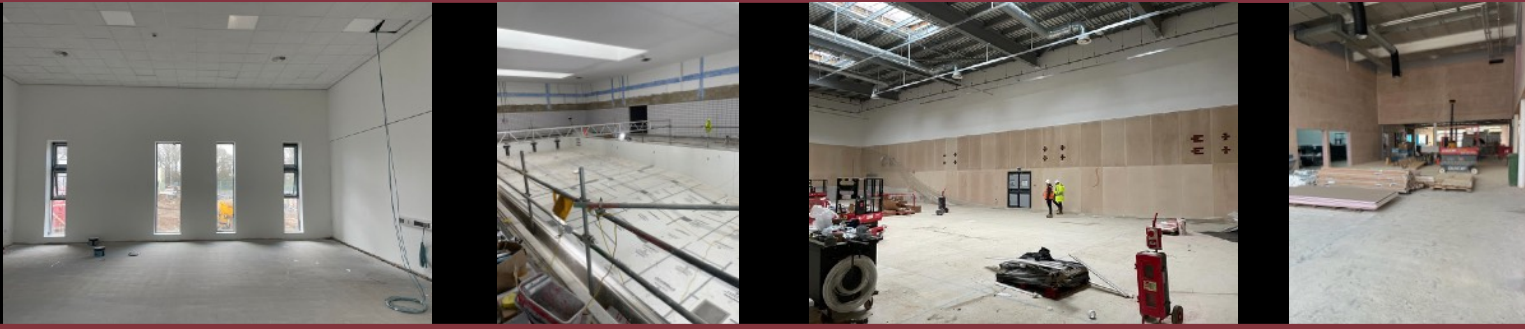




ACS NEWSLETTER



Headteacher's Message:

These are exciting times for the students and staff at The Astley Cooper School as we get closer to moving into the new building. Thank you to all the parents who have shared their feedback about the move. It is helpful to see your comments and reflect on the best way to ensure we can move into the building successfully. This will also be an opportunity to reset our expectations on behaviour, equipment and systems. I will share more information about these as we get closer to the move.



The move is also an opportunity to review our vision and values to ensure they match the high standards and expectations we have of all students in this school. The governors have been working with parents, staff and students over the last half term and will share more information in the coming months.

As always at this time of year, we have staff who are leaving us. This term we say goodbye to Erin Colfer, English Teacher, who I know will be missed by many. After Easter, we welcome Robert Burrows, Mathematics Teacher and Lead Practitioner and Debbie Ridgway who joins us to add more support to our Administration team.

I hope you all have an opportunity to rest over the Easter break and enjoy time with family and friends. We will see all students back in school on Tuesday 18 April.

What's On

Monday 17 April - INSET day
 Tuesday 18 April - Term begins for all students
 Friday 21 April - Year 12 History trip
 Friday 28 April - INTERACT pamper evening
 Thursday 4 May - Year 9 Pathfinder University Day
 Friday 5 May - Year 9 Pathfinder University Day
 Thursday 11 May - Year 11 PE Practical exam
 Tuesday 16 May - Year 7 Willen Lake Trip
 Thursday 25 May - Year 12 Career Day
 Friday 26 May - Year 13 Leavers Celebration
 Friday 26 May - Year 7 Academic Review Day
 Friday 26 May - Last day of term (3.15pm finish)

May Half Term: Monday 29 May - Friday 2 June

Letters Home

Click [HERE](#) to find the most recent letters we have sent home to parents.



Parks	King	Curie	Nightingale	Hawking	Shakespeare
15190	16188	16426	17715	15290	15829



ACS House System

At the start of this year, we introduced a new House System to develop friendly competition and fun activities across all subjects in school. All students and staff are linked to one of the six Houses.

The Houses are:

PARKS
KING
CURIE
NIGHTINGALE
HAWKING
SHAKESPEARE

So far this year, we have run a wide range of events including: football, netball, a talent show, a short story writing competition, a maths challenge, a design a Christmas card competition, Christmas cake decorating, photography, a design a board game competition and a swimming gala!

More events are planned for the Spring and Summer terms.

Students are rewarded with House Points for participating in, and winning, House competitions. They also receive House Points for completing good work in class and doing the right thing on a daily basis. Parents can keep track of House Points awarded on the Go4Schools platform.

It is hoped that ALL students will participate in as many House competitions and events as possible.

Above is a table that summarises the House Point totals for all Houses so far this year.



