

Principal's Update

Dear Parents, Carers and Members of the AGS Community,

As we reach the end of term, I have been struck by how many moments this week have brought our school community together. From Wednesday's record-breaking Christmas Lunch to Thursday afternoon's wonderfully well-attended Carol Service at St Nicholas Church in Alcester, the sense of shared celebration has been remarkable.

This morning's Year 7–11 and Year 13 Celebration Assembly in the Sports Hall—bringing together more than 1000 students and staff—was another highlight. Much like the Year 12 assembly last week, it offered a valuable chance to recognise the wide range of achievements our pupils have enjoyed this term, both inside and outside the classroom. There was an impressive amount to applaud.



Assist
Give
Support

19th December 2025

Particular congratulations go to Year 12 who have navigated their first mock exams with focus and maturity - next term we will be looking to further support all students in Years 12 and 13 with their independent learning skills.

As 2025 draws to a close, I would like to express my sincere thanks for your ongoing support. I hope the next two weeks provide a peaceful, enjoyable and restorative break for you and your families. We look forward to welcoming students and parents/carers back to AGS in 2026.

Best wishes,

Ms Rachel Thorpe
Principal, Alcester Grammar School



Language SPOTLIGHT



Actualización del director

Estimados padres, tutores y miembros de la comunidad de AGS:

Al llegar al final del trimestre, me ha llamado la atención cuántos momentos de esta semana han unido a nuestra comunidad escolar. Desde el almuerzo de Navidad del miércoles, que batió récords, hasta el servicio de villancicos del jueves por la tarde, magníficamente concurrido, en la iglesia de San Nicolás en Alcester, el sentimiento de celebración compartida ha sido realmente notable.

La Asamblea de Celebración de esta mañana para los cursos 7 a 11 y el curso 13 en el pabellón deportivo —que reunió a más de 1.000 estudiantes y miembros del personal— fue otro momento destacado. Al igual que la asamblea del curso 12 de la semana pasada, ofreció una valiosa oportunidad para reconocer la amplia variedad de logros que nuestros alumnos han alcanzado este trimestre, tanto dentro como fuera del aula. Hubo mucho que aplaudir.



ags Assist
Give
Support



Spanish

19 de diciembre de 2025

Unas felicitaciones especiales para el curso 12, que ha afrontado sus primeros exámenes simulados durante la última semana con concentración y madurez; el próximo trimestre buscaremos ofrecer un mayor apoyo a todos los estudiantes de los cursos 12 y 13 en el desarrollo de sus habilidades de aprendizaje independiente.

Al llegar a su fin 2025, me gustaría expresar mi más sincero agradecimiento por su apoyo continuo. Espero que las próximas dos semanas les brinden a ustedes y a sus familias un descanso tranquilo, agradable y reparador. Esperamos dar la bienvenida de nuevo a estudiantes y padres/madres/tutores a AGS en 2026.

Con mis mejores deseos,



Sra. Rachel Thorpe
Directora, Alcester Grammar School



Safeguarding

As we approach the Christmas holidays, we wanted to thank you all for your support in keeping the students at Alcester Grammar School safe throughout the term. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and vigilance and care for our young people means we can support them to make the best of the numerous opportunities on offer at AGS.

The holiday period can often bring mixed emotions. Many of you will be looking forward to some quality family time; however, we know this will not be the case for everyone. If you are worried or concerned about the holidays, please remember support is available to you. We have collated some of this information below for you to keep to hand.

Childline: This is the most crucial resource for young people. It's a free, confidential 24-hour helpline and online service for children and young people in the UK. They can talk about anything that's worrying them, no matter how big or small.

- Phone: 0800 1111 (free, confidential, 24/7)
- Website: <https://www.childline.org.uk/>
- Key message for young people: "You can call, chat online, or email about any problem big or small. It's free and confidential."

The Mix: Provides free, confidential support for young people under 25, covering a wide range of issues including abuse, mental health, relationships, and more. They offer phone, text, and online chat services.

- Phone: 0808 808 4994 (free, 3pm-midnight every day)
- Text: THEMIX to 85258 (free, 24/7)
- Website: <https://www.themix.org.uk/>

Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) - Worried about a Child: This is the primary contact for anyone (including young people if they feel able) to report concerns about a child's safety or welfare in Warwickshire.

