



Summer 2018

The Astley Cooper Newsletter

The academic year comes to an end during what is apparently the longest heatwave since the summer of 1976. I wonder how many of you remember that year. Good weather is always welcome and it has been very pleasant to see our students out relaxing or playing football or cricket in our lovely grounds at break, lunchtime and after school.

Fortunately, the intense and often humid heat did not start until after the examination season was over. The examination period is always a challenging time for our young people. This summer was even more challenging as we saw the biggest changes in the 30-year history of the GCSEs with a much more rigorous examination system, more exam papers, and the majority of subjects now being graded from 9 to 1.

Of the 68 students in Year 11, the majority of them sat examinations in all their subjects. We wish our outgoing Year 11 and Sixth Form students the results they deserve and look forward to seeing them on the results' days in August.

I am pleased to say that this summer term is not only notable for the unusually good weather but also for the very low number of staff leaving at the end of term. Thank you to the following colleagues for their work with us: Mrs Brady and Miss Sims have worked with us through most of this year, in Art and English respectively, and they have been extremely pleasant and supportive colleagues and very much part of our close community. Mrs Brady leaves to continue her work as a freelance designer and Miss Sims is training to become a paramedic, an even more demanding job than teaching.

In Maths, Mr Marsh has recently gained his Qualified Teacher Status through the Alban Teaching Federation and he goes on to start his first full-time teaching role at Beaumont School in St Albans.

Many parents and students will remember Miss Elkins - who worked here for many years, founded our dance company ACDC and established Dance as one of our most popular and successful subjects. - and will know that she returned to support us this term in Miss O'Riordan's absence. It has been a real pleasure to welcome Miss Elkins back to Astley Cooper before she goes to New York to train for a week at the world famous Juillard Institute of Performing Arts and then travel on to Guangzhou in southern China where she will start a two year contract teaching Dance at the British School.

Another outstanding teacher who is also travelling to the other side of the world is Mr Tyson, who joined us as a newly qualified teacher in 2013 and now leaves us to take a year out to travel in Thailand and Australia. Mr Tyson has been an exceptional, highly popular member of staff, whose teaching of religious studies, ethics and philosophy has always been lively, engaging and thought-provoking.

It has been a pleasure to pop into Mr Tyson's lessons when walking around the school and to see his classes enjoying the variety of religious or ethical issues being studied or discussed, from the four Noble Truths in Buddhism to the concepts of punishment and redemption. Mr Tyson has also been an excellent form tutor, worked closely with some of our most able students, and, being a Liverpool fan, is just getting over the heartbreak of the Champions' League Final.

We wish him well for his travels, but hope - for the sake of future students - that he is not entirely lost to the teaching profession.

Following Deputy Headteacher Mr Stevens' departure at Easter, our senior leadership team has been further strengthened by the appointment of four Associate Assistant Headteachers, all of whom have considerable experience as key subject leaders. This term we have welcomed Mr Baker, Mrs Mander, Dr Ryde and Miss Welsh (pictured below), who - along with Assistant Headteachers Mr Daddow, Mrs Rourke, Mr Lally and our School Business Manager Mrs Catterall - will play a key role in the leadership of our school over the coming academic year.

I hope that you enjoy reading about the various events that have taken place in school during this busy term and wish you and your families an enjoyable and relaxing summer holiday in the hope that the good weather we have enjoyed continues for many weeks to come.

Mr Gaynor, Headteacher



Ski Trip - Arcalis, Andorra



On Sunday 1 April, 28 students, from all year groups, Miss McIntyre, Mr Tyson, me and my parents, who are now regular volunteers on the annual trip, set off on the long journey down to Andorra for the ski trip. However, with DVD's, music and the first of our teacher team challenges helping to pass the time, we arrived at our hotel mid-morning on Monday.



After we unpacked, collected our boots and ski equipment and were issued with ski passes, we had a good meal and got everything ready for the first day. Tuesday saw the first day of skiing. The sun was shining and the students were split into groups and taken off by their ski instructors for a fun filled day of skiing. Some of the students took a little longer than others to pick up the technique of skiing. However, by the end of the week everyone was flying down the mountain. Some stars of the snow on their very first day were Jack Hopcroft, Alfie Brandom and Frankie McCormack. The ski and snowboard instructors were very impressed with how the students persevered with their skiing and their progression within the five days we were there.

