

# The Astley Cooper Newsletter

April 2019

This short but busy term has been packed with a wide range of educational and cultural activities, as you will see from the articles and photographs in this Spring *Newsletter*.

At the end of term, we say goodbye to Maths teachers Mr Rodriguez, who returns to Spain to begin his PhD and work in higher education; Mr Hurst who leaves us after two terms to take up another teaching position in a different local authority, and our part-time English tutor Mrs Hamilton. Science teacher Mr Alaiz left us earlier in the term.

We welcome a new part-time receptionist, Mrs Merriman, who previously worked at Laureate Academy, Miss Matthews, our Art and Design and Technology technician, Miss Kinimah, our Science technician, who is covering a maternity leave, and Mr Marshall, who will be taking up his appointment as a Learning Support Assistant in the Inclusion Centre in April.

In January, Mrs Clyne joined the Science department, having taught for three years at an academy in Edmonton. After Easter, we welcome another new member of the Science team, Miss White, who worked at Adeyfield School for many years. Following an injury earlier in the year, Miss Bowen will be returning to work in April so our Science department will be fully staffed again with specialist teachers.

You may remember that at Christmas I thanked those of you who had responded to our initial consultation about the possibility of our school joining the Herts for Learning Multi-Academy Trust (HfL MAT [www.hflmat.co.uk](http://www.hflmat.co.uk) or email: [info@hflmat.co.uk](mailto:info@hflmat.co.uk)). I am pleased to say that our application to join the HfL MAT will go before what is called the Headteacher Board and the Regional Schools Commissioner around the end of May. I should have more information about our application midway through the summer term and will keep you updated on the outcome of what could be a major turning point in the long term future of our school.

Thank you to everyone who has made so many positive comments about the school on social media, in the questionnaires that we ask you to complete at Parents' Evenings, or through emails that you have sent us to recognise particular staff. Your feedback on our work is always welcome.

Staff are currently working hard to support Year 11 in the lead up to the GCSE examinations and many colleagues are already putting on additional sessions before and after school, at lunchtimes, and on Saturday mornings. A number of teachers will also be coming in over the Easter holidays to work with small groups of Year 11 students.

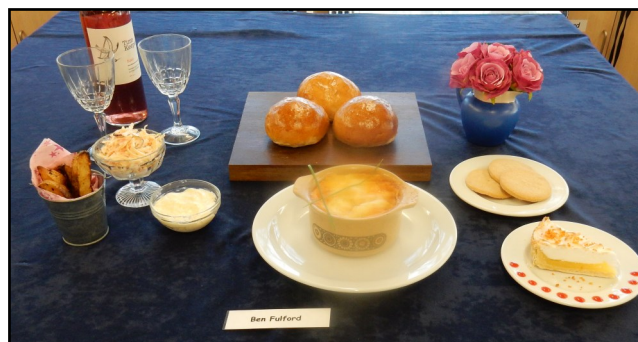
We wish every success to all those students who will shortly be taking public examinations in Year 11 and the Sixth Form. We urge them to take the opportunities to work positively with staff in school over the remaining weeks and to have a revision programme at home.

The long summer holiday for these students will be all the sweeter knowing that they have done their best in the examinations.

On behalf of the staff and governors, I wish you all a Happy Easter holiday.

**Mr Gaynor**  
Headteacher

## Year 11 Hospitality & Catering



The practical exams took place recently for our students in Y11 studying for the Vocational Award in Hospitality and Catering. Students had to prepare a main course with three side dishes followed by a dessert with three side dishes suitable for a holiday complex. The Year 11 students worked very hard in the four hours they were given to prepare, cook and serve their dishes and are to be congratulated on their fantastic efforts.

**Miss Hodges**  
**Food Technology Teacher**

## Mathematics

Saturday maths revision classes are in full swing. Students have been working hard to solve math problems in the run up to their exams.

Have you attended a session yet? Nibble on fruit, pick up a calculator and solve your maths problems away.

**Miss Siva**  
**Subject Leader Mathematics**





# Dance



## ACDC Performing at the U.Dance National Festival 2019

On Saturday 9 March the Astley Cooper Dance Company took part in the *U.Dance National Festival* organised by *Dance East*. This took place at the University of Bedfordshire and proved to be an exciting day of performances from the top 10 dance companies in the East of England. ACDC were selected and gave a thrilling and energetic performance of their latest piece *The Space Race*. 2019 marks 50 years since Neil Armstrong first walked on the moon, and the upbeat, fast-moving choreography celebrates this achievement.

The Astley Cooper Dance Company were praised for their fun-filled and entertaining performance by a number of choreographers from the surrounding dance companies. The students enjoyed taking part in a professional dance workshop and performing the challenges set by Dance East. One of these challenges was to create the word 'DANCE' using their bodies, and photograph this somewhere on the university campus. The team took to the challenges with great enthusiasm and thoroughly enjoyed the range of activities suggested. The team enjoyed the performance opportunity and represented Astley Cooper marvellously.

On Wednesday 13 and Thursday 14 March over 100 students participated in the ACS Dance Show 2019. The show was produced by our own Year 13 Production Arts students and Mr Featherstone's Tech team. The tech crew were creative in their preparations for the show and contributed to an exciting Finale where students were showered with an explosion of colourful confetti.

The evening contained confident and well-polished performances from all the BTEC examination classes, extracurricular clubs as well as students' own choreographies. The show opened with a selection of students from Years 9-13 who performed a complex *House Dance* routine creating a vibrant and feel-good atmosphere for our audiences. The Year 13 BTEC students gave a particularly charming performance of their piece *Chicago*, and performed with excellent stylistic quality giving a professional performance of Bob Fosse's choreography.



Contd/

# Dance

The show went on to see some spectacular solos and groups exploring a range of styles such as Contemporary, Hip Hop, Jazz, and even Parkour! The Year 9 and 12 BTEC dancers performed a medley of sequences from *Emancipation of Expressionism*, which included a captivating lyrical hip hop duet performed by Natasha Humphrey and Presley Goodridge. The Year 10 BTEC students performed their rendition of *Rosas Danst Rosas* by Anne Teresa de Keersmaecker, and worked hard to present a highly complex choreography. They worked well as a team during rehearsals and demonstrated a growing confidence in the evening performances.

We were privileged once again to welcome Hammond Academy to the stage with their performance *Mind, Muse, Magic*. The dancers were full of energy and enthusiasm, and showed creativity in their use of sign language and torch props. The Year 11 dancers gave a thrilling performance of their Beyoncé inspired *Beychella* choreography. Their confidence as a group was exciting to watch as they entertained their audiences with strength and dynamics.

The show concluded with *The Space Race*, performed by all members of ACDC. The team gave an astounding performance as they took the audience on a journey into space and celebrated 50 years since the first man walked on the moon. Overall, the show demonstrated the diverse range of talents and skills we have here at Astley Cooper. Many congratulations to all who took part.

**Miss O’Riordan**  
**Dance Teacher**



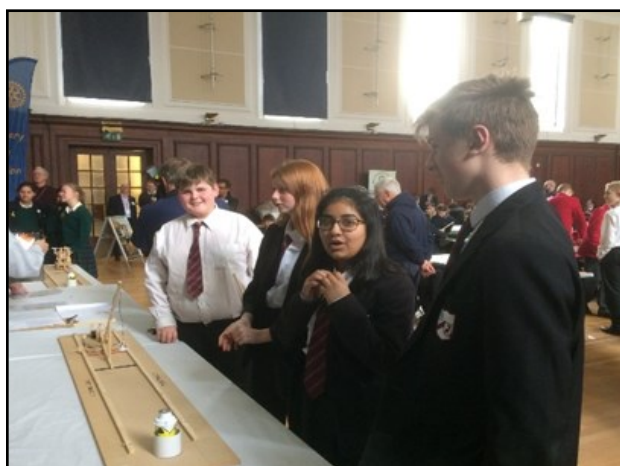


# Technology Tournament

Congratulations to all the students who took part in this year's '*Hertfordshire Rotary Club Technology Tournament*' at Ashlyns School.

