



# ABK NEWS

December 2023

## From Mr Beveridge ...

It is lovely to be able to share below many positive stories about the achievements of our students. Students have accomplished so much this term both in and out of the classroom, and I would like to congratulate them on a very successful few months at Alderbrook. It has been an important time for the school as we celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> year. Although it has been used since September, in January we will officially open our new building, the Annette Scott Building, named after our long-serving Chair of Trustees who has done so much to support our school.

This is one of my favourite times of year in school, mainly because we get to see the talents of so many students on show through performing arts productions. I have been in awe of the brilliance of all students who took part in the Winter Wonderland Dance Show, the Christmas Concert and the production of A Christmas Carol, they were all fantastic. I have also taken great pleasure in watching our students perform at a high level in a number of sports fixtures this term; competitive sport is so beneficial for young people for many reasons and those who have represented Alderbrook have been a credit to the school.

There are many achievements not mentioned below, and I would like to salute all students who have been recognised for their ongoing hard work and effort in the Presentation Evenings earlier in the term, and the awards assemblies last week. Well done to all.

I would also like to take this opportunity to pay homage to our staff, who continue to work relentlessly to support our students. Staff take great pleasure in organising trips and visits for students, and as you will see from the stories below, our students really have gone all over the place this term, with many more exciting opportunities planned for the new year.

This term we say goodbye to three members of staff who are going on to new challenges – Sarah Turturici, Zaheera Hussain and James Luton. I would like to thank them for all they have done at Alderbrook and wish them all the very best for the future. I would also like to thank Gayna Taylor who leaves the Alderbrook catering team after 15 years.

I hope all students are able to have a rest and break over Christmas, and even though some students have exams in early January, it is important they have some time off. I wish you all a very happy Christmas break.

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## SOCIAL MEDIA

**Web : [www.alderbrookschoo.co.uk](http://www.alderbrookschoo.co.uk)**

**Facebook : @AlderbrookSch**

**Twitter/X : @AlderbrookSch**

**Instagram : @alderbrookschoo**

## GREENER SCHOOLS AWARD

Three of our 6th form members of 'Love ABK' received our Greener Schools Award Level 1 from Solihull council. The award was presented by Prime Accountants who also rewarded 'Love ABK' with £100 Amazon voucher towards future projects.

The presentation took place during Solihull schools COP28 summit in which three year 11 students and one year 10 student represented the country of Brazil.

It was a fabulous event that truly highlights what we can all do as individuals and schools to combat climate change.



## NETBALL SKILLS

Sixteen of our year 7 students competed against eight other schools in a netball skills competition. They were split into two categories (compete and develop) and had to perform five skills against the clock to get the fastest time.

Both of our teams won their category, scoring the fastest times and came away with gold medals!



This was the first opportunity that some of our year 7 students had to represent the school and they were amazing! Well done to Florrie and Summer for showing excellent leadership skills for both teams.

Congratulations also to Sofie, Heidi, Florrie, Cleo, Lucy, Caitlin, Ella, Sophie and Chloe who as members of our Year 7 Netball Team have won both of their matches so far this year, winning 8-1 to St Peter's and 9-3 to Tudor Grange.



## SPORTS FIXTURES

It has been a really busy term for sporting fixtures at Alderbrook and the students have had lots of success!

### NETBALL

Our year 8 netball team have had plenty of opportunities this term to show their skills, most recently playing against St. Peter's and winning 5-2! They were able to hold possession of the ball, with some fantastic defending skills shown by Izzy and Sophie.

### GIRLS' FOOTBALL

Our year 8 and 9 students had their first opportunity to play together as an 11-a-side team where their excellent teamwork and communication skills secured them a 5-2 win against Tudor Grange with fantastic goals from Darcey, Paige and Sophie.

Our U16 girls' team were also able to come away with a huge win at their first satellite tournament, playing against 6 other schools from the Solihull borough. Stand out performances were shown by our goalkeepers Natthika and Jessica who managed to prevent the other teams from scoring and put Alderbrook at the top!