With some brilliant skiers and snowboarders throughout the week, and also some great falls, it was only right to issue awards every evening after dinner for 'skier and faller of the day'. The winning recipients of these awards wore a brightly coloured high visibility jacket while out skiing the next day. Our winners of the skier of the day award went to Mr Tyson, Abbie Merridan, Kaila Merridan, Tom King-Smith, Alfie Brandom, Frankie McCormack, Hazel Barton and Sam Rawlings. The unlucky winners of the faller of the day award went to Harry Topping, Charlie Hopcroft, who ended up in the medical centre, Mr East and Casey Evans. This year, we introduced a new award: perseverance and resilience. These went to Jaden Starbuck-Last, Ernestina Boadu, Jack Hopcroft and Akshay Patel. Our après-ski entertainment included a variety of different activities such as a quiz night, a pizza evening in a lovely



Italian restaurant and also a disco. This was a great night as the students were able to show off all their best moves. Throughout the week, we also set the students challenges within their teams. The winning team overall was my group.

On the last afternoon, the students were able to buy souvenirs and enjoy a *McDonalds* or *Subway* in Andorra City centre before we presented the ACS ski trip awards. After this, the students packed and tidied their rooms before getting a good night's sleep ready for the last day of skiing. This was another successful day with all the students coming off the mountain with smiles on their faces. After saying our goodbyes to the ski instructors, hotel staff and our ski trip rep, we set off on our journey back to the UK.

All the students were fantastic. They were well behaved, and polite to all three members of staff, the hotel staff and their ski instructors. All skied/snowboarded brilliantly and really picked up the technique well.

Next year's ski trip will run again to Arcalis in Andorra. A letter about the trip will be issued in September.

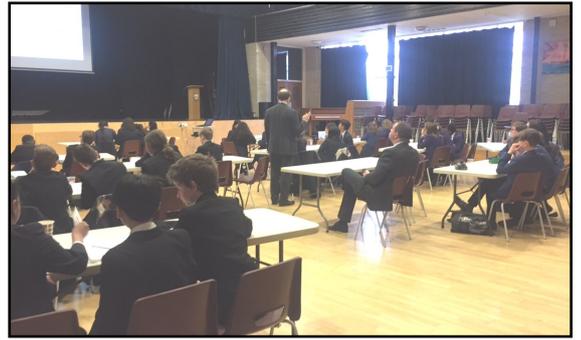
Miss East, Head of Sixth Form and Girls PE Teacher



Maths Challenge

In April, a team of our most enthusiastic Year 8 mathematicians took part in the Hertfordshire Maths Challenge competing against 12 schools. Our team, made up of Lewis Rose, Joshua Osuhor, Jack Pullum-Kemp and Charlotte Chantler, answered an array of problem solving questions all designed to test their reasoning, logic and memory skills. They performed particularly well in the visual memory round demonstrating exceptional team working skills. Well done.

Mrs Mander, Subject Leader Maths



History Trip

On Tuesday 22 May, Year 7 students went on a visit to Mountfitchet Norman Castle. The weather was glorious; they got to explore the whole site and visit the Toy Museum. They were lucky to have the chance to fire water balloons from a catapult, which for many was a real highlight.

The students were fantastically well behaved and thoroughly enjoyed themselves; Richard Pegg from Year 7 described it as 'epic'. Staff at the castle were very complimentary about our students and look forward to welcoming us back again next year.

Special thanks to all of the staff, both on the trip and those who stayed at school and worked so hard to make it all happen.

Mr Bowsher, Humanities Teacher



Holocaust Survivor Visit

On Thursday 21 June it was a privilege and a pleasure to welcome 92 year old Holocaust survivor, Harry Bibring, into school to tell his story to students in Years 8, 9, 10 and 12.

Harry was born in 1925 in Vienna, Austria. After the Anschluss in 1938, Harry was forced to leave his German grammar school and was transferred to a school that was solely for Jewish children. Harry admitted that he was not a well-behaved child in school and his main passion was ice skating. It was upsetting to hear that Harry was turned away from the ice skating rink which he went to every week because he was Jewish. He spoke about how he found this difficult to understand and he cried about it as a child. He didn't understand what being Jewish had to do with ice skating.

The situation for Harry and his family got significantly worse on 10 November 1938 when Kristallnacht took place. Harry's father's menswear business was looted and destroyed on this evening. His father was arrested and Harry's family were forced to leave their flat and live in a house together with 50 other Jewish women and children. They stayed there for several days and got increasingly worried about how they might be able to access food. Harry's father was released after ten days and by this point it had become clear to his parents that Austria was no longer a safe place for them. They attempted to flee to Shanghai but Harry's father was robbed on his way to buy the tickets.

