



ABK NEWS

July 2024

From Mr Beveridge ...

I would like to start by saying how incredibly proud I am of our whole school community for the continued energy, resilience and passion with which students, staff, trustees and our wider school community have approached the last 12 months. This year we have celebrated 50 brilliant years of Alderbrook School, with the opening of the Annette Scott Building and a number of events to mark an important point in the school's history. We have focused on the theme of pride in the school community and the students have shown this in spades, as shown in the many stories in this end of year celebration newsletter. I hope they give you a flavour of what has been going on in school, and we have a huge amount to celebrate!

I'd like to use this short introduction to pay tribute to the staff who are leaving the school this summer. I would like to thank them for all they have done in their time at Alderbrook and wish them well for their future endeavours.

I must make a special mention for one colleague leaving the school in particular, Selina Dempsey has worked at Alderbrook for an incredible 30 years. Over this period she has worked in a multitude of roles, from Science teacher, to Head of Year to Designated Teacher for our Looked After Children. We are incredibly grateful for all she has done and wish her happiness and enjoyment in her retirement!

Here are the names of the other staff that are leaving us this summer and we wish them all the very best in their new roles:

Tommy Galbraith – PE teacher; Alex Cameron – English teacher; Ellie Butler – History teacher; Lee Blackmore-Squires – History teacher; Steve Sarson – D & T teacher.

And a farewell to Cobie, Izzy and Asiya who have been with us on an internship this year. Thank you and we wish them well on their future paths.

We look forward to welcoming new colleagues joining the Alderbrook family in September, and we very much look forward to welcoming all students back in the new school year. In the meantime, I'd like to wish you all a restful and happy summer break.

Tom Beveridge

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SOCIAL MEDIA

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BLACK COUNTRY MUSEUM TRIP

This year, the ABK History department took the year 7 cohort to the Black Country Living Museum.

After exploring the impact of the Industrial Revolution in lessons, students saw some of these changes come to life. After going down the drift mine, students learnt how the mines were run, how timber props were used to support the roof and got a taste of the harsh reality of a coal miner's life in the mid-19th century.

Others watched the creation of metal chains and envisaged life on a narrowboat supplying the Black Country with various industrial goods.

Year 7 students represented Alderbrook to the highest standard and embraced a day away from the normal routines of school.

Thank you to all staff that helped organise the trip and ensure an enjoyable day out!



ABK ELECTION 2024

To celebrate UK democracy Alderbrook School held its own General Election on Thursday 4th July.

Ignited by Miss Sudworth's enthusiasm, five of Alderbrook's Year 12 Politics students were selected to represent each of the five largest parties contesting seats in England.

Videos and PowerPoint resources were created to canvass for votes across the lower school, and last Thursday, from 7:00am to 4:00pm 68% (beating the national turnout!) of Alderbrook students made their voices heard.

To best replicate the First Past the Post system, form groups took the place of constituencies, and despite Reform UK winning the most individual forms, ultimately, they fell short of a majority.

A coalition government made up of Labour, the Greens, and the Liberal Democrats won the day.

It was wonderful to see so many young people enthused by the event, and arguing passionately about the direction of their country – and perhaps most crucially of all, they learnt how to vote in as accurate a replica of a polling station as M07 could manage!



DUKE of EDINBURGH AWARD

Nine ex-students attended the Gold Award Celebration Event at Buckingham Palace Gardens in May. Aisha's mother shared her thoughts for the day "it was a wonderful experience as a parent to see our young people flourish and mingle with royalty".

Thirty-eight further students completed the Gold Award. Despite it being July, the students had to demonstrate resilience to overcome all the elements of rain, gale force winds and some eventual sunshine.

Twenty-seven students completed two Bronze expeditions, one in Bromsgrove and surrounding areas and one in the Peak District. This came with its challenges as students navigated their way through unfamiliar territory to reach the finish line after a night camping out away from home. A great time had by all!



ABK SIXTH FORM at SOLIHULL HALF MARATHON

On Sunday 11 August over 60 staff and students will be running Bruton Park Solihull Half Marathon/10km.

In running this event we will be raising money to buy a bench for our quad area in memory of Joshua Weston, a much loved member of our school community whom we sadly lost last year.

We see this bench as not only a tribute to them and their contribution to our school community but also as a place for staff and students to reflect and it could be an area that impacts positively on mental health.

