tom Briggs and Harry Robinson left Arden in 2014. It was brilliant to hear that they have recently won an award at the London Comedy Film Festival. Have a look at <https://www.missingrichard.co.uk/>



Eco Club

We went to Benefact House in Gloucester to an event where the students competed in a Dragons Den style activity in which they had to pitch their environmental plans to a panel. They then received feedback on their idea and their pitch style. All of our students were absolutely fantastic and I felt really proud of them and the passion that they demonstrated to try and make change for our future. I would not be surprised if members of eco club become future politicians and I hope they do as the country would be in excellent hands in terms of our environment. Students that attended the event represented Arden excellently and it was a delight to take them: George Burns, Lola Barker, Pearl Barker, Christy Kam, Ruby Russell, Ketaki Chaubal, Vaari Goenka, Keertan Sondh.

Miss Blenkinsop



Park & Stride Competition

During the week of 6th-9th of July students in Year 7 and Year 8 took part in a Park and Stride competition. This competition was set up and run by members of eco club and the idea was to promote active travel to school. Throughout the week we had over 600 entries into the competition which is fantastic and shows how many Year 7 and Year 8 students walk to school or decided to Park and Stride to school during our competition week.

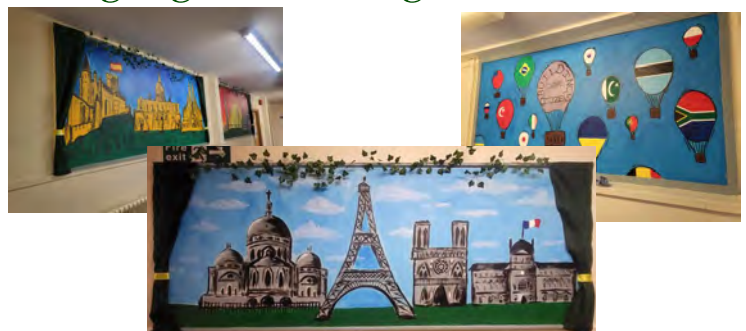
The aim of the competition was to try and reduce congestion around the front of school and also increase physical activity levels of our students.

Congratulations to 7L who were the overall winners and earned themselves an ice cream and a lesson off timetable to have fun outside in the sunshine!

Well done to eco club for promoting the competition and for setting it up so successfully!



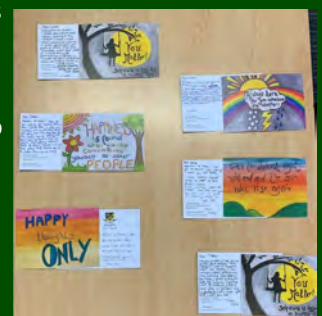
Language Corridor gets a makeover



Welcoming our new Year 7



It was lovely to meet all of our new Year 7s on their Transition Day. They had an introductory assembly to establish the Golden Rules, then went on a carousel of English, Maths & Science lessons, so they could have a flavour of what is to come in September. They were all given a summer reading book, which we hope they are enjoying! They also all received a personalised postcard from one of our current Year 7s, with a welcoming message of good luck. See you all in September!!



Story Museum Trip

Exploring the Magic of Stories: A Memorable Trip to The Story Museum

On Wednesday 12th and Friday 14th July Year 7 and Year 8 students were invited to visit The Story Museum in Oxford, to celebrate their exceptional achievement as top readers in their classes.

The day began with a walking tour of Oxford led by the knowledgeable tour guides showcasing how the simplest things, such as a lamp post, can ignite our imagination. Callum Lerat said, "The tour guide gave us techniques to spark our ideas." Both groups were invited to act out scenes from The Hobbit where they relished the opportunity.

The highlight of the trip was the visit to the Enchanted Library, where students had the unique opportunity to step into the world of stories. Beth Bates-Gamble exclaimed, "It was just like stepping into my imagination." The students were mesmerised as they explored the exhibits which brought their favourite tales to life.



The day continued with a visit to the Brilli-ANT exhibition where students explored a world of miniature and learned about reading, climate change and how to save the world!

Students also explored the Whispering Wood, where they gathered around a storyteller who encouraged them to foster a love for diverse cultures and storytelling traditions. Ava Ho commented, "I enjoyed the forest part the most because it told us stories about different things from different countries, and it was really fun."



Students were then invited to design their own museum room for the Enchanted Library. From Cluedo to a Manga version of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, our creative students were inspired to create their own exhibitions.

