

Newsletter

Curriculum News...

Happy New Year to all our students, families and staff! We welcome back Year 12 and 13 students to a busy and important half-term of study and activities. This Wednesday we 'fold down' enrichment for students and are focusing on Personal and Social Education, learning more about the plight of refugees on our doorstep here in Birmingham. Year 12 will participate in workshops with volunteers from St Chad's Sanctuary in period 4, whilst Year 13s who are not in an exam will revise in supervised silent study. Period 5 we will all come together to hear an informative talk led by some of our Year 13 students who visited the sanctuary in December, alongside other guest speakers. Chosen enrichment activities will begin again on Wednesday 15 January – please can all students make sure they have selected their preferred choices online asap.

Congratulations to the overwhelming majority of Year 13 students who decided to go down the UCAS route, most of whom are either busy receiving dates of interviews or offers. We are also very pleased to see and hear the remaining Year 13 students being proactive as they begin to secure competitive apprenticeships within the West Midlands. We wish them all luck whatever their chosen destination. For Year 12, it is never too early to start thinking about life after Sixth Form and planning meaningful Work Experience should be top of the agenda right now! Students will receive a letter this month detailing what they must do now in order to arrange and confirm with us their work experience placement for June 2020. If any student is struggling to attain a placement, Mrs Friend has a small directory of contacts that can be approached.

As we enter what can be quite a stressful time for students, please be assured that the Sixth Form Tutors, Mrs Hess (Learning & Wellbeing Manager), Mr Bryan (Head of Year 12), Mrs Howard (Assistant Director & Head of Year 13) and myself, are always here if your child has any concerns with any particular subject or has any issues or uncertainties. All they need to do is to come and talk to us. Our students' personal development and success is as important to us, as it is to you.

Getting to grips with student finance!

With Year 13 UCAS applications complete and offers rolling in, it is time to focus on the next stage of university preparation – finance. The process can seem daunting for students and parent/carers but there is nothing to fear! You will no doubt find the following pointers useful:

1. **Know your loans:** With a tuition loan, you can borrow enough to cover the full cost of your fees and it is paid directly to the institution where you study. The amount you can get for tuition fee loans doesn't depend on your household income (up to £9,250). A maintenance loan helps with your living costs such as rent, food and books. The amount you can borrow depends on your circumstances but, if you are moving away from home (but not to London), you could be eligible for up to £8,700. To find out how much you may be eligible for go to www.gov.uk/student-finance-calculator
2. **Apply early:** Get your application completed as soon as possible to ensure your money arrives on time. Don't worry if you have not accepted a place yet – you can update your details later. To find out more visit www.ucas.com/money
3. **Stay safe:** Remember the Student Loans Company will never ask you to confirm bank details or login information via email.
4. **Consent to share:** Tick the box to allow universities to view your details. Care leavers and those from low-income households may be entitled to extra funding and can be assessed more quickly.

5. **Seek out extra support:** Find out if you are eligible for an additional bursary or scholarship by contacting your university or college.

For a range of helpful tools and guidance, go to www.thestudentroom.co.uk/student-finance

ABK Sixth's Polling Day

December saw the UK head to the polls for the third time in five years for a general election, this time to resolve the biggest constitutional challenge the UK has faced in recent times.

Not wanting to leave our young adults feeling disenfranchised, we as a Student Senior Leadership Team - spearheaded by the impassioned Liberal Rob Rattray - organised our own political party presentations and a short hustings the week before polling day, with the aim of better informing and educating our young people on British politics and why it matters. Hannah Rednall, Robert Rattray and Daniel Harrison each led their respective party presentations (CON, LD, and LAB) before joining me in the Blue Room for a short debate.

Victory in our ballot afterwards went to Labour in a landslide, though I'm sure Dan would admit that this is more due to the voter demographics than any specific policy or leader appeal.

But perhaps the biggest victor was the engagement of young people in politics, who frequently turn out to vote in far fewer numbers than our older counterparts. Hopefully thanks to our initiative, we've helped to reverse that trend in a small way.

Callum Devereux, Deputy Head Boy

ENRICHMENT

Enterprise – Students have been working in their enterprise groups to develop their business proposal. We have the following teams: Plantology, CERS Candies. OurFaces and H1RELEARNING.

- Plantology aim to produce and sell hand decorated succulent plant pots.
- CERS Candies plan to produce confectionary; sweets and chocolates.
- OurFaces aim to produce quality 100% cotton t-shirts with a design that fits with the style of today.
- H1RELEARNING are a company devoted to helping students enhance their education through private tuition in a variety of subjects.

