



**KING EDWARD VI
ASTON SCHOOL**

Educational excellence for our City



THE RECORD

2022-23



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HEADTEACHER'S WELCOME

Dear friends of Aston

It is with great pleasure that I am able to provide a preface for this edition of the Record. Having marked our 140th anniversary in 2023, we've all been able to reflect on the distinguished heritage of 'the good old school'. Over the past twelve months we've witnessed some great academic success stories, a plethora of sporting fixtures (and victories), a range of fantastic music performances and whole host of events which have allowed both staff and students to show off the best of the Astonian spirit.



The age and heritage of the school at 140 have also been brought into sharp focus. The cost of maintaining the original building has been laid bare, both in terms of financial burden and human resource. Significant building works have taken place to repair the rooves and ceilings and to bring much-needed 'TLC' to the classrooms. The staff and students have been incredibly patient and supportive throughout this process, and in our 'West Wing' we can now see the fruits of our labours. The programme of modernisation continues in the year ahead as we work together to combine modern and comfortable learning spaces with the very important heritage evident at the heart of our school.

As the Record goes to print, there are still exciting, yet significant challenges ahead. The passing of the pandemic has left us with many areas of attention with regard to missed time in education for our learners. The increased digitisation of our school will place demands on teacher training and the arrival of Artificial Intelligence (AI) will undoubtedly influence the educational landscape in years to come. Aston continues to seek answers to these questions through the use evidence-informed practice to improve the quality of education in the classroom, whilst many colleagues are involved in providing educational visits and experiences which extend significantly beyond the parameters of the building.

It continues to be a privilege to lead our wonderful school and I hope that enjoying reading all about it in this edition.

Best wishes

Mr Brady | Headteacher



EDITORIAL TEAM:

Armaan Currim, William Lanham, Lorenzo Almoguera, Aquil Hussen, Cruz Ngwashi.

SPECIAL THANKS:

Mr Smith, Mrs Farmer

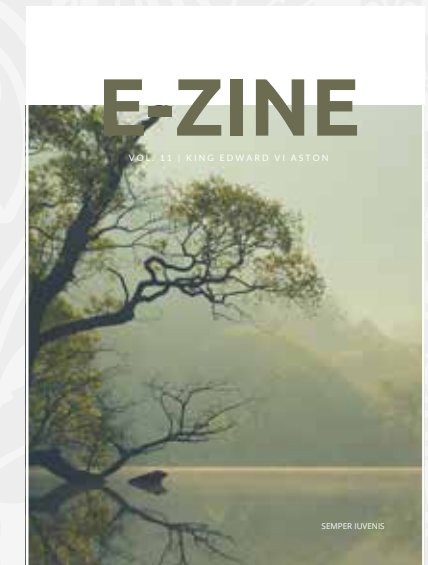
STAFF EDITOR:

Mr McBrien



E-ZINE 2023

Scan the QR code or visit the school website to download your copy of the annual student led electronic magazine.





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SCHOOL CAPTAIN'S WELCOME

It is my pleasure to welcome you to The Record 2022-23, and I hope that the first term and a half of this academic year have been enjoyable and enriching.

As School Captain, my aim is to maintain the community here, and alongside my Vices and Senior Prefect Team, we strive to support and foster every student here in their journey to becoming the best 'Astonians' they can be.

As we advance through the school year and achieve small and large wins, I would like to emphasise the importance of diligence. With this value in mind, we must strive for success as a school, with the aim of achieving excellence in every discipline. This drive affords us more time to celebrate our successes.

Over the past year, I have witnessed this drive throughout many facets of school life, and it makes me increasingly proud to be a member of this thriving community. Seeing the capabilities of other students has increased my own drive for excellence whilst also being able to celebrate them.

Every year, The Record is a much-anticipated publication. It is an amalgam of all the students' achievements and hard work of the previous year, as well as an album of the fond memories and bonds formed here at Aston.

In the following pages, we have attempted to encapsulate life here at Aston, as merely a snapshot of what goes on, and to recognise and celebrate some of the triumphs of the Aston Family formally.

Moving forwards, there will undoubtedly be setbacks for each and every one of you, but just know that with the correct amount of honesty, integrity, diligence and kindness, you will get through. This journal serves as evidence of the love for life possessed by the Aston community and immortalises our achievements as further evidence of triumph for the great old school.

I wish you all the best of luck for any upcoming challenges that the next year will bring, hope that you obtain the skills needed to overcome them and hope that you enjoy this year's edition of *The Record*.

Kieran Gallagher | School Captain



VICE CAPTAINS' WELCOME

Welcome to the pages of King Edward VI Aston's School Record for the 2022-2023 academic year! We are thrilled to be welcoming you to this edition as this year's Vice School Captains and to experience this exciting journey with you all.

Within these colourful pages, you'll find stories that capture the spirit and essence of our school community – from the classroom triumphs to the victories on the sports field and everything in between. It is a snapshot of the incredible experiences and memories created over the last year.

To the new faces who have joined us this year, let us extend a huge welcome! You're about to embark on a rollercoaster ride of learning, growth, and discovery. Dive into all the opportunities our school has to offer, because, trust us, there are plenty! Whether it is joining a club, trying out for a team, or pursuing a passion project, this is your chance to shine.

And to those familiar faces returning for another round, welcome back! Let's take this as a reflective opportunity to build on the successes of the past and make this year even better. Let's support each other, cheer each other on, and make memories that will last a lifetime.

So, as you flip through these pages, we hope you feel inspired, motivated, and excited for the journey ahead. Let's make this year one for the books – pun intended!

With enthusiasm and school spirit,

Muhamad Al-Mawry and Amaar Shahzada | Vice School Captains | King Edward VI Aston



STAFF LIST 2023

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Mr M Brady BA (Hons) MA Ed

DEPUTY HEADTEACHER

Miss R Pierce BA Med

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Mr M Downing BA

Mrs K Lally MSc

Mr M Plackowski BSc

Mr S.Hall MEd BSc

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Mr M Ahmed Science/Design Tech

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Mr R Amin Computer Science

Mrs F Aston Science

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Mrs V Ologunde Languages

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Mr A Russell BSc Head of Computer Science

Mr Y Said Maths

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Chemistry Technician Ms R Sahota

Careers Mr C Packham

Cover Mr N Ibbetson

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Director of Inclusion Mrs S Blundell

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Lunchtime/recess Supervisor Ms K Archer

Lunchtime Supervisor Mrs S Johnson

Lunchtime Supervisor Mrs S Kauser

Premises Assistant Mrs A Bi

Minibus Driver Mr A Zaman

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Sports Coach Mr B Hall

Sports Coach Mr A Loveridge

Sports Coach Mr A M Smith

Sports Partnership Admin Mr J Hunt

Sports Partnership Manager Miss H Tonks

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Mr I Davidson Violin & Viola

Mr H Bent Percussion

Mr I Jackson Piano

Mr S Damiani Piano

Mr R McBrien Guitar

Mr F Stubbs Trumpet
Mr J Griffiths Bass Guitar and Guitar
Ms R Smith Flute
Ms M Taylor Cello
Mr M Sanderson Lower Brass
Miss E Hawthorne Singing

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Mrs G Begum
Mr I Bradin
Mrs P Chakka
Mrs H Fenwick
Mr E Jones
Mrs J Li
Mrs L O'Shea
Mr P Standley
Mrs N Shafiq
Mrs R Waqar
Ms S Rashid
Ms A Saeed
Ms A Kabir
Mr D Ali
Mrs S Ali
Mrs S Chhokar

YEAR LEADERS

YEAR 7

Pastoral Leader Mrs S Blundell
Head of Year Mrs V Ologunde

YEARS 8 AND 9

Pastoral Leader Mrs M Simcox
Head of Year 8 Mr R Amin
Head of Year 9 Miss J Wilkinson

YEARS 10 AND 11

Pastoral Leader Mr S Hall
Head of Year 10 Mr Z Perwez
Head of Year 11 Mrs H Mound

YEARS 12 AND 13

Head of Sixth Form Ms E Ritson
Assistant Head of Sixth Form Mr T Amann

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Mrs F.Arfan
Mrs S Bi
Mrs M Bibi
Mrs R Bibi
Mrs F Chowdhury
Mr D Gooden
Mrs S Kauser
Mrs S Kousar
Mrs K Mousumi
Mrs S Omar
Mrs U Parveen
Mrs R Saghir
Mr C Stewart
Mrs H Yasmeen
Mrs S Zahir

TUTORS

Mr Y Abukar
Mr G Amann
Mr O Bryan
Mr K Chow
Mr A Dymond
Mr F Holmes-Stanley
Mr Z Khan
Mr N Muhammad
Mr T Muhammad
Mr H Naguthane
Mr J Owen
Mr D Patel
Mr M Rashid

TRAINEE TEACHERS

Miss K Greenaway DT
Miss M Abdullahi English

NEW STAFF



Mrs Tall
Learning Support



Mr Ahmed
Science & Design Tech



Mrs MacLaren
Learning Support



Miss McMahon
Geography



Miss Greenaway
DT (Trainee)



Mr Amin
Computer Science



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140 YEARS OF ASTON

It was on Tuesday 8th May 1883 that King Edward VI School, Aston first opened its doors.