### BOYS' FOOTBALL

Year 7: Although they lost in the second round of the Solihull Cup to St Peters 5-2, they have qualified for the quarter final of the Birmingham Cup!

Year 8: Whilst we had a couple of losses to Langley in the first round of the Solihull Cup 4-3 and the second round of the Kings Norton Boys school in the Birmingham Cup, they are still going strong in the West Midlands Cup competition.

Year 9: This team have been knocked out of the West Midlands Cup by Sandwell Academy 3-2 but have qualified for the quarter finals in the Birmingham Cup and through to the second round of the Solihull Cup – well done!

Year 10: The Year 10 have had their most successful year to date, winning two games this year and moving through to the later stages of the cup.

Year 12/13: The Sixth form team are very successful convincingly beating all 3 opponents matching forward in 2 cup competitions.

Well done to all our football year groups – lots of hard work and even though sometimes the results don't always go our way, the effort and determination are to be congratulated!

## SPORTS FIXTURES

### **CROSS COUNTRY**

All Solihull races have been attended this year by Alderbrook with several students across a range of year groups qualifying for West Midlands representation. Great to have our students there and doing so well!

### **BASKETBALL**

Alderbrook are currently going into 2024 unbeaten in all teams across Year 8-10 in all respective leagues. Year 9 have already won their league and have secured a home playoff against fourth place in the league so will be favourite to retain their title in the previous season. Watch this space!

### **GIRLS' RUGBY**

Girls KS4 rugby Touch tournament at Camphill RFC - Training games played to encourage girls to sign up for Camp Hill Vixens (ladies team).

### **BOYS' RUGBY**

Year 11 rugby team beat Lighthall in a Friendly - 12-0 in a great game showing some real talent and discipline in Year 11 at rugby.

### **KS4 TABLE TENNIS**

U16 boys - 4 players competed in a team tournament drawing the final 2 games all, only losing on a count back on points to come 2nd overall in whole of Solihull (North and South). Fantastic achievement!

A big thank you to all of the staff who were involved in organising these fixtures and extra-curricular clubs this term.

## SUPER WEEKENDER

Super Weekender is a national dance convention held at the NEC where schools take part in showcasing the talent of young dancers and giving them the opportunity to perform. Company NRG represented Alderbrook and performed with professionalism and style.

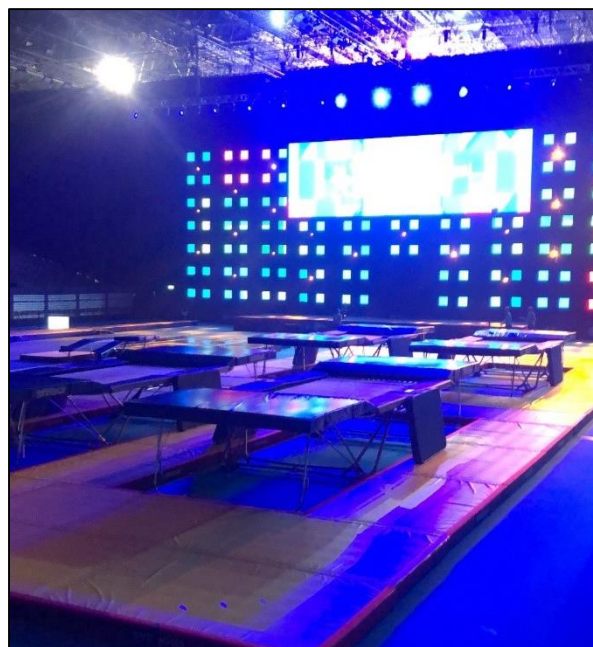
Well done to our 17 dancers from years 9-12 that took part. Alexa, Tallulah, Satra, Amelie, Megan, Chloe, Celine, Anaya, Isabelle, Hannah, Georgia, Maddison, Poppy, Ginger, Aleena, Casey and Charlotte. We look forward to going again next year.

## WORLD TRAMPOLINE CHAMPIONSHIPS

On Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November a combination of our trampolinists and A level PE students ventured into Birmingham to attend the FIG World Trampoline Championships at the Utilita Arena. The event was attended by thousands of people making for a magical atmosphere.