- Family Connect / MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub): 01926 414144 (Monday-Thursday 8.30am-5.30pm, Friday 8.30am-5.00pm)
- Emergency Duty Team (Out of Hours): 01926 886922
- Website: <https://www.safeguardingwarwickshire.co.uk/safeguarding-children/i-work-with-children-and-young-people/worried-about-a-child>
- Crucial for immediate danger: Always call 999

Victim Support - Warwickshire: While not exclusively for children, they have Children and Young People (CYP) Caseworkers who provide support to young victims of all types of crimes, including abuse.

- Local Warwickshire Team: 01926 358060 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm)
- Supportline (24/7): 0808 1689 111
- Website: <https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/resources/warwickshire/>

If there are any changes within your family circumstances - whether emotional, health-related, financial, or otherwise - please do not hesitate to contact us. Even small pieces of information can help us to better understand and support your child during this time.

As always, the wellbeing of our students remains a priority, and we are committed to working closely with families to ensure every child feels supported, safe and able to thrive.

Uniform

Uniform and Dress Code Reminder (Years 7-11 and Sixth Form)

As we begin the new calendar year, January is a helpful opportunity to review school uniform and dress code expectations to ensure that all students return to school correctly dressed and ready to learn. We are grateful for your continued support in maintaining the high standards expected at Alcester Grammar School.

A smart appearance plays an important role in setting the calm, respectful learning environment we value, and it helps reinforce a strong sense of belonging to our school community.

Years 7-11: Key Reminders

As students return after the winter break, we are reminding families of a small number of uniform expectations where issues most commonly arise:

- **Blazers** – These are an essential part of the school uniform and must be worn to and from school and throughout the school day.
- **Skirt length** – AGS skirts must be at least knee length. This includes situations where skirts are being rolled up during the day.
- **Tights and socks** – Students may wear either socks or tights, but not both together (e.g. socks worn over tights).
- **Hoodies** – Hoodies are not acceptable as coats or as layers and should not be worn at school.
- **Cold weather layers** – Layers may be worn under uniform if needed for warmth. A school jumper or plain black V-neck jumper is permitted.

To support families, we hold a supply of donated uniform items, including jumpers, available free of charge from the Front Office. If purchasing a jumper is difficult at present, please do not hesitate to contact us so we can help.

Sixth Form: Dress Code Reminders

January is also a timely point to review Sixth Form dress code expectations to ensure students are presenting themselves in line with smart office wear standards. Current areas requiring attention include:

- **Suit jackets** – These are compulsory and must be worn into and out of lessons and around the school site.
- **Coats** - must be removed before entering registration or a lesson and do not substitute the need for a jacket
- **Jumpers/cardigans** must be smart, plain and thin with no logo, and do not replace the need for a blazer. Hoodies/Sweatshirts/jumpers with logos and strappy tops are not permitted.
- **Skirt length** – Skirts must be smart and near knee length.
- **Footwear** – Ugg boots, Doc Martens, trainers and similar footwear do not meet the requirement for smart business shoes.
- **Lanyards** – Wearing the correct Sixth Form lanyard at all times remains a safeguarding requirement. We would appreciate parents reinforcing the importance of this with their child.

Our aim is to keep rules to a minimum while ensuring all students present themselves smartly throughout the school day, including during breaks and when travelling to and from school. Tutors and staff will continue to check uniform and address any issues in line with the school's behaviour policy.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and support. If you have any questions or need assistance with uniform, please contact the school and we will be happy to help.

Mrs Shipway

This Fortnight at AGS

Festive French Magazines

Year 7 have made some amazing French Christmas magazines again this year! Here's a selection from 7BSL. Their brief was to use the French they have learned in lessons so far in a creative manner to produce a magazine aimed at children their own age. They researched how Christmas is celebrated in a French-speaking country of their choice (in English!); they designed puzzles, poems, cards and menus!

Mrs Jefferies



AGS Christmas Lunch



This Fortnight at AGS

Craft Club

Ms Din and Ms Brooker have introduced an exciting new Craft Club at lunchtime in the Bridge.

Learn to knit, crochet, or use our mindful colouring books – a place to relax, reset, and spend time together under the expert guidance of our super knitters and crocheters.

We have yarn and equipment available, and our experts are on hand to help you get started or guide you through your project. You're also welcome to bring along your own projects, or come along to learn a new craft.

The club runs on Fridays at lunchtime from 1:00–1:35. Feel free to bring your own projects or turn up ready to learn a new skill and enjoy some quiet time with new friends.