The day concluded with the screening of the City of Stories film, which took the students on a time-travelling adventure. James White commented, "It was cool, fun, and immersive because of the built-in floor vibration, making it seem like you were really in a time-travelling spaceship."



For some students, the trip held special significance beyond the realm of storytelling. Eden Love Green shared, "I want to go to Oxford for university and study English, and it has been a dream to go and look around the colleges." Zac Hill-Brown expressed his gratitude by saying, "thanks for this amazing trip - the highlight of the year."

I am immensely proud of our students' achievements and their enthusiasm for reading. A huge thank you to Mrs George, Miss Dreznin, Mr Williams and Mrs Bhurra their support on the trip.

Miss O'Brien, Librarian



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FCBG Children's Book Award Ceremony



After a long wait thanks to a pandemic and several unfortunate train strikes, we couldn't have been more excited about finally getting to attend the FCGB Children's Book Award ceremony, a cheerful and lively celebration of children's literature that five lucky Arden students attended in June along with Miss O'Brien.

The event was the conclusion to a long period of reading, voting and shortlisting that hundreds of young people across the country took part in, including several from Arden. The votes revealed the top three books in each category (Younger children, Younger readers and Older readers) which formed the shortlist, and the award ceremony was to announce the winners for each category as well as the overall winner.

Before the ceremony, we had the chance to explore the venue - the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education - which was a vibrant, exciting space with a diverse range of children's literature, from picture books to young adult fiction. We also got the opportunity to get books signed and interact with the authors, who included Jennifer Killick, Phil Earle and Non Pratt.

After lunch, the ceremony began with a story from Steven Lenton and a draw -along session before the winners were announced. In the true spirit of the Children's Book Award, children representing different regions of England were invited to announce the winners and present each shortlisted author with a portfolio of art and writing from readers inspired by the books on the shortlist. The Arden group did a brilliant job of announcing the winner for the Older Readers category (Jennifer Killick's *Dread Wood*) and presenting her with her portfolio.



For the full list of winning books, visit the FCBG's website at [Children's Book Award 2023 – The Federation of Children's Book Groups \(fcbg.org.uk\)](https://www.fcbg.org.uk)

Article written by Vaari Goenka, Year 10

Diversity & Culture Week

For Diversity and Culture week, our Year 7 roving reporters, Harriet Messer and Suri Goenka have provided the following summaries:

Year 8 and 9 assembly: Karl Nova

Rapper/performer Karl Nova came to our school for an assembly with the Year 9s and 8s. He talked about his childhood moving from East London with his mother to Nigeria to live with his father and his step family. He writes poetry books of rap and talks about how the art of rapping has been stereotyped away from poetry over the years. Year 8 student Eden Love Green said Karl's talk taught her that, "anyone and everyone can be a rapper, poet and author, and the words you speak can have a massive influence"

Year 7 Bhangra dancing:

Sohan Kailey hosted a bhangra dancing assembly for the Year 7s this week; he talked about his travels in India and taught some words in Hindi, played music and taught the Year 7s how to bhangra dance. Everyone learnt new skills and had fun along the way!

Year 7 and 10 assembly: Kimba

Starting with an interesting poem, Kimba successfully entertained Year 7 and 10. He talked about many famous people in history and their fight for equality. He shared his own personal views about how he still believes that racism is prominent in current day's society and how it needs to be sorted out. When asked what they enjoyed and learned, Year 7 student Jayden McNiece said they liked being able, "to explore the culture while being fun" whilst Year 10 student Vaari Goenka said, "I learned about how diversity can facilitate living in peace which is something I hadn't considered before."



Sports News

Athletics



At the recent Solihull Borough Championships, Arden won 5 out of 6 categories, which meant we were **OVERALL WINNERS** in both the **BOYS & the GIRLS** categories. These competitions include 16 schools, so it is a massive achievement. Well done to all that took part.



Rounders

The Year 7 Rounders Team competed at the Solihull Borough Tournament. They played fantastically throughout and after winning their group (on Rounders Scored) they progressed to the semi-final. Another solid performance against Alderbrook secured them a place in the final against Solihull.

The final was a very close game with both sides performing very strongly in both batting and fielding. Solihull ended up with the win (6-5). The team came 2nd overall which is fantastic for their first tournament as a team.

