



Headteacher's Letter

Dear Readers,

What a final term! Despite the rather unsettled weather we have had a great summer at Aldridge School. The school has been a hive of educational activity ranging from the Faculty of Design receiving a grading of Good in a departmental Ofsted inspection in May, through to an Olympic Festival in July with over 500 primary school children attending.

The hard work of the students and staff is reflected in this edition of Headlines. There is much to celebrate and we are now looking forward to the new academic year, our first as an academy, and enjoying the opportunities this offers.

We hope you have a restful and possibly sunny break and we look forward to beginning the new academic year in September.

Mr D. Mountney BSc MA

Broadway Comes To Aldridge

A cast of twenty five upper school students started rehearsing *Guys and Dolls* in April. Serious singing and dancing has been taking place most evenings, Sundays and even through the Whitsun half term to polish the performance to the high standard traditionally expected of Aldridge school. Based on the short stories of Damon Runyon, this lively and good humoured show presents the conflict between the fervent Salvationists and the drinkers, gamblers and eccentrics they hope to convert.

The show marks the debut of Joe Cryan as a director. An ex student, musician and thespian, Joe has spent a gap year teaching music and drama in preparation for a full time degree course. He hopes to make a career on the professional stage following in the wake of other distinguished Aldridge alumni who have enjoyed success in the West End and Broadway as well as provincial theatres and television. The Aldridge heritage is also evident in Scott Warrilow who takes the roles of Harry the Horse and Joey Biltmore; Scott's mother is remembered for her sparkling performance of Maria in *The Sound of Music* in 1993.

Aldridge School orchestra, augmented by a number of past students and conducted by Director of Music Richard Mason, provides the very challenging music the week before embarking on their annual concert tour of the Black Forest in the final week of term. The performers have the



support of a large number of staff and friends of the school who have spent weeks building the set, sourcing and making properties to give an authentic 1950s atmosphere and preparing lighting and make up. Costumes have mainly been provided by the cast members but they have been supported by members of the English Faculty whose needlework skills have transformed the Aldridge uniform to very convincing Salvation Army ensembles of the period.

Running for five nights in the penultimate week of term *Guys and Dolls* is a tremendous finale, not only for the Performance Faculty, but the whole school in what has been a momentous year.



Geographical Association

Worldwise Challenge Weekend

As Aldridge School has been successful in competing in two consecutive Local Worldwide Quizzes, six of our G&T Year 9-10 Geographers (Year 9 – Charlotte Smith, Emily Westley and Matt Easthope; Year 10 – Ben Pickering, Ella Kinder and Josh Townrow) were invited to the Lake District for the national Worldwide Challenge Weekend. This event was hosted by the Geographical Association and the Field Studies Council at the Blencathra Field Centre in Keswick.



Ten schools across the UK (from Edinburgh to Dorset) were invited to send up to two team of students to take part in a broad range of enjoyable and competitive fieldwork activities. Each team gave a creative oral and visual presentation to a panel of judges comprising a combination of GA Worldwide volunteers and FSC staff. Regardless of two fantastic presentations, the competition was tough and Aldridge School was highly commended.

Shakespeare is the best Option

Students from Years 8 and 9 were invited to take part in an RSC Drama day as a taster session for their Option choices for next year. They spent the first part of the day producing a dramatic re-enactment of 'Julius Caesar' and gaining an understanding of the characters and themes. They then went on to watch an RSC Live Webcast of the RSC's new production of 'I, Cinna' which shows the events of 'Julius Caesar' through the eyes of a minor character called Cinna. During the live Webcast, the character Cinna asked the students to write keywords onto a piece of paper; students then went on to use the keywords as a stimulus for their own piece of devised drama.

The day was a resounding success showing the key elements of Drama, such as collaboration, listening skills, creativity and overall a commitment to performance! We were very proud of the efforts of all involved!

Post Apocalypse Art

Year 10 as part of their BTEC Art and Design course are currently working on a fashion module which has the theme post apocalypse.



Within lessons they have been designing and making costumes appropriate to a post apocalyptic landscape. As part of this work we were lucky to secure the services of sculptural artist Nick Garnett. Nick uses reclaimed scrap materials to produce his amazing sculptures. The students spent a day with Nick and produced four vehicles using old washing machines, bedsteads, wheels and even an old canoe. Students then used the vehicles to set up an appropriate scenario for the event.



Young Angler

Sam Gallagher is set to feature in a new TV series 'Fishing in the Footsteps of Mr. Crabtree' due to be broadcast in the Autumn. Sam is the winner of a national competition that aimed to find a young angler to appear in the series. In May Sam spent two days filming along side John Bailey, a professional angling guide, author and presenter. The experience gave Sam an opportunity to learn more about fishing techniques and strategies, the natural world, the aquatic environment, various different ecosystems and dealing with the many challenges that present themselves when immersed in this environment.

Fishing in the Footsteps of Mr. Crabtree is supported by national bodies such as the Environment Agency and The Angling Trust, all with the aim of getting more youngsters into angling; Sam is a shining light in the world of the young angler.

Alton Towers

On Saturday 14th July 17 Staff took 170 students to Alton Towers for this year's third and final reward trip. Both staff and students really enjoyed the day. Congratulations to all the students who have been awarded places on the reward trips this year. We believe the reward trips are a good way of showing our students that hard work pays. As good as they are, the reward trips would not be possible without the help of the amazing Staff at Aldridge School. Next year's reward trips are currently being planned so keep up the hard work!