Student Achievement House Points

Well done to the following students for achieving the highest amount of positive house points this term in their year group!

YEAR 7: Kamen Apostolic

YEAR 8: Maddison Bryce-Thomas

YEAR 9: George Jackson

YEAR 10: Alfi Cresenti-Brown

YEAR 11: Zakarya Chowdhury

SIXTH FORM: Charlie Wilson



Congratulations!

Indoor Athletics

In February, we took a group of students to Longdean School to compete in the Dacorum Indoor Athletics Championships. All students performed exceptionally well and showed great promise for the outdoor season which will happen in the summer term.

The girls were placed 4th overall and the boys came 2nd. It was a great effort by all.

Rotary Young Photographer Competition 2023

Congratulations to Sapphire Bradding who won a Commended award for her entry to the Rotary Young Photographer Competition 2023.

The judges were impressed by Sapphire's 'Glass Building' Photo and Dr Champion, the chief judge writes: *"This reminded me of a piece of music. Wonderful and thoughtful capture of the glass as it reflects the harmony of the construction. I love the black and white capture. Well done!"*

Sapphire's photography will be exhibited at Open Door, Berkhamsted High Street between the 15th and 30th of May.





Pi day celebration - 3/14

Pi Day is a special day for mathematicians and maths enthusiasts around the world, celebrated on March 14 (3/14) to honour the mathematical constant Pi, which is approximately equal to 3.14.

On this day, the maths department organised a range of activities to celebrate the importance of mathematics. Twelve students who had won on a number of activities were awarded golden tickets and given the opportunity to Pie a few teachers, including the headteacher. Students were excited to take part in the pie throwing event, and the teachers were more than happy to participate in this memorable and unique activity.

The event was a fun and memorable way to celebrate the occasion, and the students had a great time participating in a number of activities such as: Pi recitation competition, Pi-themed baking competition and many more fun competitions for all year groups.

The activities were aimed at creating a fun and engaging learning experience for the students, and also to promote the importance of maths in everyday life. The day was also organised and supported by some of our maths A-level students: Lewis, Anthony and our school student maths ambassador - Sophie Webster.

With the new school building opening very soon, we are hoping to make this an even bigger celebration next year.

UK Intermediate Maths Challenge

Recently, a group of our year 9 and year 10 students participated in the Intermediate Mathematical Challenge, a 60-minute multiple-choice test that challenges students to use their mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills. The challenge was designed to encourage precision of thought and fluency in using mathematical techniques to solve interesting problems.

Many of the students who took the challenge received bronze and silver certificates in recognition of their achievements. To celebrate their hard work and dedication, Mrs Noquet organised a rewards breakfast morning for the students. The event was a great opportunity for the students to come together, share their experiences, and celebrate their success.

We are incredibly proud of all of our students who participated in the Intermediate Mathematical Challenge, and we hope that this event will encourage more students to develop their mathematical skills and participate in future challenges. We look forward to seeing more students achieve great success in the future.



Tate Modern Gallery Art Trip

On the Friday 24 February, our Year 10,11,12 and Year 13 students visited the Tate Modern Gallery to support their studies in Art. Located in the heart of London, on the south bank of the Thames River, the gallery is based in what was once a power station and displays international and contemporary works of art. We enjoyed exploring the gallery spaces and architecture.

I was taken aback at some of the artwork, especially the pieces made from new media and neon lights. I liked how there was so many different cultures represented in the art. I found the whole day inspiring.

Poppy Roberts Yr10

I saw these huge black sculptures by Louise Nevelson and Leonardo Drew. The scale of the artwork was impressive. They were so different to the other pieces that it made me think differently about art and its history. It made me think about climate change and capitalism. There were other pieces; planks of wood with triangular and zig-zag patterns, that made me feel dizzy.

Millie Aldridge Yr11

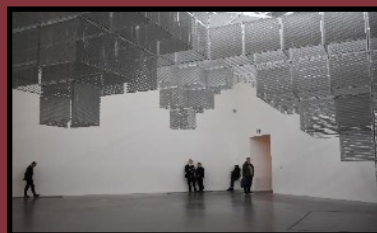
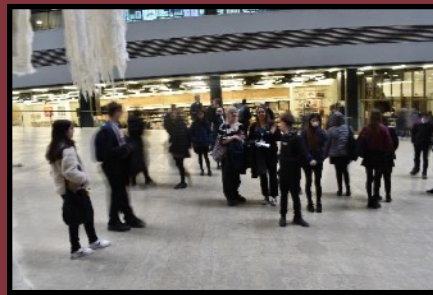
The radio tower made me think about how much is available to the artist to use and manipulate in their work to express their ideas. That all art is not still and silent.