The three teams showed an excellent work ethic and outstanding engineering skills throughout the day to produce a motorised hoist capable of lifting a 200g canister from a tube. Next they had to move it clear before lowering it again. To make it more challenging the device had to be operated from a distance of 600mm.

This year there were 28 teams entered from schools around Hertfordshire. All 3 of our teams were exceptional competitors and we are all extremely proud of their efforts. It was a fantastic day and the students showed great enthusiasm. We look forward to the challenge next year.



**Mr Elliott**  
**Subject Leader Design and Technology**

## PE & Interact Club

### Fundraising

In the week before February half term the PE department organised a joint fund raising event during Key Stage 3 and 4 PE lessons. Students in their gymnastics lessons bounced on trampolines and trampettes in teams. Swimming lessons consisted of swimming as many lengths as they could for the duration of the lesson.

All students involved were keen to participate in the event and to help raise as much money as possible for buying new equipment for the PE department and the National Animal Welfare Trust, the chosen Interact charity this year. The final total raised was a whopping £638.

Special thanks must go to LilyMae Druce who raised £175! We will shortly be buying new football kits which will be worn by boys and girls in all year groups. Thanks to everyone who supported the event.

**Mr Gatenby**  
**Subject Leader PE**



## Ashridge Decorative and Fine Arts Society (ADFAS)

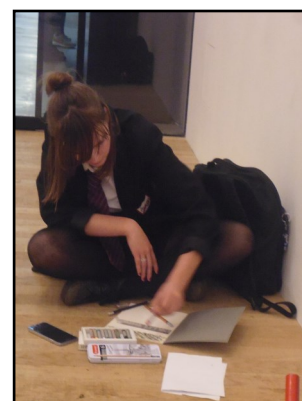
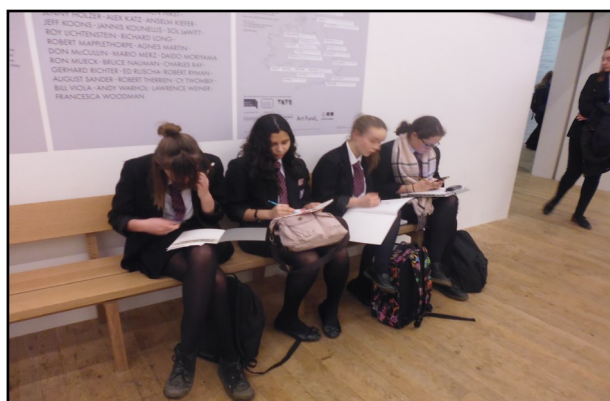
A huge thank you to the Ashridge Decorative and Fine Arts Society for their generous donation to the Art Department.

On Wednesday 13 March, ADFAS Committee members, Pam Langdon-Pratt, Julie Griffiths and Barbara Mitchell presented us with a cheque to fund the purchase of a Slab Roller and glazes. Year 8 students showed their Pop Art Cake sculptures that they soon will be able to decorate using the earthenware glazes. We're very grateful for this opportunity to acquire specialist equipment that will help us to develop the study of ceramics and create further exciting projects.



## Tate Modern Art Gallery Visit

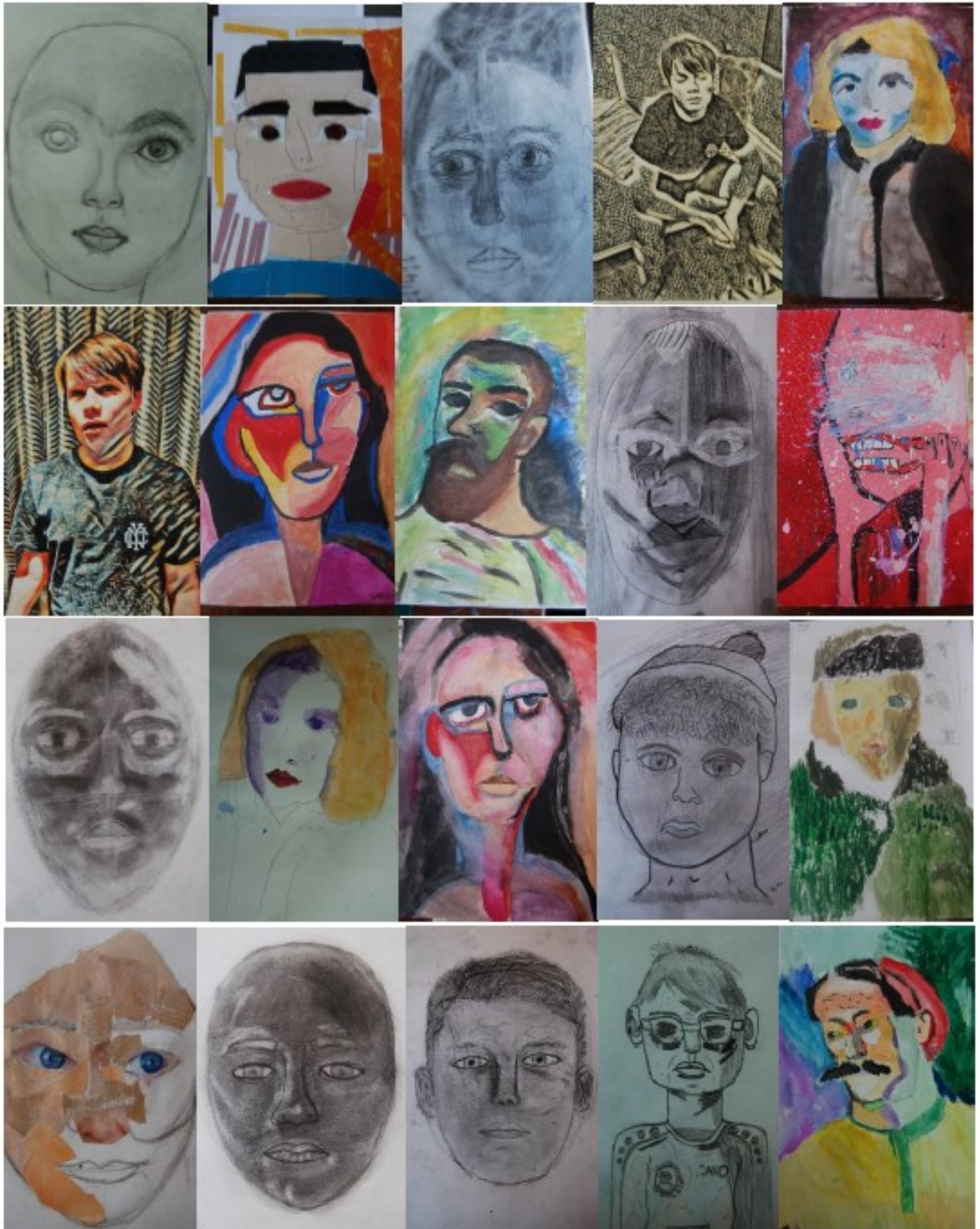
On Thursday 4 February, GCSE art students visited the Tate Modern Art Gallery.



**Miss Padam**  
**Subject Leader Art**



# Year 7 Portraits



This term we have had a lot going on in the English department preparing for World Book Day, which was on 7 March. Staff and students have been taking part in the 200 million minutes challenge where we (as a country) team up with other schools to record the minutes we have read each day and total them up to see if we can reach the 200 million minutes by the 2 April. As a competition, there's always a chance of winning a prize. An update will follow after Easter...

## Grace Killick 7MG

**Book Review**

Book review by: Grace Killick

Title: Hacker

Author: Malorie Blackman

Non fiction ☐ Fiction ☒

Who would this book be suitable for? Age/interests

This book will be suitable for children and adults (+9) because it has language that is good for children to learn new words. You can also guess at the start and find out in the end.

Would you/would you not recommend the book? Why?

I would recommend this book because you can be a detective and guess who really stole the money.