Harry's parents were very worried for the safety of him and his sister, Gerty, following these events. They were encouraged when they heard that the British government was willing to offer sanctuary to Jewish children in Austria and Czechoslovakia (this initiative was known as the Kindertransport and resulted in the evacuation of 10,000 children to Britain). Harry's parents took the difficult decision to allow Harry and his sister to leave the country to go to Britain. They told Harry and his sister that they would join them in a few months, but sadly this never happened.

Harry and his sister were sponsored by a middle class family when they arrived in Britain but the situation worsened for him again when he was told that there was no room for him to stay. The family had sacked their maid the day before and said that there was space for Gerty but informed Harry that he would have to go and stay with some of their relatives. Harry found this very difficult as he did not speak English and was reliant on his sister to help him communicate. Harry talked about how he started to pick up English words by listening and concentrating on what people said and did. In 1939, Harry was evacuated to Peterborough. He stayed with his headmaster, who he credits with helping him to learn English.



During this time, Harry and his sister were receiving letters from their mother and father. Harry showed us examples of these and pointed out his mother's neat handwriting. As time went on, the handwriting in these letters started to become messier and more difficult to read, suggesting that his mother was incurring some terrible treatment. One of the letters he received in 1940 was just from his mother. She stated that his father was not there to sign the letter. Harry later found out that the Nazis had come to take his father to a concentration camp. He had a heart attack on the way there and died. The last letter Harry received from his mother was in February 1941. In this letter, Harry's mother said that she loved him and his sister and that she hoped they had a happy life. It was clear from this that she knew that she was not going to survive. He has since found out that his mother was deported to Izbica in Poland in 1942. This was a holding camp for transportation to the death camp, Sobibor. There has never been any trace found of his mother.

After his 14th birthday, Harry left school and returned to London. His sister was no longer there, having been evacuated. He started working as an errand boy but, feeling uncomfortable with this situation, he moved in with his sister when she returned. In May 1945, Harry met his wife-to-be, Muriel, and they married two years later. Harry enrolled to study in evening classes at various colleges, while continuing to earn a living. After about 14 years of study Harry qualified as a chartered engineer with management qualifications. He went on to work for 20 years as a manufacturing engineer and later became a lecturer at Middlesex University. He has one son, Michael, and two grandchildren, Lee and Nikki.

Harry spoke to students for four hours, remarkable for someone who is 92 years old. Harry took many questions from students, one of whom asked him what he would say to his parents if they were still alive. Harry said that the saddest thing for him was that his parents had never got to know the person he had become. He had always been in trouble in school and was not well behaved. He said it upset him to think that they went to the graves thinking Harry would never change.

Harry's closing message to students was a very important one. He said that it is clear that the world has learned nothing since the Holocaust as genocides still continue to happen. This is the reason why he has dedicated himself to visiting schools to speak to students. He asked the students to make a promise to commit to stamping out prejudice so that one day we can have a world where the human race can live in harmony. It was an honour to meet Harry and we are all very grateful to him for the time he took to speak to our students.

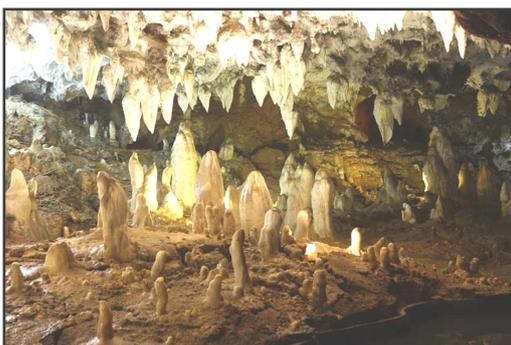
Miss Welsh , Associate Assistant Headteacher and Subject Leader Humanities

Cantábria Spain

During half term, Mrs Rourke, Mr O'Grady and I took a group of 27 students to spend five days in the beautiful Cantábria region of Spain. We flew to Bilbao and visited the most picturesque towns and villages Spain has to offer.

There were many activities that the students enjoyed, but the highlight of the trip was a day spent at Cabarceno Natural Park, where wild animals such as elephants, tigers, bears and many more are roaming the hills and the green spaces. We were able to admire their beauty from cable cars.