Charlie Wilson Yr12

It was really inspiring for my artwork. I'd love to go back; it was really fun.

Olivia Biggs Yr10

Miss Padam Subject Leader Art



KS4 Aspire Higher Residential Project



Click on the Aspire Higher logo for further information

Across this academic year, the Widening Access Team at the University of Hertfordshire have been working with a group of 25 Year 10 Students on a residential project. By working with these learners, we are aiming to:

- Develop students' confidence, social skills and resilience
- Develop and demonstrate communication, problem solving, leadership and teamwork skills
- Help to remove the barriers to access to higher education in underrepresented groups
- Support students to find the right educational progression for them
- Support students' study skills and academic success

At the point of writing, the students have participated in three workshops, both in school and at the University of Hertfordshire Campus in Hatfield. We have focused on teamwork, student lifestyle and skills, Post 16 Educational Pathways, and Study Skills.

Our work will culminate with a two night residential stay at PGL's Osmington Bay resort in Dorset during the Easter Holidays. Students will have plenty of opportunities to demonstrate their problem solving and team working whilst trying their hand at a range of new activities, including Climbing, a Sensory Trail, Zip Wire, and Coastal Management.

It has been a pleasure to work with these young people and we cannot wait for the trip to begin.

Careers Focus Year 10 Work Experience

On the 22nd of May, our Year 10 students will each take part in a week long work experience placement. Students have been asked to find a placement either by identifying one they have found themselves or by choosing the placement from the LINK2+ online website (<https://hcc.learnaboutwork.net/index.asp>).

LINK2+ contains over 120 different work placements provided through Services for Young People (SfYP), who are supporting The Astley Cooper School in this project. If the students wish to choose a placement on the LINK2+ website, we ask that they choose a minimum of 3 placements and a maximum of 6. Each placement should be given a 'choice' (priority), and the choices should then be submitted to lock them in to the system. We ask that this process is completed by Friday 31st March. At the start of the summer term, we will contact the employers and parents to confirm which placement has been allocated.

If any parents or carers are able to offer work experience placements to other students, please contact Dr Mike Ryde by email on m.ryde@astleycooper.herts.sch.uk.



Year 11

It is unbelievable that we find ourselves approaching the Easter Holidays. A time for relaxation and time for the students to prepare themselves for the start of the GCSE's. One step closer for some of our cohort to leave and go to College, other Sixth Forms, or apprenticeships. Some of our students will remain at The Astley Cooper School and be part of the exciting new school, which will be nothing short of magnificent when it is completed.

Since the start of September, the focus has been on wellbeing, revision, and preparation for life after 'Astley'. Many students have visited colleges and Sixth Forms and our career advisors have been helping students to decide where to go and what courses to enrol on. The cohort have had some excellent opportunities to help, support and guide them with their exams. Year 11s went to London for Poetry Live, where poems that they are studying were read aloud by the actual poet. The GCSE Sport group went to the University of Hertfordshire, our Geography students have been on two field trips, one to Epping Forest and the other to Hemel Hempstead to collate information that is required for their course. The Production Art students have had professional workers from the TV and Theatre world in to teach and demonstrate their skills to the Year 11's. The Art students went to the National Gallery and some of the dance students went to performances and competed in Dance Shows locally.

There was the History Trip where I received daily reports on the outstanding behaviour of our students.

Online 1:1 tuition has been offered to many students in numerous subjects and teachers at The Astley Cooper School have been working tirelessly with before and after school intervention to support our students.

Year 11 have been treated to several hot chocolate and biscuit break times to celebrate their outstanding attitude in lessons and around school. In fact, the Year 11's have done better than some of the younger year groups in receiving zero behaviour points. This has not always been the case.

I would like to thank you for your support in helping me and the pastoral team ensure a calm and consistent approach to school for your child. It is a stressful time for both students and parents/carers, but I feel that we have provided an exceptional platform for your child to do their very best in their GCSE's.

I hope that you and your families have a wonderful holiday. Happy Easter.





Sixth Form News

It has been a busy term for the Sixth Form students with many events and opportunities for our students. Year 12 and 13 students completed their vocational BTEC examinations in January and have since received their grades for these with some fantastic results.