Congratulations to: Poppy Burrows, Emmie Spencer (Batting – POM), Beth Harriman, Bethany Lunt, Lois Conduit, Nina Farrell, Alexa Richards (Fielding – POM), Ada Masson, Lola Frost, Ruby Morris, Amy Hurdman. Miss Rhodes



Student Achievements

We are exceptionally proud of all our students and we are delighted when we hear about their accomplishments outside of school. Please continue to keep us updated. Here are a few of the fabulous stories from this term:

Abbey Road Experience

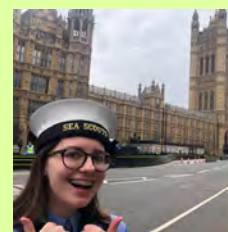
Sam Wiseman has just finished his A-Levels. However, alongside this he is also a producer and songwriter that has quickly begun to show signs of prominence within the emotive deep house scene by working with labels and companies such as, Warner Chappell, Soave, Ostereo and One Seven. As well as collaborating with artists such as Tough Love, Wh0 and

Piece Wise. Sam has also played a tropical house DJ set as part of an online festival for the legendary dance-duo, Disclosure. Sam has recently begun songwriting after being invited to a 3-day songwriting camp by Ostereo and Warner Chappell at the legendary Abbey Road Studios with artists such as Billen Ted, Wh0, Nico & Vinz, Tom Enzy and many more. In both songwriting and producing, it is clear that Sam's sound is a chill/deep house sound with a common theme of emotive songwriting. Sam most recent release includes a chill house track 'haunted' on Spectrum Recordings which was Sam's second release of 2023.



King's Coronation Experience

We were also thrilled to hear about Megan Roberts' experience of the King's Coronation. She was invited to watch a private screening of the service from St Margaret's Church, Westminster as a representative of the Scouts. She said "It was an honour to be invited to be this close to the Coronation and one of the best experiences of my life"



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.

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Sports News

Girls football



The Arden Girls' Football teams went from strength to strength this year with over 70 girls attending training regularly throughout the year from Year 7 to 11 and help from Sixth Formers too. It was inspiring to see some who had never played football before playing alongside some of our more experienced players. The girls took part in several tournaments over the year and were superstars representing the school against other schools in Solihull. The Girls' Football teams have never had a dedicated kit or set of equipment in the past so we were very excited when Tom Dunbar, DPD Birmingham Depot Manager, decided to help raise money and very kindly offered to sponsor kits for a KS3 team and a KS4 team off the back of the Lionesses success in the Euros 2022, to help inspire the next generation of female footballers.

Mrs Dunbar and Ms Leadbeater organised a match against Park Hall for a combined Year 7-9 team and a Year 10 & 11 team as the last match of the season. It was great to see both teams play well and enjoy the match and DPD presented Park Hall with a set of kits too.

We had lots of ideas of how to raise money and held a very successful hot chocolate station one cold, winter's night after training. DPD Birmingham Depot held a Bake Off and between us we raised a total of £642.30 dedicated to Girls Football at Arden in the future, whether this be for equipment or trips/experiences.

Thank you to Tom, Ms Leadbeater and everyone who has supported the Girls Football teams in the past and I hope the future of the Ardenesses is a successful one.

Mrs Dunbar



Boys Football

The Year 7 boys football team have had a great season culminating with them completing a Cup Double by beating St Peters School 4-3 in the Solihull Cup final. This was on the back of a 2-0 win against Kings Norton boys school in the final of the West Midlands Cup. This is a tremendous achievement for the team and school. They have been playing games since last September across the region and the squad of 14 have supported each other on and off the pitch. Everyone has made their impact in different games with Jack Parkes, Alex Horsley or Max Rippington on the wings or the defence unit comprising Henry Murphy, Josh D, Nick P and Lucas A. In the centre of midfield Frankie, Jacob, Jamie and Stanley have played very well controlling the game.



Meanwhile the goals have come from the whole team but Josh Gibbs has contributed when needed. In goal Darragh has improved his playing out from the back considerably as well as being solid at kicks and saves. But one of the stand out performances of the season has been the goals from striker Max Campton including all 4 in the Solihull Cup final as well as numerous hattricks. His effort levels have inspired the team to keep battling and he has worn the Captain's armband with true leadership. The team have also benefitted from the support of sixth former Ben 'Chappers' Chapman who will be missed massively, as well as excellent parental support. Next season its 11 aside and so the squad will need to grow and the team will need to evolve further.

Dr Cannadine (Bunsen Burner FC Manager)

Also worthy of mention is the 6th form team that won the U18 West Midlands Cup, supported by Mr Masson.



