



ACS NEWSLETTER

Headteacher's Message:



Raising academic standards and improving the opportunities your children have in the future is important to me. I've spent time reviewing the processes and systems we have as a school, listening to student, parent and staff feedback and taking note of visits from Ofsted and the Local Authority. I firmly believe that The Astley Cooper School is a great school and your support in sharing the information below with your child/children is essential to maintain this.

One thing that has worried a lot of headteachers nationally since lockdown has been the decline in the behaviour of students and, sadly, we have seen some of this in our school and in the local community. In school, behaviour can in part be explained by the disruption of the building works. However, there are too many instances of unacceptable behaviour. This has led to high levels of fixed term exclusions and, unfortunately, cases where students have had to be permanently excluded or go to other schools on managed moves. Incidents outside school are being more regularly reported to us and these include damage to property, anti-social behaviour and theft from local shops. We are working closely with the local police to help educate our students about being more responsible members of the community.

Finding the balance in a behaviour system that allows students to make mistakes and learn from these without being draconian is difficult, but I believe the system we have in place is the right one for the students at this school. Sometimes we have push back from parents who think that our approach to behaviour is strict, especially when their children are being sanctioned for issues that they consider minor. However, the reason that we 'sweat the small stuff' is that, by doing this, the serious stuff very rarely happens.

What's On

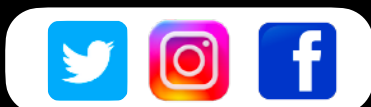
Monday 5 June- INSET day
 Monday 5 June - Friday 9 June - no students in school (online learning)/Year 11 Leavers Celebration
 Monday 12 June - Year 7 only in school
 Tuesday 13 June - Year 8 only in school/ Year 7, 8 and 11 parent tours (4-6pm)
 Wednesday 14 June - Year 9 only in school
 Thursday 15 June - Year 10 only in school/ Year 9, 10 and Sixth Form parent tours (4-6pm)
 Friday 16 June - Years 7-10 return to school
 Tuesday 20 June - Year 12 UCAS Discovery Trip
 Thursday 22 June - Year 7 Mountfitchet Castle trip/ Windrush Dacorum Celebration
 Friday 23 June - WW1 Trench Experience/Year 13 Leavers Celebration
 Saturday 1 July - DoE Trip
 Monday 3 July - Dacorum Music Festival
 Monday 3 July - Friday 14 July - Sixth Form induction
 Wednesday 5 July - District Sports Day
 Wednesday 5 July - Saturday 8 July - Battlefield Trip
 Monday 10 July - Wednesday 12 July - Year 12 Work Experience
 Monday 10 July - Year 10 Brighton Trip
 Tuesday 11 July - Year 10 Brick Lane Trip
 Thursday 13 July - Year 6 Transition Day/Year 8 Academic Review day
 Tuesday 18 July - Sports Day
 Friday 21 July - Last day of term

Letters Home

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

Vacancies

Click [HERE](#) to find our current vacancies.



We are reviewing different ways that we can share more information about all the positive things we see everyday, but I expect the full support of all parents when they are contacted about their child's behaviour. My staff are professional and their judgement of students' work and behaviour should be respected.

It is important that teachers at this school be able to teach, and for students to all be able to learn, and the school environment to be pleasant. For this to happen we are tightening our behaviour system and introducing some changes from half term to support us in the move to our new building. Please take time to go through this with your child/children to help support good communication and a positive outcome in our commitment to improve behaviour and raise standards.

Rewards and house system

All students will receive an automatic 5 house points per day. This provides all students with a positive platform to build on through their 5 lessons. Any behaviour incidents during the day will result in a student's aggregate score (positives minus negatives) being lower than those students who have followed the school rules consistently.

Detention system update

After half term, any students who are removed more than twice from lessons in one day will do an automatic detention after school totalling 45 minutes on the same day. They may also receive a detention for the original behaviour that will be set by the class teacher.

Examples of the behaviours that could lead to students being removed from lesson:

- Negative behaviours
- Not following instructions after a reminder of expectations
- Disruptions to learning
- Rudeness to staff
- Chewing gum
- Eating in lessons

Examples of the behaviours that could lead to students being issued a detention:

- Negative behaviours in the corridor or around the school building
- Pushing other students
- Pushing into the lunch/break queue
- Talking in the line
- Unsafe behaviour
- Loitering (hanging around and not going to lessons)
- Lateness to lessons
- Using the toilets inappropriately
- A mobile phone seen/heard during the school day
 - The phone will be confiscated and home contacted
 - A same day detention will be issued

If a student receives a same day detention, parents will receive notification of this.