Mrs Maltby

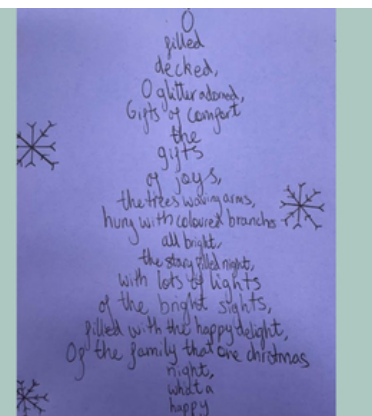
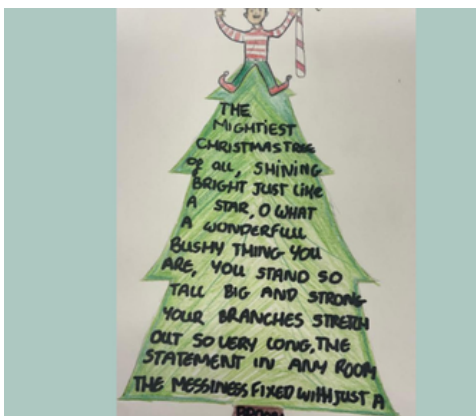
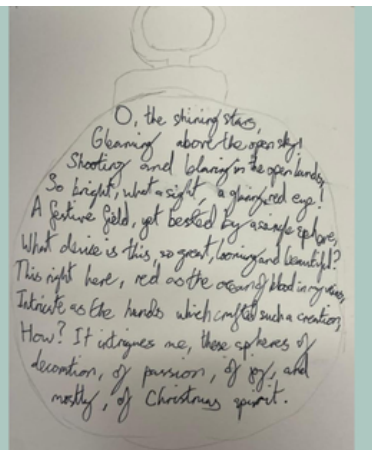
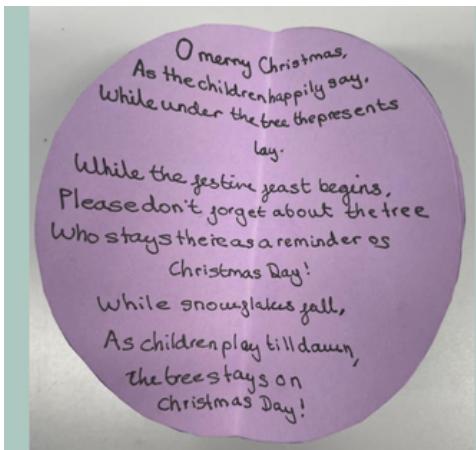


A brilliant evening in Alcester as our Young Enterprise team took part in the St Nicholas celebrations.



This Fortnight at AGS

Year 7 Carol Service



A beautiful morning over the AGS skyline!

A fantastic selection of festive poetry!

This Fortnight in Sport

Festive Fun Run!



Year 7 netball vs Alcester Academy



Interhouse Dodgeball



Y7 Indoor Athletics House Competition



PRE Market Place and Oracy

In this PRE assessment, Year 8 students explored the concept of reconciliation and what it might mean within different religious and non-religious worldviews. Pupils researched how reconciliation is understood and practiced, using examples such as Sikhism, Buddhism, Paganism, or non-religious perspectives.

Students presented their learning by creating an academic-style research poster focused on a key question about reconciliation. They then took part in a marketplace-style presentation, where pupils moved between different “stalls” to listen to short explanations, share ideas, and make notes on what they learned from their peers.

The assessment encouraged students to investigate, explain, and evaluate beliefs and practices, develop speaking and listening skills, and deepen their understanding of how reconciliation can involve forgiveness, justice, community, and repairing relationships in different worldviews.



Mrs Collings

House News



Alder



Birch



Hawthorn



Oak



Willow

As we reach the end of the calendar year, it feels appropriate to reflect on the energy, generosity and creativity that continue to define our House system. Although it isn't the end of the House year just yet, there is already so much to celebrate, with our DHB qualities and AGS attributes at the heart of everything our students do.

Our Outreach work has continued with real purpose. Oak House has been busy supporting the Arden Food Bank and coordinating Christmas cards for Meals on Wheels, spreading kindness well beyond our school community. Birch House brought festive cheer to life with a really enjoyable Christmas Fayre yesterday, filled with games, competitions and miles of smiles. The Christmas spirit was tangible!

Last week, Hawthorn House encouraged us all to wear our Christmas jumpers, raising an impressive amount for Water Aid.

Meanwhile, our students have been embracing creativity and curiosity across the curriculum. Year 7 have been hard at work in History building Medieval castles, showcasing both imagination and craftsmanship. Year 7 and Year 13 have also been decorating their form room Advent doors, adding colour and festive spirit to our corridors. Inter-House competitions have been in full swing too, with PE offering House athletics and dodgeball events bringing out teamwork, determination and plenty of healthy rivalry. The Science department has also kept us thinking with their ever-popular "Fun Fact" feature.

Looking ahead, a reminder that Birch House will be holding their non-uniform day this Friday, 19th December, with all proceeds supporting Macmillan nurses. Any financial contributions you are able to send in will be warmly appreciated.

And as we turn our thoughts to 2026, we are excited for Willow and Birch's upcoming outreach projects and Alder's charity event, all of which promise to continue the strong tradition of service and community that defines our Houses.

Thank you to all of the Y13 SALT team, House reps, students and parents for your support of the House System this year.

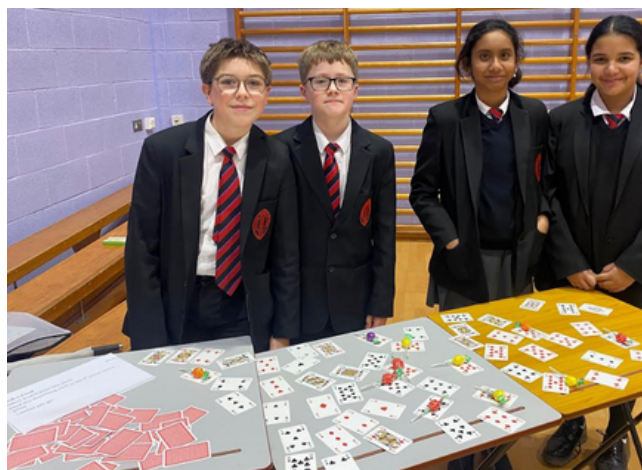
Mrs Bremner-Smith

House News

Advent Form Doors



Birch House Christmas Fayre



Oak Community and Outreach

A huge thank you to all the pupils who created beautiful Christmas cards for the Warwickshire Community Food Fleet! These thoughtful messages will bring much-needed cheer to vulnerable members of our community when they are handed out over the Christmas period. Below are some of my favourites!

We also extend a massive thank you to everyone who so kindly donated food tins for the Arden Foodbank. 130kgs of food was collected, which equates to over 150 meals. Your generosity will help provide essential food packages to families in need over the holidays.

Miss Lawson



If this is your design,
please come to the
7-11 Hub - you have
won a prize!



Year 7 Medieval Castle Competition

Year 7 have been busy making medieval castles this term. They were asked to use their subject knowledge to design castles which would be particularly difficult to attack. We had some really creative entries, so well done to all who took part.

Congratulations to our joint first prize winners:

1. Siddheswar and Sarveshwar G, Isaac and William M
2. Tabby H

Special mention to James C as first runner-up and Noah P and Harrison L as second runners -up.

Ms Bowles

GCHQ Challenge

In the Maths department this week students have been learning about GCHQ, who work alongside MI5 and MI6 to identify, analyse and disrupt threats to the UK in their collective mission to keep the country safe. That mission ranges from counterterrorism, tackling serious crime and threats from hostile states, through to protecting the armed forces and safeguarding institutions like the NHS from cybercrime.

Students have been introduced to the careers within GCHQ. From analysts and data scientists to mathematicians and linguists, it takes a huge mix of minds to keep the country safe.

Problem solving abilities, critical thinking and effective teamwork are all key qualities for aspiring professionals. It's their hope that these activities provide students with a valuable insight into how the skills they are developing in school today are used in the modern world of work and can translate into exciting future career possibilities within the technology sector and beyond.

The students enjoyed completing the annual GCHQ Christmas Card Codebreaking Challenge.

If you or your child would like to learn more about GCHQ and their mission, you can find further information on their website www.gchq.gov.uk

Mrs Newton



Bebras Challenge

Between the 10th and 21st November 2025, 499 pupils at AGS took part in the Bebras Challenge. The Bebras Challenge introduces computational thinking to students around the world. During the challenge the pupils tackled a series of interactive tasks, designed to encourage logical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Overall there were 248 Participation awards, 118 Merits and 125 Distinctions. 197 (39%) of the 499 pupils got a Gold award - this is given to the top 10% nationally.