The event was recorded in the Birmingham Daily Post the following day: *"Opening of New Grammar School at Aston - The new Grammar School for boys and Girls in the Albert and Frederick Roads, Aston, was opened yesterday, with an attendance of 150 boys and 150 girls. Mr J Temperley BA is the Headmaster of the Boys' School and Miss M J Nimmo BA is the Headmistress of the Girls School."*

1883 was the year that saw the birth of Labour Prime Minister Clement Attlee, the death of Karl Marx, the publication of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* and the inauguration of both the Royal College of Music and promotion hopefuls Coventry FC.

The first 28 years saw boys of King Edward VI Aston use what is now the West Wing of the old original building and enter the school via the Albert Road entrance, while the girls of King Edward VI Aston occupied the East Wing and used the Frederick Road Entrance.

There was a twelve-foot wall between the boys' playground and the girls' playground (called the Pyramus and Thisbe Wall). The start and finish times were staggered by half an hour to avoid

contact and girls were forbidden to walk along the road with a boy - even their own brothers!

In 1911, the girls' school moved out to a new building in Handsworth and merged with two smaller Foundation schools (Summer Hill and Bath Row). The whole Aston building was then used for boys.

The original buildings are still in regular use today, but there have been significant alterations and extensions to the school site since then.

1963, saw the first "new building" opened called Douglas House (after a Victorian Villa that stood on the same site) with new facilities including Science laboratories, woodwork and metalwork rooms, a new gym, new kitchens and dining room and a main hall

In 1986 the Longdon Courts were opened and the end of Frederick Road was closed off to traffic and became part of the school grounds, meaning that students no longer had to worry about cars when crossing from Douglas House to the old Buildings.

1996 saw the opening of the Sports Hall, with the music department moving to the old gym in what is now the Recital Hall and music practice rooms. The start of the 21st Century saw the Bridge Link built and in 2008 Douglas House



Original Teaching staff of the school including Headmaster Mr Temperley (centre) and Mr Floyd (Deputy and second Headmaster) front row left



Douglas House 1963

was extended and refurbished to provide four extra laboratories; a teaching kitchen; new classrooms for art, design technology and music; a conference room; a first aid room; and offices.

The extension was named the Watcyn Thomas Wing after a former Welsh rugby international who taught at the school for thirty-seven years.

The latest "new building" that has been built on the site is the Colin Parker Building which was opened in November 2021.

This marked the end of a 14 year project to acquire the "land at top" and allowed for additional playground facilities and the completion of the new building comprising a new canteen, reception and additional sporting facilities.

OLD BOYS' DINNER



Old boys' David Roberts (Chair of Governors) and centenarian Jimmy Duff (Guest of Honour) with Mr Brady at the 2022 Old Boys' Dinner.



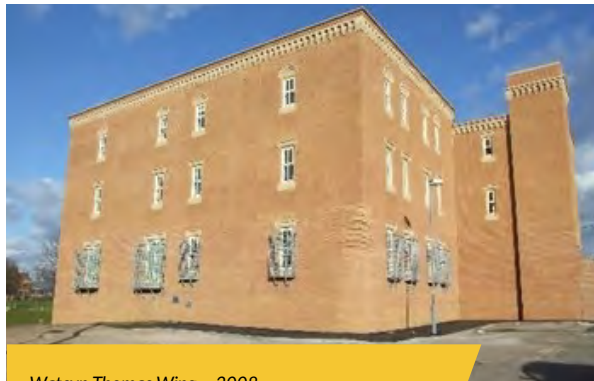
Old Building from Albert Road in 1960



Bridge Link - 2000



Longdon Courts from Top Playground - 1986



Watcyn Thomas Wing - 2008



Sports Hall - 1996



Colin Parker Building - 2021

ADVANCED ENGINEERING SHOW



This year, ten Year 12 students were invited by the ConeX Portal to attend the 2022 Advanced Engineering Show held at The NEC.

They met with key figures in British engineering and manufacture and were exposed first-hand to what modern engineering really looks like.

Opportunities to discuss routes into employment, day-to-day operations and the change to witness Arjun be 3D scanned into a CAD programme were just some of the highlights of the morning.

Our thanks to Conex and their partner companies, M-CNC, CADline and Central Scanning for their hospitality and input throughout the event.

The Advanced Engineering event gave us an insight into the world of engineering with the systems, products and programs they use on a daily basis.

It was a great opportunity to further explore the types of engineering jobs available and the routes we could take after sixth form.

Some universities were also at the event to talk to us about other routes, besides university after school including apprenticeships.

We had the representatives of ConeX talk to us about their daily lives in engineering and what the job of an engineer entails.

We also had the time to explore the wide range of products used for engineering and talk to the people who designed them.

Although the experience barely scratched the surface on the scope of the possibilities of engineering, it showed us a fraction of the endless pathways to engineering that exist.

More distinctively, just how vital engineering is to modern day society.

Not only did we see utilisation of engineering in the present, we also saw how engineering is being shaped for the future.

Engineering is also now, understandably, placing a great deal of effort in its sustainability and impact on future generations.

Akash Sebastian & Arjun Parmar

AGENTS FOR CHANGE

On December 16th school form class wellbeing representatives became 'Agents For Change' and attended a meeting led by Equaliteach. The meeting highlighted many ways to help the school become a safer and better place for anyone of any age, race, ethnicity and belief and addressed how to deal with identity-based bullying.

The first talk focused on getting to know each other around the room and the challenge was whoever spoke to the widest variety of people first would win. This was fun experience as everyone got to talk to students of many different ages and backgrounds and get to know things about each other that they never would have had the chance to talk about.

After a short break, we came back to the meeting room to discuss the types of bullying that occurs in school, and to share the places that are most hidden and sometimes less known to teachers. This consisted of areas without teacher supervision and cameras, for example the toilets. This conversation led to an activity in which we put in our opinion about what certain images represented and why we thought this. This led to talks about how fairness in society and how equality is an extremely important thing, as if we do not accept others around us we will never have a healthy school environment nor a healthy community outside of school.

We then went into depth with this in a conversation about how people who identify as part of the LGBTQ group fall into this. It was identified that they are found to be the most bullied students in schools and again this leads to an unhealthy school environment and makes these students feel uncomfortable and vulnerable when they are just also humans.

After our lunch we had another conversation about how we can stand up to prejudice with some examples of common stereotypes that people have in their heads. This made us all realise that there are so many different types of bullying that people just in that room have faced, leading to some conversations about different experiences that they wanted to share. We also then had a conversation about the pros and cons of the school's anti-bullying system and how it might be developed.

We rounded off the day with a game called Snowball, where we had to write down one of our experiences, scrunch it into a ball and then throw it across the room. Then, when the teachers told us to stop we would pick one up and write a response to this on how to help the person. And we had time to write down our ideas for actions on a piece of paper to help the anti-bullying systems in school and how to make the school a better place in general.

Later in the year we met once again to put our ideas into action and we will be creating 'Support Boxes' around school for students to share their concerns or issues, and also promote further the support networks in school.

Many thanks to the visitors that came in as well as Mrs Blundell (Director of Inclusion) and Mr Downing (Safeguarding Lead) for supervising and allowing us to have these opportunities.

