



Headteacher's Letter

Dear Readers,

As the 2009-10 academic year comes towards its end, there is a chance to reflect on the hard work and success of the past twelve months. This is clearly shown in the following pages and in the progress we have all made in raising the standards in the school. The latest feedback from our annual surveys show that the students have rated their school as good in every aspect, and outstanding in its ability to improve further.

We are not resting on this encouraging result, but looking at the next phase of development, from the shortened Key Stage three for our incoming students, to our House flashes and rolling lunchtime, we are making changes to improve outcomes. We are committed to achieving the very best in all we do, retaining the best of the past and the most effective of the new. If you wish to help us with this please attend our APCC meetings, which are listed on our website.

We hope you have a restful and "sunny" holiday and look forward to seeing you all in September ready for a new academic year.

Mr D. Mountney BSc MA

Walsall Education Business Partnership Award

Walsall EBP are aware of the tremendous help, support and time that secondary schools devote to education business link activities through their involvement with EBP programmes. Introduced six years ago, the School Award is designed to recognise those schools who it is considered have given outstanding support over a sustained period.

For a number of years, Aldridge School have supported a number of Walsall EBP activities including work experience, practice interviews and curriculum enhancement activities. In the last three years however, the school has significantly increased the range and number of activities offered to include: Enterprise Challenges, Primary Enterprise Link work and Health & Safety.

We Will Rock You!

In the immortal words of Freddie Mercury "The show must go on!". The cast and crew of 'We Will Rock You!' worked tirelessly for months to create a spectacular success. The musical which has been a West End hit is about the future of music and the desire to break free from the constraints put upon the Gaga kids.

The show was on for four successive evenings and two of the evenings were a completely Full House! The cast rocked the audience with Queen hits such as 'Bohemian Rhapsody', 'Somebody to love' and 'Radio Gaga'.



Chloe Wharton 1125B (Cooper & Jordan) as 'Scaramouche' and Dan Alexis 1327D (Leighswood) as 'Galileo' were absolutely amazing and captivated the audience with their characterisation and vocal quality. Lucy Bunce 1211B (Cooper & Jordan) as 'Meat' and Jon Caddick 1228aL (Cooper & Jordan) as 'Britney' were charismatic and humorous. The evil 'Killer Queen' Charlotte White 1211B (Glenmead Primary) and her power crazed comrade 'Kashoggi' Tom Bayley 1327D (Cooper & Jordan) were riveting to watch. The audience were left rolling with laughter from Joe Cryan's 1269S (Leighswood) performance as 'Pop!' I don't think anyone in the audience will be able to look at a video tape in the same way ever again! The entire cast showed a high level of professionalism and dedication to the show and this was evident in the final production.

All this success, however, could not have happened without the hard work and direction given to the cast by Joe Green 1327D (Leighswood) and his Musical Director, Richard Dawson 1371S (Old Church CE Primary). They were both truly inspirational and showed an enormous amount of talent and commitment. Mr Bowyer and Mr Noakes were an integral part of the stage design, set building and lighting. Well done!

A Fond Farewell to Bryntysilio

Since Bryntysilio opened its doors, children from Walsall have benefited from the experience of visiting this beautiful house in North Wales.



We at Aldridge have not only taken advantage of the brilliant outward bound courses but also from the week holidays offered in non-term time.

Staff give up a week to take students on holiday. Thanks Mrs Michniewicz, Mr Fendek, Mr Morton, Miss Deinega, Miss Heggerty Mr Lowe and Mr Baily for coming again this year. This year will be our last due to council cuts which include closing Brynty.

Some students enjoy their holiday so much that they volunteer to act as mentors in following years. The list is large but some examples Mr Baily and Miss Deinega who went as students and are now going as teachers.

Rob Francis 1333L (The Radleys Primary), who has been every year since Year 7, is leaving this year for university, but assured us he would be back to help at Brynty. Katie and Rosie Deinega 1161D (New Invention Junior) who have been going since they were little and are devastated at its closure. Josh Davinhill 1269S (St John's CE Primary) and Hannah Farley 1211B (Lindens Primary) who have been for the last four years and will sincerely miss the opportunity of spending a week encouraging younger students to have fun.