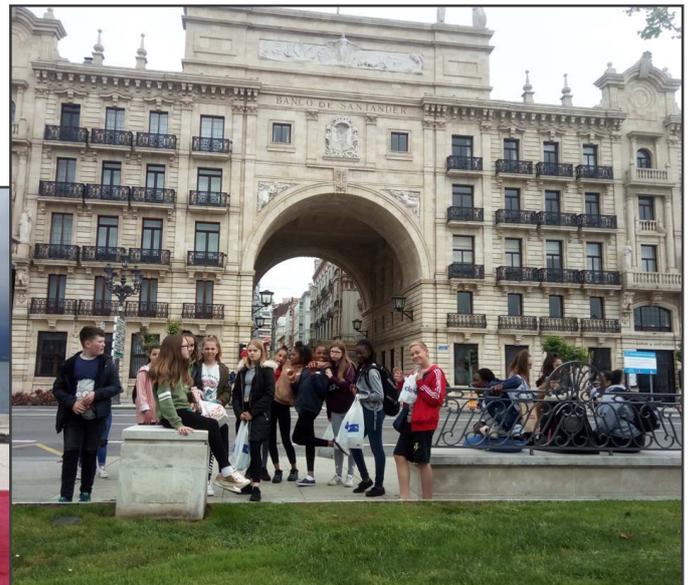
The students also had the opportunity to exchange details with Spanish students they met at a birds of prey show and I know that some of them are keeping in touch and communicating both in English and in Spanish.



Other activities included a visit to one of the oldest caves in Europe, Soplao Caves, which was mesmerising.

Getting lost in the maze was a lot of fun and I am not ashamed to say that I probably enjoyed it more than I should have done.

Despite the weather not being as clement as we had wished for, we very much enjoyed this trip and hope to do it again next year.



Miss Babouri, MFL Teacher

Performing Arts Summer Show

On Thursday 12 July a range of year groups took part in Drama and Music performances. The three extracts from the plays performed were comedies, all based in schools. The Year 10 & 12 Production Art students helped with set construction and technical elements.



Interact Club

This year has been an excellent year for the club raising over £1,500 for the local charity *OLLIE Foundation*. This charity was chosen by the club as it works with local schools to train staff to prevent and see the signs of teenage suicide. The most recent event was the St Albans 5k run on Sunday 10 June. Three members of Year 10 - Steven Armitage, Lucy Wilde and Josie Christodoulou - took part. We also organised a non-uniform day this term raising money for the international charity *LUMOS*. I would like to say a thank you to the club members, the school and the *Hemel Rotary Club* for their ongoing support. Thank you also to Katie Hollis for being the President of Interact for the last two years.

Miss McIntyre, Subject Leader Drama & PSHE Co-ordinator

Natural History Museum



On Tuesday 24 April, students from Years 9 and 10, who are very interested in science, visited the Natural History Museum in London.

The Year 9 and 10 students were given two different tasks: *explore and discover cells and genetics* and *explore and discover nerves and hormones* respectively, which was very useful to expand their knowledge of those topics.

The students also had the opportunity to learn about so many different areas in science by exploring the museum throughout the visit.

The visit was both very educational and enjoyable.

Mrs Nazmi, Science Technician

Sports Department @PEdeptACS

School Sports Day - Monday 18 June

On Monday 18 June we had as a great day from start to finish with all year groups competing in a competitive yet supportive spirit. The weather was fantastic and the day was enjoyed by participants, spectators and the enthusiastic staff who supervised each event. The winning forms were:

Year 7 - 7SK & 7RB (Joint Winners)
Year 8 - 8KW
Year 9 - 9AT
Year 10 - 10MR

District Sports Day - Wednesday 27 June

We arrived with high hopes as the students had been training hard at Jarman Park throughout the summer term. We were confident their hard work would pay off. This certainly proved the case as we ended the day with the highest medal tally and highest team points total for more than 10 years. All students that participated in the day should be immensely proud of their efforts. Medal winners are as follows:

Ben Warwick - Year 7 Long Jump Bronze
Mason Cameron Hart - Year 7 200M & Shot Put Gold
Robert Nicolae - Year 7 Discus Bronze
Naomi McGrory - Year 7 Shot Put Bronze
Stella Whitlum - Year 8 800M Gold
Dylan Kocel - Year 8 Long Jump Silver
Presley Goodridge - Year 8 Discus Bronze
Ivans Oppong - Year 9 High Jump Bronze
Hugo Micoud - Year 9 Hurdles Silver
Bertie Beaman - Year 9 200M Bronze
David Sarkodie - Year 9 100M & Long Jump Gold
Bertie Beaman, Ben Humphrey, David Sarkodie, Hugo Micoud - Year 9 Relay Bronze
Eliana Kutati-Pembele - Year 10 100M Silver
Lucy Wilde - Year 10 800M Silver



Norfolk Trip

On Friday 29 June, the PE department took 29 students to Norfolk for a weekend of outdoor activities. The weather was hot and sunny all weekend which meant the lake on site was a very attractive proposition for students and staff. Sailing, raft building, canoeing and paddle boarding were popular with everyone.

Other land activities included high ropes and an obstacle course. The students' attitude throughout the weekend was positive and enthusiastic. We look forward to returning next year.