★★★★★

I enjoyed this book 'Hacker' because it has a lot of questions that you ask yourself during the book. You see during a chapter after a chapter Victoria and her brother Gib research and find out clues to show her father is innocent. You can also build up clues and guess who you think is guilty. According to 'Aunt' Beth and Sebastian, Victoria's and Gib's dad apparently stole 100,000 pounds that had been found in his bank. Every chapter will lead to another and another cliff-hanger which leaves you on the urge to read more. So your question is..... Who stole the money? Who set-up your dad?

## Ellis Blake 7VL

**Book Review**

Book review by: Ellis Joseph Blake

Title: Hunt: Dead Scared

Author: Curtis Jobling

Non fiction ☐ Fiction ☒

Who would this book be suitable for? Age/interests

Age: 4 5 6 7 (8) 9 10 11 12

Interest: Sport Animals History Stories Countries Poetry Cooking Funny Sad For Boys For Girls Toys Activities Pictures (Other)

Would you/would you not recommend the book? Why?

Would recommend ☒ Would not recommend ☐

Why? I would recommend this book because it is humorous and has a lot of cliffhangers, which will leave you wanting more!

Rating: ★★★★★

This book was an incredible book that I thoroughly enjoyed reading. When I was reading this book, I was hanging on every word. Every time I put the book down, I was left wanting more. This book is about the humorous adventures of Will Underwood and his best friend Dougie Hancock. One day Will is tragically killed by getting hit by a car, leaving him to discover he is now an actual ghost! Will he get into heaven with the help of Dougie? If you read this book you will find out!



## Ariadna Darii 7VL

**Book Review**

Book review by: Ariadna Darii

Title: Charlie Small

Author: David Fickling

Non fiction ☐ Fiction ☒

Who would this book be suitable for? Age/interests

Age: 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Interest:

Sport	Animals	History	<u>Stories</u>	Countries
Poetry	Cooking	Funny	Sad	For Boys
For Girls	Toys	Activities	Pictures	Other

Would you/would you not recommend the book? Why?

Would recommend ☒  
Would not recommend ☐

Why?  
I recommend this book because is a book full of funny stories about Charlie's life

Rating: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

As a child my favourite book was 'Charlie Small' by David Fickling. Charlie Small is a book about an adventurer who learned how to with pirates from his own experience: how he learned to cook, what to do if you get trapped in deadly sea-slug gunge, and why it's a really bad idea to get hung from yard-arm. I suggest this book is for you and I promise you will not regret also you will learn more about pirates, pirates are not as nice as they seem.

## The year 8 winners are:

### Naomi McGrory 8JRO

**Book Review**

Book review by: Naomi McGrory

Title: The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones

Author: Cassandra Clare

Non fiction ☐ Fiction ☒

Who would this book be suitable for? Age/interests

This book would be suitable for teenagers who are interested in romance or fantasy novels.

Would you/would you not recommend the book? Why?

I would absolutely recommend this book as it is extremely gripping and enticed me from the start. It was an amazing read.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones explores themes of romance and fantasy. My initial thought was that it would be completely unbelievable and boring, but once I read the first page, I was completely gripped. During the book, you follow Clary on an adventure of battles, romance and drama that is veiled in lies. All teenagers would enjoy this book as it mixes everyday problems with something a lot darker. Combining love triangles with demons and angels, Clare creates a magical yet realistic world that you will never wish to leave.

## Rebecca Debocs 8

**Book Review**

Book review by: Rebecca Debocs

Title: To All the Boys I've Loved Before

Author: Jenny Han

Non fiction ☒ Fiction ☐

Who would this book be suitable for? Age/interests

This book is suitable for teenagers. Personally I think this book is more suitable for girls because a boy would never understand the feelings and the mood. Lara-Jean is going through.

Would you/would you not recommend the book? Why?

Yes, I would recommend this book. A lot of teenagers find themselves in the same situations Lara-Jean is, like expressing their feelings by writing them, or being shy.



I really enjoyed reading this book. Lara-Jean was such a relatable introverted person. Her innocence was incredibly admirable and every emotion that she experienced was projected back onto me as I read her story. I had expected the story to be all about her letters, considering the title of the book is related to letter writing. But it wasn't it took another turn deeper into the realms of cliché romance that worked better than most. In the end I was so sad to be done with the book. It was such a well written and brilliant story. Therefore To All the Boys I've Love Before is a really good book that out shines first impressions.

## Elsi Osuhor 8

**Book Review**

Book review by: Elsi Osuhor

Title: Stone Cold

Author: Robert Swindells

Non fiction ☐ Fiction ☒

Who would this book be suitable for? Age/interests

This book would be suitable for 7+.

Would you/would you not recommend the book? Why?

I would because it's an incredibly moving novel that can change lives for the better.



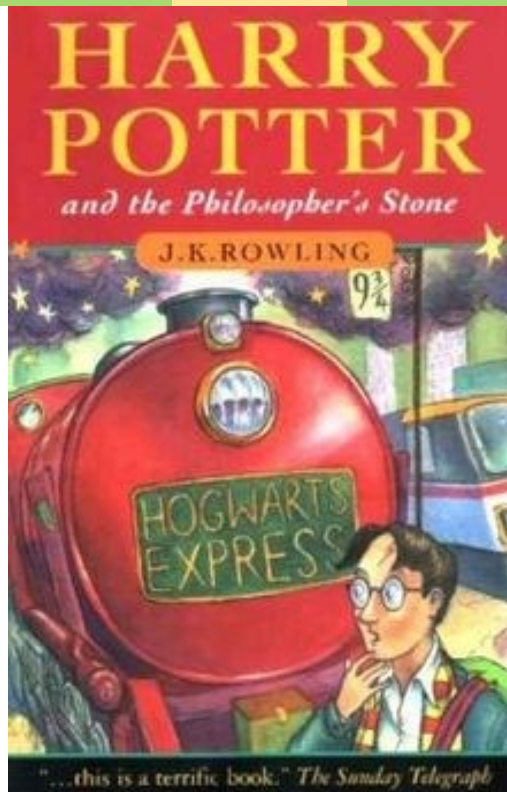
As a kid I never really understood the real struggles homeless people go through every day with no roof over their heads. Reading Stone Cold made me realise the cruel social injustices and heartless people out there. I have always loved reading and from the first page I instantly became captivated with the moving story-line. This book also made me think about what I have, making me grateful for the little things in life. Overall I would definitely recommend you read this book as it makes you see the world in a completely different way. !!

**Well Done Everyone!**

**Miss Gant**

**English Teacher**





### Harry Potter and The Philosopher Stone - J.K Rowling

Anyone I teach will already know what book I loved when I was younger.

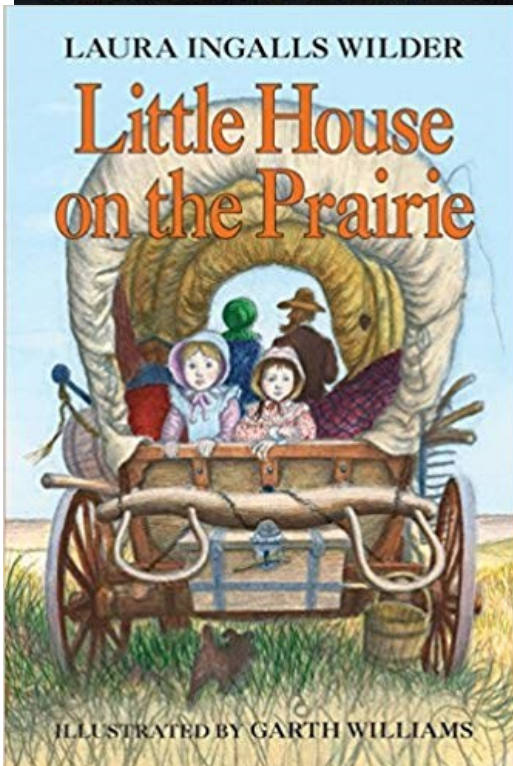
I was never massively into reading, but when I was twelve I was recommended Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone by a friend.