All other aspects of our behaviour policy remain the same.

Morning routines and line up

- The gate opens at 8.00am and students are expected at their line up point by 8.30am. Students who arrive at the gate after 8.30am will be marked late (exceptions made where a parent/carer has made the school aware of a lateness or there is a known issue on the local roads).
- All students in Years 7-10 line up on their line-up points in form groups and in alphabetical order.
- Line-up is an opportunity to share whole year group messages, support those without the correct uniform and/or equipment and ensure all students arrive together to assembly or registration.
- Year 11 students are not required to line up in the mornings. Instead, upon arrival at school in the morning, Year 11 will go to their form rooms. This procedure is in place in recognition of their maturity and to prepare students for being in the Sixth Form in the following year. Staff will use this time each morning to ensure Year 11 are in the correct school uniform and ready for learning.
- Year 7-11 students will attend a daily tutor time session after line up where key topics will be delivered and discussed.
- All students in Years 7-10 will also line up at their line-up points after break and lunch time to ensure an orderly start to their lessons.

Communication

Communication between families and the school is extremely important in celebrating the successes of students as well as supporting the resolution of any inappropriate behaviour. When contacting the school, parents and carers should expect a response within 24 hours, although in more serious or important circumstances, this time frame will be much shorter. Please consider your language when communicating with staff and avoid accusations and threatening language. If you have any concerns you would like to discuss, please raise these in the appropriate way through a member of staff or the school complaints policy rather than through social media pages.

Equipment

All students are expected to carry their everyday equipment, including PE kit when required, pencil case, books, etc. **in a bag of suitable size.** Students should bring a bag every day. Students should bring a pencil case, which should include the following items:

- 30cm ruler
- 2 HB Pencils
- Pens (black/blue and green)
- Eraser
- Sharpener
- Protractor
- Compass
- Scientific calculator

Uniform

Our uniform is an important part of our identity and students should wear this with pride in school and in the community. No hoodies are to be worn on site. Students should leave these in their bag during the school day, including break and lunchtime.

Our full uniform policy is on the school website.

Some key points which have been an issue recently:

Jewellery - no hooped earrings or piercings. One plain, single stud earring may be worn in each ear.

Makeup - no fake eyelashes or nail extensions.

PE

Students must have a full PE kit for every lesson. They will not be able to participate without their kit. This is particularly important in the Sports Hall where students must wear non marking trainers. If a student does not have a correct item of clothing, such as a t-shirt, they will be allowed to wear another plain t-shirt, but will also need a note explaining the reason why.

If a student has an injury, or another medical reason why they cannot participate, they must have a note or email from their parent/carer for their teacher. Unless it is a major injury, we will still encourage students to bring kit and participate where possible. They can then participate in some of the lesson. For example, as a scorer, official or coach.

Dance

The first time a student forgets their kit during a half term, a text message will be sent home.

If they forget their kit a second time, their teacher will call home. The third time, and any time after, they will be issued with a detention and home will be contacted.

Please also note that no shoes are to be worn in the dance studio whatsoever, so all lessons for all year groups will be on bare feet. If students have a medical reason for not being in bare feet, they must wear grip socks and bring a note.

If students do not bring their kit, as well as the consequences, they are still expected to participate so will remove ties, blazers, shoes and socks.

Any requests for reasonable adjustments to our uniform policy should be put in writing to the Headteacher.

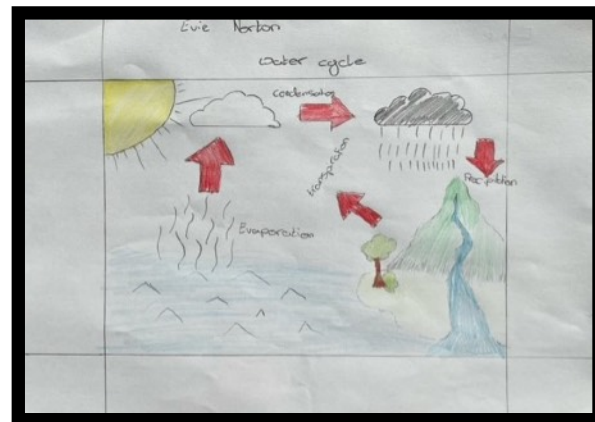
Thank you in advance for your support in reading and sharing this information with your child/children.