Mr Gatenby, Subject Leader PE



On Sunday 17 June the Astley Cooper Dance Company (ACDC) took part in the British Red Cross *Make your Move* competition. This took place at Stantonbury Theatre in Milton Keynes. The students gave a captivating performance of their piece *Solidarity*. They were inspired by the response made by UK citizens to the terror attacks in London and Manchester last summer. They learned that shortly after these incidents occurred the British Red Cross set up the *UK Solidarity Fund*, to help people affected by these attacks. Moved by the response of the British public, Astley Cooper Dance Company created a piece that depicts everyday citizens involved in a terror attack and the first aid bravely applied by the British Red Cross team.

Their research showed them how to apply first aid to burns, bleeding and broken bones. The piece began with a flash-forward to moments during an attack and was followed by the everyday activities and coming together of UK citizens. Astley Cooper Dance Company were awarded 'the most innovative piece' out of the 12 teams taking part. They came second place, just one point behind the winners, and received excellent feedback from the judging panel for their creativity and concept. The team worked hard to achieve an original piece and represented Astley Cooper admirably.

Miss O'Riordan, Dance Teacher

Phasels Wood



Year 7 had an exciting opportunity to take part in a team building day on 22 June.

They enjoyed Human Table Football, lots of competitions between the groups especially between Mr Hardy and Mr Rodriguez. Most of the students took part in the rock climbing too. It was a very enjoyable day with perfect weather.

Mrs Goodchild, Key Stage 3 Leader (Y7 & Y8)



Year 11 Prom

On Friday 23 June, after years of hard work, assessments and GCSE examinations, Year 11 students gathered at Aubrey Park Hotel for their Prom. It was a lovely sunny evening and many families and friends came to watch the arrival of the young people who made impressive entrances in a variety of vehicles including a vintage fire engine, a Cadillac, and a double decker bus. All the students looked amazing in their suits and dresses and they voted Ellis Aldrich and Keira Kemp as their Prom King and Queen.



It was a wonderful evening and a superb way to celebrate the end of the year. I would like to thank the students and their families for making the Prom so special, and to the staff who attended the event.

I am so proud of the students and the way they have responded to the challenges of Year 11. They are talented and special young adults and I hope that they are rewarded for their hard work with good examination results on 23 August. I look forward to seeing many of them in the Sixth Form but, whatever their direction and future, I wish them all much happiness and success.

Mrs Cansick, Key Stage Leader

Sixth Form News

Y13 Leavers

Friday 25 May was the last day for Year 13 before they started their final A-Level examinations. The year group were very close which showed when students who had left in Year 12 came back to celebrate the success of their peers. The event was held in the Sixth Form Centre. The students decorated the room and also brought in food and drink. It was a lovely afternoon as the students were able to show their appreciation and say goodbye to members of staff.

With the majority of our students securing offers to Universities, we would like to wish them the very best of luck for the future. A reminder that A-Level results day is Thursday 16 August.



Y12 Work Shadowing

With the Year 13 students gone, the Year 12s have been starting their UCAS applications. Part of this was to attend a work placement of their choice for two days. Students had the responsibility of finding their own placement and making their own way there. All students successfully secured a placement with one student, Martina Scibetta, managing to land a prestigious placement at *Nuffield Research Placement* and another student, Ceri Gulmohamed, managed to land two placements - one with our local MP, Mike Penning, and the other with the charity, *Mind*. The students have come back to school with a great positive attitude and confidence from their placements, which will be of a great benefit to them when applying for university courses.

A reminder for Year 13 students that the academic year starts on Wednesday 5 September. Please collect your timetables from 8.45am on Tuesday 4 September. For new Year 12s, the academic year and Induction Day starts on Tuesday 4 September at 8.25am. A letter has been sent home regarding dress code and bridging tasks.

Miss East, Head of Sixth Form and PE Teacher

Rhianna Abrey

Rhianna Abrey, 20, who recently made such an impression on TV show *The Voice* returned to Astley Cooper, where she was a student from 2008-15, to perform for staff and students in a special end-of-term concert at Easter.

Head of Humanities, Ase Welsh, who organised the event, said, '*Rhianna was always hard working, determined and kind. No matter how challenging the task, she always committed herself fully and tried her best at everything she did. She worked incredibly hard and always took on board advice and feedback of staff to improve her work. Singing was where Rhianna shone at school and she took every opportunity to develop her talent, always fully supported by her family.*



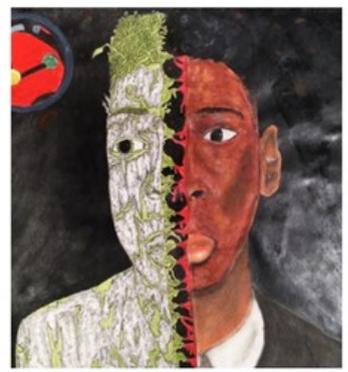
Staff who worked with Rhianna quickly recognised her amazing ability. She was a pleasure to teach. We are all so thrilled to see the success she is achieving and we are watching eagerly to see how things will develop for her in the future. She is someone who fully deserves this success and recognition and we are so incredibly proud of her.'