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Tennis

This photo marks the end of a fantastic tennis season for the girls tennis team. They have had some very tough matches against some very strong private schools. However they showed excellent resilience and kept smiling throughout the whole season. I would like a particular mention to go to Katie Anderton and Lola Barker who agreed to play in a match at very late notice despite not being tennis players. They represented everything we love about Arden school by stepping up and helping out the team!

A huge well done to all of the girls tennis team this year consisting of Paige Edgington, Maia Daines, Poppy Burrows, Emmie Spencer, Lily Gannaway, Emilia Pykett, Hannah McDermott, Lola Barker and Katie Anderton.



The boys tennis team have had a fantastic tennis season with some excellent matches against some strong private school teams. A particular mention must go to Vasco Rodrigues in Year 9 who lost half of his tooth whilst playing in our first match and wanted to carry on playing like a true professional.

Daniel Grist in Year 10 has had a storming season with one of the longest ever tennis matches against King Edwards School in which he managed to come out victorious! A huge thank you to Noah Henbest, Harry Cheatham and Matt Bowley who all stepped up very last minute for one of our matches!

Well done to all of the boys who have played for the boys tennis team this year including: George Reilly, Callum Lerat, Lewis Pearce, Harry Cheatham, Matt Bowley, Dan Grist, Vasco Rodrigues, Lucas Askey, Alex Pennell, Sam Sharp, Noah Henbest, Ernie Emmerson and Ollie Oakley.

The annual mixed doubles house tennis competition took place a couple of weeks ago. It was fantastic to see so many Year 10s paired up with willing staff members to play in the knockout tournament. The eventual winners were Beatrice McCorry & Mr Edgington, however, the best dressed couple award definitely goes to Mia Hill & Mr Cole. Thanks to everyone that took part and enjoyed the competition (and some strawberries) together.

House Tennis



Gymnastics & Dance

A massive well done to the gymnasts and dancers who performed in the end of term showcase. The determination, commitment, and resilience they have shown to choreograph their routines has been fantastic!

Students involved were: Poppy Burrows, Andrew Irvine, Sophia Rody, Maia Daines, Eliza Dunne, Amy Sibbing, Ivy Dutton, Pavan Bansal, Sophie Banister, Georgia Wisemen, Freya Pannett, Isla Herbert, Maisy Roache, Daisy Tye, Connie Bates, Scarlett Hough-Childs, Paige Edington, Lilly Collins, Mae D'onofrio, Hannah McDermott, Bebe Cooper, Anya Joshi, Beth Thomas, Imogen Agar.

Miss Rhodes



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Ice Hockey

Katie Anderton was selected to take part in the England Showcase Ice Hockey event by England coaches as she is classed within the top 10% of players within her age group. The event is the pinnacle of the junior calendar, where she had the opportunity to showcase her ability in front of England and senior team coaches. She represented Team England White against Team England



Football

Zach Sutton had the opportunity to represent Northern Ireland at u15 football during the first week of the Easter holidays. Here he is pictured at the Leuven training ground in Belgium.



Gaelic Football

Orla Cole, Erin Boyle & Avelyn Quinn play for John Mitchells Gaelic football and the team won the under 12 and under 14 Gaelic Athletic Association Northern Games Tournament.



Athletics

Daisy Burton qualified for a second year running this year to represent West Midlands at the English Schools Athletics Championships for high jump for the Intermediate girls age group.

The competition took place at Alexander Stadium over 30 June to 1 July. Competing against 16 other girls she just missed out on getting a new personal best on the day but jumped a very respectable 1m 62 cm.



Gymnastics

On 23rd April the Solihull & Birmingham Invitational Floor & Vault Competition was held at North Solihull Sports Centre.

There were a number of teams from across the region in attendance and the Intermediate 15 and Under Girls team from Solihull Olympic Gymnastic Club was made up of 5 girls who are all from Year 9 at Arden - Amy Banting, Abi Dickson, Emily Hulse, Lucie Pajon & Sophie Pajon. They won team gold in their category, with Abi Dickson also winning individual gold.



Next she's off to compete in English Athletics U17 championships at the end of August.

Taekwondo

Dawud Ahmed is now officially the Under 14s Light weight **World Champion!!**

He also got a bronze for tag teams.

There were 26 counties competing, with a great atmosphere and a great experience.

His older brother Yusuf waited 5 hours for a fight and couldn't finish it as he broke his toe as he went to take a kick. There was a literal blood bath in the arena. Hope you recover soon Yusuf!