This enrichment opportunity involved seeing the qualification rounds of the Boys & Girls Trampoline, Tumbling & Double Mini-Trampoline. The students were in awe of the skills performed with outstanding control by the athletes and saw great determination if an athlete made a mistake but then came back stronger in a later round. The students saw some outstanding role models and were thrilled to have their photos taken with some of the athletes.

A fantastic time was had by all and it was an experience that the students will never forget. Fingers crossed we will see one of our students competing in an event like this in the future!



## YOUTH SPEAKS

Congratulations to Cameron, Leeya and Megan in year 9 who won the Youth Speaks Competition against a number of local schools with the motion "This house believes that pineapple should go on pizza"

A thrilling debate that they truly deserved to win!



## CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY

ABK Drama Department took 90 students to see 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory' at Birmingham Hippodrome. It was amazing to see how they adapted the well-loved book and films to stage. Combining an interesting set design, heart warming songs and, of course, several Oompa Loompas, the students left with smiles on their faces and a Wonka Bar craving !





## FRIDAY NIGHT FUN

World Challenge students in years 10 and 11 hosted a fundraising event for their expedition.

It was a wonderful evening for Y7s and 8s with two main events - a Super Smash Bros gaming tournament and Night Orienteering, where students ran around the fields with

torches in the pitch black, trying to find clues. There were prizes for the winners from Nandos, Wagamama and Jamaya! A fun filled night of food, music, dancing and mini competitions.



This event happens every two years, see you in 2025 for the next one!

## SIXTH FORM WINTER WONDERLAND BALL

We started the year with the usual anticipation of getting to know the incoming year 12 students. We decided that it was time to shake things up and start a new tradition here at our Sixth Form, so we approached Mr Bryan to ask if we could hold a Winter Ball, and he said yes!

So thanks to Miss Smith we started an unofficial 'party planning committee' and we are now holding our first ABK Sixth Form Winter Wonderland Ball.

We will be dancing into the night following a day of festive fun that includes our awards assembly and the infamous Sixth Form Christmas Quiz.

Thanks to The Limes Country Lodge and Hotel for hosting over 170 of our sixth formers and staff as we celebrate the end of our first fantastic term of the 2023/2024 academic year.

## PGL WEEKEND

In September, a hundred of our year 12 students had a fantastic weekend away at PGL making incredible memories and creating new friendships. They got to take part in a variety of activities including rock climbing, raft building, axe throwing, fencing and rocket launching. Mrs Desjarlais said, "Despite the heavy rain, we all fought on in great spirit and had a wonderful time!"



## SIXTH FORM OPEN EVENING

Mr Bryan our Director of Sixth Form: "On 16th November we welcomed a record turn out to our Open Evening with over 340 prospective families coming to visit us, we had very positive feedback from all and are looking forward to meeting you again for interviews in the new year."



## LITERATURE CONFERENCE

On Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December, Year 13 students visited Aston University for a English Literature Conference. As well as hearing about what it is like to study English at degree level, they attended lectures on a range of fascinating topics including 'The Tragic World of Keats' Poems' and 'Constructing a Killer: white lies, red herrings and unreliability' in *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*.



## MACBETH

We were lucky to welcome the National Production Company into school in September, to give Y10 and Y11 students a performance of William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. The students thoroughly enjoyed the performance and it provided them with an extremely valuable opportunity to see one of their GCSE English Literature texts live on stage.

## WINTER WONDERLAND

Winter Wonderland Dance Production: it was the largest dance production by far. 150 dancers from years 7-13 participated in two showings of fantastic dance.

The year 7 and 8 dancers took the audience on a Michael Jackson medley and they shone in their sparkle!

Year 9s performed brilliantly, a dance piece called Elephas to an Afrobeats track.

Year 10s gave us a spice for life with their Bollywood performances.

Year 11 BTEC dancers did a fantastic job at performing the tricky choreography of professional repertoire, and the GCSE year 11 dancers performed a politically charged piece about the protests following Mahsa Amini's death.

Year 13 astonished the audience with two complex and sophisticated works.