Rhianna performed three numbers and was joined on stage for the final song 'Can't Help Falling in Love' by her friend, and another former Astley Cooper student, Abigail Davis-Fletcher, who recently graduated from the University of Portsmouth. Rhianna's sister Aimee, who is currently studying Psychology at Bournemouth University, also came back to her old school to give moral support.

Headteacher Edward Gaynor said, '*It was a real treat for the whole school community to welcome back Rhianna, Abigail and Aimee. They were delightful students when they were here and it's wonderful to see them all doing so well.'*

Year 11 GCSE Art and Design

Congratulations to Year 11 Art students on completing their course and producing some fabulous artwork. We are very proud of what they have achieved.



Headteacher's Commendations

April 2018



Izabelle White 7BOR
Scott Oakes 8KW
Leanne Clarke 9NS
Josie Christodoulou 10CH
Sam Brown 11PT
Zach Thomas 12HR
Jac Kember 13RP

July 2018



Hallie Young 7JRo
Prisca Frimpong 8KC
David Sarkodie 9AT
Steven Armitage 10AOG
Kamila Nachajova 12HR

W
P **Watford**
Palace Theatre

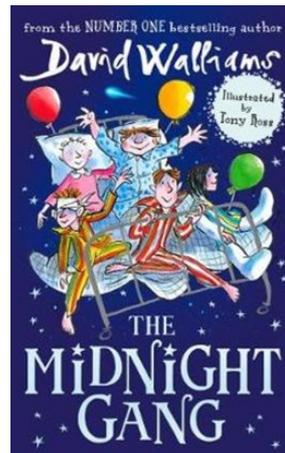
110
years

1908-2018

Watford Young Filmmakers' Festival 2019 at Watford Palace Theatre is now open for submissions for ages 10-19. For further details please visit:

<https://watfordpalacetheatre.co.uk/participate>

Summer Reading



The Midnight Gang
by David Walliams



Everything, Everything
by Nicola Yoon

Parking



Please can we remind you that the students must be dropped off outside the school. Cars are only permitted on-site if you have an appointment with a member of staff or the student has mobility issues which you have discussed with a Key Stage Leader. This makes the site safer for students, visitors and staff.

Please also show consideration of residents when parking.

Start of Autumn Term Arrangements

Monday 3 September is a staff training day. Students are not expected in school.

Tuesday 4 September (Week A) Y7, Y12 and Y13 only:

Year 7 students should arrive at 8.25am and will remain in school until 3.15pm. The day will include time with their Form Tutors and having their photograph taken.

Year 12 students should arrive at 8.25am and will remain in school for most of the morning. There will be some travel between the East Dacorum sites during this session.

Year 13 will need to come in to school before break to collect their timetables.

Wednesday 5 September (Week A):

All other students (Years 8, 9, 10, 11 and 13) will return to school, starting at 8.25am and finishing at 3.15pm. Students should bring a fully equipped pencil case with them as lessons will begin that day.

Students in Years 8, 9 and 10 will have a PE lesson and will need to bring their PE kits.

Those students in Year 11 who have opted for Drama in option block C will have a Drama lesson.

Progress Reports

Thank you to parents for your feedback on the recent reports. Our system for reporting progress is currently under review as we have identified some flaws in the process. This has led to a number of apparent contradictions in the recent reports.

For now, we suggest that you focus on the 'Aspects worthy of praise', 'Aspects causing concern' and 'Attitude to Learning'.

Please accept our apologies for any confusion we have inadvertently caused in reporting your child's progress and be assured that we are working hard to improve the system for the next academic year.

Thank you for your patience.