If you would like to donate, you can do so using this link:

GIVE AS YOU LIVE



NFL FLAG

This term, our Year 8 students have achieved remarkable success in our new NFL Flag club.

For the first time, we offered this exciting sport, and it culminated in an extraordinary performance at the West Midland Regional Championships.

Our team of ten Year 8 students played their first competitive matches and went undefeated to win the tournament.

Jeffrey's stellar performance earned him the tournament MVP title.

Following this triumph, we were invited to compete in the NFL Flag National Championships at Loughborough University.

Despite some tight contests, our team finished 8th, showcasing determination and sportsmanship. This experience has set a high standard and ignited a passion for NFL Flag in our school community.



SOLUTIONS FOR THE PLANET

We continued our success in the Solutions for the Planet competition this year.

We had 3 teams get through to the West Midlands Regional Final with Team Algefy, made up of Vidhi and Freya, coming as runners up.

Cleo, Sophie, Jessica, Alex, Tom and Faris also did very well and enjoyed the tour of the STEAMhouse building.

Algefy's idea was sustainable ink cartridges for printers, the girls impressed the judges with their prototype ink which they made themselves!



WILLIAMS F1 VISIT

We were very excited to visit the headquarters of the Williams Racing F1 Team.

Students were treated to a tour of the Williams Museum and got up close to a wide selection of Formula 1 cars of the past and present.

After this, students jumped into the racing simulators and got to experience what it was like to drive an F1 car.

We finished the day by programming some robotic cars to follow simple instructions.

Williams were kind enough to also give every student a selection of free gifts which they were extremely grateful for.



SPELLING BEE

Malley Hall was buzzing with excitement during the annual spelling bee competition in January 2024.

The initial knockout round welcomed more voluntary competitors than ever before from Years 7, 8 & 9.

The rest of the year group were spectacular spectators of the participants who proudly competed in the head-to-head competition to win and bag a tremendous amount of house points for their "Houses".

Well done to all the participants - you were very brave indeed!



WORLD CHALLENGE

After two years of fundraising and preparation, 14 students will be embarking on their two-week World Challenge expedition to eSwatini in the South of Africa.

This experience is designed to develop tomorrow's leaders by building resilience, leadership and teamwork in our learners.

Since October 2022, students have prepared through distance and incline training walks along the Grand Union Canal and in both the Malvern and Shropshire Hills. A range of fundraising activities occurred, from bake sales to the infamous Friday Night Fun events for Y7 and Y8. This time students could compete in the night-orienteering and Super Smash Bros tournament to win prizes kindly donated by Krispy Kreme, Jamaya and Nando's.

This expedition will have the students tackling education and construction community projects, learning crafts, dances, and cooking skills from our hosts, and surviving in the wilderness while wild-camping on a four-day trek along the Ngwempisi River. The final days will end with some R&R in Kruger National Park experiencing night and early morning safaris, hoping to spot the Big 5!



WPR PROJECT

We are so happy to be developing our careers provision with an award-winning, Birmingham based PR company - WPR. This partnership has hit the ground running with some truly impactful events and resources, and is the start of the answer to some of the challenges schools face with their careers programmes – consistent contacts, and effective, interactive activities. WPR joined us in helping to deliver our vision of fostering ambition, providing inspiration and informing students of their choices.

A year on, we introduced an in-school experience of the workplace, where Y8 students were exposed to the world of PR. With 75% of students not knowing what PR was at the start of the day and 60% now potentially considering it as a career choice, an additional 14% *definitely* considering it, we can only describe the day as inspiring, engaging and a great success.

A Y12 mentoring project developed students' professional communication skills and independence, and students completed placements on the well-established work experience programme ran by WPR. We have developed complete Schemes of Work within Y7 English and Y10 iMedia, linking curriculum learning to the world of work, and creating opportunities for meaningful encounters with employees, where students can receive valuable feedback from industry professionals.

After such a passionate start we hope to continue developing our curriculum resources further, creating a model that can be rolled out across departments. WPR themselves have been impressed with the standard of student at Alderbrook School, the passion they demonstrate and their innovative and wacky ideas.



50th ANNIVERSARY OF ALDERBROOK SCHOOL

In 1965, the comprehensive system was introduced by the government. This involved the merging of grammar schools and secondary modern schools across Solihull with the aim to form a mixed ability set of students.