I tried to read it, but gave up after a few pages. However, a couple of friends kept going on about it and I decided to give it another go and I'm so glad I did!

After the first chapter I couldn't put it down. I felt like I had been pulled into another world, full of magic and exciting possibility.

Despite obviously reading lots more books since then, Harry Potter will always be my childhood favourite. If I had not read it I doubt I would love reading as much as I do now and I definitely wouldn't have completed a university degree in English or become an English teacher. - **Mrs Cowell**

Harry Potter transfigured my life! (Potterheads will get it.)



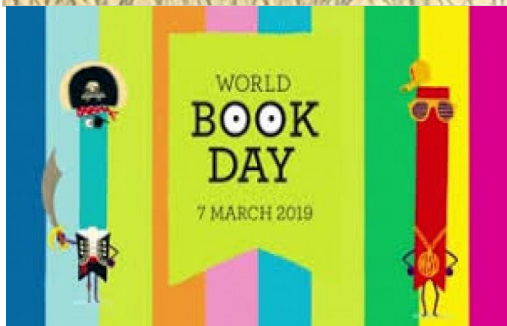
### The Little House on the Prairie—Laura Ingalls Wilder

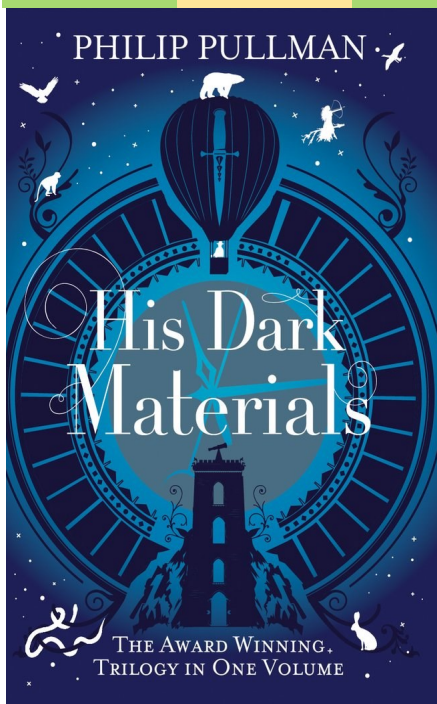
When I was a teenager, cowboy tales were hugely popular on TV and at the cinema. My sister and I loved anything to do with the Wild West including clothes, horses and the novels of Laura Ingalls Wilder.

The Little House on the Prairie tells the real life story of an American family who attempt to settle on Native American territory in Kansas in 1874. There is difficulty and danger involved but the domestic detail is what drew me in.

The wide open spaces of the Prairie and the challenge of creating a new world seemed so different to my home in the suburbs of Watford. The romance of the frontier has remained with me always.

-**Miss Chinn**





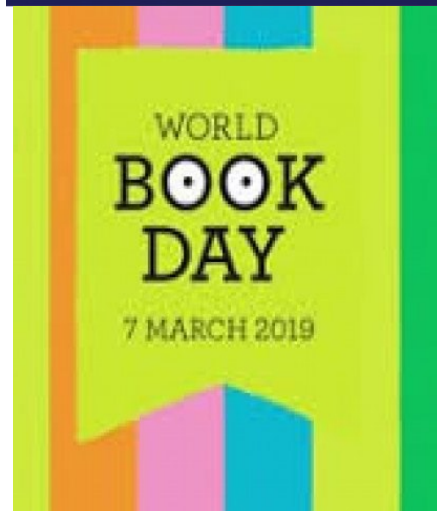
### His Dark Materials - Philip Pullman

I'm not sure why, but I always loved the idea of artefacts that gave the person wielding them powers of unrivalled proportion.

From light sabres that could cut through anything, to time-controlling stop watches that would allow you to 'pause' time, and walk around with the things and people around you completely frozen in place!

I think that's why 'His Dark Materials' by Philip Pullman resonated with me so much as a teenager - The 'Alethiometer' could tell the user the answer to *any* question they asked it, and the 'Subtle Knife' could cut through the very fabric of space-time, transporting the wielder to another universe quite literally! The combination of these two artefacts and the brazen personalities of the protagonists carried their adventures through some very bone-chilling moments and scenarios - that made me thankful that these kinds of objects don't exist in our world, *but also wonder how close the book describes our real, modern technological and scientific escapades with 'Google' and 'Dark Matter/Energy'.*

Writing this, I think I have to admit to myself that a reread of the book might have to happen quite soon! - Mr Burnaby



### Oh, the Places You'll Go! - Dr Seuss

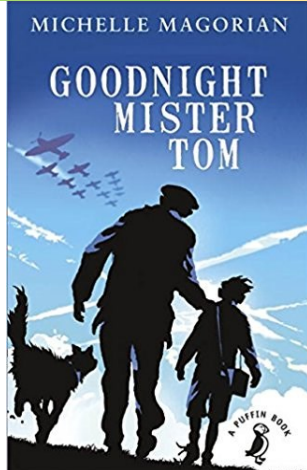
My absolute favourite book (now and as a child) is 'Oh, the Places You'll Go!' by Dr. Seuss.

This book is an inspirational and beautiful story about how everyone should be resilient as they journey throughout life. The book's message teaches about following your heart, reaching for the stars and not letting anything stand in your way is perfect for everyone! An excerpt from this book was read at my wedding and it was the first book that I read to my daughter after she was born. This book is a wonderful piece of literature, which everyone should enjoy time and time again.

-Mrs Lakhani







### Goodnight Mister Tom - Michelle Magorian

As a child, my most memorable book was 'Goodnight Mister Tom' by Michelle Magorian. I have always enjoyed war-time novels but this novel remains particularly poignant. This moving tale provides the perspective of an evacuee, William Beech and his experience being sent from London to the countryside before the Second World War to live with a man named Tom Oakley. It was touching to observe how what started as a difficult relationship developed into the unexpected. I enjoyed the unpredictable nature of this text which kept me in suspense throughout each page.

- Miss Gilmour

### The Lovely Bones—Alice Sebold

My favourite book is The Lovely Bones by Alice Sebold. It is the story of a 14 year old girl called Susie Salmon who tells her story from heaven following her brutal murder. She watches from heaven as her family try to cope with her loss and struggle with their grief, while also trying to solve her murder.

It made me cry numerous times while reading it. One part of the novel (which I have always remembered even though I first read it about 15 years ago) describes how her father tries to tell her four year old brother, Buckley, about her death as he keeps asking for her and doesn't understand why she's not there. Susie's father brings out the family Monopoly board and explains that Susie always played with the shoe. He then explains which playing piece each of the other members of the family play with. He asks Buckley to put all the pieces on the Monopoly board and explains as follows:

"...the board is the world. Now if I were to tell you that when I rolled the dice, one of the pieces would be taken away, what would that mean?"

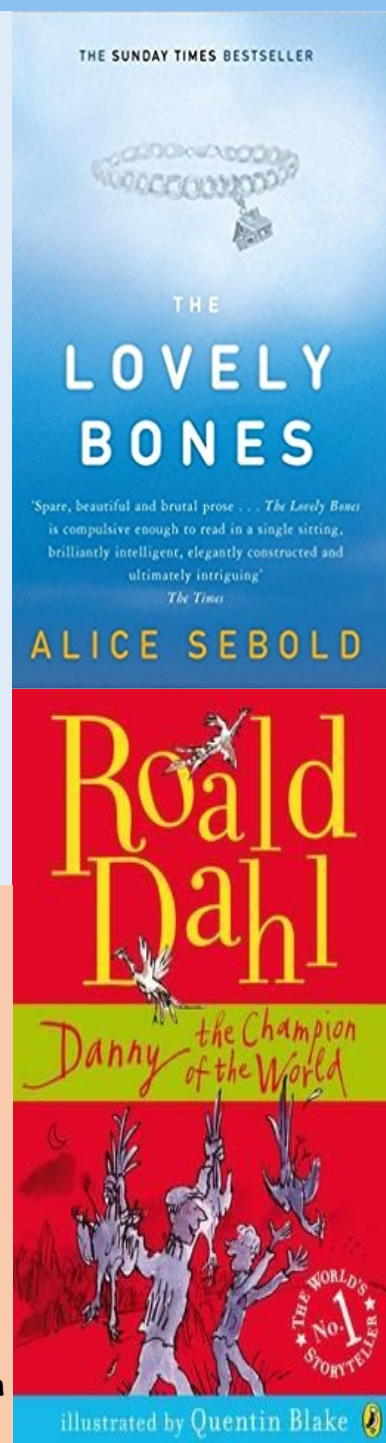
It is an incredibly sad novel and one which has always stayed with me. I would definitely recommend reading it if you get the chance.