Mrs Mander & Dr Ryde
Associate Assistant Headteachers,
Data and Reporting

Term Dates

Autumn 2018

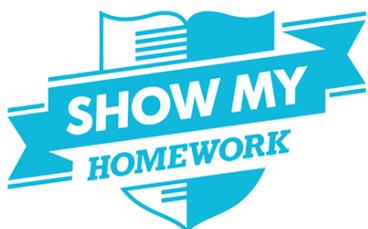
3 September	INSET
4 September	Term begins for Y7 & Y12
5 September	Term begins for all students
5 October	INSET
29 Oct - 2 Nov	Half term
30 November	Occasional Day
21 December	Term ends

Spring 2019

7 January	Term Begins
18 - 22 February	Half Term
5 April	Term ends

Summer 2019

23 April	Term begins
6 May	May Day
27 May - 31 May	Half term
19 July	Term ends
22 July	INSET
23 July	INSET
24 July	INSET



Uniform Guidelines

Our aim is to have our students looking smart and dressed appropriately for their age and for school. We are also keen that our students promote a good image within the local community. With this in mind, I thought it would be useful to provide a brief overview of our uniform expectations ahead of the beginning of the new term in September.

All students

- Facial piercings are not permitted
- Hair must be of a natural colour and not cut into an unusual style (for example 'tramlines' are not permitted)
- Nails must be short and natural (no extensions or coloured varnish)
- Discrete make up
- Jewellery must be limited to one pair of small earrings, one ring, one small chain/ necklace, one watch
- Shoes must be black and sensible (trainers and boots are not allowed)
- All school uniform is available to buy through Sportswear International (www.swidtp.co.uk).
- Shirts must be able to be buttoned at the neck
- Only black tailored trousers are permitted (no jeans or tight 'skinny trousers' are allowed. See picture below.)
- The wearing of external wear, for example hats, gloves, hoodies, coats, is not allowed within the school buildings

For girls who wish to wear a skirt, this must be black, less than 10cm above the knee and loose around the legs (non-clinging).

This is fine →



We have recently had issues with new trouser styles:

← This style of trouser is not allowed



This style is fine →



We have arranged with our uniform supplier for all elements of our uniform to be available from them. If you are, therefore, concerned about purchasing the correct items please don't hesitate to contact the school for an order form.

We expect all students to be in correct uniform when we return from the summer break.

Mobile Phones

In recent months, there have been an increasing number of issues related to mobile phone usage in lessons and around school. We have therefore taken the decision to tighten our mobile phone policy from September. The main points to note are:

- Mobile phones will not be permitted to be used in any school buildings except the canteen (unless specifically directed by a teacher for educational purposes)
- Mobile phones can only be used before school, at breaktime or lunchtime and after school. They will not be allowed to be used in or between lessons

We would ask that Parents and Carers contact the school reception if you need to get a message to your child.

I thank you in anticipation for your support in this matter but if you have any queries please contact your child's Form Tutor at school.