NRG Dance company brought the house down with a very creative Vogue inspired piece choreographed by the talented Mrs Parker.

Two sell-out audiences and very happy dancers- what more could a head of dance wish for? Maybe just one more thing- more boys dancing please! In January, we will be re-launching our boys dance company, Freefall. The company will be open to all years so look out for details.



## FOREST GREEN ROVERS

Forest Green Rovers has been voted by FIFA to be the greenest football club in the world. To support our learning at KS3 on sustainability, we took 50 students to Forest Green to watch a match.

Before the game we had a tour of the stadium and a talk about all its green features; the most interesting for the students was when we used the 'pee to pitch' toilets and they realised their pee would be fertilising the pitch.

We then indulged in a vegan meal before watching Forest Green Rovers get smashed 0-2 by Barrow AFC.

After the match ex-Birmingham City player Troy Deeney came over and met our students.



## ON THE HOUSE

It has been a fabulous term for the relaunch of our new House System, with a whole range of house events taking place.

These have included: Netball and Football House Tournaments, The ABK Bake Off, The Computing Escape Room, MFL Challenge and the 6<sup>th</sup> Form Christmas Quiz.

Congratulations go to our newly elected House Captains who are:

- **AMBITION:** Cleo, Robbie, Ashton, Sophie, Manika, Isabella
- **BRAVERY:** Saman, Maddison, Finlay, Jude, Louie, Ibrahim
- **KINDNESS:** Riley, Zymal, Jamie, Scarlett, Owam, Mia
- **PROUD:** Sophie, Freddy, Charlie, Sienna, Will, Jennah, Jason, Harriet

Current Overall House Standings have House Kindness in the lead with 1345 points!!

## ABK BAKE OFF

Our first inter-house event was ABK BAKE OFF.

10 students from years 7-9 competed with 1 winner and 2 runners up.

The winner was Archie in year 9.

'Well done Archie!'



## TEAM OF THE YEAR – WARHAMMER CLUB

We welcomed six regular attendees to Warhammer Club which thanks to their continued support is now a permanent part of our after-school clubs offer.

They are mostly new to the hobby but their enthusiasm and energy to immerse themselves in the pastime has been an example to the students from the lower years.

They have mixed really well with yrs7-9 and there's no difference between them when playing. They have all brought their own vision of what the hobby is and even though this may be very different, they have all been able to be part of the same club.

Oliver & Alexa bring their imagination, Aoibha brings a love of creativity, Connor his competitiveness and dry humour, Adam his sense of fun and Ru enjoys being with his friends and playing a game.



## MATHS CHALLENGE

The Senior Maths Challenge is an international competition organised by the UK Maths Trust. It is designed for students in Year 12 and Year 13 in the main, although we did enter some Year 11 this year. In 90 minutes, the students tackle 25 challenging problems that are designed to make them think. Top performing entrants are awarded certificates and we are extremely pleased to report that, this year, Alderbrook students achieved 9 Bronze, 3 Silver and 2 Gold certificates. The standard of entry is always extremely high with the very best mathematicians across the world competing. All students who entered should feel extremely proud of their achievement.

Special mention to James in Year 11 who received a Silver certificate which is exceptional.

Also, huge congratulations to Alex and Helen in Year 13 who achieved Gold certificates and were invited by the UKMT to take part in a follow on round of further, more challenging problem solving. Alex received a Certificate of Merit, which is awarded to only the top 25% of entrants. This is an outstanding result.

We look forward to building on this success in the coming years.

## COOKERY CLUB

A picture paints a thousand words :





## JAMIE'S FARM

12 year 9 students adventured to Jamie's Farm for a week residential in November. Jamie's Farm uniquely blends Farming, Family, Therapy and Legacy into a transformative 5-day residential programme with follow-up support. The aim was for the young people to leave the farm better equipped to thrive academically, socially, emotionally during their school years and beyond.

The students fed the livestock, mucked out the pigs, groomed horses and gathered wood for the fire.



Mid way through the week they climbed Haterall Hill showing great determination in the windiest weather!



Moreover, they prepared all meals and ate as a family and spent time reflecting on their success and behaviour, giving compliments and showing recognition of the rest of the group's achievements.