The groups spent the Autumn term thinking about various options and developing their ideas. Once they had finalised their idea, in order to enter the Tycoon Enterprise Challenge (set up by Peter Jones), they have been working on their business plans. Groups will submit their plans before their February deadline, to secure funding to set up their businesses. The businesses will then trade between 24 February 2020 and 27 March 2020. At the end of the trading window they will evaluate their business and we will wait to see if they have done enough to win the competition and the chance to be invited to a prestigious celebration event at Buckingham Palace!

Creative Writing – We have had a fantastic first ever term of Creative Writing! Each week we have enjoyed quick-write activities using a range of interesting stimuli and creative prompts. In October we started drafting our own poems to be entered into the esteemed Tower Poetry Competition (this year the idea title given is 'Trees') and in November we welcomed Derek Littlewood from Birmingham City University to run a workshop with students looking at both poetic form and 'getting into a short story'. We have truly enjoyed working together and sharing our passion for writing.

Duke of Edinburgh – This year our cohort has increased to eighteen Year 12 students, who have been busy completing the skill, physical and volunteering sections of the award. We have a range of activities going on from Skateboarding to Swimming. When we return in the New Year, we will begin preparation for the expedition this summer, with some keys dates for the diary:

Saturday 22 February – Sunday 23 February: Training weekend in Ratlinghope, Shropshire

Tuesday 14 April – Friday 17 April: Practice expedition, Wales

Medics Society – The MedSoc was delighted to spend the first half term welcoming a range of professionals within Healthcare or University admission roles. This was a great opportunity to gain greater insights into the varied roles within the healthcare profession, as well as learn about and discuss topical issues. The MedSoc were also grateful to two of its Year 13 members who led sessions on dentistry and points of interest from the media that week. For the majority of the second half term, students were tasked with finding work experience placements honing in on skills useful for the profession such as communication, emotional intelligence and resilience.

KS3 Learning Mentors – well done to the following students in Year 12 and 13 who have been an incredible source of support to our staff and students in Student Development, completing paired reading tasks. Falak Khan (13), Kierat Kaur (12), Madiha Meherban (12), Maya Flora (13), Arthiha Sarma (13) and Aaliyah (12). This was a good experience for the younger students who benefited from reading and practising spellings with enthusiastic, positive role models. Aaliyah is also working on resources for Dyslexic students, which we are very much looking forward to sharing with the students when they are completed in the New Year.

Support for A Level Mathematics Students

A FREE opportunity with Aston University - '**Maths Coach**' is a free online service supporting A Level Maths and Further Maths students two evenings a week run by DBS checked final year Maths Undergraduates. The service runs on a Wednesday and Thursday evening 5-8pm. Students simply register with <https://mathscoach.org>

Competition Time!

Competitions are an important means by which students can expand their knowledge and enhance learning. If applying for a particular subject at university, undertaking an essay or practical competition is a good way to deepen your understanding of a field. If you intend on applying to Oxbridge and top Russell Group Universities, essay competitions are excellent preparation. Give one a go!

Newnham College, Cambridge – Essay Prizes are now open! All **FEMALE** students currently in **Year 12** at a UK school may enter the prizes, which are offered in **Biological Sciences, Computer Science, Engineering** and **History** as well as the annual '**Woolf Essay Prize**' with questions inspired by Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*. This year, we are pleased to introduce a new essay prize in **Mathematics**. Each of the Newnham Essay Prizes has a first prize of £400, a second prize of £200 and a third prize of £100. There will be a prize-giving at Newnham College in June 2020. Entries are welcome from interested students studying any combination of subjects. Each competition has a slightly different word limit, so please consult the questions and information sheet for each of the prizes. All essays must reference sources (including websites consulted) and provide a bibliography. Students may only submit an essay for one subject. Each school may only submit 5 entries per subject. The submission deadline for all entries is midday on **Friday 6 March 2020**. Please visit: <https://www.newn.cam.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduates/newnham-essay-prizes/> for past examples of winning essays and current essay titles.

Moments to shout about! Our Sixth Form students are busy young people outside of lessons.....