-Miss Welsh

When I was growing up my parents struggled to get me to read! I used to flick through my 'Shoot' annual and 'Match' magazine which were both football related but not a lot else!

This was until I listened to an audiobook narrated by the author Roald Dahl. I loved his enchanting voice and was hooked on the fascinating stories. I soon progressed from listening to reading. My favourite was 'Danny the champion of the world' but I also really enjoyed 'Charlie and the chocolate factory' and 'Fantastic Mr Fox'. They are all great books that I would thoroughly recommend."

- Mr Stevenson





### Point Horrors—

I loved reading Point Horrors, could spend hours in the library in town reading the books there and taking them out on loan. I enjoyed the descriptive storylines, the mystery and trying to work out who was involved in the crimes.

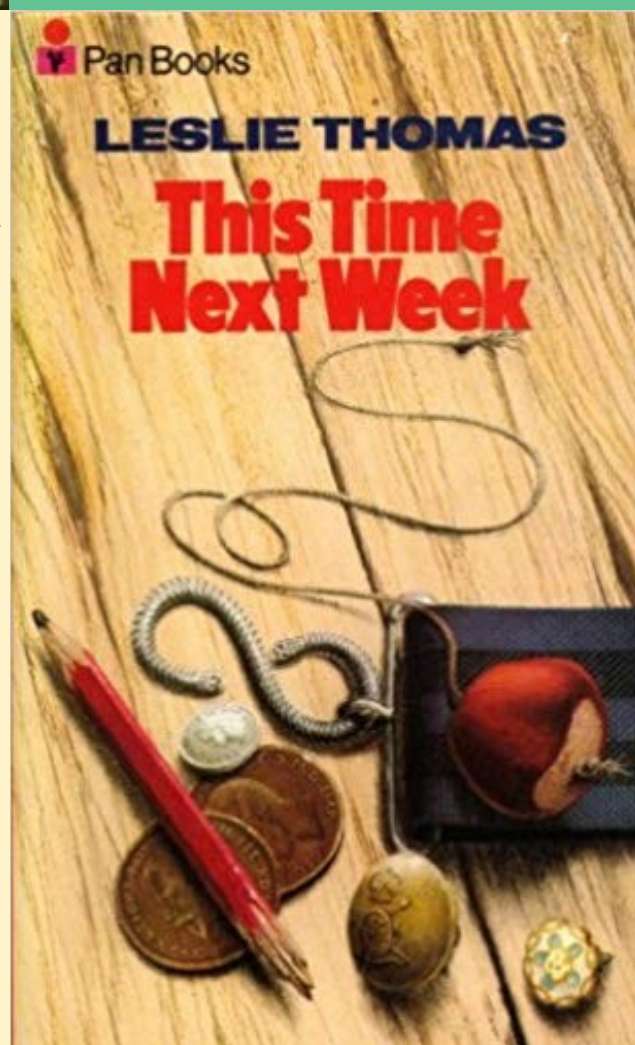
- Miss McIntyre

### This Time Next Week - Leslie Thomas

This Time Next Week, subtitled 'the autobiography of a happy orphan' is Thomas' early life story after he loses both his parents and is sent to a Dr Barnardo's Home - an orphanage - at the age of 12. The book was one of our set texts in English and it was the first autobiography that I ever read.

It's a lovely autobiography - funny, humane and deeply touching. I have never forgotten it and liked it so much that I bought a copy of it after I left school, a small Pan Books edition that cost 25p, which I still have. I think it's one of the reasons that I became an English teacher - so thank you Leslie Thomas.

- Mr Gaynor





## Book Reviews

# THE LORD OF THE RINGS

Continuing the story of *THE HOBBIT*  
NOW A MAJOR MOTION PICTURE



J.R.R. TOLKIEN

As a busy Mum I never had the time to read big novels. Instead I found great comfort reading to my children. When they were little their favourite book was 'George and the Dragon' by Chris Wormell. I used to put on voices and make the book come alive. They would get all excited, then a little scared - even though they knew the ending! We would laugh and spend time together.

As they grew, so did the books. All 7 Harry Potter books, 3 Lord of the Rings and the Percy Jackson series was a huge hit! Now they read for themselves and I can enjoy a variety of books including autobiographies.

The point is, if you don't like reading or haven't the time, maybe find someone to read to? A younger brother or sister perhaps? Grandma or Grandad? To read with a purpose is a great gift to encourage others to join in and learn, but most of all to sometimes just sit with someone - even if they are asleep!"

- Miss Davies

## World Book Day

This term the students at Astley Cooper School took part in a range of different activities to celebrate the national event, World Book Day.

Year 7 students took part in two activities, Character Costume Design and The Strangest Places to Read Descriptive Writing Task. Patrisia Petkova 7RP received a certificate for her costume design and Tristan Russell 7RP received a certificate for his descriptive writing work.

Year 8 students were encouraged to think about how books have changed over the years and to use their imagination to design a book which may be available to use in the future. Naomi McGrory 8JRO received a certificate for her future book design.

Year 9 students took part in a Book Quiz Team Challenge. Groups of Year 9 students battled against each other testing their knowledge of popular books.

Year 10 students embraced the importance of World Book Day by engaging in a Silent Debate, tackling the question 'Can we live in a world without reading?'

All students also received a World Book Day Token with instructions on how to use it to obtain a new reading book. This is very important so that students can enjoy reading for pleasure every day during the full school allocated Private Reading slot.

**Miss Bishop**  
LRC Manager/Librarian



# Sixth Form

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 mock assessments in February. These assessments have been a good opportunity for Year 12 students to evaluate their progress on material learned in their first term studying A-Levels. For Year 13 it has been a chance for students to reflect on their learning before the start of their examinations in May. I would like to congratulate all the students for the dedication they have shown towards revision for these assessments.

The deadline for Year 11 Sixth Form applications was at the beginning of February with a high number of applications received. Interviews have been conducted by senior members of staff and students will receive a letter regarding the July Sixth Form Induction Day. Year 11 students should also have received a letter about the decision to go down to a four day programme of study for new Year 12 students starting in September.

Year 12 will be receiving letters regarding Work Experience which will take place in July. Students will be encouraged to approach businesses to find their own placements with relevance to their future career. This will be a good opportunity for students to develop their skills and will be useful when writing personal statements or applying for apprenticeships.

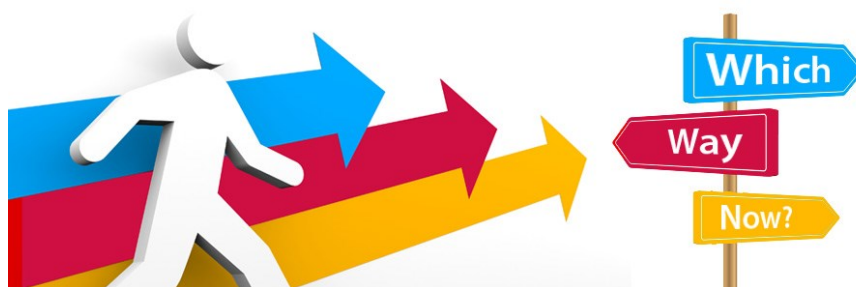
Here are some highlights of the spring term:

## **Legal Apprentice - Law Competition**

We have four students in Year 12 who are part of the Legal Apprentice Law competition run by King-Isley Napley and *The Times* newspaper. The students involved are Amy Dorling, Rayne Marsh, Keisha Mapfeka and Isis Mendes. The team have had to complete three tasks which have tested their legal knowledge, negotiation and drafting skills which are all skills that face a solicitor in their day to day life. Our team has successfully made it through all three tasks and are currently waiting to hear if they have made it to the final round which is being held live in London in June.