Business and Politics in America

Summer 2012 will be a particularly exciting time for three Year 10 students who have been awarded places on an exciting exchange programme in America. Madeleine Turner and Ben Pickering are two of only eight students to represent Great Britain on an Entrepreneurship Youth Exchange. They will pair up with American High School students to learn how to think creatively and develop skills needed to be successful entrepreneurs. They will be visiting world renowned institutions including Harvard Business School's Rock Centre for Entrepreneurship and Dartmouth University's Tuck School of Business. During their visit they will be staying with host families and have the opportunity to participate in sports and cultural activities.



Alice Rhind-Tutt will be participating in the prestigious US Elections and Civic Participation Programme which boasts such alumni as Tony Blair and William Hague. Alice will be learning about the American political system in Washington DC before travelling to the crucial swing state of Ohio to look at political campaigns. A visit to Charlotte, North Carolina

where the National Convention of the Democratic Party takes place will enable Alice to observe the environment of a large political event before visiting the University of Virginia. Staying with American families will enable all students to observe American life in more depth including attending some classes in a high school and socialising with peers.

Madeleine, Ben and Alice underwent a rigorous application and selection process and are very excited about the prospect of what promises to be a memorable and life changing summer; we wish them every success.

Duke of Edinburgh

Congratulations to the Year 10 Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award Group, who completed their expedition over the weekend. This involved walking about 25km in two days carrying all their camping equipment and food. After Friday's deluge, the ground was very muddy but everyone managed to complete the route in good time and without getting lost. In order to complete their Bronze Award, the group now have to finish their Physical Activity, Skills and Volunteering sections.



The group are: Alice Roe, Amundeeep Rajania, Rebecca Macey, Amy Brotherton, Ella Kinder, Louise Slimm, Madeleine Turner, Jorja Smith, Jed Venables, Connor Perry, George Quirk, Ellie Yapp, Lucy Mitchell, Fergus Mowbray, Ben Pickering and Josh Townrow.

Summer Projects

Following months of hard work and planning Aldridge School has a busy summer of projects and refurbishment ahead. The school pavilion is undergoing a complete refurbishment and will be utilised as an extra facility by the PE department. This has been made possible with the help of funding provided by Walsall Council. The Library is being stripped out and refurbished. It will be painted, carpeted and fitted out with new shelving and furniture. Twenty classrooms are to be decorated and fitted with new carpet. In order to improve the look of 'A' block main corridor and reduce noise levels, carpet tiles are being fitted.

The Fire Alarm across the site is being upgraded to a fully addressable fire alarm system, which provides early warning in the event of a fire. The wooden floor in both Goodsell and Whitman Halls will be rejuvenated through a process of sanding and re-sealing. The boys' side of the swimming pool is being reglazed with blue aluminium frames as can be seen in many other locations around the site. Tarmac work will be carried out with a view to removing trip hazards and eliminating some of the notoriously muddy areas within the school grounds. To continue the focus on improving 6th Form facilities, planning is in place to redesign and modernise their washrooms. We will be replacing over 20% of our IT infrastructure and expanding the range of our wireless network.

Trampolining

On Friday the 27th April, 18 girls from Years 7 to 11 took part in the Walsall School Trampolining competition. The Under 13 Novice team won a silver medal and the Under 13 Elite team won the competition. Charlotte Handley (Year 7) came second in the individual competition with Mollie Darrock (Year 8) gaining the bronze medal.

The Under 15 Elite team came first overall; with Sian Amos (Year 10) winning a Silver medal in the individual competition. Katie Langridge (Year 11) competed in her first competition and came second in the under 18-novice competition.

The Under 18 Elite team also gained success finishing with a silver medal and Danielle Roberts also achieved a Silver medal in the individual competition. All competitors from Aldridge school worked exceptionally hard to perfect their routines and did very well in the competition. Congratulations.

Year 8 Football

Year 8 football team won the Walsall schools' intermediate cup in a thrilling end to end final against Alumwell. The final was played at Pelsall Villa FC in torrential rain and hail but this did not prevent a match full of excitement. With both schools having many chances, Aldridge were able to get the ball in the back of the net more times than their battling opponents with the final score being 8-6 for an Aldridge victory.



Year 7 Gymnastics

The Year 7 Gymnastics team competed in the Walsall Schools' gymnastics competition in June and performed very well against other schools despite being one of the youngest teams competing. Well done!



Aldridge Ambassadors

Aldridge Ambassadors are a group of Year 7 students that have volunteered to go into Primary Schools. They have been in to talk to Year 6 students, who are due to make the move to Aldridge in September. Training has been provided by Mrs Sutton and Mrs White. Our Ambassadors have talked to students about any concerns they may have, such as what Aldridge School is like and what is expected from them. The Ambassadors are going to be there to support and help them during their transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3. This can be a daunting time in any student's academic life; hopefully our Ambassadors have helped them on their journey.



Recently our Ambassadors have helped out with the Year 6 Induction Day. They were given some huge responsibilities and were praised for their behaviour and positive attitudes. They definitely did Aldridge School proud.

Aldridge School - A Science College

Your future starts here

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