Laura Parslow 1213D (Leighswood), Nicola Baily 1129L (Whetstone Field Primary), Tom Green, Jack Boden 1188S (Whetstone Field Primary), Joe Whale 1110S (Manor Primary), Andrew Lloyd 1188s (Leighswood), Simon Philips 1213D (Cooper & Jordan), Alex Smith 1161D (Leighswood), Michael Smith 1161D (Whetstone Field), Shannon Perry 1110S (Chuckery Infant), Emily Kettle 1133L (Cooper & Jordan), Katie Aldridge 1148D (Ryders Hayes), Rhiannon Kimberly 1148D (Leighswood) and Helen Nightingale 1188S (Delves Junior) to name a few.

Thanks for all their hard work and help.

Russia 2011

If you have ever wanted to travel rather than just holiday then Russia may be the trip for you. It is an opportunity to see a country that has only recently opened up its borders to foreigners.

It is a once in life time experience to see a country that is undergoing rapid development but that is still culturally very alien to our own. Russia is not a place you would think of as a family holiday but rather a place to visit to give the individual a life experience. If you would like further information on this exciting adventure collect a letter from Mrs Michniewicz Room 33.



Thanks for coming!

What more can I say. Every one of you has contributed to our improved attendance. All students have done very well, with each house battling every month to be top of the attendance tree.

This year we have 60 students who have achieved 100% attendance in this academic year. All will receive a voucher reward. I have also had the pleasure of submitting the names of these students to Walsall Education, who will be awarding a certificate to the nominated students. They are holding an Attendance Rewards Award day to be held on Wednesday 14th July, at the EDC.

All those named will be entered into a prize draw for items such as digital cameras and MP3 players. Students lucky enough to be drawn out will receive their prize from Walsall's, Mick Kearns.

This is a fantastic achievement and their efforts should be recognized. Year 10 have provided the largest crop of 100 percenters, at 18, with many having 'done the double' over the last two years.

However, one student stands out and with very good reason. Sian Middleton has not missed a single day in her 5 year career at Aldridge School, I don't know if any staff can say the same! Well done Sian you should be extremely proud of your efforts.

Aldridge School Conquer Lloret De Mar

Aldridge School took 17 girls and 23 boys to Lloret De Mar during May Half Term. On the Monday and Tuesday the girls took part in a U13 Netball tournament against other English schools and the boys competed in an U13 football tournament.



In the morning, each team was taken for an hour's training session by a qualified coach. They developed skills and tactics which helped them in the afternoon competitions.



The "A" team girls went undefeated throughout through the netball tournament and played exceptionally well. They scored 70 goals against the 11 teams they played throughout the tournament. The girls were in a class of their own and showed a tremendous amount of skill and sportsmanship. They went on to win the final 22-0. The "B" team improved enormously throughout the tournament and worked really well as a team supporting each other and thoroughly deserved to win their last game convincingly. Both teams had a superb attitude and tried their best, well done!

The boys were split into two teams, with both performing admirably on both days. The "B" team put in some committed performances against some extremely strong schools in their group but unfortunately did not qualify from their group.

The "A" team won eight and drew one out of their nine games without a single goal conceded. The final proved one step too far for a tired bunch of lads and we were defeated by Sheffield by two goals to nil. Over the two days the lads were very supportive of each other and played with an excellent attitude.

Well done everyone!

Walsall Regeneration Winners

The following students took part in the Walsall regeneration challenge organised the Education Business Partnership.



Keyleigh Lowe 907L (Leighswood), Hannah Bates 955D (Whetstone Field), Lauren Wittman 959B (Meadow View), Paul Joannou 959B (Cooper & Jordan), George Caulton 914S (Whetstone Field), Josh Beach 955D (Radleys Primary), Ellie Drakeley 955D (Whetstone Field), Charlotte Jackson 914S (Little Bloxwich CE), Johanna-Mae Colman 955D (Cooper & Jordan), Chrissie Hawkins 959B (Leighswood), Abigail Miles 914S (Castlefort JMI), Katie Langridge 944D (Whetstone Field) and Hayley Mitchell 955D (Cooper & Jordan).

The group of students worked exceptionally well on a project to improve the town centre of Walsall. The students were asked to focus on improving the town centre and to present ideas on how to generate new businesses into the town. The group presented their ideas in the form of an advert based on the Queen song 'We Will Rock You'.

The judges were extremely impressed with the presentation and unanimously gave them first place and the trophy.