## **University and Apprenticeship Show**

Friday 8 March saw all 34 Year 12 students go to MK Stadium in Milton Keynes for the UK University and Apprenticeship show. This was a fantastic opportunity for Year 12 to start thinking about life Post 18. Students were able to attend seminars on topics such as Russell Group Universities Higher and Degree level apprenticeships, Student Finance and Personal Statement advice. They were also able to walk around the vast number of exhibitors from Universities up and down the country as well as apprenticeship providers such as Virgin Media, The Army, TUI, Lloyds Bank and Network Rail. Students could also take part in a creative media and STEM interactive hub.





# Sixth Form

## UCAS Applications

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

- 1 – If students have had all university offers back by **Sunday 31 March**, they need to respond by **Wednesday 1 May**
- 2 – If students have had university offers back by **Thursday 2 May** they need to make a decision by 6 June
- 3 – If students have had all university offers back by **Monday 6 June** they need to make a decision by **Thursday 20 June**

## Year 12 UCAS

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

It would benefit students wishing to apply for a university place to start looking into free subject specific summer residential courses. This will help them to write their University application as well as give them an insight to the subject they wish to study. Several universities including The University of Hertfordshire offer placements shadowing students. The Sutton Trust and Nuffield offer subject specific programmes and courses. Please see Miss East or Mrs Dixon if you are interested in applying for a university place UCAS has the following deadlines;

**Monday 1 July** – All students applying to submit first draft of personal statement to Form Tutor

**Monday 15 July** – Form Tutor to give feedback

**Monday 16 September** – Final draft of personal statement to Miss East or Mrs Dixon

**Monday 30 September** – Veterinary/Medicine/Oxford and Cambridge UCAS applications to be sent to Mrs Dixon for checking process

**Monday 7 October** – Russell Group University UCAS applications sent to Mrs Dixon for checking process

**Tuesday 15 October 2019** – UCAS deadline for Veterinary/Medicine/Oxford and Cambridge applications

**Monday 21 October** – Final deadline for all UCAS applications to be sent to Mrs Dixon and Miss East

**Friday 29 November** – All UCAS applications to be sent by Miss East

**Wednesday 15 January 2020** – UCAS deadline for all applications

**Miss East**  
**Head of Sixth Form**

# Work-Based Learning

## "You're hired!" Astley Cooper student Jake lands top apprenticeship

Staff on the Astley Cooper Work-Based Learning course are celebrating as their first student apprenticeship place was recently confirmed. Jake Ashpole is the first to win a place to work and study next year and he is set to start right away. Tech company Sopra Steria have plucked Jake from the course before the end of the academic year in order to steal a march on other employers in Hemel Hempstead looking to employ bright and enthusiastic young people.

The Work-Based learning course, soon to be renamed the Pre-Apprenticeship Course, is designed to take raw post GCSE students and transform them into well-oiled machines ready to take on the world of work. The core of the course is a three day-a-week six-month work experience placement that is supplemented by three business related BTEC qualifications.

Jake really impressed in his work placement at SWR where he became a rising star in the sales department. He has responded well to the coaching on the course for things like interview skills and writing successful applications. In fact Jake applied for three positions at different companies and got positive responses from them all. He chose Sopra Steria's well paid Level 3 Business Administration apprenticeship because it came with an option to continue on to a degree course. He is extremely grateful for the help he has been given by SWR and has taken a Saturday job with them so he can keep in touch.

Jake Ashpole said, 'I'm delighted to get this opportunity to start a great career. I couldn't have got here without the Work-based Learning course and the people at SWR. It's taught me that with hard work and the right support I can achieve anything I want.'

The course mentors are now guiding the remaining students through their applications for apprenticeships. Course coordinator Erica Hodges said, 'We are over the moon for Jake. He has brought his 'A' game to every session at school and done us proud at work. We have high hopes for his fellow students getting places for next September and Jake's success is sure to inspire every one of them to reach for the stars.'

We are currently accepting applications for next year's Pre-Apprenticeship course from Year 11 students. Details can be found on the school website.

**Mr O'Brien**

**Work-Based Learning Assistant**





## Science Trip

As part of Science week Year 9 and Year 10 Single Scientists as well as A -Level Biology students went to the Body World's Exhibition in London. The exhibition showed us how our body works and how intricate all the systems are, for example how hard the blood system has to work to supply enough energy to all our cells. The students really enjoyed the interactive audio system letting them access specialised information for each display.

There were several things to try out - the blood pressure machines were a great success. Not only did the exhibition show us how our bodies work when they are healthy or when affected by disease, it showed us the effect of relaxation and exercise. Students liked the relaxation zone, especially the rocking chairs where you could sit and look at calming images on a large screen. Towards the end of the exhibition, there was a 'before you die' wall where visitors could write their hopes and dreams on a huge black board. It was lovely to see the students write their aspirations as well as talk about other messages left on the board. Our students had a fantastic time at the museum and really enjoyed their trip.

**Mrs Leinster**  
**Science Teacher**



## Boxing Clever



Congratulations to George Elson who represented the St Albans and London Colney Amateur Boxing Club in a home show at Sandridge on 19 January and won his first ever public boxing match.



# Anti Bullying Event



On Wednesday 5 December, 10 students (two Sixth Formers and eight Year 7s) took part in the *Diana Award Anti-Bullying Programme*. This programme was set up by the Diana Award Foundation to train young people, staff and students to become Anti-Bullying Ambassadors. The programme has allowed over 24,000 young people to be Anti-Bullying Ambassadors across the UK. Astley Cooper has been fortunate enough to be involved in this huge movement.

The day consisted of many activities for both the students and the staff who organised this event for us. My favourite activity was the Parachute task where the key message was that, 'We all have a responsibility to look out for each other.' Another activity was a 'True or False' session where we had to guess whether the facts we were given about bullying were real or not. The most important activity that we participated in was a role play session. It was our job as students to read through a scenario, act it out and then explain how, using our Anti-Bullying training, we would defuse the situation.

After taking part in the multiple activities, the session was then handed to us. We watched a very moving video of students around the country and famous celebrities who are being or have been bullied during their time at school. While watching the video, we were given the time to come up with opportunities that we can provide in our school to increase the awareness about bullying and how we can prevent it.

As a group, we had the idea to run lunch time clubs, charity events, a whole school open email account that anyone can use to report bullying or get advice from, Ambassador run games to show the whole school who we are and what we are here to do and so many more brilliant ideas.

All 10 Ambassadors are now fully equipped to deal with and support all students who are being bullied and have reported it to us as Ambassadors. Our goal for 2019 is to advertise who we are and the significance of our roles within school, meet weekly to discuss our progress and start putting our ideas into action and bringing our events to life. We would like to thank both Mrs Goodchild and Mr Daddow for allowing all of us to take part in such a fantastic opportunity for us and the school. Our Anti-Bullying Ambassadors are: (Year 7) Amy Howell, Sophie Brown, Alexander Heywood, Cassidy Kirton, Laila Moustafa-Ramadan, Eva Mutavchieve, Nicoleat Remetan, Tanya Rydqvist, (Sixth Form) Rayne Marsh and Charlie Webster. Our teacher representatives are Mrs Goodchild and Mr Daddow.

**Charlie Webster**  
**Year 13 GH**



# Brilliant Club- Scholars' Programme

## The Brilliant Club – Scholars' Programme

The Brilliant Club launched with KS4 and KS5 students in October 2018. The aim of the programme is to encourage students to widen access for outstanding pupils in non-selective state schools to the United Kingdom's most selective universities. As part of this programme, 14 students in Key Stage 4 and six students in Key Stage 5 were selected to take part, with the aim of encouraging them to think about going to university in the future.