Alderbrook was one of these schools and to celebrate our 50th anniversary milestone, we held a celebration party.

Present and past members of staff across the whole school were invited to attend.

We had a massive turnout and it was a lovely opportunity to share past memories and to see the changes and improvements to the site.



DIGITAL INNOVATORS

This year we partnered with Digital Innovators to launch the Transition to Work scheme. Selected Year 10 students developed and presented a unique business proposal.

Through these interactive and engaging group activities students built their soft skills. They presented the proposals to Alderbrook and Digital Innovators staff as well as visitors from the Solihull Careers Hub. It was so inspiring to see the growth in confidence and the creative, unique ideas.

SPORTS NEWS

- Oliver receiving the Team of the Year award from the Mayor of Solihull as Captain of the Year 9 Basketball team – undefeated for two years.
- Nathan receiving an award for his representation of Solihull in the English Schools Athletics.
- Ben receiving an award for winning the Year 11 Cross County Championship and his dedication for 5 years of racing.



PANATHLON

We were thrilled to be invited to compete at the South Solihull Panathlon Sporting Event held at Langley School on 7th May, students in attendance were Alfie, Kurt, Morgan, Harpreet, Lily Rose, Zachy, Tegan, Aayon, Loen and Kingzley. They were excellent ambassadors of our school community and were awarded a bronze medal which led to an invite to the Coventry/Solihull/Warwickshire Secondary Xtend Panathlon Final in Coventry on 4th June.

The students showed ambition, bravery and kindness; their attitude and sportsmanship won gold in our eyes.

We were so proud of their engagement in events and when they all congratulated the winning school, we also walked away achieving second place with a trophy that is proudly positioned on the Student Development corridor.

SPORTS NEWS

U16 Girls' Football

The team played in the final's night of the Solihull Schools 5-a-side on Tuesday 30th April. The team were up against Grace Academy in the semi-final game which would determine their place in the final. Captain Poppy led the team to their first victory, winning an incredible 9-0, with the help of goal scorers Sophie, Darcey and Ellen.

The team then went on to play a really tough final against St. Peter's, where after a grueling first half of 0-0, motivations were lifted, finishing the final 2-0 to Alderbrook. Goalkeepers Jessica and Natthika were phenomenal, with zero goals being conceded. As a result of this win, the girls then progressed on to represent Alderbrook in the County finals. Playing 4 other schools in some heated games, the team once again came out on top with some great defending from Chloe and Rosie.

The team received first place overall, and were awarded the values award for their determination, passion and teamwork.

U14 Girls' Football

The team had a fantastic year, also making it to the final's night of the Solihull Schools 6-a-side Cup. The team played Lyndon in the semi-final winning 3-0 as a result of some great goals from Paige and Isabella, and some fantastic saves from Eva.

Defenders Orla-Rose, Taylor and Ava also helped to relieve the pressure by making some great clearances up the pitch. They then progressed onto playing in the final game versus a tough Tudor Grange side, who just edged the win at 2-1.

Congratulations to Captain Paige who was awarded Player of the match out of all 4 schools involved. A big thank you to Miss Fogarty for continually giving up her time to take the students to fixtures and encouraging them from the sidelines.

SPORTS NEWS

TABLE TENNIS

Four students went to the Solihull table tennis tournament with two players reaching the semi finals and Ethan from Year 11 went onto the final, where he lost to a very experienced club player from Arden.

BOYS' FOOTBALL

Year 10 boys football team had not won a game in 3 years but with a new manager in Mr Galbraith, they went on an unbeaten run all the way to the final, beating a very strong Arden side with a fabulous free kick from Charlie in the semi final.

They then got to experience playing at Villa Park and had an amazing day and played superbly well, but the other team was very strong with some very good academy players and the game ended 3-1 to Bishop Challenor, but a great day was had by all!



SPORTS NEWS

SUPER 6

The Super 6 Competition this year was dominated by Alderbrook boys. Year 7 came first, Year 8 came first and Year 9 came second. This involves athletes taking part in one track and one field event each to have combined totals making it a fantastic team event.



CHESWICK GREEN SPORTS DAY

Year 12 and Year 10 students travelled back in time and supported at a local primary school's sports day, by helping run the events for Years 3-6. This was a great experience for our students and was gratefully received by the teachers and students at Cheswick Green Junior school. Our students led and supported students of all abilities and gained some valuable life skills in the process building some great links with our local schools.