Wimbledon Treat

Eight lucky lads travelled to Wimbledon on Monday 28th June. Driven by two even luckier teachers, Mr Sidaway and Mrs Herriotts, we arrived, after an eventful journey, in time to take our seats on No.1 court. In the first match we saw Clijsters beat Henin in a close three set match. Djokovic beat Hewitt in the next game on court 1 and we were also entertained by a small group of Australian supporters in the arena. The climax of the day was seeing Rafael Nadal beat Mathieu; were we watching the new Wimbledon champion in action?



In between these games we were able to wander around the outside courts to watch other games, soak up the atmosphere on 'Henman Hill or Murray Mound' and have some food.....no-one bought strawberries and cream or champagne but the pizza and chips went down well.

A very long but exciting day out and one that we'll all remember for a long time, thanks to Mr Wright for organising this chance of a lifetime!

Welcome To Georgie Gray

Aldridge School would like to welcome its newest member Georgie Beau Gray daughter of Mrs and Mr Gray. Georgie was born on 3rd June weighing 8lb 1oz.



Mrs Gray said "We are both over the moon with our daughter and how well everything has gone for us. We feel so lucky to have Georgie home safe and sound."

Sports Leaders

Year 10 pupils have been following a Sports Leaders UK Level 1 course in their core PE lessons. This requires them to take responsibility for their lessons, learning how to lead warm ups; plan and deliver skills and games; and officiate in a variety of sports. A number of pupils have also had the opportunity to develop their leadership skills by delivering PE sessions in local primary schools.

A total of 158 pupils have completed the qualification which saw them all play a part in organising activities for the rest of the school at Aldridge School during National School Sports Week. The Leaders led tournaments in football, rounders, ultimate frisbee and dance. Well done to all those who have passed the qualification.



Extended School's Program

The summer term has seen Aldridge School begin their extended schools program. Pupils from Aldridge School, Cooper and Jordan, Leighswood, Whetstone, Radleys and St Mary of the Angels primary schools were invited to attend a variety of courses in Tennis, Art, Gymnastics and Trampolining. All courses proved very successful with all pupils involved enjoying the experience. The extended school's program will be continuing in the Autumn term, information regarding the courses will be released in September.

Football Focus

Aldridge School and Starlands St Anne's Football club have formed a strong relationship through the 2009/10 football season. Starlands St Anne's FC have started playing all of their home fixtures on the playing fields at Tynings Lane which has proved a big boost for Aldridge School and their community links. Starlands have also benefited from being able to play all of their home fixtures on the same site for the first time.

Macbeth

I say the word Shakespeare and I'm presuming half of you are already tying your laces to run a mile, but I'll tell you something, you have no idea of the truly extraordinary experience of seeing Shakespeare's work up on stage and, in particular at his own theatre, the Globe on the South bank in London. Exciting, dramatic and horrifyingly gruesome instantly spring to mind upon recollection of our experience at the Globe, in which the true power of Shakespeare's work was portrayed to us in a way like I have never seen before.



The Theatre itself is a magnificent building, with the beautiful architecture reflecting back to that of the original globe, built during the Elizabethan period, adding to the true Shakespearian experience. Nonetheless, a great surprise was thrust upon us as we entered the Globe itself, as a vast black canvas surrounded the stage, right where we were supposed to be standing! After a period of confusion we realised the purpose of the device, and crawled underneath it towards the front, searching for holes in which to poke our heads through. It was at this point that we realised we were to watch the entire performance with only our heads sticking through the canvas, a sight that caused much laughter between the group, as the obscure fabric made the entire audience look like a sea of floating heads. However, it was not until later on that we understood the true function of the canvas, as while we were waiting for the performance to begin; strange movements began to occur around our feet, scaring the life out of members of the audience, including myself.

After peeping underneath I fell in to a state of complete shock and fear as I saw the most horrific looking lady I have ever laid eyes upon, one of the witches from the play, running underneath the canvas stroking the audience's legs and provoking panic throughout. As a result the atmosphere within the theatre maintained a high level of fear and speculation, emphasising the effect of the performance on the audience.

The performance itself was not only fantastic, but tremendously realistic, resultant of a magnificent combination of stage techniques. Although many find it difficult to understand and interpret the language used by Shakespeare, the true drama of the production limited the problems caused by this, and created an enjoyable experience for all. Horrifying in parts as it may be, and extremely gruesome as a result of the consistent use of stage blood, Macbeth pleased all with a great involvement of the comic factor, in the form the Porter, who regularly had the entire audience in fits of laughter as a result of his exploitation of his grotesque physique and pantomime style sense of humour. The actors demonstrated great talent, in particular the young children who played up to their parts brilliantly, making their murders later on ever the more realistic and horrifying to

watch. The play on a whole I believe was brilliant, and I anticipate studying it in greater detail next year.