- Fundraising: well done to all those involved in organising or donating to the following events. £167 was collected in support of alumna student Olivia Parson's six day trek around the Andes for the charity MIND. £50 was raised through a 'Tug of War' challenge in aid of 4Ocean. The Rainbow Trust also benefited from a donation of £92.76 raised through a popular bake sale with 25% of the overall proceeds also going to Survivors Spirit.
- Turkey Hasan (13) is preparing to become a professional TaeKwonDo Instructor and currently continues to train with the TAGB England squad. Turkey began lessons aged 7 and has succeeded quickly through his grades to be a second Degree Black Belt at the age of 17! He became a world

champion aged 14 winning Bronze and later aged 16 he secured the top honours taking home a Gold medal. Well done Turkey!

- Annual Christmas card competition: the glory this year was scooped up by Imogen Smith (12). Imogen won some lovely art materials and her design was put on the front of the Head's official Christmas card which she sends to many people in the local community.
- Tegan Smith (12) proudly accepted the Youth Achievement Award at the Swim England National Awards 2019 for being 'incredibly hard-working' and 'wholeheartedly dedicated and committed to synchronised swimming'. Tegan, pictured to the right, hopes to be selected for Great Britain's artistic swimming squad in the future, "The big aim would be to compete internationally. This year, I've done my coaching course and my judging course, so I want to continue in that area, as well as competing." Congratulations Tegan on your success!
- Bank of England Film Competition: riding on the back of our success in last year's competition, this year the theme was 'Climate Change'. Rajun Madahar (13) led a team – Eathan Downes (13), Matt Gardner (13) and Oliver Rutherford (13) – to create a really excellent animation film. We are keeping our fingers crossed for them!



Reminders:

- Please ensure that your son/daughter are **checking their Sixth Form email accounts regularly**. Many opportunities are signposted through this system and it would be a shame for them to miss out.
- Students must wear **smart footwear** to Sixth Form on business dress days Monday – Thursday.
- Final **Bruges Tour payment is now due** w/c 6 January 2020 please.

Important January Dates

Mon 06 – Fri 17: Year 13 Mock Examinations

Sun 12: World Challenge 'Table Top Sale' in Malley Hall, pay on door, external visitors welcome

Mon 20: Drama & Theatre students afternoon with Splendid Theatre Productions (in-house)

Wed 22: Trip - Year 12 Physical Education students to Loughborough University

Fri 31: Trip - Drama & Theatre students 'Ancient Greek Theatre Festival' Warwick Arts Centre

CAREERS INFORMATION...

Upcoming opportunities...

Year 13 Students – Aberystwyth University

For any students who have applied to Aberystwyth in 2020, they have been in touch regarding their scholarships, bursaries and awards scheme which is now open. They offer a generous range of funding opportunities that can help towards living costs whilst at university and one of our students last year was awarded a scholarship eg: Entrance scholarships – up to £2000 a year, Academic Excellent scholarship £2000 in your first year, Sports scholarships £500 a year, Music scholarships £650 a year. Visit www.aber.ac.uk/scholarships to find out more!

Pembroke College, Cambridge have been in touch to advertise their upcoming events. They are running **Year 12 Masterclasses** in a range of subjects in **March 2020**. They are designed to give students a deeper understanding of the subject they are considering applying to, as well as an insight in to what it is like to study at Cambridge. There are a number of eligibility criteria that are considered when selecting successful applicants. Essential criteria include currently attending a state school, and being on track to achieve at least AAA at A level. The FREE masterclasses will take place on **Saturday 21 and Saturday 28 March 2020**. Students

who would like to be considered for a place will need to apply online at www.pem.cam.ac.uk/yr12masterclasses by **Monday 10 February**.

The College are also holding a **Year 12 Arts and Humanities Summer Residential**. This will take place from Monday 29 June – Friday 3 July 2020 and is FREE for successful applicants. Attendees will have the opportunity to explore what it is like to study an Arts/social science degrees through a range of subject masterclasses, and build confidence in applying to Cambridge through guidance sessions. Please check the website for further information, including eligibility criteria and application details at www.pem.cam.ac.uk/yr12summerschool

Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge are hosting their popular **Year 12 taster days** and bookings are now open! **Geography** is to be held on **Monday 22 June 2020**, **English** on **Monday 16 March 2020**, **Law** on **Thursday 19 March 2020**. All the days are free and include lunch. To find out more about any of these subject days visit <https://www.fitz.cam.ac.uk/study-us/undergraduate/opportunities-prospective-applicants>

St John's College, Oxford have some upcoming Year 12 Study Days. The days are often oversubscribed and selection is based on academic merit using GCSE performance. Participants must be predicted to achieve AAA at A Level. All the days are free and include lunch. **Thursday 5 March 2020** is **Maths Study Day**, **Tuesday 10 March 2020** is **History**, **Geography** is to be held on **Wednesday 3 June 2020** and **Saturday 6 June 2020** is a **Study Day in Medicine and Biomedical Sciences**. Please complete the application forms here: <https://www.sjc.ox.ac.uk/study/working-schools/study-days/> as soon as possible.