The students were fantastic! They were focused, enthusiastic, kind, hardworking and up for every challenge. They also engaged in reflecting on how the strength of character they all demonstrated during the trip could be useful in their future, sharing positives and challenges when they are back at school and home.

Some highlights for the young people include: - Tiana working hard even at the smelliest and most difficult jobs on the farm. Ollie showing huge empathy towards the animals and regulating himself well. Harry showing maturity and leadership skills. Sam pushing himself out of his comfort zone with bravery and a sense of fun. Jennah making a strong connection with the horses. Mahrukh picking up a dog despite being scared of them!

Finally, the centre sent their thanks to the school mentioning the Alderbrook staff who attended as being so supportive of the young people and collaborating wonderfully with the Centre's team to help every one of the students have a successful week. We are very proud of our young people and look forward to seeing the progress they make in the follow up sessions back at school.



## EMOTIONAL HEALTH AND MENTAL WELLBEING

Here at Alderbrook we want to make sure that looking after our emotional health is as important as looking after our physical health. For mental health day in October we welcomed Satveer Nijjar to our school to give an emotive assembly on the importance of mental health. Satveer shared her own personal experiences and used the assembly to promote awareness of mental health. Year 10: "I thought that the assembly was very meaningful, I really liked how she started off in a quite humorous way and then shifted to a more serious topic. I also really like how she shared her own story showing that she had her own personal experiences in the topic."

Satveer also provided staff with training on self-harm followed by a workshop for parents. [www.satveernijjar.com](http://www.satveernijjar.com) / twitter @\_satveernijjar.com



In response to promoting wellbeing activities we have had a trial run of Yoga in school! Triwellness, a local company, has been coming in every week to work with some of our Y9, 10 and 11 girls. It has received great feedback from the students. "It made me feel relaxed and less stressed and gave me some time to think about everything and decompress" – Year 11 Student. Thank you Triwellness!

We are also very excited to introduce this year our Wellbeing Ambassadors! Over 30 students across year 10, 11, 12 & 13 have volunteered in our new support role in school as ambassadors. Each student received 6 hours of training on the importance of and encouraging wellbeing within school. We are excited to see what is to come and to get the ambassadors active in the student body!

Please find below the link to our **Student Health Guide!** This is a brilliant resource created by experts to help both students and parents to feel happy, healthy and successful. In this magazine there are lots of useful resources on helping the mind, body, fitness and life. <https://shg.fyi/alderbrookschoo>

## CEP PROJECT

The Solihull CEP project offered local schools some time with professional artists and Film producer Nicola Prestige from Tiger productions worked with a number of our EAL ( English as a second language) students. We had a super response with 35 KS3 and KS4 Alderbrook students enthusiastically participating for a number of sessions. There will be a presentation of their creativity, again with other schools locally who participated in the creative workshops, in March 2024.



## YEAR 12 DISPLAY

Our students have some work on display over the Christmas period at the Core, Solihull Library Gallery. The CEP Project (Community Education Partnership) has invited a number of local schools with all age groups to show work in this exhibition. The ink Photography work by our year 12 students was selected for display this time and we could have happily displayed more examples of their achievements from this practical. We look forward to its opening on Thursday 14th December until January 6th.