Yours sincerely

Sam Orsborne



ACS House System



1st Place - Millie B 7C "Frogs on a pond" The frogs are called Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

2nd Place - Bobby D 7C "Rainforest"

3rd Place - Evie N 7K "The Water Cycle"

This half term, the 'House Competition' was run by the Humanities department. Students were asked to create an artefact related to habitat.

There were some amazing entries.

Congratulations to the winners!



Special Mention - Oscar Roberts (Miss Roberts' son) "Dinosaur"

Student Achievement

Throughout each term, teachers nominate students to receive a 'green ticket' in recognition of their attitude and work ethic shown in their lessons. These green tickets are put in a draw.

Congratulations to Sameeha O in Year 7 who won a tablet in the Spring term draw.



Year 7 and Year 8 Rewards Trips

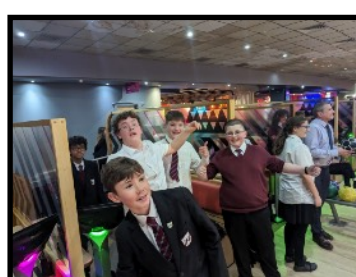
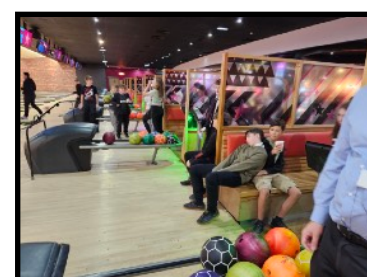
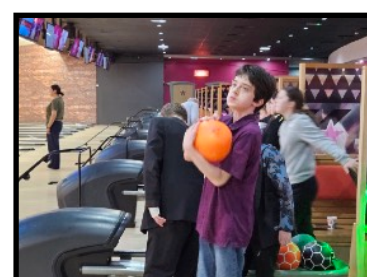
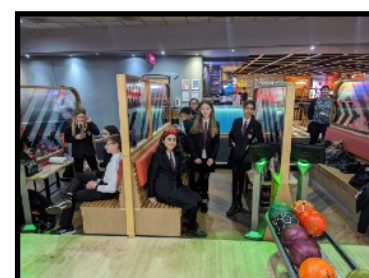
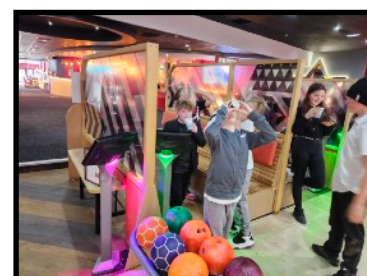
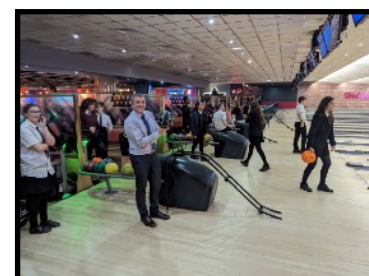
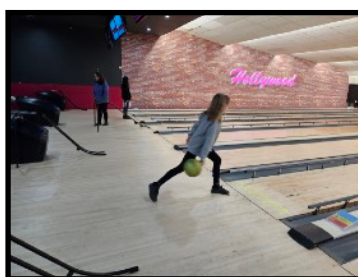
For the Year 7 and Year 8 Rewards Trips this half term, we chose bowling!

30 students in each year group were chosen by their form tutors as a reward for their attitude towards their learning, excellent behaviour and being ambassadors for their year group.

We went to Hollywood Bowl where they had fun bowling. There was a lot of competition! They also had slushies and some lunch to finish the day.

In Year 8, Lily-rose was the best bowler, closely followed by Miss Goodchild!

It was a fantastic opportunity to celebrate success.



Year 9 Pathfinder Day

On the 4th and 5th April, Year 9 went on a Pathfinder Day at the University of Hertfordshire. During the day, they participated in several team building activities such as a university quiz and the 'Game of Student Life'.