Hassan Khattak | Wellbeing Representative

HARVEST FESTIVAL

The Harvest Festival is a traditional event celebrating the successful gathering of the year's crops. People are encouraged to donate homegrown produce, fruit and vegetables to those in need.

The Harvest Festival is a time for feasting, celebrating and giving thanks. It is also a time for honouring those who grow and reap crops. The Harvest Festival occurs on the Sunday nearest to the appearance of the harvest moon. This is the full moon that appears closest to the autumn equinox, which is usually at the end of September or the beginning of November.

This year, as part of the Harvest Festival celebrations, students and staff at Aston collected items such as long-life milk, tinned food, shampoos and deodorants for the Aston and Nechells Foodbank.

Thank you for your generosity.

Mr Downing



HOUSE PSYCHOLOGY

This year's house psychology competition took place for Year 9 on Thursday 13th July and for Year 10 on Friday 14th July.

The question students had to answer was "How can psychology help to create a better future".

Four people from each form designed, wrote and performed their presentations to myself and a former student, Zain Khan who has completed a masters degree in sports psychology.

The presentations were incredibly impressive! I can't state strongly enough how impressed we were with the psychological content and effort put in by the students, especially when none of them have studied psychology before.

It was agonising trying to decide winning positions. In the end we had to look at very small details to help us to decide, such as how well focused the presentation was and whether they had included any scientific evidence. Many talked about benefits to the environment, business and education as well as the pros and cons of AI influences such as ChatGPT.

I want to say very well done again to all who took part.

Miss Carter



CHESS SUCCESS



On the evening of Friday 30th September, eight boys from Aston attended an English Chess Federation (ECF) rated rapid Jamboree event at Bishop Vesey's Grammar School.

At this event there were two categories – Under 13 and Open – and we brought one team of four players for each.

The chess was played under official rules, with clocks and in silence, against some of the strongest competition from across the Birmingham area. Hallfield, a preparatory school in Edgbaston, brought two teams of under 11s who were intimidating to face across the board despite their youth. Although the Under 13 team was unfortunately not able to get on to the podium, our Open team were initially in second place and finished in third, earning their bronze medals. This placed us behind two other Kind Edward's Schools, a real success for the Trust. All players will now be entered for an ECF rating and so have taken their first steps towards the professional chess world. The students who attended played with enthusiasm, were gracious in defeat, and supported each other wonderfully between the three rounds.

A special mention should be made of Eesa Azim, Year 10 for winning all four of his games - including a wild Traxler Counter Gambit. Our sixth formers were swift to help out with tidying away, as well as helping out and encouraging the younger players.

Thank you to all the parents who supported this event.

Mr Wright

OLD BOYS' FESTIVAL 2023

Friday the 30th of June marked the date of the 'KE Aston Old Boys' Festival', where old boys from many walks of life came in to talk to us about their experiences. There were people from a variety of professions – medics, engineers, lawyers.

The success of these Old Boys showed a lot of us just how privileged we are to attend this school, with many Old Boys commending the opportunities and support they received, from teachers like Mr Amann. The Old Boys had a lot of knowledge about their respective careers, and had a lot of wisdom to share with us.

For example, Aaron Chugger was very knowledgeable about the ins and outs of Consulting through his experience at Roland Berger. Similarly, it was clear to me that Mohammed Kazmi was also very well-versed in the issues surrounding corporate law, due to his work at Latham and Watkins.

I think the most important thing I took away from the festival (and what the old Boys stressed) was that careers are rarely ever a straight line. I learnt that sometimes you have to find your strengths, your weaknesses, your interests and your passion in order to succeed.

Overall, this was a very informative event, and I'd like to thank Mr Amann, Ms Ritson, Mr Plackowski, and all the Old Boys for their efforts, without which we wouldn't have had this invaluable experience.

Yusuf Nadeem | Year 12

The Old Boy's festival held on June 30th provided an excellent opportunity for students in years 11/12 to engage with former Astonians who have pursued diverse careers and network with successful

businessmen. The day consisted of a combination of casual meet-and-greet sessions and more formal question-and-answer panels.

During the formal Q&A sessions, the atmosphere in L5 was resemblant of a committee inquiry, with the old boys positioned at the front as if they were under scrutiny and with the students facing them, effectively taking on the role of "committee chairs", with Mr. Amann supervising the proceedings attentively in the background.

Among the distinguished Old Boys present, Jack Drury an Aston alumnus from 2007-2014, who studied history at Cambridge stood out.

He provided an intriguing response to a question about the importance of work experience in a personal statement, emphasizing that while work experience is not as significant as one may think, it is crucial to convince admissions officers of your genuine interest in the course and demonstrate extracurricular activities that reflect that passion and any work experience undertaken, should be reflective of your interests.

Another notable Old boy who had piqued my career interest was Aarondeep Chugger, a senior business strategy consultant who attended Aston from 2009-2016.

Aarondeep shared his experiences of handling clients such as JLR and his role as their problem solver, offering me valuable insight into the job's responsibilities, working hours, and necessary skills.

Someone else whose career choice had really interested me was Owen Gill, an Old Boy currently employed in the speaker's office.

Owen's role involved administering divisions



in the lobbies, overseeing Select Committee Chair elections, and working closely with MP's, Commons staff, and the public during Committee inquiries.

As a politics student, I found it insightful to learn about Owen's close collaboration with the speaker and his somewhat involvement in the day-to-day decision-making of the government. Including providing notes to the speaker during Question Time on Wednesdays.

Overall, the experience of the Old Boy's festival proved immensely valuable.

It served as a platform for networking and connecting with the Aston alumni, providing invaluable insights into life beyond Aston and the realities of the professional world.

Uthman Mahmood

MONEY WORKSHOPS

This year, students in all year groups have been involved in a Money Workshop aimed to help develop their financial education.

The sessions ranged from how to be a savvy consumer, budgeting and planning and living independently at University.

Louise from The Money Charity was enthusiastic and engaging and all boys have developed in their money confidence as a result.

"I thought this workshop was very interesting. I loved the exercise where we had to guess the prices on a grocery list. The workshop taught us about unmanageable debt and manageable debt. Also, they talked about the differences between saving, borrowing and interest".

Haroon Fazal | Year 7

"We got to hear about pricing in shops and learned about banking. I liked that the workshop

helped us to understand these things. We learnt about why certain things are priced as they are, and also got to hear about the best ways to use our money, and to help avoid financial pitfalls that can occur. My personal favourite part was the banking, because I feel that it's not a topic always covered enough. Thank you to the school and the Money Charity for organising this event".

Danyal Ahmed | Year 7

"As a participant in the money workshop session I gained invaluable information on the financial aspects of higher education. This workshop taught me about maintenance and tuition loans, essential living expenses such as accommodation and also the financial aid options given to students for instance scholarships and bursaries. By being aware of these options I feel equipped with vital resources to manage the financial aspects of higher education".

Omar Nasr | Year 12



YEAR 7 HOUSE CHRISTMAS SONG

All five forms competed at a high level in the annual House Christmas Song competition with renditions of Jingle bells and Jingle bell rock as part of the programme.

The winning house was FLOYD with a Christmas rendition of Baby Shark which included the Grinch, some elves, and of course a reindeer.



MANDARIN DEPARTMENT

CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS

The annual Chinese New Year Celebration event was a fascinating opportunity for Key Stage 3 Mandarin Students to take part in a range of Chinese cultural activities from Kung Fu to Lion Dancing and Paper Activities.

Our day began observing the beautiful and intricate footwork of Lion Dancing across the Main Hall.



It was great to see the product of teamwork come to life with different moves including horse, unicorn and skip dancing moves we learnt about later on in the day.

The mood and excitement of the hall was fantastic. It was clear just how much hard work and training was put in by the dancers behind

the figures to ensure everything went smoothly, yet chaotically, throughout the brief show.

We all took part in having a go at learning the lion dance and found out why it is so important in Chinese Culture.

It is believed that if the Lion throws you fruit (like oranges) and you catch and eat it you will be blessed with good luck.

But beware, it is believed to be bad luck if you throw the fruit back!

Kung Fu followed and were shown a range of different moves to learn and put to practice across the Trophy Room. Kung Fu means 'hard work'. Hardworking is exactly what we were, learning some of the standard Kung Fu stances.

Some of these moves were quite difficult but as our knowledge built up, we were able to practice as a group and to create our very own move scheme.