In November 2018, the students were invited to visit Goldsmiths' University. They participated in a campus tour and a study skills session. They also had the chance to meet and ask questions of current students and were given advice and guidance about attending university. Following this, the students had a tutorial with their PhD tutor, Catherine MacKenzie.

From November to January, the students were involved in weekly tutorials with Catherine. The focus of these tutorials was investigating the link between diabetes and depression. The students were asked to complete a 2,000 word assignment answering the question: *Evaluate the statement: 'Type 2 diabetes is caused by a lack of self-control around junk food'*. This assignment was marked using degree level criteria and mark schemes.

Catherine came into school at the end of January to meet students individually and feedback to them on their assignments. All students in Key Stage 5 achieved either a 2.1 or First. At Key Stage 4, Martina Despotovic (Year 9) achieved a First, six students achieved a 2.1 and the rest achieved a 2.2 or Third. This was a remarkable achievement for all students, and many have commented saying that it has given them the confidence and self-belief that they could go on to university in the future and achieve well.

On Monday 11 February, all students were invited to attend their Graduation Ceremony at Exeter College, University of Oxford. This gave the students a further chance to experience a highly prestigious university with a campus tour, the opportunity to meet current students and the chance to reflect on their participation in the programme.



Congratulations to the following students for their work during the programme:

KS5 - Isis Mendes, Rebecca Tafe, Kamila Nachojava, Sam Brown, Amy Dorling, Shakrist Masuphan-Boodle

KS4 – Martina Despotovic (Year 9), Charlotte Chantler (Year 9), Bethany Merritt (Year 9), Marlene Stringer (Year 9), Jessica Lancaster (Year 9), Barbara Boadu (Year 9), Lewis Rose (Year 9), Alissia Rydqvist-Smith (Year 9), Sam Rawlings (Year 9), Hannah Brown (Year 10), Ashleigh Durham (Year 10), Vale Hurt (Year 10), Callum Millbank (Year 10), Berti Beaman (Year 10).

The programme has just launched with Key Stage 3 students, who visited Jesus College, University of Oxford on Monday 25 March.

**Miss Welsh**  
**Associate Assistant Headteacher**

# Harry Bibring

## **Harry Bibring**

Last June, we were privileged to be visited by Harry Bibring. Harry was a Holocaust survivor who came to school to share his story with students in Years 8 to Year 11. Harry, who was 92 at the time of his visit, spoke to students for over four hours.

We were saddened to learn that Harry died on 31 January at the age of 93. Incredibly, he was still giving talks to school groups until the day before his death.

Harry came to Britain at the age of 13 with his sister, Gertie, on the Kindertransport. He told students of his time growing up in Vienna and the awful discrimination he faced as a Jewish boy growing up in Austria. During his early years in Austria, he was forced to leave his school and banned from attending his local ice skating rink. He loved ice skating as a boy and couldn't understand what ice skating had to do with being Jewish. The situation got significantly worse for Harry and his family after Kristallnacht in 1938 when his father's shop was looted and destroyed. His parents, who were fearful for their children's safety, arranged for them to be taken to Britain on the Kindertransport. That was the last Harry ever saw of his family. His father died of a heart attack in 1940. 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.

Despite this trauma and the difficulties of adjusting to life in Britain without his parents, Harry went on to marry his wife Muriel. Together they had two children and Harry had a successful career as an engineer. Incredibly, Harry devoted much of his life to visiting schools and working on behalf of the Holocaust Educational Trust to share his story with as many people as he could.

When Harry visited us, his closing message to students was a very important one. He said that it is clear that the world has learned nothing since the Holocaust happened as genocides still continue to happen. This is the reason why he 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.

We were incredibly lucky to have met Harry and we are very grateful to him for the time he took to speak to our students and share his story. I hope that the students who were privileged enough to hear Harry speak will remember and share his story and carry forward his message in the way they live their lives.

He was an incredibly kind, funny and brave man and the world is a much poorer place without him in it. RIP Harry.

**Miss Welsh**  
**Associate Assistant Headteacher**





# Careers Fair

On Wednesday 20 March, The Astley Cooper School hosted our annual Careers Fair. The purpose of the Careers Fair is to increase employment prospects for our students and enable them to talk to specialists about their future pathways and opportunities.

We have received many encouraging and positive responses from the students, companies and organisations who attended the fair and we are pleased that every student at school on the day had the opportunity to attend.

Many local companies, higher education and careers organisations exhibited at the fair. They included:

Organisation	Sector
STS Limited	Car Mechanics/Engineering
Osborne Construction	Build and Construction
Atlas Copco	Engineering and Head Office Functions
RSK Land and Development Engineering	Engineering Consultancy
Herts Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust	NHS
SPAN Training	Hair, Beauty and Childcare
West Herts College	Further Education
Education and Employers	Apprenticeships
Quantum Care Ltd	Health and Social Care
RES Group	GeoTech and Renewable Energy
SWR Ltd	Engineering, Construction and Retail
The Astley Cooper School WBL	Education/Pre-Apprenticeship
The Royal Air Force	Public Sector / Armed Forces
YC Herts	Careers Education
Hopespare Ltd.	Engineering (Hydraulics and Pneumatics)
Synergy	Construction and Property Consultants



Contd/

## Careers Fair



The Careers Fair supports our extensive whole school careers programme, introduced last year. Astley Cooper offers careers education for every year group. In Key Stage 3 there is an introduction to careers and support for aligning subjects and careers. In Key Stage 4 we offer targeted occupational sessions, CV writing and Interview support and one to one careers meetings. For our Sixth Form we run a successful Work-Based Learning programme, provide University/UCAS application support and organise targeted occupational sessions.

**Dr Ryde**  
**Associate Assistant Headteacher & Careers Leader**

## Student Safety

We would ask that parent/carers do not drive on to the school site to drop off or pick up students unless you have an appointment to see a member of staff.

Thank you for not parking on the yellow lines outside the school gates. Please do not stop on the zigzag areas outside the school and arrange to drop off or meet your child at a safe point further along St Agnells Lane.

We appreciate your support.

**Mrs Catterall**  
**Business & Personnel Manager**





# Headteacher's Commendations



## January 2019

Marissa Lee 7RP  
Naomi McGrory 8JRo  
Prisca Frimpong 9KW  
Spencer Gilligham Cooper 10SF  
Omar Salem 11PT  
Sam Brown 12ELG  
Aisha Patel 13GH



## February 2019

Amy Bowell 7AG  
Cody Bolton 8JRO  
Aimee Colls 9KW  
Mary Whetter 10TB  
Alfie Ash 11GHU  
Pim Frost 12ELG  
Olivia Christodoulou 13GH



## March 2019

Grace Sells 7RP  
Jessica White 8JRO  
Jess Bradshaw 9Inc  
Cameron Sells 9AW  
Amber MacDonald 9Inc  
Frankie McCormack 10TB  
Liam Farrell 10Inc  
Shaun Arthur 11PT  
Paul McQuade 13GH  
Zach Thomas 13GH  
Lewis Hall 13GH



# Attendance

I recently carried out assemblies on attendance with each year group and within this we incorporated our values of Aspiration, Determination and Integrity. We discovered what it takes for athletes, businesses, entrepreneurs and world leaders to succeed and how each of these are expected to attend events, talks, training and matches even in the darkest of winter days, and some having to do so every day of the year.

293 students had an attendance of 97% or above this term with 154 of these students having 100% attendance since January 2019. I would like to say well done to you all.

Now that spring is here, we can begin to enjoy the warmth and bright mornings. I would like to remind you that you are expected to attend school every day, and if you are unable to, you need to provide either medical evidence or a letter from home if this is your first absence. The Astley Cooper Attendance Chart and expectations below outlines the steps taken to improve attendance as well as celebrating those of you who have achieved this target. If you have any concerns about attendance, please contact me or Mrs Allen 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 since 2013.

### **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 8.45am 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.

