

Dear Parents and Carers

As we fast approach the end of the autumn term, I would like to update you all on this term's events and inform you of events and key dates for the start of the spring term. As always, this term has been a very busy one, but also a very rewarding one! Our new Y7 students are settling in well, I am nothing but impressed by their positive attitudes to learning, their uniform and their behaviour. Thank you to all families, feeder schools and staff involved in transition for making the start of the new term run so smoothly for them. All other students have also made a good start, thank you once again to all those parents/carers who continue to support the school by sending your children in the correct uniform and well equipped for a day of learning! Please do take some time to read about the fantastic things that have taken place over the course of the term and all about some of our upcoming events. There are also important dates for your diary at the end of the newsletter.

Please also note that we will be closing at 12.05pm on the last day of this term, the 21st December and will reopen to students on the 8th January 2019. More information about this day has been outlined in a letter and given to students.

Exam season - Summer 2019

It is important for all parents/carers of Y11 students to note that there is an additional 'contingency' date on the national examinations calendar of 26th June 2019. This means that this additional day could be used, if for any national reason, a planned exam day was postponed.

Summer 2018 Results

Our results were again pleasing with students making good progress from their starting points. We were particularly pleased with the increase in the % of students achieving both maths and English at a grade 4 and above. Students also performed particularly well in the sixth form, with results above national averages across the board. We held our presentation evening on the 22nd November which was a lovely event and a pleasure to celebrate the achievements of our young people.

School calendar 2018-2019

We know how important it is to you to have key school dates in advance, so please visit our academy website or Facebook page to see the school term dates for 2018-19 and 2019-20. These are the agreed Wakefield LA calendar and will be adopted by all schools within our Trust. Inset dates are not published as yet for that academic year.

Pack your 3 Ps!

In September, we had a big push on being in school and ready to learn. Having the correct equipment is a huge part of this. All students are still expected to have the '3Ps' (planner, pen, pencil) every day and their planners will be checked to record this. Please ensure your child comes to school every day with the correct equipment, and a bag to carry their belongings in. We will continue to run a school shop for emergency stationery purchases, before school and at break time each day, to support with lost items. This will be located in Cool Off reception and will be reasonably priced!



Your opinion matters!

We would really appreciate it if you could take the time to follow the link to give your views about the academy. We really do care about parent/carer opinions and take them all very seriously. www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk



Although improving, this remains a key priority for the Academy. I would like to congratulate all students with improved attendance as well as those at 100% and those students who are punctual every day. Thank you for your continued support with this and please remember – attendance at school is vital to your child's success, academic and other.

WW1 Centenary Event

As part of our commemoration of the centenary of the end of WW1, we held a number of different events and activities over the week. Students had a remembrance themed assembly and form time activities throughout the week to mark this significant, historic event. Members of the community were also invited to the Academy to enjoy some fantastic performances and afternoon tea.

Head Boy and Girl – it's a first for Airedale Academy!

Airedale Academy's first ever Head Boy and Head Girl took up office recently. Tomasz Szczypinski and Nell Cowell will be ambassadors for the academy, support our students in all year groups and work closely with the senior leadership team to take the school from strength to strength. As prominent figures within the academy, they will also lead the revamped Student Council, driving improvements around school and the wider community. Both students have settled excellently into their positions, and have already been involved in the Centenary celebrations, Anti Bullying Week and the selection of new student council members.

At a time when Airedale Academy is developing an ever growing ethos of our core values - Respect, Ambition, Bravery - these appointments could not come at a better time. Congratulations, to Tom and Nell!



A musical feast!

The Autumn term is a busy season for the music department with many of our groups performing in the local community and within the academy. First of all, we began with the Centenary celebrations where the choir performed a WW1 medley followed by solo performers from years 7/8. This year we have also been lucky enough to have as many as 4 piano players performing ambience music for our open evenings.

Our choir began the festive season early with a November 'Christmas Light Switch On' performance at Airedale library. Our head boy, Tom, was there to introduce the choir which featured students from years 7 to 11 performing to the local community. The choir was so good that they have been asked back to the library to perform again on the 19th of December and during the last day of term in Christmas Assemblies.

Once again, thank you to everybody that has supported the music department so far this year. Merry Christmas!!