All in all, it was a fantastic and enjoyable experience to be part

of and we thank the whole of the Mandarin Department in setting the morning activities up, and of course, our visitors and Kung Fu Masters for coming and giving us the opportunity to participate.

Xīn Nián Kuài Lè! (Happy New Year!)

Aqil Hussien | Year 9

YEAR 8 TALKPAL PROGRAMME MEETING STUDENTS FROM CHINA

Our Year 8 Mandarin boys have been meeting students from HeFei Thomas School in China via ZOOM. They have made international friends and talked to them in Chinese. They have applied their Chinese skills and had so much fun!

"Today, I was talking to my Chinese Pals. In my opinion, we should do this more often because it was so much fun. We were asking each other questions about how old we are, what are names are and more. They made us a presentation and we found out that a person called Nancy who had a dog called Cola and a cat called Sprite".

Olivier Wieremiewicz | Year 8

"We got the opportunity to fine-tune our Mandarin speaking skills talking to some students in China. In the first session we showcased a presentation about learning Mandarin at Aston and in the second session we were given separate breakout rooms to speak to the Chinese students one-to-one.

The amount of effort and planning to pull this off would have been astronomical and I thank Miss Liu and the other staff for providing us with this opportunity. I would say that these sessions really helped me and my class as we were able to improve our pronunciation. As we were talking with people of the same age, we were able to socialise, learn faster and have fun".

Danial Rayhan | Year 8

"It was lovely to see technology being used by students in Year 8 to engage with their Chinese counterparts. There were smiles all around the room as they exchanged information about each other and learnt more about the Chinese culture and opera. Students thought it was an invaluable lesson which they partake in once a month to put their Mandarin conversation skills in practice and develop long distance friendships. Huge credit goes to the Mandarin department for setting up such a fantastic and memorable opportunity!"

Ms Noreen



STUDENT CONFERENCE: CHINESE

As someone who enjoys learning Mandarin, I recently had the opportunity to embark on a trip to Manchester Grammar School, and it was truly an unforgettable experience.

Manchester Grammar School is one of the most prestigious schools in the United Kingdom, and being able to visit and learn more about the Mandarin language was an amazing opportunity, and I am incredibly lucky to have been able to attend this. The trip was organized by Swire Chinese Language Foundation, which is dedicated to teaching Mandarin to students of all ages and levels.

We were warmly welcomed by the staff and students at Manchester Grammar School, who had prepared a full program for us. The school is located near the heart of Manchester, and it has a long history of excellence in education. We started the day with a short presentation about how to remember how to write characters by breaking them down into parts. After the presentation, we took part in activities such as Chinese Dance, Tai Chi and Calligraphy. These activities were challenging, but also very rewarding and I could feel myself improving as the sessions progressed.

In the afternoon, we listened to four motivational speakers. I enjoyed Timothy Cho's story the most as it is quite possibly one of the most motivational and inspiring accounts I've ever heard. Having been the son of a betrayer, he managed to escape North Korea twice, without much support from family. It struck me how important diligence and perseverance is to helping us achieve whatever we want to with the right mind.

To conclude, the Mandarin trip to Manchester Grammar School was an incredible experience that I will never forget. I learned so much about Mandarin language and met some amazing people from schools across the country and I was inspired to continue learning and deepen my understanding of this fascinating language. I would highly recommend this trip to anyone who is interested in Mandarin or Chinese culture.

Lorenzo Almoguera | Year 10

Before Easter year 10 and 11 Mandarin students were invited to the prestigious Manchester Grammar School (MGS) to the Swire Chinese Language

Student Conference. It was a chance for schools from all over the country, part of the Swire program, to create an inspirational experience for students to broaden pupil's outlook on China.

Schools as far as Edinburgh, were invited to take part in extracurricular activities such as calligraphy, dance, music, painting, tai chi and a talk on 'The Rise of the East' which explained the fascinating history of China. We were also given a lecture by Professor Andrew Scrimgeour from the University of South Australia called Demystifying the Chinese writing system where he explained how to break down Chinese characters into sections known as 'radicals' to remember how to write in Chinese.

After our workshops, we were given the option to participate in outdoor games such as table tennis, basketball and Chinese hacky sack. Chinese Hacky sack is played with a shuttlecock which you have to kick to keep it in the air. During this time, we were also offered bubble tea which proved extremely popular. Our lunch was provided free including halal options and I would like to thank MGS for making that available.

Finally, we were given a conference about "exploring UK-Chinese relations" from Professor Peter Gries Professor of Chinese Politics at The University of Manchester, Professor Chris Berry Professor of Film Studies at Kings College London, Cindy Yu Assistant Editor at The Spectator and host of the bi-monthly podcast Chinese Whispers and Timothy Cho Analyst of East Asian affairs. Each of them had unique views and belief about how Chinese could benefit students, however my personal favourite was from Timothy Cho. Timothy was born in North Korea and he told us how he was imprisoned four times in both China and North Korea. He told us his story how he became homeless at the age of nine, managed to escape North Korea twice and pursued a career in politics after migrating to the UK.

This experience was very eye-opening for me showing me what doors learning Chinese could open for me, how many opportunities could become available to me from my education to my career. I would like to thank Mrs Liu and Mrs Moore for organising the trip and to MGS for hosting this amazing experience.

Eisah Roghey | Year 10

CHINESE RESTAURANT VISIT

On 8th March 2023, Year 8 students had an exciting trip to enjoy a Chinese meal at a popular restaurant. The students were thrilled to try new dishes like noodles, and spicy Sichuan chicken.

After the meal, the group visited a Chinese tea shop to try some bubble tea. The students were fascinated by the different flavours and toppings available, and they loved the chewy tapioca pearls in their drinks. The trip to Birmingham was a wonderful experience for the Year 8 students. They got to explore try new foods and learn about Chinese culture through their meal and tea shop visit. It was a day they will remember for a long time to come.



"We went for a meal at the Kings of Kings Chinese restaurant where we ordered food in Mandarin then we were allowed to go to a Chinese supermarket and a shop that sells bubble tea. I found the experience really enjoyable".

Peter Adefioye

"The experience was to be remembered as we practised how to use chopsticks and conversed with the waiters in Chinese. After being briefed on the important words and phrases, it was time to eat. I filled up my plate until it was full and enjoyed every bit of it. After this we headed for the ice cream machine and doused our cones in three different sauces. We also visited a Chinese supermarket, and it was very interesting to see all the different Chinese products in the shop. Overall, it was a really fun experience and a great opportunity to practice our Mandarin skills".

Naaail Hussain

HOUSE COOKING COMPETITION

Tuesday 15th November saw a whole day of talented chefs hard at work in the House Cooking Competition.

The boys were asked to produce a dish that has special significance to them. This could be a family recipe, food eaten on holiday or a recipe from their own culture.

Years 8 and 9 started off the day with a whole host of dishes from many cultures including Potato pancakes, Afghani Pulao, Jollof Rice, Gizzards and Plantain and Chicken Jalfrezi.

The standard was high and the boys were confident and competent.

Year 10 and 11 didn't disappoint making dishes that included Chicken Quesadilla, Chicken Schnitzel, Chicken Katsu Curry, Dumplings with King Prawn Fried Rice, Fresh Tagliatelle with a creamy Mushroom sauce to name a few.

The boys demonstrated excellent skills, but also managed to use every bowl, saucepan and utensil in the Cooking room!

Year 12 and 13 had a more sophisticated and organised approach. Afghan Style Shakshuka and Sheer Chai, Ground Nut stew, Lamb Kofta with Cheese parcels and a whole Chinese family Meal were just a few of the delights on offer.

We also had the opportunity to taste a variety of teas made in different ways with unusual flavours.

THE WINNERS ARE:

First in each age group are **Hassan Afzaal**, Year 9, **Ayaan Karim**, Year 10 and **Saied Dakak**, Year 13

Second in each group are **Alihaider Damji**, Year 8 (joint First), **Kaiden Chun Kit**, Year 10 and **Ibrahim Zaid**, Year 12.

Third in each age group are **Safwan Tahir**, Year 8, **Mohammed Ibrahim**, Year 11 and **Kit Fung Chow**, Year 13.

Thank you to all of the parents who provided ingredients for the event.