In PSHE, we were fortunate enough to watch the live screening of *Prima Facie* on National Theatre Live. Starring Jodie Comer, the play explored the themes of consent, the criminal justice system and the female experience. Following this, we had 'The Schools Consent Project' team in school to deliver a workshop to our Year 12 students about the legal definition of consent and key sexual offences. The aim of the play is to normalise conversations amongst young people, to empower them to identify and communicate their boundaries and to respect them.

In February, 20 Year 12 and Year 13 Psychology students attended a Forensic Psychology lecture run by leading Forensic Psychologist, Jennifer Rees. We travelled down to Wimbledon and the students really enjoyed themselves and came back with some excellent knowledge about the psychology of serial killers to support their BTEC Psychology coursework.

In January, we invited all students in Year 11 to have the opportunity to see what it would be like to study in our Sixth Form by attending 'Sixth Form discovery day'. Here, students were able to choose four subjects to explore and learn about, as well as find out more information on opportunities in the Sixth Form.

The deadline for Year 11 Sixth Form applications was in February with a record number of applications received. Interviews have also been conducted by the Sixth Form team who have been very impressed when speaking with our Year 11 students. Students will receive a conditional letter after Easter, as well as information regarding the July Sixth Form Induction.





Year 12 News

Alongside their studies and working hard with their coursework, Year 12 has been contributing to the wider life of the school, and they are trying to broaden their horizons for their next steps.

The Year 12 Pre-Apprenticeship students have graduated from their Rising Futures programme, where they have worked on improving their resilience, developing their confidence, and ensuring they stand apart from others. They have been involved in wider community programmes such as 'Play your Part', where they worked with the Chiltern Rangers on developing a garden in Warners End, going to KPMG for a world of work session and a weekend residential, where they showed Leadership Skills with other students. This will help develop their employability skills.

Students also helped contribute to the Mencap Prom on the 8th of February. This was an event for the carers of people with learning difficulties. Students helped with ensuring the guests had an enjoyable evening and the feedback from the carers and the guests was very positive. These events will help with their UCAS applications and broaden The Astley Cooper School's Sixth Form standing in the community.

The Year 12 students have also been involved in wider activities such as the Pi Day in Maths and they will be involved in further events in the Summer Term.

Year 12 UCAS

In the summer term, Year 12 will be starting to look at their next steps after Sixth Form during PSHE lessons and form times. We would encourage students to start thinking about this process during the Easter holidays to prepare themselves for lessons. We will give the students more details about important dates after the holidays.

It would also benefit students to start looking into free subject specific summer residential courses that will help them write their university application, as well as give them an insight into the subject they wish to study. Several universities, including The University of Hertfordshire, offer placements shadowing students. The Sutton Trust and Nuffield also offer specific programmes and courses. Please see Mrs Ollerenshaw-East or Mr Hall if you are interested in applying.

Click the image below for an example of some of the FREE courses available online:



Year 13 News

UCAS Applications

Year 13 UCAS deadline closed in January and all the students who applied for University have heard back from the majority of their choices. Students need to reply to their offers by the following deadlines:

- If you receive your last decision on or before 18 May 2023, your reply date is **8 June 2023** (except if you're using Extra to find a place).
- If you receive your last decision on or before 12 July 2023, your reply date is **17 July 2023** (including Extra choices).

We would also like to remind Year 13 students that they should be applying for Student Finance now. The deadline for this is **Friday 19 May**.

Year 13 Leavers Day is on **Friday 26 May**. Students will be invited into school for an assembly before heading into London for their event.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish our Year 13's the best of luck in the summer exams.

Mrs Ollerenshaw-East
Head of Sixth Form

Mrs Houchin
Head of Year 13

Mr Hall
Head of Year 12

School Council

The student council has been busy this term. The first meeting before half term was to help organise our move to the new building as well as to plan charity house events for the rest of the year. The council were keen to support the Turkish earthquake appeal amongst other good causes.

The student council was invited by the governors to help them review the school values ahead of a relaunch in September. It was felt that our current values – 'aspiration, determination, integrity' - aren't understood in the same way by all students so need an overhaul.

Finally, the council were invited to meet Aspens, the school caterers, to come up with suggestions to improve food at break and lunch. Most members of the council had an opinion on the food, but they weren't all the same! The kitchen manager nevertheless got a good idea of what might sell better as long as the price was right.