Well done to all pupils who took part.

CyberFirst Girls

The CyberFirst Girls Competition aims to inspire girls interested in technology to pursue a career in cyber security. This year there were 3 groups of 4 girls from year 8. They tackled challenges from cryptography and logic to artificial intelligence and networking for the chance to be crowned Cyber Security Champions.

In the West Midlands, one of our teams made it into the top 10. AGS has made it into the top 10 for the West Midlands 2 years in a row. Out of the 10 schools, 3 including AGS are co-educational schools.

All the girls worked so hard at completing all the challenges and we couldn't be prouder of them!

Mrs Nicholas



A fantastic end to the term with our Amazing Christmas Raffle! Thanks to your generous support, we raised **£3182** and gave out **26** amazing prizes! **INCREDIBLE!**

We are really grateful to all our prize donors - including Mathnasium of Worcester, Arrow Mill Restaurant, The Village Café, Bidford, Harts Cocktail bar of Leamington, Oversley Groom, Speaking Matters, Von's Craftery, Pizza 48 Street Food, Bayliss and Harding, Tesco, Marks and Spencer's, Warwick Castle, Coughton Court, Spotty Pots of Studley, Aubrey Allen Deli of Leamington and Morrisons..

Please do follow us on [Facebook](#) to find out links to all these lovely people who have supported us!

We also want to say a big thank you to Henley Chocolate for our Christmas collaboration - you get amazing chocolate, they get support as an independent local business, we get funds raised! That's a Christmas hat-trick of feeling good, right there! Once the cocoa has settled, we will announce our fundraising total from this initiative. We're always on the look-out for more good ideas like this, so get in touch if you have one!

Early notice - our AGM is on Weds 14th January, 7pm at school - a quick business meeting, committee elections and then out for a meal afterwards. We're a friendly bunch, and you're welcome to join us for either part of the evening, or all - we'd love to see you! Formal notices can be found on our website, and have been emailed out this week.

That's bringing the end of this term to a wrap - what a busy and successful one it's been. Wishing you all a relaxed, and fabulous festive time. Recharge your batteries- we go again in January!

Von and the AGSF team



Parent Governor Vacancy

We're currently looking to strengthen our board with a parent governor, ideally someone with experience in secondary education, the legal profession, or diversity and inclusion.

Please [click here](#) for more information.

Applications close at 8am on Tuesday 23rd December.

If you would like to talk through the role prior to application, then please do not hesitate to contact Clare Cockbill, Chair of Governors at c.cockbill@alcesterags.com.



Illness Support through the Winter Months

During these colder months which are usually full of coughs and colds, Warwickshire Council have asked us to share with you some important information to help keep your young person healthy and happy in school. Please see this link for some helpful guidance: [Is my child too ill for school?](#)

If your young person is too ill to come to school, please let us know as early as possible by completing our online absence form found on the website [here](#).

Mrs Cope-Johnson

AGS PRESENTS

SHAP OF HORRORS

**21ST – 23RD
JANUARY 2026
7PM**

**TICKETS £8
PURCHASE VIA
EVOLVE SHOP**

DESIGNED BY ELEANOR HOGAN

**LAMDA
Opens
Doors**

For details:
speakingmatters121@gmail.com

AWARD WINNING

**CKMA
FAMILY
KARATE**

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YOUR 2 FREE TRIAL SESSIONS:**
07817 712536 / www.ckmakarate.co.uk
ckmakarate@gmail.com

**INCLUSIVE
ANY AGE / ABILITY
(3 yrs plus)**
as featured on BBC CWR

LOCATIONS:
Stratford upon Avon, Alcester, Norton
Lindsey, Coventry, Balsall Common,
Warwick, Ettington, Henley, Wellesbourne...