Mrs Beech



"The House Cooking Competition is a much-anticipated event every year. The opportunity to recreate our culinary favourites that personally resonate with us is especially valuable and sharing these treasured recipes with the school community is a delight. This year, I decided to make an authentic Syrian dish of Lamb Kofta, cooked in a tomato, pepper and onion sauce, served with white rice and cheese Burak. Winning the competition this year with a culturally significant dish from my homeland is a very meaningful moment for me."

Saied Dakak | Year 13

"I cooked a dish called Tamarind Cassava. This is an East African dish and is based on the plant root Cassava. Cassava is native to South America but is grown in places in East Africa, for example Uganda and Tanzania. The actual Cassava itself has many health benefits such as the fact that it is a good source of resistant starch which helps for good gut health and blood sugar management. Making this dish involved lots of different stages and cooking techniques which I had already practiced before the competition. It went according to plan and I was able to produce this amazing dish."

Alihaider Damji | Year 8

"I made a dish called Chicken Jalfrezi. Chicken Jalfrezi is a South Indian dish, and it means "Hot Fry." It is essentially a curry type of sauce with boneless chicken, paprika and onions. This dish is important to me because it is cooked a lot in my home country (Pakistan) and my dad taught me how to make it."

Hassan Afzaal | Year 9

"I believe a very important part of the Chinese dining culture is to ensure everyone is served well and leaves with a full stomach. I challenged myself to make a 5-course meal from starter to dessert. I started with a soup to warm us up in the winter, then a cucumber salad to refresh the palate. This was followed by spicy chicken with noodles. To bring down the heat a bit, I included a Chinese herbal tea. Finally, we had a sweet ending with the coconut jelly."

Kit Fung Chow | Year 13

BREAD AND PASTA MAKING

January 2023 saw Year 9 students taking part in a Pasta and Bread making workshop with Cale Flynn, Chartwells Regional Development Chef. Here is what some of them had to say about the experience:

"In the Bread and Pasta workshop, I learnt how to make pasta and Focaccia bread. I learnt skills including baking techniques and tips. We had lots of fun and I enjoyed working with my friends".

Mohammed Asghar

"The workshop was quite an experience as we learnt how to make two different designs of pasta and bread. I learnt about the different ingredients used to help the products work. It was a fun experience and I was able to do things I hadn't done before".

Ayaan Hussain

"I was quite surprised at how good the food turned out when I followed Mr Flynn's tips on how to make bread. The environment was overall quite relaxed and the bread I made was better than all the previous breads I've made".

Dylan Castillo

"Overall the workshop was very good. I learnt about pasta and bread; not only how to make the dough but how to make the sauce with the pasta. I would like to thank Mrs Beech for organising this opportunity".

Isa Ali

"The workshop was a delight to attend, baking two different types of bread and learning the function of ingredients. The learning environment was good with a well experienced chef, Mrs Flynn guiding us with instructions".

Lewis Fung

"On Wednesday we had a session with the Chartwell's development chef Cale, he taught us how to make bread and pasta. This was the highlight of my day, not only was the pasta quick and easy to make it - was tasty too!"

Ibraheem Abbas



CHARTWELLS CHEF SUCCESS



Congratulations to Andrew who won the regional LACA 'School Chef of the Year' award.



COOKIE KINDNESS THE MARK OF A TRUE ASTONIAN

Year 7 student Conor Dawes brought in cookies for his form that he had baked himself to celebrate the finishing the end of year exams.

What a kind gesture. They were delicious!

SUSHI WORKSHOP



This year some of our year 7 pupils had the opportunity of experiencing a Sushi work shop with Cale Flynn Regional Development Chef working with Chartwells.

The boys were enthusiastic and appeared to thoroughly enjoy the practical session.

Mrs Beech

"Today I made Sushi. I used Bamboo mats, nori (seaweed paper), sticky rice and wasabi along with sesame seeds, crab sticks and a variety of vegetables. I garnished my sushi with dried onions, wasabi mayonnaise and Siracha sauce".

Praysit Silwal

"Today in our Food lesson I learnt how to make Sushi. The method appears easy but in reality, it is quite challenging. We had to evenly pack the Nori with sticky sushi rice and then add other filling like spicy tuna and vegetables. I used cucumber, yellow, red and orange peppers, crap sticks and spring onion. We then had to tightly roll the sushi up using the bamboo mats. I then garnished my sushi with crispy onion and wasabi mayonnaise"

Ibrahim Shahiol

BLETCHLEY PARK

On Friday the 11th of November computer science students from Year 11 and Year 13 visited the National Museum of Computing in Bletchley Park.

The 'Home of the Code Breakers', as displayed on the welcome sign, Bletchley Park is of historical significance due to its important role during the Second World War.



It was here that a team of codebreakers such as Alan Turing raced to break the German Enigma Code, and in doing so, may have shortened the

war by some years and saved millions of lives.

The tour guides were quick to inform us that the code breakers were not actually breaking 'codes', but rather 'ciphers', and that these are a secret or disguised way of writing.

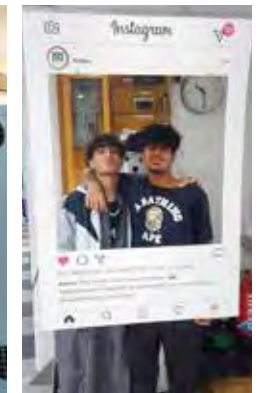
A number of us were already fans of the film *The Imitation Game*, which tells the story of the race to crack the Enigma Code so being showed around the museum and given a much more in-depth analysis of how the machine worked was a great opportunity.

Getting to see and hear the whirring of parts and bulbs lighting up in a first-generation computer machine was eye opening as much of the information taught at GCSE is based on modern computers which can be hard to understand and make sense of as everything happens on such a small scale.

During the day we also got to interact with older machines making a snake game, and we were treated to some time playing on vintage games consoles. This was something we all enjoyed.

Overall, the trip was a very insightful experience for all computer science students and I would like to thank all the staff involved.

William Lanham



A VISIT FROM DR FROST

On Friday 14th July, we were honoured to welcome Dr Frost to our school once again.

He gave an engaging assembly to Year 7 and 8 pupils, hosted a meet and greet with those top of our leader board and then led some staff CPD to help us make even more use of the site moving forwards.



"Today was absolutely amazing. Miss Boyce gave us a splendid introduction to Dr Frost and he began to tell us stories about his obsessions like designing and he told us about the story of Dr Frost maths and how it was originally called EduMonkey. After the assembly some of us went to the conference room and patiently waited for him to sign our calculators and postcards. I am still extremely pleased with how I have met one of the world's most renowned mathematicians".

Hariz Armaghan

"Our school had the privilege of being visited by Dr Frost; most pupils attended his assembly, but a lucky handful of students had the amazing opportunity to meet him in person. I actually managed to get his autograph in the back of my planner. I complimented him on how great a website Dr Frost maths is and how it's an amazing resource. It was a really nice experience meeting him and I'd like to meet him again in the future".

Armaan Currim

"To start off with, Dr Frost told us a bit about himself and his degree and PhD in Computer Science at Cambridge University. He then told us about his first job working in New York, how he set up his first teaching resource and how this developed over time into Dr Frost Maths. It was exciting to meet Dr Frost in person and hear about how important Maths is to him. The website is a great resource for homework as well as revision as I like being able to track my progress. Thank you to the Maths Department for organising this opportunity and to Dr Frost for visiting our school".

William Brett

ASTON FANTASY FOOTBALL

The Fantasy Football league started earlier than usual this year because of the World Cup but the winter event didn't make what was happening in the Premier League any less exciting or, for that matter, the goings on in the Aston Fantasy Football competition.

Banter amongst staff and pupils was great up to the end of the season when it got awfully quiet on the subject for a clear reason: in the final few weeks, it was obvious that the English department's Mr Smith was going to run away with the title.

Mr Smith built on his credible 9th finish last year to cement the title by almost 100 points with an incredible points tally of 2547.

The battle for second place was much closer. Credit to Thomas Courtney for edging it – only 14 points separated second and seventh positions.

Mr Lavery



KARTING

Despite extreme wet conditions, Year 9 student Dhena Rohan fended off over 30 competitors to win the 2022 Sodi Kark Midland Series Championship.

Congratulations Dhena from all of King Edward Aston.