Burberry Partnership

We are very privileged to have been invited to take part in the exciting Burberry Inspire Project. Chosen as one of only 8 schools nationwide, this 4 year long programme will see every pupil in Key Stage 3 have the opportunity to visit one of four exciting cultural organisations, starting with The Hepworth this year. We will also be welcoming into school an Artist in Residence who will work with our staff to enrich and broaden pupil experience of the creative arts. We will update you with more news as the project progresses.



Christmas Hampers

Once again the staff of Airedale Academy and local businesses have been incredibly generous and donated to our hampers for local families. We have around 15 hampers full to the brim with goodies to be delivered. A big thank you to TESCO express and the COOP at the Magnet for their generous donations.



Bad Weather

As the weather becomes a lot colder with the likelihood of snow and ice, can I please remind parents/carers that should students need to walk to school in boots or similar, they then need to change their footwear once in school. In the unlikely event that the school should need to close due to snow, parents/carers will be informed as soon as possible and kept up to date via text/website and our Facebook page. It is therefore vital that school has your up to date contact details.



Outdoor Coats and Hats

We want all of our students to arrive at school warm and dry and ready to learn. As the weather takes a turn for the worse during the winter months, may I remind you of our high standards and expectations around uniform. Our students look incredibly smart, but the wearing of hoodies spoils the appearance of the smart uniform we have all worked so hard to achieve. All students have been told that as of the 8th January 2019, hoodies of any sort (zip front or pull over) will not be allowed to be worn to school. Coats can of course be worn over uniform but must be removed when indoors. Hats may of course be worn to and from school in the colder weather, but these must be kept in bags once in school. Staff will ask students to remove outdoor coats in all buildings, including the canteen and hoodies will be confiscated from students if worn. Plenty of warning has been given to students and to parents/carers so that this is not an issue for anyone come January. As always, we thank you for your ongoing support.

Parking

Another reminder to please park safely outside of the Academy. We must ensure the safety, when entering and exiting, of all students and some parking continues to jeopardise this. Also we need to show consideration to local residents. We have asked the police to support us with this.



Events this term

DofE at Airedale Academy

As of 1 September 2018, Airedale Academy became a Directly Licensed Organisation. The licence allows us to deliver Duke Of Edinburgh programmes to young people on our own premises.

At the moment, we are offering the Bronze Award to 11 students in Y9 and Silver Award to 45 students in Y10.

Students need to complete three sections: volunteering, physical and skills sections before they can go on a small expedition at the end of the year for 2 days, 1 night (for Bronze) and 3 days, 2 nights (for Silver).

Already we have seen a large array of activities started by students, from one student who has signed up to volunteer in a Cancer Research Charity Shop to students volunteering at our annual open evening for Y6 students.

Other students have signed up to develop skills, such as playing instruments, cooking, photography and painting, acting, writing and fishing to name but a few.

The diverse nature of these skills, far from some students' comfort zones will undoubtedly improve each student as an 'all-rounder' by the



Airedale Academy Recognised with Award For Excellence

Airedale Academy is excited to announce that we have been awarded the Community Alcohol Partnerships (CAP) award for Excellence in Education.

Our very own Principal, Liz Fairhurst, headed to Cardiff this week to receive the award on behalf of the school at the glittering CAP celebration event, which this year took place at the Welsh Assembly. Presenting the award, Josh Connolly, Ambassador for the National Association of Children of Alcoholics, said: "Alcohol education is an integral part of CAP and it is fantastic to see the interactive approach that the Airedale Academy takes. It sets students the challenge of developing and creating a piece of theatre as part of their coursework and each year the students have chosen themes linking to alcohol misuse. They research the subject with the help of CAP partners including Spectrum Community Health CIC, the Neighbourhood Policing Team and by talking to residents of a local rehab facility."

"In addition, the school organises a huge range of events and activities relating to alcohol misuse. Weekly drinking levels for 13, 14 and 15 year olds show a huge reduction, from 31.45% in 2016 to 7.31% in 2018. And its impact is far-reaching: it is part of Northern Ambition Academies Trust so a lot of its work feeds across to three other local schools, where many younger siblings are educated. Many congratulations to Airedale Academy!"

CAPs are made up of partnerships between retailers, local authorities, police, schools, neighbourhood groups and health providers, working together to empower communities to tackle alcohol-related harm to young people and improve the quality of life for residents.

Andy Simms of Spectrum Community Health CIC is co-ordinator of the Wakefield Central and Castleford CAPs, which work closely with Airedale Academy. He says: "This award is so well deserved and reflects the hard work the Academy has done. Their commitment to making positive changes to young people's lives and to the success of the partnerships shines through in everything they do."





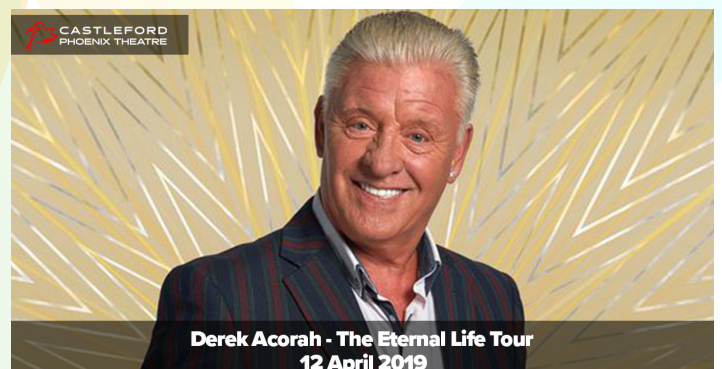
ALTON TOWERS FORENSICS 'SUB-STRAIN' TRIP

13 Y9 students embarked on a forensics trip to Alton Towers on Tuesday 23 October. As part of the trip, students took part in a forensic investigation with the help of PhD students of Staffordshire Universities. At the start of the challenge, the students saw a video blog of a scientist who had gone missing. Their task was to unravel the clues to solve the mystery. The students were split up into 4 teams and raced against the clock to investigate the crime scene and analyse a whole host of evidence, such as fingerprints, footprints, samples of liquids, written notes and using UV lighting to scour the scene for extra clues. The Yellow team blitzed through the clues to finish the challenge in less than 20 minutes. The university staff were extremely impressed and said that it usually takes teams more than 40 minutes to complete the challenge and commented how they worked well as a team to be methodical scientists. As winners of the challenge, the Yellow team were awarded fast-passes for the rides for the rest of the day! It was a fantastic day and the students were a credit to the academy.



STUDENTS BEAT STAFF AT ESCAPE ROOM!

Seven Y11 students visited the Escapologist in Xscape during half-term to take on our staff and four ex-students in a 'staff vs students' showdown. The seven Y11 students ventured into an arctic-themed room called Frozen in Time and had one hour to solve all the puzzles in order to escape. The students blitzed through the puzzles to finish in 40 minutes and 3 seconds, leaving an amazing 19 minutes and 57 seconds on the clock. The staff and ex-students, on the other-hand, entered an MI5 secret agent room called 'Secret Service: Winter Fall' who had to eliminate suspects to escape. The staff finished two minutes later in a very respectable 42 minutes and 13 seconds. The gamemasters commented that both teams worked well and communicated fantastically with each other. The students will be looking for a similar result again in December, when the game rooms will be reversed!





STUDENTS SEE MR BILLINGS IN HAIRSPRAY

Thirty-Five lucky students with five excited members of staff boarded the coach to visit Harrogate Theatre, where Mr Billings has been starring in the hit musical Hairspray. He has been playing the role of Tracy Turnblad's kind, plus-sized mother, Edna.

It was a fantastic night and Mr Billings pulled out all the stops to entertain us and the rest of the audience.

We were treated to a rendition of 'Timeless to Me', which had us howling with laughter, before he appeared from the 'hairspray can' during the final song, 'You Can't Stop the Beat'.

The students were a credit to the academy and were buzzing about the show on the way back. Well done to Mr Billings; we're all proud of you!



French news!

Year 6 Open evening was a great success and we will enjoy teaching you when you arrive in September! 'Vive les langues vivantes!'

Armistice Day was a very moving experience in MFL. The children created a 'Wall of Remembrance.' Seeing the children writing messages in both French and English on cut out poppies brought some emotion and even tears!



The pride our children showed on this day was incredible and even now the beautiful display remains entirely intact because of the absolute respect that our children have. 'Merci aux soldats' Again... the cheeseboard returns! Our Year 8 students prepared and shared a beautiful cheeseboard whilst having an imaginary trip to Paris. It was a brilliant experience for us all. 'Merci, j'adore le fromage!'



Sixth Form News

This year our 6th Form Health and Social Care students all took part in valuable work experience placements as part of their course which included working in local GP practices, care homes with West Yorkshire Fire Service and Wakefield District Housing.