As well as this, students went round the university on a tour with their student ambassador visiting the accommodation, the library and food facilities (which most students loved). For their last activity students worked in their teams to create an object or poster concentrating on what they had learnt or seen during the day. They then presented what they had built to the rest of the group. Highlights included a recreation of a F1 car, a university halls room featuring a paper mâché beer and a cardboard version of the lecture hall.

All the students had a wonderful day, and it was a joy to see them all getting involved and into the competitive spirit.



Work Experience

22 -26 May 2023

An exciting time for our Year 10s as they undertake the world of work during Work Experience week. Students have developed valuable skills such as teamwork, communication, problem-solving and time management.

These skills are essential for success in any career. Furthermore, students will learn about workplace etiquette, expectations and culture. They can learn how to behave in a professional environment and build their confidence in working with others.

It has been great to see the cohort going outside of their comfort zone and in an environment that is completely new to them. We have seen students at vets, Royal Mail, gyms, hairdressers, a care home, supermarkets and doctor surgeries. This experience will enable our students to develop their confidence as they prepare for their future careers.



Wicked Theatre Trip

Year 10 students had an opportunity to immerse themselves in cultural enrichment at the Apollo Theatre, seeing 'Wicked: The Musical'. The show is known for its visually stunning performances, from elaborate sets to intricate costumes, lighting, and special effects.

Wicked offers a fresh take on the Wizard of Oz story. It's told from the viewpoint of the witches and provides a unique spin on the classic tale.

Year 10 were left pondering the moral inferences and how they correlate to the present day world.



We are very lucky to have received Wimbledon Championships tennis tickets to watch the Semi Finals on Tuesday 11th July 2023.

We have two tickets left.

If your child would like to go, please email Miss Collins at d.collins@astleycooper.herts.sch.uk



Aspire Higher Residential Project

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 students 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.

The students have participated in three workshops, both in school and at the University Campus in Hatfield. We have focused on teamwork, Student Lifestyle and Skills, Post 16 Educational Pathways, and Study Skills.

The project culminated with a 2-night residential at PGL's Osmington Bay resort in Dorset during the Easter Holidays. Students had plenty of opportunities to demonstrate their problem solving and team working whilst trying their hand at a range of new activities, including Climbing, Sensory Trail, Zip Wire, and Coastal Management. It was a joy to see students undertake activities that they were initially fearful of, like abseiling, and then conquering their fears. Others showed perseverance and superb team work on Jacobs's Ladder which was physically tiring!



Year 11

What a half term this has been.

The Year 11 students have been working tirelessly towards the exams. At the time of writing this piece for the newsletter, we are still very much in the eye of the storm. It has been physically and mentally demanding for students as the realisation has dawned on them that we have arrived at the GCSE's. After four years of working together, we are nearing the end of our journey together alongside the tutors and the staff at The Astley Cooper School.

Their attitude towards this examination period has been nothing short of inspirational. They have been calm and focused, and many staff have commented on the students' composure and dedication to interventions after school and during holidays.

The Prom Committee, in particular Kyah W and Annabelle B, have organized the Yearbook and Spirit Week. Kyah was instrumental in organizing the ideas for the fundraising week, which has helped to fund some of our Prom, which this year is being held at Aubrey Park.

Spirit Week emphasized the cohesiveness of Year 11. Everyone took part, and we enjoyed the independence and trust that Mr Orsborne showed in the year group to still adhere to all the school expectations, whilst being dressed as favourite characters!

I wish all the Year 11 students a pleasant and relaxing half term. We still have exams after this week off; I urge students to spend time still doing some revision, but also, would encourage them to take time to reflect and recharge their batteries in preparation for English Language Paper 1 on Monday 5th June.

In addition, on this day, we will be having our Leavers Assembly and shirt signing after the exam.

Thank you to parents and carers for all the support that you have given to the school this half term.

I wish you and your families a relaxing break.

Miss Roberts





Performing Arts

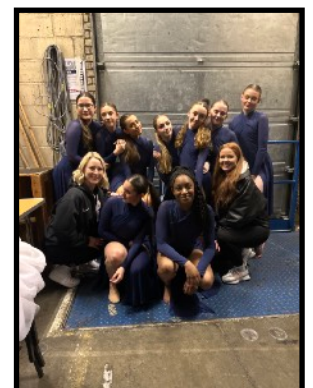
Performing Arts have enjoyed a busy term.