ORACLE PROJECT

The Oracle Project is an initiative set up to support four current students who wish to enter the world of corporate employment.

It was conceived by Old Boys Jordan Lloyd and Samuel Jackson. The successful applicants of the scheme for 2023/4 are Uthman Mahmood, Ayub Anshur, Gaganjit Hothi and Adil Shazad.

The students have interests in economics, finance and law and they gained a lot from their visit to London to be guided by our kind project leaders.

We wish them well on their journey.

ART AT ASTON



ROMANS DAY

On Monday 26th September, Year 7 were taken off timetable to enjoy a hands-on workshop where they could immerse themselves in aspects of Roman life.

They took part in Roman gladiator fights, Roman army drills and even built their own Roman weapons. This was an excellent introduction to their next topic, 'Society in Roman Britain', and it was fantastic to see this event back at Aston after a three year break due to the pandemic.

Here is what some Year 7 students said about their day:

"My favourite part of Roman day was when we got to fire artillery weapons. What I learnt in that session is that artillery is usually something that leaves your hand. Weapons like a bow and arrow and a catapult are examples of artillery. An example of a weapon that is not artillery would be a sword as it generally stays in your hand."

Yusuf Makhzoum

We learned many facts about the Roman army such as the weapons they used, the different ranks they belonged to and the type of armour they wore. In my first session we learned about the different pieces of artillery like the bow and pilum. I experienced shooting a Balista which was one of the most powerful weapons used by the Roman army. I also built a catapult with my friends, and we had lots of fun whilst doing this activity. In my second session we looked at the Roman Military in terms of armed combat. We also had a mini gladiator event where a group of 6 people had a battle with props. For my third session we looked at the different countries the Roman army invaded, and the battle tactics used by the army. Overall, I really enjoyed this informative hands-on learning experience and to be honest I couldn't have asked for more.

Hariz Armaghan

We had our own virtual take on roman army life; marching, training and even charging and learning some battle cries. We attended a general talk about life in the roman army which also gave insights into what life was like for commoners. Roman warriors were not allowed to be married until their service was over, if you were already married and signed up to the army you could expect immediate divorce.

Faris Straker



POETRY LIVE

On Tuesday 17th January, 120 Year 11 students visited Symphony Hall to listen to a selection of poets that feature on the GCSE Power and Conflict anthology which is part of the GCSE English Literature course.

The poets, including Daljit Nagra, Simon Armitage and crowd favourite, John Agard, were on fine form reading their work as well as discussing the meaning of their poetry and what inspires them to write.

Tony Childs, AQA's chief poetry examiner, was also on hand to show pupils the best way to approach responses to the unseen poetry questions.

Two of our students, Gabriel Fernandez and Ibrahim Hussen took the opportunity to ask Imitiaz Dharker and Carol Ann Duffy respectively interesting questions during question and answer sessions.

It was pleasing to see how engaged our pupils are in trying to enhance their understanding of literature.

They should also be commended for their bravery in asking questions in front of a packed auditorium.

All in all, the event proved to be extremely valuable in helping our Year 11 students prepare for their upcoming GCSE English Literature examinations.

Here's to next year when our current Year 10s will be given the same chance to hone their analytical skills and enrich their knowledge of the studied poets and their work.



MATHEMATICS

HOUSE PI

On the 14th March, Pi day is celebrated around the world.

Pi (Greek letter “π”) is the symbol used in mathematics to represent a constant – the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter – which is approximately 3.14159. Pi Day is an annual opportunity for mathematics enthusiasts to recite the infinite digits of Pi, talk to their friends about mathematics and eat pie.

Pi has been calculated to over 50 trillion digits beyond its decimal point.

As an irrational and transcendental number, it will continue infinitely without repetition or pattern.

While only a handful of digits are needed for typical calculations, pi's infinite nature makes it a fun challenge to memorise and to computationally calculate more and more digits.

The House Pi competition invites pupils to recite as many digits as possible of pi as they can.

This year our school record of 252 previously set by Shayaan Shah currently in Year 13 was broken by Eesa Arif in Year 9.

Well done to all competitors. How many can you recite?



MATHS CHALLENGE

On Wednesday 26th April, 70 Year 7 and 8 students competed in the Junior Maths Challenge organised by the United Kingdom Mathematics Trust.

This is an hour long competition which tests the students on their logic, reasoning and mathematical problem solving skills.

The results this year were outstanding, with 20 students obtaining a gold certificate and 15 qualifying for the follow on round, which is our best result ever recorded!

Congratulations go to every student who participated in the challenge.

However, a special ‘well done must go to Abdullah Hasan 7F and James Weng 7T for obtaining the joint best score in the year group and to Max Wan 8T for not only obtaining the best result in Year 8 but for the best result in the school!

For more information on the other challenges offered by the UKMT and to have a go at some of the problems for yourself, please use the following link ukmt.org.uk

Well done everyone!

Miss Wilkinson



ASTON WIZARDRY EVENING

On Thursday 8th December Aston Tower Primary School children and parents were invited to the inaugural Aston Wizardry Evening in the school library.

The atmosphere was festive and fantastic as various ‘professors’ ran potions, spells and book reading sessions. The children were offered tasty treats and five lucky visitors were welcomed to each House by the House Leaders. The evening was rounded off with a best-dressed wizard competition and a good time was had by all.

MODEL UN

Over two days in March this year, a group of sixth form politics students took part in the first ever King Edwards School Model UN where we took the roles of both Russia and Iran.

The event was a simulation of a United Nations summit with over 20 nations taking part all from different schools in the King Edwards foundation. In choosing Russia and Iran we Astonians intended to play the “bad guys” by attempting to block resolutions from western nations and form a pact against what we named “Western Imperialistic Fascism”, as expected our delegates speeches were amongst some of the most thrilling of the two-day event with both myself and Saalim Chihani winning awards for best delegate in our

committees. The two nations that Aston played where led by myself and Araf Khan, this meant that we had to deliver opening speeches for our nations, these were regarded as some of the most interesting in the conference with Araf’s speech daringly calling for a minute’s silence for Saddam Hussein’s Iraq.

A call which was surprisingly followed by the entire delegation. Having played the “bad guys” it is not surprising that no Iranian or Russian resolutions were passed by any committees, though this did not stop us from expressing the views of ‘our’ nations.

The first ever KES Model UN was an enormous success.

Amaar Shahzada | Year 12

TRIP TO ITALY

The school trip to Naples in Italy was a perfect blend of history, culture and fun experiences.

We visited the ancient city of Pompeii which was preserved under a layer of ash from a volcanic eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD79. Excavations of this deposit of ash give a unique insight into what life was like in ancient Rome. Whilst there we got to see Mount Vesuvius itself which was breath taking. We explored the vibrant coastal town of Sorrento which was a great way to experience Italian culture.

The striking scenery, cuisine, and hospitality of the locals helped make it a memorable experience. Later on, in the trip, we visited a lemon farm and learned how to make pizza in the traditional Italian way - a perfect way to spend an afternoon. We were given a first-hand experience about Italian farming and traditions and learnt a lot throughout our stay.

This trip was a memorable experience and one I would recommend to students in younger years. Thank you to all the staff involved.

Faizan Mohammed | Year 10



COMMUNITY APPRENTICE SOCIAL ACTION PROJECTS

TEAM SAVE YOUR LUNGS

As part of the autumn cohort, twelve Year 9 students formed the team "Save Your Lungs".

They worked together to design, develop, and deliver a social action project to tackle vaping in their school community.

The team chose to create a video that educated and informed fellow students on the dangers of vaping. The young people presented their project idea to the judges and the other teams in the final where they shared a snippet of their video and spoke about why they had decided on the issue of vaping.

They made it clear why it was so important to highlight the dangers surrounding it for young people in particular.



THE INSTITUTION OF THE ASTONIANS

A second team of eleven Year 9 students decided to raise awareness of the cost-of-living crises and formed "The Institution of the Astonians".

Together, with the support of their mentors from DMN Logistics and HSBC, they decided to plan a movie afternoon, to raise awareness and funds for an in-school cost of living café, which would support anyone who needed help.

It was fantastic to see this team's growth in their skills which was shown off at the final event, where they presented confidently about their project and the journey they had been on together.