After the performance we stayed in the restaurant for a while, during which we were able to meet some of the actors from the play and congratulate them on their performance. Certain members of the group, however, found it difficult to speak to the witches, as even though they were out of costume, they were still frightened of them. The visit was not just for personal reasons however, as a result of the Year 13's spending part of the past year studying it and Year 12 hoping to study it next year. Nonetheless, I firmly believe that although the play is a piece to be studied, it felt far more enjoyable than an educational trip, but I guess that's just the true power of Shakespeare's work. On a whole, we had a fantastic day and seeing Shakespeare's work brought to life was an incredible experience, and I would without a doubt recommend it to all.

Aldridge School Goes Green

Eco-club was set up in November 2009, its aim; to improve awareness of sustainability through practical application, in other words show pupils how they can grow their own food and recycle more effectively and in a fun hands on way.

Over the academic year the group of year 8 pupils have transformed the area known as 'the pond', into a clear and organised space where they are now growing plants including a flowering border and two salad/herb/vegetable borders.



The Eco Club have obtained resources through a quiz (to raise money), donations from generous staff and by participating in the British Gas Generation Green Scheme.

The scheme has enabled the students to gain resources without costing the school or community; the resources include three raised planting borders, seeds, seeding trays, compost and much more.

Overall, the students involved in the Eco-Club have gained a greater understanding of sustainability and gardening in general. They want to continue their hard work into next year and even want to get other students involved from different years. The next stage to their development is to regenerate the pond itself, and establish it as a fully functioning pond so it can become a useful resource once again.



Art and Design Exhibition 2010

This June saw the A-level and GCSE art exhibitions take place. This was the second year that the end of year show has run and again it proved to be very popular with pupils, parents and governors! Visitors to the show were able to have refreshments and chat to the pupils about their art work.



Included in the show was a life size pencil drawing of Usain Bolt, this was created by Andrew Fisher 1333L (Leighswood) and took over 70 hours to complete! Andrew is hoping to study physiotherapy next year at university but has said he intends to keep up his art work in his own time.

Other pieces on show included 3D 'Sock Monsters' and portraits using Pyrography – this is a technique using a heated poker to burn marks in to wood to create your image.

We would like to wish all the students luck in the future, many of whom are going on to study art. You've worked extremely hard this year and put on a fantastic show.

Thank you!

Aldridge school Art department.

Oh Yes They Did



Year 9 Pupils have taken part and won a competition to design a costume for *W i d o w T w a n k e y*. The event was organised by

Walsall EPB and took place at the Grand Theatre in Wolverhampton. Pupils had to present their finished costumes to members of the Grand Theatre Board and representatives from the Art Council West Midlands.

Lorenzo Cosco from Walsall EPB said "I can't praise your kids highly enough today for their attitude, behavior and talent. Calling them a credit to the school isn't enough. It was a tough contest with four superb teams so they should be really proud of coming top."

Geolympics Geography Interhouse Quiz

The Geography Department held their annual Geolympics Interhouse quiz on Tuesday 15th June. Five teams of up to six pupils entered from the four houses. The winning team called themselves Geography Gods and Goddesses and consisted of Josey Durrant (Holy Trinity), Amy O'Neill (Leighswood), James Allen (Whetstone Field), Sarah-Jayne Bucknall (Whetstone Field), James Langridge (Whetstone Field) and Danny Pointon (Whetstone Field) and were all from 722a Daniels House. The pupils were presented with a certificate, badge and an Atlas; and gained valuable points for the Interhouse competition.



How Good Could Learning Be?

During the spring and summer term 10 pupils from Years 7 and 8 represented Aldridge School in 'How Good Could Learning Be?' project, as part of the Black Country Challenge, working with pupils in Years 5 and 6 from Leighswood, Cooper and Jordan and Whetstone Field Primary Schools (Year 7 – Paige Jackson 717D (Blackwood), Lydia Evans 717D (Leighswood), William Young 776B (Whetstone Field), Max O'Brien 776B (Cooper & Jordan) and James Paine 768S (Cooper & Jordan); Year 8 – Jorja Smith 880L, Jack Measham 858S (Cooper & Jordan), Amundeeep Rajania 858S (Cooper & Jordan), Samuel Rasmin 826L (Whetstone Field) and Alice Rhind-Tutt 804B).