During a trip to The Lion King, students enjoyed watching this live on stage as we have been studying it in Year 7.

At the 'Move It Dance Exhibition', 50 students fully immersed themselves into shopping, freebie hunting, watching performances, taking masterclasses and one of our lucky students even got talent spotted for a talent agency!

At our annual dance show - the last one at The Old Town Hall - students performed their work to a very proud audience.

Finally, at the County Dance Festival, ACDC performed at the St Albans Arena where their piece was very well received. Students got a taste of a real theatre's dressing room and stage.

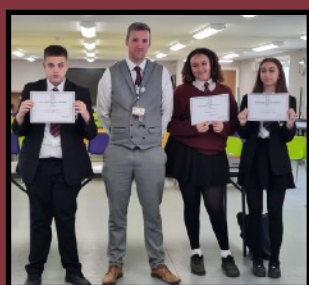




Duke of Edinburgh Award

On Thursday 30th March, we took our 58 Duke of Edinburgh students on a 10km trial expedition walk. The students had their first opportunity to walk unsupervised through Hertfordshire's countryside, testing their endurance and essential map reading skills. The students involved were fantastic, and despite the muddy and rainy conditions the majority of them completed the route without issues. Naturally, a few students found themselves slightly off route, but it was impressive to witness their resilience and determination to continue and complete the trek. All of the groups displayed fantastic teamwork by supporting each other and motivating each other to continue.

We look forward to taking the students out on their real expedition in July.



UKMT Junior Maths Challenge

On Wednesday 26th April, 50 Year 8 students took part in the UKMT Junior Maths 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.

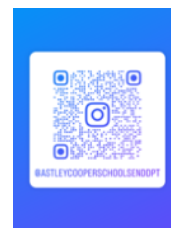
Many of the students who took the challenge received bronze, silver and gold certificates in recognition of their achievements. A massive congratulations to Elsa C who made it through to the next round of the competition.

To celebrate their hard work and dedication, Mrs Noquet organised a reward breakfast. The event was a great opportunity for the students to come together, share their experiences and celebrate their success.

As a community, we are incredibly proud of all our students who participate in the 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.

SEND and Inclusion

Ms Hobson (Assistant Head INCO) and Mrs Beresford (SENDCo) have been busily working within the team since January to develop our provision and raise the profile of the department.

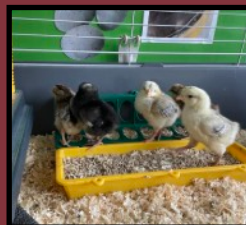


We would love parents to see all the positive events and work that takes place here, so please use the QR code and follow the link to view our page.

In April, Inclusion fostered 8 chick eggs. Unfortunately, only 6 hatched. We were able to monitor their progress on live stream which all teachers had access to.

Students were able to watch the chicks hatching live. This was an amazing new experience. We encouraged students to come and visit the chicks and to handle them. Students became more confident in holding the chicks and especially nurturing our last chick that struggled to hatch.

The students named the chicks Sam, Pickle, Jeff, Stormzie, April and Roxy.



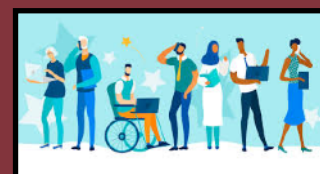
Diversity Week

During the week commencing the 26th June, we will be raising awareness and promoting acceptance and appreciation through our Diversity week. This will include focus days and activities exploring awareness around disability, including hidden disabilities and neurodiversity, LGBTQ+ and will culminate in a celebratory Culture Day.

Culture Day will be held on the 30th June where there will be fun activities to participate in, speakers delivering in school, food from different cultures in the canteen and the opportunity to learn and respect other people's cultures. The aim is to make everyone feel proud of who they are and what they represent.

This day will also be a non-school uniform day where students are encouraged to wear cultural dress/ traditional outfits or the colours that match their flag.

If you have any questions, please feel free to talk to Ms Hobson or Miss Griffiths.



Follow our social media pages for up-to-date news and information about ACS.



Further information is also available on our website.