ROUNDERS

Another successful year for our Year 10 Girls who represented Alderbrook in the Solihull Schools Borough rounders tournament. The team played fixtures against 5 other schools, showing the school values of ambition, bravery and kindness by cheering for each other and risking their runs for rounders, especially when playing a tough Lyndon side. Excellent fielding play by backstop Sienna and Millie catching players out in the field edged Alderbrook the win, continuing to add to their title of undefeated champions for the third year in a row! Thank you to Miss Fogarty and Miss Newlands for taking this fixture and continuing to encourage the team.

SPORTS NEWS

BASKETBALL



Years 8, 9 & 10 all qualified for the Solihull basketball finals. All three teams were victorious in winning the final with Year 8, unbeaten all year, and Year 9, unbeaten for two seasons. Year 10, had very little success until this year, but went on to narrowly qualify for the semi-finals and beat a very strong team in the semi finals, to then go on and be crowned champions in the final.



TRAMPOLINING

The Alderbrook trampolining team were once again successful at this year's Solihull Borough Trampolining Competition held at Fundamental Movement Academy. The year 7 and 8 team represented the school amazingly with their enthusiasm and work-ethic which led to a bronze medal team position, with Caitlin finishing in a silver medal position individually. Our Year 9 and 10 team were once again victorious for the second year, beating 5 other schools for the gold medal position, with individual medal places from Jamie, Rosie, Sienna, Millie, Neyah and Amelia. A big thank you to Ms Williamson and Miss Fogarty for giving up their time and getting the teams to the competition.

CULTURE DIVERSITY & ABK VALUES

This academic year Alderbrook School has seen an increase in the number of students who have joined us from Hong Kong.

They have involved themselves fully into all aspects of our school becoming a valuable addition of our diverse, culture-rich school not only by immersing themselves into enriching opportunities but also by making considerable academic progress.

Our Hong Kong students have proudly taken part in external community projects such as *My Community, My Heritage, My Place* and *Together in Solihull*, both of these events were founded and developed by Solihull Council.

In school, at KS3 Presentation Evening, we were so proud to see them taking part in the dance performance and equally playing in the school band.

During our most recent Life Ready Day, our students were asked to write a poem about their identity. Chloe Wong, one of our Year 8 students, wrote this poem and bravely performed it in front of the year group superbly summing up our ABK values of Ambition, Bravery and Kindness:

*My name is Chloe Wong
And I come from a place which is called Hong Kong
I have got a lot of friends
And our friendship never ends
One of my friends is called Rameen
She is really kind to me
I like to listen to our old Hong Kong song
Because it cheers me up like my sister Zoe Wong
Everybody takes a look
Until when I say 'what's up Alderbrook'
This is my identity
And it will be mine for the whole eternity.*

NT CONNECTIONS

This year, the Drama Department took place in the National Theatre Connections programme for the third year in a row. We performed a new musical, 'The Sad Club', written by Luke Barnes with music by Adam Pleeth. It explores depression and anxiety and what about living in this world stops us from being happy and how we might go about tackling those problems.

With it being a musical, we collaborated with the Music Department and worked with student musicians who created their own versions of the songs. We also had a student led technical team who designed and operated the lighting and sound for the production.

We performed two shows in the Edge Theatre and we were visited by a professional director who gave us feedback before transferring our show to the Royal and Derngate Theatre in April. On the day, as well as performing our show to other schools and youth groups, we participated in a workshop on how AI could be used to in rehearsals. The students were dedicated and professional throughout the whole process.

Musicians: Lewis, Ben, Elijah, Owam, Amy, Lottie

Tech: Euan, Louie, Dan

Actors: Will, Will, Lucas, Bella, Sophie, Amelia, Erin, Owen, Emily, Caitlin, Daisy, Harriet, Rosie, Jess, Izzy & Ben



SPANISH OUTSIDE OF THE CLASSROOM

At Alderbrook we believe that language learning does not only occur within the vacuum of the classroom. Therefore, we have sought to provide inspiring opportunities to engage our students in Hispanic culture this academic year whilst developing the cross curricular links our subject naturally lends itself to.

We once again had the pleasure of inviting the Onatti Theatre Company to perform to our Year 9 and Year 10 students.