Pupils undertook active research on what makes learning interesting, valuable and relevant over the course of 3 workshop days and numerous lunch/form time sessions.

Questionnaires and interviews were taken from a sample of Year 7 and 8 pupils at Aldridge School to investigate 'What makes learning fun?' and 'Are pupils given time to evaluate their own progress and learning?'

Geography Gifted and Talented

On 15th June a Year 9 Geography Gifted and Talented field visit took place to Bridgnorth, this was held in conjunction with Birmingham University education department. 62 pupils developed their investigative and map work skills during the day. They had a great opportunity to experience geography out in 'the field'.



The main results from the Year 7 project 'What makes learning fun?' showed the majority of pupils enjoy learning through group work as everyone gets a chance to be involved and be active. Half of the pupils questioned found learning fun when they were challenged to use thinking skills as it gives a sense of achievement. Most of the pupils surveyed felt that it is important to be involved in the decisions about how they learn.

The main results from the Year 8 project 'Are pupils given time to evaluate their own progress and learning?' showed most pupils do get time to evaluate their learning through a variety of methods including peer assessment, three stars and a wish and thinking hats. They also found that sharing success criteria before and after assessments is important and feel more time should be given to evaluate their progress and learning.

The research findings are to be shared with other schools in the Black Country area via the Black Country Challenge.

Miss Micklewright (Geography Department).

Student Development Department

There have been a lot of positive things happening in the Student Development of late. Last month, with Ms Deinega's help, a group of Year 10 students planned and organised a 'Mad Hatter's Tea Party' at Walsall College. Reece Price 1012L (Rushall JMI) and Azhar Mahmood 1045S (North Walsall Primary) treated their guests to some delicious homemade cakes, tea, coffee and fruit punch. Whilst they dined, the guests watched a range of short films produced by Grant Ottewell 1089S (Redhouse JMI), Adam and Ryan Leach 1053B (Leighswood). They had all worked extremely hard to make the event a success.

Mrs Trivasse recently organised a day out to Ash End Farm for her 'Skills for Working Life group.' Students spent the day touring the farm and helping the staff to feed and care for the animals. The assessed activities, will contribute towards the completion of their qualification.

In May, Mr Rahman, Mr Roberts and Mrs Michniewicz took thirteen students to Pizza Hut as reward for their participation in the Multiple Heritage Project. Over the last twelve months, these students have spent a lot of their own time helping and arranging on their own initiative, events during Black History Month as well as a National Mixed Heritage Conference in Walsall for pupils all over the country.

Mrs Banks also organised a buffet lunch for students who have successfully completed the One to One Tution programmes in English and Maths. Students were rewarded with a certificate in recognition of their achievements.

The 'Social Club' run by Mrs Morris from SEN and Mrs Roper from the Alder Centre, is a regular weekly event. It was set up in September 2009, with the aim of promoting friendships amongst new Year 7 students, to help them settle into secondary school life. The club runs at lunchtime, once a week and the students eat lunch together and engage in a variety of craft and interactive games. It is about having FUN together. Students who may have started the year feeling a little isolated, have benefited from the group and almost all, now have a strong network of friends. We are looking forward to meeting the new Year 7 students next year and we hope that this success will be repeated.

Safety First

Pupils at Aldridge will be safer in the workplace thanks to a new qualification from the British Safety Council (BSC) that teaches young people about the hazards they may face when they go out on work experience or start their first job.

During Enrichment Days 1 and 2, Year 10 pupils put together personal portfolios covering a range of topics such as hazards, safety signs, personal protective equipment and fire for which they will receive a nationally recognised certificate.

'Aldridge is the first school in the borough to undertake the award. This is a very positive development to ensure the safety of our young people in the workplace. A very big thank you to Walsall EBP (Education Business Partnership) for organising this for us.'



ECM Award

Every child does matter at Aldridge School, where we have just received an award recording and celebrating our successful implementation of the five ECM goals.

Aldridge School easily met the 12 'ECM Standards' devised by Ms Cheminais, who is the director of Every Child Matters Solutions, the company which validates the award. The 12 Standards, which are based on the Government's five main goals, include environment, personalised learning and partnership with parents, as well as transition and transfer, ethos, leadership and management and environment.

Ms Cheminais said, "[I] couldn't stop thinking about the lovely day I had spent in school hearing about the great ECM work taking place first hand."

Aldridge School - A Science College

Your future starts here

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