LORD MAYOR'S MEGA QUIZ

Do you know the currency of Lichtenstein?
Can you explain what catatumbo is?
What is the highest rank in sumo wrestling?

Held within the University of Birmingham's Great Hall, six of Aston's sharpest minds pitted their knowledge against 35 other Birmingham schools to answer questions like these.

With ten quiz rounds ranging from English Language, Sport, TV, film, Music and Natural History, our year 13 students were really put through their paces.

Finishing in the top third, placing 12th, against the backdrop of some having sat mocks exams that very morning, Aston achieved a result to be proud of.

We are really grateful to Imaad, Parameth, Nathan, Danyaal, Aadam and Yusuf for giving up their study leave time to compete in this annual competition and their demonstration of Aston's growing cultural capital.

Ms Ritson and Mr Smith



NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

The Natural History Museum in London is recognised internationally for having one of the largest and most important natural history collections in the world.



Our excursion began at 7am when our coaches departed from Aston aiming to reach London by 11am. Although it was a long journey, we had different ways of keeping ourselves busy, from playing chess, listening to music or just chatting to our mates. On arrival we made straight for the exhibits for our dedicated project, which for us was rocks and minerals. There were all sorts of specimens on display, from copper and diamonds to earth rocks and meteorites. We made notes and took photographs for us to refer to, so we had some information for the project we would be working on when we returned to school.

Once we had researched our project, we were free to explore the rest of the museum and learn about other exhibits. One of my favourite displays was the dinosaurs as it included a life size moving Tyrannosaurus Rex. In this exhibit incredible architecture was also on display as even in the pillars carvings of fish and plants were visible. This phenomenal museum houses over 80 million objects telling the history of the earth going back millions of years.

In the Hintze Hall a blue whale skeleton is suspended from the ceiling as a reminder for our responsibility to preserve and protect the environment. The sheer vastness of it is difficult to encapsulate. Before we left we had a browse through the gift store where I

bought something to remember the museum by. There is no doubt that you could visit this museum on several occasions and there would always be more to explore.

Eesa Shuaib | Year 8

"The thing I liked the most was looking at all of the different things. If I go again, I will read the walls instead of just looking at the exhibits".

Noah Birch

"When we went to the London history museum it was extremely exciting as we walked down the museum hall. My favourite part was the giant whale inside of the entrance".

Rishi Panchal

"My favourite part about the national history museum was the cocoon: a large sphere that you could enter through the Darwin centre. We had lots of fun there".

Abu Bakr Azadi

"The dinosaur area was my favourite part of the museum. The exhibitions were breath taking, displaying huge monsters that previously inhabited the Earth. The attention to detail and interactive exhibits made me feel as if I was travelling back in time".

Rayan Tasawar





PSYCHOLOGY CONFERENCE

YEAR 13 PSYCHOLOGY JOINT REVISION CONFERENCE WITH KING EDWARD HANDSWORTH BOYS SCHOOL

On Monday 14th November, Year 13 psychology students spent the whole day with students at KE Handsworth Boys school.

It was run by Jean Marc Lawton who has written one of the main textbooks for AQA psychology and worked as a chief examiner for AQA.

The day was extremely useful and students completed lots of practice exam questions and went over key content. In addition, Jean Marc shared lots of useful tips about the exam and how to structure exam answers.

It was great for the students to be able to spend a day in collaboration with another foundation school. Hopefully there will be more opportunities in the future.

SYMPHONY HALL

In February, Year 7 had the opportunity to visit Symphony Hall in Birmingham city centre to attend a concert by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.

With 2262 seats this world class concert hall can hold more than two and a half times more people than an Airbus A380.

The CBSO performed eight pieces of music in a concert that lasted around an hour.

From 18th century pieces such as Finale from Symphony Number 1 by Johannes Brahms to more modern compositions like Alan Silvestri's Portals from Avengers: Endgame.

There were some unusual pieces such as Field Guide for Orchestra, in which the instruments were played in unconventional ways such as tapping on the bodies of

cellos and double bases and violins being played with pencils.

All of this was played over a compilation of sounds collected from the rainforest.

The other strange piece was titled Headbanger and it made every single person imagine something different.

It changed between dark, mysterious, action movie type music and happy, fun, magical sections.

There were around 80 musicians playing during the concert.

We would like to thank the staff at Symphony Hall, the CBSO, Mrs Mackereth for organising the trip and the staff who accompanied us.

Ben Cottle & William Brett | Year 7



POND CONSTRUCTION

A TESTAMENT TO DETERMINATION AND TEAMWORK

In a world where technology often takes centre stage, a group of Year 10 and 12 boys at our school have defied expectations and demonstrated the power of hard work, determination, and teamwork.

Overcoming numerous obstacles, including large stones, rubble, and old paving they have successfully dug out a pond in our school's nature area.

This incredible project is not only a testament to their dedication but also contributes to our school's broader goal of maintaining biodiversity and rewilding in urban areas.

The journey towards the creation of the pond began in conjunction with King Edward's commitment toward a future where urban environments play a key part in sustainability and rewilding.



Simple ideas are often the most effective and with the support of our Head Boy Kieran it was decided that a pond would not only provide a sanctuary for various aquatic creatures but would also act as a crucial step in the restoration of the local ecosystem.

It didn't take long to get volunteers! In the pictures you can see boys from Year 10: Seth Lenton, Esa Akhtar, Mohammad Awan, Ka Pui Cheung, Ibrahim Choudhury, Yohannes Habtom, Ayaan Karim, Hanif Kesington, Harris Khan, Farhan, Labeeb, Rafi Barrett, Ehsaan Mohammad and Adam Rasul.

Many of these boys are using their experience to contribute to their D of E Silver award.

Also shown is a group of eager Year 12 lead by Ibrahim Khan.

Their first challenge was the sheer physical effort required to dig out the pond.

The nature area, once neglected, was filled with large stones and rubble, making the task arduous and time-consuming.

However, instead of being discouraged, the boys embraced the challenge, their spirits undeterred.

Undoubtedly, it was the remarkable determination and teamwork displayed by these boys that made the seemingly impossible task achievable.

Armed with shovels and buckets, they tirelessly chipped away at the rocks, moved the rubble, and dug deeper into the earth.

They supported and motivated each other, overcoming fatigue and occasional setbacks with unwavering resolve.

By the end of the day they had shifted over a tone of top soil and stone.

Thank you to Ms Mound who provided ice lollies and drinks on what turned out to be a very warm day.

Mr Hill



Finishing off the boarders



A moment of reflection



I think its deep enough



Will it fit?



A few more plants and let nature do the rest.

LITTER PICKING

I am proud to share the admirable efforts taken by a group of enthusiastic students in 10T.

They offered their time to make our school environment cleaner and remove the horrible rubbish left by people outside the entrance to the school.

Armed with litter pickers, gloves, and high-visibility jackets, these Year 10 eco warriors embarked on a mission to pick up as much litter and rubbish scattered around the school grounds as they could in a short space of time.

In just 45 minutes, the class managed to collect an astonishing 12 bin liners filled to the brim with rubbish.

It is truly commendable how much can be achieved when individuals come together for a common cause.

By giving a bit of their time and effort to clean up the area where others had irresponsibly discarded rubbish, these students demonstrated the power of collective action and the importance of taking responsibility for our environment.

Showing pride in their school and a genuine concern for the environment marks some of the best qualities in our students. Their actions serve as a powerful reminder to all of us about the significance of maintaining a clean and litter-free environment.

It is essential that we all play our part in preserving the beauty of our school, as well as fostering a culture of environmental consciousness among our peers.

Remember, every small action counts, and together, we can create a cleaner and greener future for all.

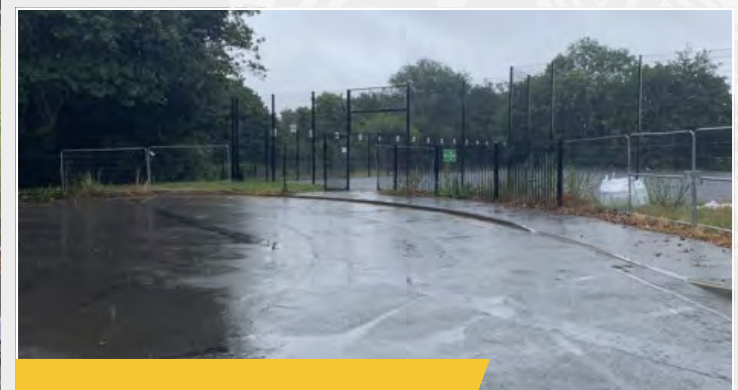
Mr Hill

"On Friday, we went out in the rain to pick up litter. After 45 minutes of cleaning the area around the MUGA, we have saved thousands of living species from dying, and in the process, making the area look a little bit nicer. Finally, a thank you from Mr Hill who organised this and hopefully we can have a better eco-friendly life at Aston."