This was well received by the cohort, who enthusiastically engaged with the Spanish language production *Reserva duplicada* and who had the opportunity to participate in a question and answers session with the actors afterwards. We were very impressed that many students chose to ask their questions in Spanish. We are looking forward to welcoming Onatti Theatre Company back to Alderbrook next year.

Furthermore, all Spanish students were offered the opportunity to explore the history of Flamenco thanks to our partnership with Ana Garcia.

The students who took part in the workshop not only deepened their cultural knowledge of Spain but also engaged their dance skills by performing a Flamenco routine.



SHREWSBURY PRISON

Year 13 Sociology and Criminology students visited Shrewsbury Prison in January. The prison which became decommissioned in March 2013 is still open to visitors and students were able to apply their learning from the classroom to the prison. They explored concepts such as how the media portray crime and criminals, forms of punishment including custodial sentencing and the effectiveness of prisons.

As part of their day student attempted an escape room from one of the cells – unfortunately for them, Miss Jones and Miss Crowther-Green came out victorious.



WEST MIDLAND SAFARI PARK

Year 12 Psychology students attended a workshop at West Midlands Safari Park in June where they explored how phobias develop and are treated using psychological principles. They put these to the test with some of the resident creepy crawlies! Beth and Evie were amongst some of the bravest handling stick insects and rats. Even Mrs Hobbs had a go!

Students were later able to apply their understanding of how behaviours can be shaped and modified using psychological theory whilst watching the sea lion show!

SEND RESEARCH

In January, we wrote to our parents with students that have a diagnosis of autism to invite them to participate in research conducted by Aston University to understand Autism and effective interventions regarding SEMH. Whilst we are not affiliated with the research, the outcome of the study will be shared with us.

We are keen to stay up to date with the latest findings so that we can provide evidence based interventions that support our children.

FRIDAY QUIZ CLUB

In January, we launched Friday Lunchtime Quiz Club which is led by the students for the students. They have organised some excellent power points to deliver the quiz each week.

We have been blown away by the detail, creativity and the determination to make the club a success; involving one another to create a place of inclusion and community. Quiz themes are chosen by the children and there are no winners, as everyone wins for their participation and working together as part of a team. We very much look forward to watching Quiz Club evolve in the next academic year.

A huge well done and thank you to each and every one of our students that have organised and delivered a quiz and a special thank you to the students that support by attending each week during 2024.

SEND STUDENT VOICE

Students have demonstrated the power of having their voice heard and working with professionals to inform and make change happen. Students have been busy during the Summer Term completing sensory audits, interview panels, and providing helpful information to inform the transition for the year 6s.

Special mention to Yvie, Jenson, Kurt and Charlie for their excellent efforts in supporting year 6 transition workshops.

The SEND student voice will form an integral part of our work within the Student Development team in the upcoming academic year and we look forward to working alongside our students to continue to develop our inclusive practice.

COSY COPE CAFÉ

The Year 10 students completing their COPE Skills programme have organised a Cosy Cope Café for staff to purchase cakes and raise money for the Marjorie Willis Donation. The students have worked together to advertise the event, liaise with staff to design posters, price lists and coordinate decorations and cake making. They have worked together as a team to create a beautiful cafe creating joy at the end of the Summer term whilst raising money for their selected charity. Well done Year 10 ! Fantastic effort for a worthy cause !

ANXIETY UNCOVERED WORKSHOPS

60 students were invited to attend anxiety uncovered workshops by Joe Rowntree. These workshops aimed to help empower the students (and parents) to understand how worries and anxiety work in our bodies, how we can work with anxiety by understanding and learning how to manage it effectively with proven techniques and knowledge.

Joe guided the students with plenty of enthusiasm, passion and engagement by ensuring that they felt confident to be a part of the discussion so that they took an active role in learning how to move forward with what works for them. There were activities for students to work together, laugh and talk freely ensuring that each student felt more confident. Guidebooks were issued to help students continue their journey with helpful activities and strategies.

We look forward to watching students unlock their potential by taking control of their worries and anxiety.

We were incredibly proud of all of the students that attended the workshop, their participation and engagement with something that can be hard to talk about was admirable, and a thank you to all the parents that attended the twilight session.



LET'S TALK

We were excited to attend a “Let’s Talk” event at the Council House in Solihull in June. This was a unique opportunity to meet some decision makers working within the Council to have our SEND voice heard.