Contd/



## Attendance continued

### Absence Line

Please can we ask parents to contact us daily if your child is absent from school due to illness, is going to be late/leaving school early due to a medical appointment, or is absent from school for any other reason. Please telephone our 24 hour absence line by 8.25am on 01442 394141, alternatively, you can email

[admin@astleycooper.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@astleycooper.herts.sch.uk)

### Home for Lunch Pass

If your child has a 'Home for Lunch Pass', please may we remind you they must present their pass every day on leaving the school site during lunch. Without their pass, they will not be permitted to leave the school to go home.

Please be aware, students are not permitted to be at the local shops, if found there, lunch passes will be revoked. In this situation, you will need to provide them with a packed lunch or ensure they have sufficient funds on their ParentPay account.

Finally, this is for the student to return to their home address for lunch and must return to school by 2.05pm.

Thank you

**Mrs Allen**  
**Attendance Administrator/Pastoral Support**

## Recommended Reads



### Disney A Twisted Tale: As Old As Time by Liz Braswell



### Alone by D.J. Brazier



Drama Performance



# A DANCE AND DRAMA SHOWCASE

## EVENING OF EXAM PERFORMANCES

Thursday 25 April 6:00pm

Doors opening at 5:45pm

Main School Hall

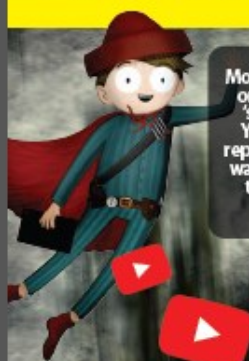
***Free Entry***



# Online Safety-What parents need to know

<https://nationalonlinesafety.com/resources/platform-guides/>

It's important to note that new challenges are arising on the internet all the time. We have created to this guide to raise awareness of the issue and offer advice on helping parents to talk to their children about making safer decisions online. See also our 7 conversation starters guide for more tips on better communication with your child.



Momo is a sinister 'challenge' that has been around for some time. It has recently resurfaced and once again has come to the attention of schools and children across the country. Dubbed the 'suicide killer game', Momo has been heavily linked with apps such as Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, and most recently (and most worryingly)... YouTube Kids. The scary doll-like figure reportedly sends graphic violent images, and asks users to partake in dangerous challenges like waking up at random hours and has even been associated with self-harm. It has been reported that the 'Momo' figure was originally created as a sculpture and featured in an art gallery in Tokyo and unrelated to the 'Momo' challenge we are hearing about in the media.

## What parents need to know about

# MOMO



### CHILDREN'S VIDEOS BEING 'HIJACKED'

There have been recent reports that some seemingly innocent videos on YouTube and YouTube Kids (such as 'surprise eggs', unboxing videos and Minecraft videos) have been edited by unknown sources to include violence provoking and/or other inappropriate content. Even though YouTube monitor and remove videos that include inappropriate content, clips can be uploaded and viewed thousands of times before they get reported and removed. As a parent, it's difficult to spot these videos as the harmful content doesn't appear until partway through the video.

### DISTRESSING FOR CHILDREN

Popular YouTubers and other accounts have been uploading reaction videos, showing their experience of the MOMO challenge. Some of the videos include a disclosure message warning that the content may be "inappropriate or offensive to some audiences" and that "viewer discretion is advised" but these videos are still easily accessed by clicking 'I understand and wish to proceed'. The image of the 'Momo' character can be deeply distressing to children and young people and it's important to note that it may slip through parental settings and filters.

### SUGGESTED VIDEOS ON YOUTUBE

Video apps such as YouTube include an 'up next' feature which automatically starts playing another video based on the video just watched. Due to YouTube's algorithm, users are shown 'suggested videos' that they may be interested in. The thumbnails used on suggested videos are purposefully created in a way to encourage viewers to click them. During our research, we found that when watching one Momo related video, we were shown countless other Momo themed videos and other scary content which would be age-inappropriate for children under 18.



**National  
Online  
Safety**

## Top Tips for Parents

### TELL THEM IT'S NOT REAL

Just like any urban legend or horror story, the concept can be quite frightening and distressing for young people. Whilst this may seem obvious, it's important for you to reassure to your child that Momo is not a real person and cannot directly harm them! Also, tell your child to not go openly searching for this content online as it may only cause more distress.

### BE PRESENT

It's important for you, as a parent or carer, to be present while your children are online. This will give you a greater understanding of what they are doing on their devices, as well as providing you with the opportunity to discuss, support and stop certain activities that your child may be involved in. As the nature of each task become progressively worse it's also important to recognise any changes in your child's behaviour.

### TALK REGULARLY WITH YOUR CHILD

As well as monitoring your child's activity, it's important for you discuss it with them too. Not only will this give you an understanding of their online actions, but those honest and frequent conversations will encourage your child to feel confident to discuss issues and concerns they may have related to the online world.

### DEVICE SETTINGS & PARENTAL CONTROLS

Ensure that you set up parental controls for your devices at home. This will help to restrict the types of content that your child can view, as well as help you to monitor their activity. In addition to this, it's vital that you are aware of your device and account settings to ensure your child's utmost safety. For example, on YouTube you can turn off 'suggested auto-play' on videos to stop your child from viewing content that they have not directly selected.

### PEER PRESSURE

Trends and viral challenges can be tempting for children to take part in; no matter how dangerous or scary they seem. Make sure you talk to your child about how they shouldn't succumb to peer pressure and do anything they are not comfortable with, online or offline. If they are unsure, encourage them to talk to you or another trusted adult.

### REAL OR HOAX?

As a parent it is natural to feel worried about certain things you see online that may be harmful to your child. However, not everything you see online is true. Check the validity of the source and be mindful of what you share as it may only cause more worry.

### REPORT & BLOCK

You can't always rely on parental controls to block distressing or harmful material. People find ways around a platform's algorithm in order to share and promote this type of material. Due to this, we advise that you flag and report any material you deem to be inappropriate or harmful as soon as you come across it. You should also block the account/content to prevent your child from viewing it. Also encourage your child to record/screenshot any content they feel could be malicious to provide evidence in order to escalate the issue to the appropriate channels.

### FURTHER SUPPORT

Speak to the safeguarding lead within your child's school should you have any concerns regarding your child's online activity or malicious content that could affect them.

If your child sees something distressing, it is important that they know where to go to seek help and who their trusted adults are. They could also contact Childline where a trained counsellor will listen to anything that's worrying them.

The Childline phone number is 0800 1111.



SOURCES:  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-news-110-video-youtube-kids-14052795>  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk>  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-4725523>

[www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com)

Twitter - @natonlinesafety

Facebook - /NationalOnlineSafety

Phone - 0800 368 8061



# 2019 BUBBLE RUSH



The Hospice  
of st francis

Kindly sponsored by

**RAYDEN**  
SOLICITORS  
Family Law Specialists

**HERTS**  
**12TH MAY**  
Gadebridge Park  
Hemel Hempstead

Join us on Sunday 12th May  
for a foam-filled 5k charity fun-run  
for everyone!



[stfrancis.org.uk/bubblerrush](http://stfrancis.org.uk/bubblerrush)

The Hospice of St Francis helps over 2,000 local people  
every year to live their precious lives well.



YouTube

#YourPreciousLife

**SIGN UP  
TODAY!**

Registered Charity No. 280825

Interact Quiz Night

Astley Cooper School  
Interact



# QUIZ NIGHT

FRIDAY 10 MAY

TEAMS OF 8 PLAYERS

Refreshments available - £2.50 per Ticket

Begins at 6:00 PM

Tickets available on Parent Pay



# Ashlyns Festival



Ashlyns School & Wood off on Chichester road

## Ashlyns festival

A celebration of summer for  
Berkhamsted and beyond



Friday 12th July  
**Comedy and  
curry night**  
6:30-10:30pm



Saturday  
13th July  
**The Festival**  
12 noon-11pm

Tickets and info: [www.ashlynsfestival.co.uk](http://www.ashlynsfestival.co.uk)