Mr Daddow
Assistant Headteacher

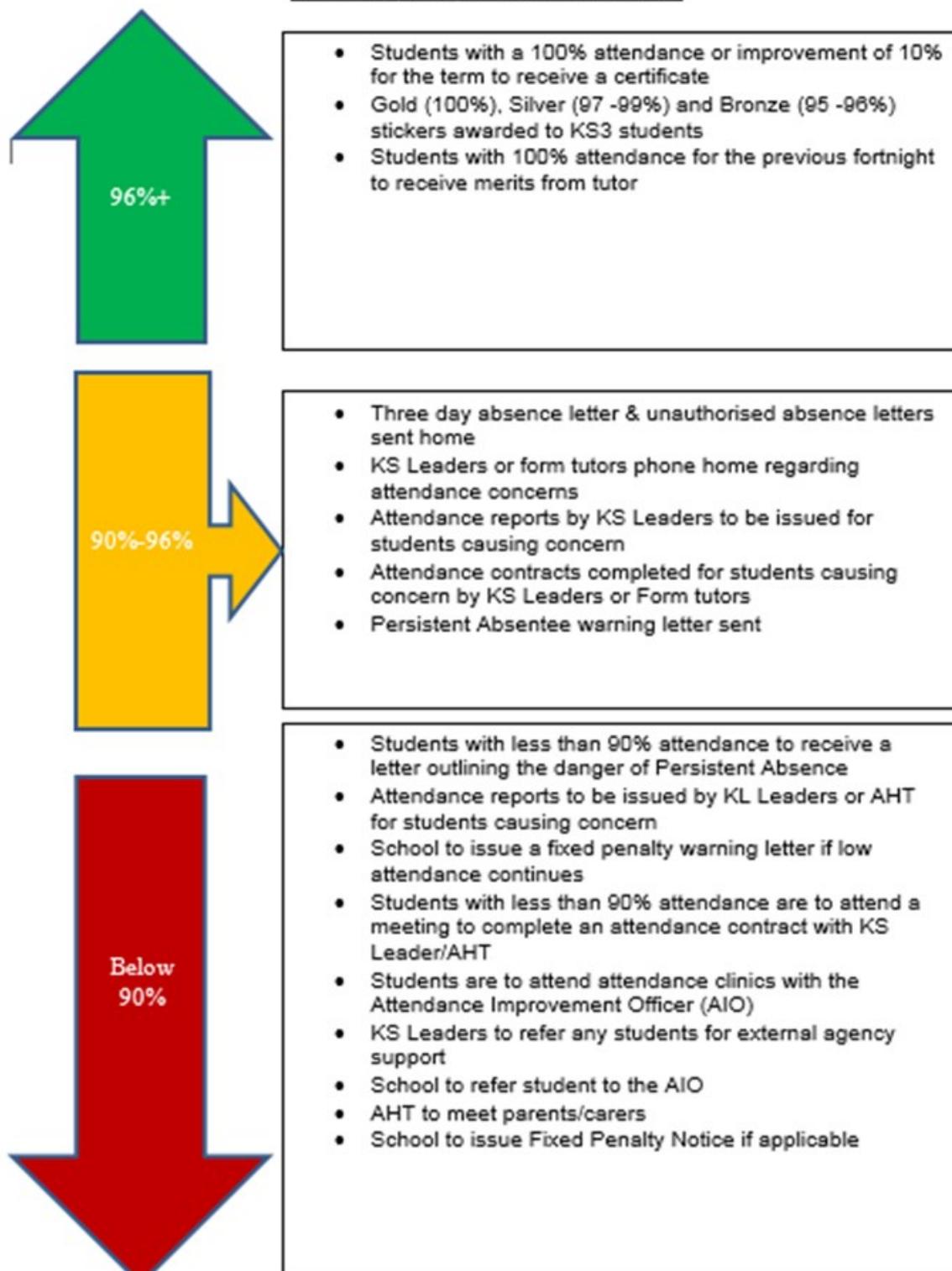
Attendance

As you know, I am now responsible for attendance at The Astley Cooper School. As stated in previous newsletters, the expectation is students should have an attendance above 96%. 186 students had 100% attendance this half term so well done to you all. Students will have received their certificates and stickers in their year assemblies. As well as this, the Astley Cooper Attendance Chart and expectations are below outlining the steps taken to improve attendance as well as celebrating those of you whom have achieved this target. The school's attendance policy has recently been updated and you can find this on our school website. If you have any concerns about attendance, please contact me or Mrs Allen - the Attendance Co-ordinator - at the school.

Mr Lally, Assistant Headteacher



The Astley Cooper Attendance Chart



Attendance continued

All parents and students are asked to support our expectations relating to attendance and punctuality:

Attendance

Please observe the following procedures with regard to absence from school:

If your child is unable to attend school due to illness, please telephone the school before 8.25am, selecting the attendance option. An answer phone is available out of office hours to leave details on; please leave your name, your child's name, tutor group and reason for absence repeating your child's name at the end of the message. This process needs to be repeated on each day of absence as it is a legal requirement you inform the school of any absences.

If you fail to inform the school of your child's absence, a 'Truancy Call' message will be sent to your mobile/home number asking you to make contact with the school immediately. This can be done by replying to the text message or contacting our absence line on 01442 394141.

If we do not receive a call or message from you explaining your child's absence, this will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

Please give plenty of notice for any planned absence. We would appreciate all dental and non-urgent medical appointments being made out of school hours. If you have an appointment within the school day, please ask the receptionist to provide you with a dated appointment card for our records.

Leave of absence for holiday purposes will **not** be authorised. This follows The Department for Education regulations which have been in place for the past three years.

Punctuality

We understand that adverse circumstances will occasionally prevent students from arriving on time at school, but ask that all parents help their children to adhere to the school rules regarding punctuality: students should arrive at school on time and be in their form rooms by 8.25am.

Students arriving late after 8.50am should sign in at the Attendance Office and explain their lateness and inform their Form Tutor at the next registration.

The morning register closes at 9.00am and afternoon register closes at 2.15pm. By law, we have to mark students arriving after this without an acceptable reason as unauthorised absence

Students who are persistently late or absent from school will be brought to the attention of their Key Stage Leader and Rebecca Porzio, Attendance Improvement Officer.

Fixed Penalty Notice

The Astley Cooper School operates The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulation 2007.

If a pupil has at least 15 sessions (half day=1 session) unauthorised absence in the current and/or previous term, including leave of absence where permission has been denied, the Headteacher can apply for the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. A fine of £60.00 (per parent) is issued if paid within 21 days or £120.00 if paid within 28 days.

If your child has ongoing poor attendance and they have unauthorised absences of 15 or more sessions across the current and/or previous term, this will also initiate a request to Herts County Council for a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued.