



# Principal's UPDATE

**29th January 2024**



Dear Parents and Carers,

The last 3 weeks have again been busy at AGS - a true reflection of the busy, engaged and diverse life of the school community. On January 18th, it was a pleasure to welcome nearly six hundred students to our 6th Form Subject Sampling Evening, from over seventy schools across the region. The sense of maturity, resilience and community shown by all students (whether currently at AGS or joining us for the first time) was a delight to see, with students successfully navigating their seven A level taster sessions as they (we hope) continue on their journey to joining us in September.

The production of Woyzeck last week was a considerable triumph, a professional performance of a complex play addressing many serious themes - the Stratford Herald summarised in their review 'Student Show up there with the best'. My sincere thanks to all involved, particularly Mrs Swan and Mrs Spencer, Do take a look at the photos on page 6. Trips have also continued aplenty, including a training expedition for the trip to the Himalayas later this year over this last weekend, whilst last week sixty students from Years 8-13 attended a CBSO concert in Symphony Hall. I had the pleasure of accompanying the latter group, who were excellent ambassadors for the school.

With Parents' Evenings ongoing for all year groups, I am delighted in particular that we will be inviting all Year 7 Parents to an 'in school' Parents Evening on Monday 5th February - the first time we have returned to face-to-face since Covid, whilst tonight I look forward to seeing some of you at our inaugural AGS PTFA AGM. Finally, many of you have contacted me about Riddleys' decision to run certain bus routes (or not) next year. My apologies, however, these emails cannot be answered individually - such have been the number received. Please do feel free to continue to share concerns about transport to [enquiries@alcesterags.com](mailto:enquiries@alcesterags.com), however, we cannot guarantee a response. Parents have always been responsible for transport to AGS and we are not able to force any company to run a particular bus route. Governors and I do have a working group looking at the implications of transport issues for the school more widely and I will update you on this later in the year.

Ms Rachel Thorpe

Principal, Alcester Grammar School



# Alcester Grammar School

## PTFA AGM

Monday 29th January 7pm  
AGS Sports Hall

Anyone connected with the school is welcome to attend.

Click [here](#) to register your attendance or email:  
[ags-friends@alcestergs.com](mailto:ags-friends@alcestergs.com)

# Since our last update...

Congratulations to our Top of the Bench team, who visited the University of Birmingham to participate in the regional finals of the Royal Society of Chemistry challenge.



A great evening of girls' basketball against other South Warwickshire Schools.

Year 9 finished 2nd, with Year 10 and 11 both remaining unbeaten to claim 1st place.

A fantastic achievement, congratulations to all.

Year 8 also enjoyed a fantastic rugby lesson, smiles all round!



# Since our last update...

A fantastic turn out at lunchtime hockey club!



Year 8 have been learning about the importance of a healthy balanced breakfast, and worked collaboratively this week to plan in pairs to cook & eat a healthy breakfast, then wash up and clean their kitchens, all within an hour!



Himalayan Training Hike - Brecon Beacons



# Since our last update...

## French Magazine Project

Year 7 finished the year completing a homework project to create a French Christmas magazine for children. Some amazing work was produced, developing the skill of using the French that they had been taught so far in a creative way in order to write an interview with Father Christmas, a Christmas wish-list, puzzle pages and so on.

It was heartening to see how so many projects reflected such an enjoyment of the language: they had gone above and beyond the call of duty to use their language in really imaginative and interesting ways.

In 7MSP the overall winner was Izzy Branch and in 7MJI it was the astonishing Yin-Yee Johnson-Chung! The 'gold' winners in 7NHB were Molly Manns, Jamie Ball, Ronav Patra, Aniyah Muktar and Seren Davis.



## Congratulations to Bryn Patel Stephens

Bryn has been accepted from a huge number of applicants to be enrolled in the National Youth Theatre's Technician programme. Bryn is an exceptional lighting designer and he has worked tirelessly in order to programme the school play Woyzeck.



# Woyzeck



# Guest Speaker

## What is it like to swim the English Channel? A story of perseverance and determination!

Students were given the opportunity to attend a Monday lunchtime talk this week. Our guest speaker was Will Hodgess, who came in to talk about his experience of swimming the English Channel with the aim of encouraging people to take action to address climate change.

Will explained that growing up he had only really been interested in football, but had to give this up due to injury, so turned his attention to swimming. He then found his adventurous nature led him to sign up to attempt swimming across the English Channel (21 miles in a straight line, but impossible to swim it in a straight line so more like 30 miles!). He referred to it as the 'Mount Everest' for open water swimmers due to the strong tides and freezing temperatures.

Will talked honestly about the extreme challenges, and how there were many times he wanted to give up, but by keeping in mind the reasons for doing it, and spurred on by a wealth of support and inspiring messages he didn't quit. Students were able to ask lots of questions about the challenges and how he overcame mental barriers. They were also able to feel how cold the water would have been and imagine themselves swimming in it for 16 hours straight!!

Will then explained how the experience had spurred him on to start his own company to encourage as many people as possible to do something to help address the climate crisis.

Will is the uncle of one of our students, and a massive thank you to him for giving up his time to come and talk to students. If any parents/ relatives feel they have something students would benefit hearing about, we would love to provide more opportunities for them to hear about different experiences. Please contact Mrs Price ([s.price@alcestergs.com](mailto:s.price@alcestergs.com)) if you would like to get involved in this initiative.



# News and Notices



## Exams Update

The second set of mocks for year 11 will start from Wednesday 31 January and Year 13 from Monday 19 February. Pupils can access their timetable via their AGS portal. For year 11, MFL tiers and Science are still to be finalised but the date and time will not change just the length of your exam.

Summer timetables are also available on their AGS portal for years 11 and 13. This is draft as the entries have not been finalised by departments. A message will go out when timetables are final. More information about the summer exams will follow once the mocks have been completed.

Year 12 - you will be deciding if you want to take any AS external exams in the summer. It's important that you read any information sent to you and email me if you do not understand anything ([exams@alcesterags.com](mailto:exams@alcesterags.com)). You must keep to any deadline dates set otherwise you may incur extra fees.

Thank you.

Mrs Silcox - Examinations Officer

## Extra-Curricular

Click [here](#) to view extra-curricular opportunities for Years 7-13 in the 1st half of the Spring term 2024.



# News and Notices



## Non-Uniform Day - Friday 9th February

Wear your own clothes on Friday 9th February

We are supporting The Trussell Trust. Please bring in either food / household item(s) from the below list or at least £1 and give to your form tutor during the next week.

## Items urgently needed by Stratford and Coventry Food Banks

- Tinned chicken meals
- Hot dogs
- UHT whole milk
- Squash or long life fruit juice
- Jam
- Tinned fruit
- Instant mashed potato
- Dry noodles
- Spray cleaners
- Bleach
- Washing powder
- Nappies (sizes 5, 6, 7 & 8)



*Thank you for your support*



# 2024-25 Term Dates

## *Autumn Term*

Term begins: Tuesday 3rd September 2024 - Years 7 and 12 only  
Wednesday 4th September 2024 - All students return  
Half Term: Monday 21st October to Friday 1st November 2024  
Term ends: Friday 20th December 2024

## *Spring Term*

Term begins: Tuesday 7th January 2025  
Half Term: Monday 17th February to Friday 21st February 2025  
Term ends: Friday 11th April 2025

## *Summer Term*

Term begins: Monday 28th April 2025  
Half Term: Monday 26th May to Friday 30th May 2025  
Term ends: Friday 18th July 2025

## *Inset days (no school for students)*

Monday 2nd September 2024  
November- Date TBC  
Monday 6th January 2025  
January - Date TBC  
Friday 23rd May 2025  
Monday 21st July 2025