The students that attended were superb in their delivery of what support looks like in Solihull and how they can help to make things better. The students raised some excellent points around the need for more awareness of SEND in the Borough.

The organisers of the event complemented our students on their ideas and are hoping to work with us in the future.

A special mention to Chloe, Conor, Orla-Rose, Yvie and Dev. We applaud your efforts communicating and embracing SEND leading the way for important change that will help others.



IN THE WILD

We now provide 40 of our SEND students with a 5 week programme of “in the wild” workshops. These workshops have taken place outdoors promoting the wellbeing of our students in a fun and interactive way through a series of carefully planned activities in nature.

Students had the opportunity to plant, to paint, to create, to be free to sit and admire their surroundings while learning important wellbeing tools that they can take away and build on. The students have enjoyed the opportunity to be working outdoors, learning more about the scientific benefits for both body and mind.

It has been a pleasure to watch the children build confidence each week and delight in the wonders that nature has to offer.



VORTEX TRIP

Year 10 and Y12 Computer Science pupils visited Vortex Games to see real life implementation of virtual machines.

They had a brief talk from the branch manager to see how emulators are used in a commercial setting to create an immersive gaming experience on a windows-based platform disguised as a retro arcade platform.

During the trip, branch manager hosted a Shoot the Hoop Basketball competition and our very own Sam won 1st place winning the title and goodie bag full of gamer merchandise.



LIFE READY DAYS

ABK's third LIFE READY day of the school year included activities for years 7, 8, 9 and 10 whilst our year 12 students were completing their work experience placements.

The focus for year 7 was FRIENDSHIP. The students went through the day in their form groups and worked through sessions on EMPATHY, BANTER, E-SAFETY, MINDFULNESS and TEAMWORK.

Year 8 and year 9 students were encouraged to think about their IDENTITY. They were led through sessions that covered IDENTITY, GLOBAL CULTURE, HERITAGE, WORLD FOOD, WORLD MUSIC and MEDICINE & INVENTIONS FROM OTHER BACKGROUNDS. The students and the staff were encouraged to wear clothes that represented their identity.

Year 10 students spent their day thinking about CAREERS and their future. There were over 50 visitors to the school who led workshops on behalf of companies, colleges and universities. The highlight of the day for our students was a mock interview in which each student was asked a series of interview questions by one of our guests who then gave feedback to the interviewee on how well they had done.

LIFE READY DAYS rely on the involvement of everybody in Alderbrook – thanks for making the day run so smoothly.

COMBINED CADET FORCE

It has been fantastic to launch the Combined Cadet Force this year at Alderbrook. We have had an overwhelming number of applications from year 7 and 8 to start in September 2024.

A big thank you to Ms Mills, Ms Hatton, Mr Middleton and Ms Fielding for their commitment to training at the Cadets HQ in Telford ahead of our start date.



YEAR 11 PROM

We had a lovely evening celebrating Year 11, the students arrived in style, the two that stood out were an American school bus and a wheelbarrow!

The students looked glamorous in their evening gowns and suits. They danced the night away and took hundreds of photos and videos. It was the perfect end to 5 years at Alderbrook and it was a pleasure to say a proper goodbye to them. We wish them all the best for the future.

HOUSE CHAMPIONSHIP 2024

What a year it's been of our inaugural House Championships ! Reformatted at the start of the year to reflect our school values; Houses Ambition, Bravery, Kindness and Proud have been locked in battle all year.

Our events have included: House Football, House Netball, European Day of Languages, ABK Bake Off, World Kindness Day, Computing Escape Room, Humanities University Challenge, House Dodgeball, Textiles Christmas Jumper Competition, Big Quiz - 6th Form, Art Competition, Science Challenge, Maths Challenge, The Race to the Top...

Our final 2 events, The Braids Assemblies and Athletics Championships will be key in deciding our overall winners. A huge thank you to all students and staff who have been involved.

20,262 House Points have been awarded to students this year for positive contributions to Extracurricular, House Events and our wider school community which is hugely positive.

We look forward to the first names being etched on our new House Shields!!

BRAIDS ASSEMBLIES

As is tradition, we are hosting our annual Braids Awards Assemblies in the last week of the school year. These assemblies give staff the opportunity to reward specific students for their progress in their subject areas. Staff are allowed to nominate up to 11 students within their subject area and those who are awarded a braid in a particular subject will be entitled to wear that braid for the entirety of their time at Alderbrook.