Christ Church College, Oxford is delighted to be hosting a **Geography Taster Day** for Year 12 students on **Friday 21 February 2020**. The day will include an introduction to Geography at Oxford, a taster lecture in Physical Geography, as well as several interactive academic workshops in Human Geography. You will have a chance to meet students who study Geography at Oxford, have lunch in the Christ Church Hall, and go on a tour of the college. For more details see: <https://www.chch.ox.ac.uk/admissions/christ-church-geography-taster-day>. **Apply by Sunday 26 January 2020!**

Swansea University invites Year 12 students to a **Medical School Open Day** on **15 February 2020**. Take part in hands-on taster sessions in the labs – find out about the range of undergraduate courses, tour the state of the art facilities and meet current student medics. Book your place at: www.swansea.ac.uk/open-days

YEAR 12 WORK EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES 2020:

Sixth Form Internship Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) - APPLICATION DEADLINE: 27 March 2020

Dates: Monday 6 – Friday 10 July, Monday 13 – Friday 17 July, Monday 20 – Friday 24 July 2020. IEA provide a dedicated week of work experience for 120 sixth formers in three groups held across the summer. The week includes lectures and discussions with expert economists. There is the chance to hear from people in academia and politics about career opportunities and much more. In addition, at the end of the week, there will be a debate with your fellow interns. To apply, please send a CV and short covering letter to Christiana Stewart-Lockhart at internships@iea.org.uk explaining why you would like to take part in a Sixth Form Internship and which dates are best suited for you.

Solihull Council Work Experience Opportunities

There are many Work Experience opportunities offered through the Council across Departments including Children's Services, Finance, Neighbourhood services, Communications & Marketing, ICT, Architecture and many more. If you are interested, please contact Mrs Tracey Getlevog on 0121 704 6420 or recruitment@solihull.gov.uk

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery - Learning Team, 29/06/2020 - 03/07/2020

Find out about the working world and develop your skills and knowledge through their work experience programme. Each year the museum and gallery welcome over 60 people on one or two week work experience placements. We welcome applications from anyone 15 years or over who is not currently in employment. For this work experience placement you will be working with the Learning Team at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery. **Closing Date: 17 February 2020.**

<https://birminghammuseumtrust.livevacancies.co.uk/#/job/details/91>

Science Work Experience, University of Birmingham

Did you know that the University of Birmingham offers Work Experience placements which include experience of the following areas? Experiential design and result analysis; Human physiology measurement techniques; Aspects of brain structure and function; Observations of experiments; Tissues culture techniques; Histology and tissue staining. Students will also have the opportunity to discuss the role of a research scientist and / or clinician with people who are active in the field. Contact Mr David Westwood, Work Experience Co-ordinator, College of Medical and Dental Sciences – d.m.westwood@bham.ac.uk

Health Ambassadors at Solihull Hospital

An amazing opportunity from Stephanie Parkes the Work Experience Manager at University Hospitals Birmingham has been offered to our students. Based at Solihull Hospital itself, students have the chance to provide services to patients on a stroke ward to engage them in various activities and help aid their recovery. Individuals will gain and expand both their knowledge and experience within the healthcare profession whilst building confidence and effective team working skills. Please visit <https://www.hefteducation.co.uk/content/health-ambassadors> if interested.

BMW

Local Employer **BMW** offer one-week manufacturing placements; however, they only take on 12 per year (one per month) so places are very limited. If interested, contact Lucy Healey: Lucy.Healey@bmwgroup.com who will send you an electronic application form. Applications then get sifted, suitable candidates get invited in for interview and places are offered accordingly.

FOR FURTHER CAREERS SUPPORT...

Mrs Tracey Cross is always available to answer career related emails from both parents and students at careers@alderbrooksixthform.org



Official Facebook Page – Alderbrook Sixth Form – please LIKE & Share
Twitter: @ABKSixthForm



www.alderbrooksixthform.org