**AGS Dance Studio-
Wednesday, 18:00-19:30**



2025/26 Term Dates

Autumn Term

Term begins: Wednesday 3rd September 2025 - Years 7 and 12 only
Thursday 4th September 2025 - All students return
Half Term: Monday 20th October to Friday 31st October 2025
Term ends: Friday 19th December 2025

Spring Term

Term begins: Tuesday 6th January 2026
Half Term: Monday 16th February to Friday 20th February 2026
Term ends: Friday 27th March 2026

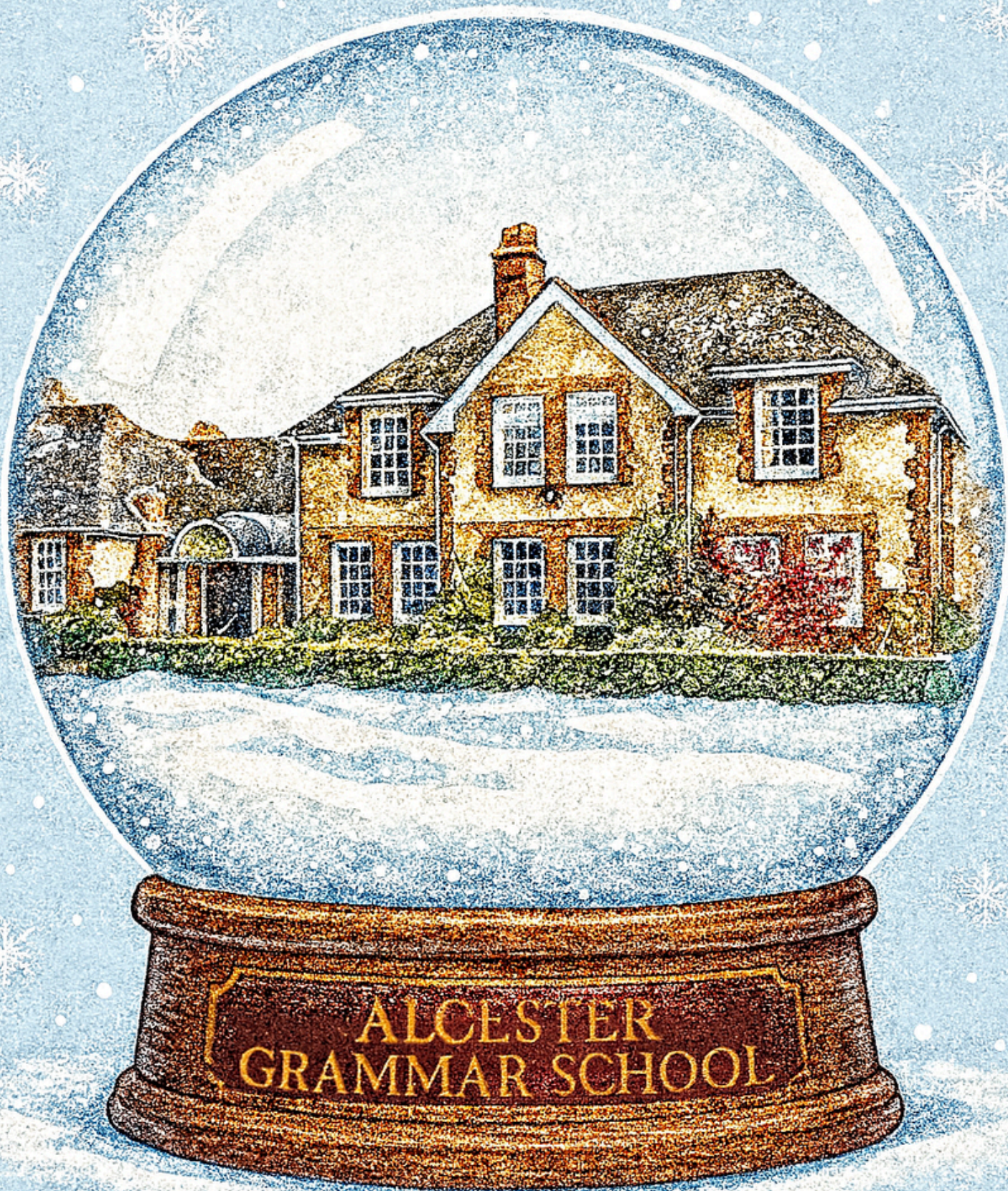
Summer Term

Term begins: Monday 13th April 2026
Half Term: Monday 25th May to Friday 29th May 2026
Term ends: Friday 17th July 2026

Inset Days (No school for students)

Monday 1st September 2025
Tuesday 2nd September 2025
Monday 5th January 2026
Friday 6th February 2026
Friday 22nd May 2026
Monday 20th July 2026





Merry Christmas