As well as subject braids, there are also braids awarded for a variety of other reasons: Reading, Leadership, House Events, Sports, Progress, Commitment, as well as our coveted Governors braid to name but a few.

We make every effort to recognise as many students as possible over the 4-year Braid Assembly cycle and we very much work towards all students being rewarded over this time.

We congratulate this years' recipients and hope that they wear their new braid with pride!

MUSIC DEPARTMENT

What a busy year – from Christmas lights switch on in Shirley to performing as part of the Solihull Music Festival in Mell Square; from rocking out at the Cavern Club to performing at local schools, Cheswick Green and Hazel Oak.

The students have been amazing at representing the school at all these events plus many more!

As well as this, we had our Christmas Concert, Peri Music Night, Spring Concert and finally the We Will Rock You Showcase at the start of July with the rest of the Performing Arts department.

This year we had an amazing band of 14 musicians for the musical - the biggest band for a production yet! It was a true delight to work with you all!

This year we were also delighted to be part of two new opportunities. First being the host school for the Vocal Fiesta alongside Solihull Music and 3 local primary schools. Each school prepared their own pieces as well as learning 'Sing' from Trolls and 'Lean on Me' Bill Withers. All students came together in Malley Hall to perform all songs for parents and it really was a true delight!

The second was hosting Music workshops with Solihull Music again. This was part of a transition project with students from local primary schools writing and performing their own song in small groups. It was an amazing three weeks and we hope to see these students signing up to extra-curricular Music groups in September.

Next year promises to be bigger and better with the following trips and performances- Belgium Music Tour Feb 2025, Christmas Concert, Spring Concert, Symphony Hall trip and a Summer Festival!

Thank you to all students who have been involved in the Music department whether as part of Choir, Orchestra, Rock and Pop bands, We Will Rock You band, solo and duet pieces. Your efforts never go unnoticed by the Music Department and we appreciate all your hard work! Hope to see you all sign back up in September – new members to all extracurricular activities are always welcome !

MUSIC DEPARTMENT



SKI TRIP

It was, as always, another unforgettable Ski Trip. Alderbrook stayed in a new resort, Folgarida, in a beautiful Hotel (Dal Braconniere) high up in the mountains.

The trip was a fun-filled adventure, where the majority of the day was spent up in the mountains learning to ski. It's of note that the majority of the group were beginners, yet the group approached learning a new skill with high levels of enthusiasm.

The instructors were incredibly impressed with the progress they all made, and this was acknowledged with a fantastic ending ceremony on the final day where students were given awards and certificates for their individual performances.

Outside of skiing, the trip was made up of visiting towns around the area, karaoke, and a lot of eating to refuel for the following days! The students were a huge credit to the school.

Such was the success of the week it was decided will be returning to the same hotel and resort for 2025!!!



WE WILL ROCK YOU

We had an amazing response from many attendees at 'We Will Rock You', and we are very proud of our achievements. We genuinely believe that the standard of the show and the staging has surpassed any of our previous productions.

With over 70 students directly involved in the show, from yr7-12, and from a broad span of abilities and backgrounds, we are also really proud of the diversity of the production team. In particular, it was great to see so many boys involved. To include more boys, especially on stage, was one of our key goals, and we were delighted to see the participation of numerous boys in leading roles and in the band. There were a number of other firsts in this production too. We incorporated dry ice, and a staging frame that added four new levels to the production. This enabled students to access the space and climb up to the full height of the proscenium arch, adding to the range of dynamics and movement. The school recently invested in a set of radio microphones, and it was great to integrate them too, saving us about £1000 off the production costs.

Overall, it was great to see a diverse and broad ranging team perform to such a high standard, and embrace 1970s rock music in our 50th Anniversary year!



SUPPORTING ABK with MARJORIE WILLIS

The Marjorie Willis Educational Foundation is a registered charity, that has been supporting the students at Alderbrook School for over 50 years. This is done by raising funds, awarding grants and providing items that are not provided by normal school funding.

SIGN UP with 'GIVE AS YOU LIVE'

'Give As You Live' is the free and easy way to raise money for Marjorie Willis when you shop online with 6,000+ stores.

Simply sign up and start shopping to make a difference for Marjorie Willis!

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WISHING YOU ALL A GOOD SUMMER

Alderbrook School and Sixth Form