This has opened up lots of exciting opportunities for us to be able to promote jobs and careers in Health and Social Care with our students so as a follow up event we have just had a careers showcase event in school. This event brought together all the employers who have worked with us previously and also included staff from local universities. Health and Social Care students in Years 9 - 12 were able to speak to people about the jobs they do and also find out more about routes into jobs such as nursing, social work and community care. All went away with lots of useful information as well as bags full of leaflets and pens!

A number of off site visits have taken place recently with some of our Year 13 students receiving their Progression Module Plus awards at Leeds City Museum. This was a lovely event and gave students the opportunity to meet other students from around Yorkshire.



It has been another very busy term for the Sixth Form. Student numbers are high and we have embarked upon an exciting collaboration with Castleford Tigers Category 3 Academy.

We are currently hosting their students who are studying for the Level 3 Extended Diploma in Sport as well as benefiting from the coaching, resources and facilities that the Tigers have to offer. This is now open for our current Year 11 students to apply for and also means that our students on other Level 3 courses such as Health & Social Care, Business Studies and Performing Arts, can benefit as well. There will be opportunities for them to play or benefit in other ways such as having access to their strength and conditioning team.

Most recently all of our Performing Arts students visited the Create Your Future convention in Manchester, where they spent time finding out about HE and Theatre school opportunities across the country.





CASTLEFORD PHOENIX THEATRE

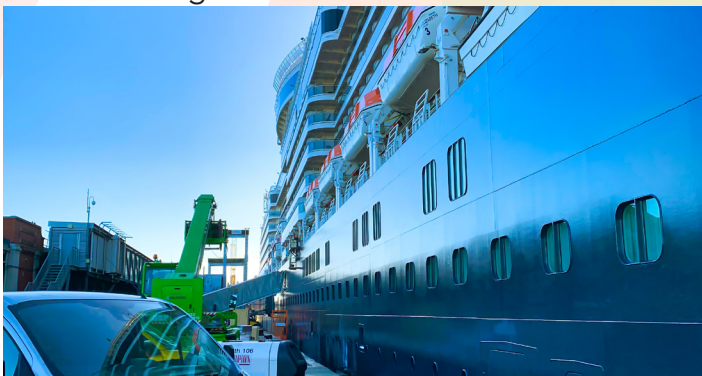
It has been a very busy start to our new season which has seen the theatre doing more shows than at any time in our ten years of being open. As well as academy productions and events we have hosted plays, dance competitions, international competitions, musicals dance schools touring bands and tribute acts.

Highlights so far have included a sell-out visit by the nations favourite medium, Psychic Sally, A visit from the national theatre who performed the critically acclaimed show The curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time to a local schools audience and a sell-out Pantomime by the excellent local company Encore Theatre.

Since September we have had over 6400 people at our shows.

The next part of the season looks to be just as busy with shows including Neil Diamond, Queen, ABBA, Dolly Parton, Johnny Cash, Shakin' Stevens and the Jersey Boys. For full details about whats on please visit our website.

The theatre has also recently been selected to receive a gift from Cunard who have just finished re-fitting their flag ship; the Queen Elizabeth, and have donated some of their old lighting equipment to us. The theatre team drove down to Southampton after a panto performance for an 8:30am apointment with the ship. We then loaded over 60 lights including 30 moving lights and drove back to be at the theatre ready for the evenings show. The lighting will make a big difference about what we can offer and we are thankful to Cunard and the production and events team for the gift.



Dates for your diary – Spring Term 2019

January

8th

w/c 14th

23rd

w/c 28th

Academy opens to students
Y8 Assessment week
Y9 Parents evening & report issue
Y7 Assessment week

February

13th

14th

15th

25th

25th & 26th

Y8 Parents evening & Report issue
Brian Cox Live event
Academy Closes
Academy opens
Geography Field Trips

March

4th – 13th

6th

w/c 18th

22nd

w/c 25th

26th-28th

Y11 PPEs
GCSE Dance Showcase 4pm
Art Exam week
Y12 7 Y13 Report Issue
Y10 Assessment Week
Y8 Option Taster sessions in school

April

2nd – 4th April

4th

6th Form Show – Hairspray!
Y11 Revision Evening & Report Issue

INSET Dates 18-19

7 Jan 2019

22 July 2019

23 July 2019

Many thanks for taking the time to read this newsletter, and on behalf of all of us at Airedale Academy, we wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year. We will look forward to welcoming all students back to school on Tuesday 8th January 2019.

E Fairhurst – Principal