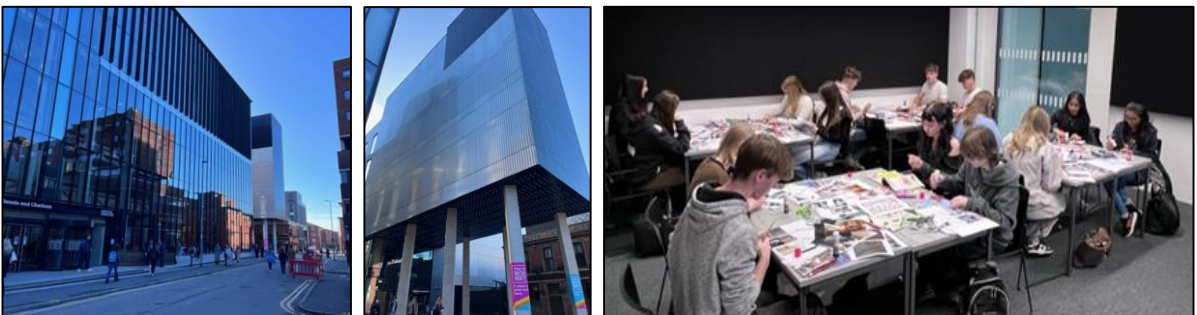
## PHOTOGRAPHY TRIP

We again gave the opportunity for the KS5 Photographers to explore **Shutter speed** and **Aperture** settings on cameras at the Christmas Market and fair ground areas last week. An adventure that yielded some lovely festive photos.



## MANCHESTER TRIP

We took KS5 photographers to Manchester to see SODA the School of Digital Media. A range of new digital courses are offered in this purpose-built contemporary part of the University. We enjoyed a workshop and tour of SODA and a little free time in the city.



## HARRY POTTER TRIP

We have had an eventful term in the Art department with Ms Saimbi's successful trip to WB Harry Potter.

This is very important and relevant KS4 and KS5 trip that not only is enjoyable as the viewer engages with and revisits the characters and sets from the films but it provides an insight to the careers that are held in the industry for Art and Design students.

We saw behind the scenes with designs, processes, concept art and the technical challenges that cover the sets, props, costumes, filming and photography.



## CHRISTMAS DISPLAY

Our technician Mrs Foden and Mrs Myatt have been busy displaying students' art work in the foyer for Christmas displays. Christmas jumpers, Baubles and Christmas themed artwork also adorn the walls.



## ABK MUSIC

### Rock and Pop Night at the Core Theatre

Two of our school bands performed at a recent Rock and Pop Night in Solihull. Well done to Distortion and The Band With No Name for representing our school on the evening!



### Shirley Christmas Lights switch on

The Alderbrook Choir had the pleasure of performing in Shirley for their Christmas Light switch on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> Dec. The students braved the cold weather to perform 'Merry Christmas Everyone' and 'Winter Wonderland'. We also had three delightful solos from Leeya, Hannah and Megan. Well done girls for performing, we're very proud of you!



## ABK MUSIC

### Christmas Concert

The Music Department held the annual Christmas Concert on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December in Malley Hall and what a success this was! Well done to each and every student who performed. There were many solos as well as bands from Y7 right through to Y12. We also had a beautiful rendition of 'Walking in the Air' from Orchestra, 'Wish you a Merry Christmas' from Aidan in Y10 and 'High Hopes' from Aoibha to name a few. Both Miss Rafferty and Miss Saunders would like to thank the students for their commitment to extracurricular groups and hope to see you all again in the new year.



## ABK MUSIC

### Solihull Hospital Fundraiser and Brueton Place performance

The Alderbrook Choir have quite a busy schedule this year with two final performances this week. First up, we performed in the hospital foyer as part of the Hospital's Christmas Fundraising campaign. This is our fifth year in attendance, and we hope to go back next year! The students sang a collection of songs to spread Christmas cheer to all at the hospital but more importantly raising funds that go to the patients in hospital over Christmas. Last year we raised £134.94. This year's fundraising amount to be confirmed!



Finally, the choir will complete their final performance at Brueton Place which is situated just opposite the school site. We will perform a selection of Christmas Songs to the residents as part of their Christmas Entertainment Programme.

Thank you to parents/carers for their support of the Music Department so far this year. It is always much appreciated, and we look forward to many more musical opportunities in the New Year!

## NORTH SOLIHULL FOODBANK APPEAL

We had a fantastic response from students and staff for our North Solihull Food Bank Appeal so a huge thank you to everyone who kindly donated. On Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> December our Head Girl and Head Boy, Tallulah and Josh, delivered ten large boxes of donations to the Food Bank. The food will be distributed to families in need this Christmas and will make a real difference to people in our local community.



**NORTH SOLIHULL FOODBANK**  
**HELPING LOCAL**  
**PEOPLE IN CRISIS**



**MERRY CHRISTMAS & A HAPPY NEW YEAR**