Rajab Ahmed | Year 10



12 Bin liners later



Looking much better!

MUSIC

HOUSE FESTIVAL OF MUSIC

The final of the House Festival of Music took Place on Wednesday, 26 of our finest musicians took to the stage.

We welcomed the return of Harry Grove as our guest adjudicator who had the difficult task of choosing the winners. Congratulations to everyone who entered through all the rounds, but especially to our finalists who were very impressive.

Junior Piano

First Place: Johnson Wang
Second place: Julian Francisco

Senior Piano

First place: Zakariya Sikander
Second Place: Joe Box

Junior Instrumentalist

First Place: Levi Miller
Second Place: Johnson Wang

Senior Instrumentalist

First place: Arun Robinson
Second place: Zuben Adjei

Vocalist

First Place: Gabriel Fernandez
Second Place: Chinemerem Afoka

Most Promising Young Musician William Brett



JUNIOR SPOTLIGHT CONCERT

On Tuesday, July 4th we celebrated the musical talents of our younger students in school.

Everyone gave polished and confident performances and all the boys should be extremely proud of themselves.

Whilst a handful of Year 8 students were performing for their second consecutive year, we also had a number of debutants from Year 7, some of whom only took up their instruments in September.

Mrs Mackereth

"Overall, the night of the concert was great, as there were lots of parents there to watch us play our instruments. There were lots of instruments being played by us, such as the piano, violin, drum kit, cello, trombone and even singing!"

Aadam Ali



SUMMER MUSIC CONCERT



CYBERFIRST ADVENTURERS

On Saturday 4th February, I spent a fun and informative afternoon at the CyberFirst Adventurers Course which took place at the University of Warwick.

CyberFirst is a programme of events for people to discover and learn about cyber security.

Cyber security means the skills and technology that are needed to protect networks and devices from attack, damage or unauthorised

challenges: 3D modelling, data analysis and codebreaking.

We were put into groups of 4-6 and began by experimenting with 3D modelling software, creating anything we wanted.

Then we did the next activity, which was using sets of data to make predictions about teams – specifically, making choices about the best players to make up the best team of Quidditch.

The final challenge was a race where instead of all teams trying to get the best score, we were all working together to crack the code – if one team didn't succeed, none of us would have succeeded.

We had half an hour to do the task and we collectively finished in 28 minutes – this was particularly impressive considering all other sessions the organisers had had that

day took around 45 minutes to complete, with some not even finishing.

It was great to meet new likeminded people and work with them as a team to solve the challenges.

The staff running the course were very friendly and approachable – and it was fine to get things wrong and make mistakes as that is how learning really progresses!

I would really recommend applying to attend these courses: they are fun and interactive and you learn a lot!

For more information, check this site: www.ncsc.gov.uk/cyberfirst/courses

Darius Rahmati | Year 9

access. CyberFirst has been running for the last seven years and is led by the National Cyber Security Centre. The free courses are open to students who are interested in any sort of tech – whether that be coding, gaming, vlogging, or any other type of computer-related activity.

The sessions are tailored to different age groups from Year 8 through to Year 13, and then they even have bursaries and their own degree apprenticeship scheme.

In the Adventurers course which I attended, there were about 20 other students, some of whom had travelled quite a long way to be there (e.g. London and Derby).

The afternoon consisted of three different

DEBATING SUCCESS

On March 11th, the King Edward VI Aston Debate Team competed in the Oxford Schools debate finals located in the famous Oxford Union.

It is the largest secondary-level debate event in the country, starting with over 800 teams competing in regional rounds from as far afield as Canada and Singapore.

Some of the most prestigious schools compete for the title of having the best school debate team. Aston was up against schools with well-established debate teams with years of experience such as Eton, RGS Worcester, KES and Harrow.

It is a source of great pride as team captain to have led our school debate team, which was founded just this October into a competition against these schools. In some rounds we managed to beat schools such as Harrow and in doing so we placed King Edward VI Aston into the top 85 school debate teams in the entire world, one of the highest positions held by a state school.

Our school debate team had a squad of two qualify for the championship finals, this consisted of myself and Araf Khan. On the day we took part in four debates, all lasting around an hour.

We debated in the British Parliamentary style and were given the subject of our debates just 15 minutes before the debates began. This tested our speed of preparation without any access to the internet. We debated topics from feminism to the influence of AI and the dangers of career politicians.

Out of hundreds of entries worldwide, only 120 teams qualified for the championships, and out of that number we were placed in the top 85, just under six months after establishing a debate team. This cannot have been accomplished without the dedication of all eight members of our debate team members and other students who helped with organising the team, from chairing debates to coming up with lesson ideas. I would like to also thank my vice-captain Araf Khan for his dedication to the team and the support he has provided me in leading the school team. An extra special thank you must go to Mr Amann for his support and for driving us to Oxford.

After just under six months of hard work, the newly established KE Aston Debate Team is now a worldwide competitor in debate competitions, and I cannot wait to see where the team goes next in years to come.

Amaar Shahzada | Captain of the Debate Team | School Vice-Captain



Y10 DUKE OF EDINBURGH SILVER EXPEDITION

As school closed for summer half term, a group of Aston students headed to Shropshire to take part in their DofE expedition.

The aim of the expedition is to inspire young people to develop initiative and a spirit of adventure and discovery by planning, training for and completing an adventurous self-sufficient journey as part of a team.

"DofE isn't just about walking and camping, it is also about finding more about yourself and others, and trying to make the most out of what little you have. A massive thank you must go to Miss Cattell for organising and coming along with other teachers, taking their time out and the supervisors from the Big Strides team who assessed and helped us get there along the way".

Rajab Ahmed | Year 10

"Despite the expedition being quite challenging at some points, it was a fun way to explore a different side of England that we might not have had the chance to visit before. The second day was my favourite in my opinion, because we were able to explore a wide range of land and saw some amazing views from the hills that we climbed.

Our campsite was very spaced out, and allowed us to participate in a lot of different activities between ourselves and gave us the opportunity to rest as we enjoyed the scenery. The supervisors were also very supportive and filled us with the motivation to push through and make it to the end.

To conclude, the entire expedition was a great thing to experience and I'm glad that I was able to take part in it."

Yahya Aziz | Year 10



LA MAISON HANTÉE



FRENCH THEATRE PERFORMANCE

On Tuesday 4th July Year 9 and Year 10 students who study French were invited to attend a French play called "La Maison Hantée" performed by the Onatti Theatre Company in the school hall.

"It was not only enjoyable to watch this play live, but it also was a motivation booster to study more French as when we listened to the first-hand fluent French conversations in the play, we realised we already had the ability to understand many words thanks to our weekly French lessons. It has definitely encouraged me to dedicate more time to improving my French".

Mahmood Rashid | Year 9



INDUSTRIAL CADETS SUCCESS!

Thursday 22nd June saw the Industrial Cadets Bronze (Year 9) and Gold (Year 12) teams travel to the University of Birmingham for the project celebration event.

Both teams created stands to display the results of a real-life brief they had been set by our sponsors, Arup. The event hosted schools from all over the Midlands as well as numerous professionals from all walks of STEM industries. Students spent time explaining their projects as well as looking at the work of other teams - there was a real sense of pride as Aston students enthusiastically discussed their briefs, the successes and the learning opportunities that each team had found along the way.

After a Year 12 CV and UCAS session the day moved to the awards. Competition in both age groups was fierce and it is important to note that by completing their projects, engineering reports, presentations to assessment panels and discussions on the day all of those involved really do deserve credit for their hard work and dedication.

Year 12 narrowly missed out on nominations for the awards this year but it is with an overwhelming sense of pride we can announce the Year 9 team won the People's Choice award 2023. This award is voted for on the day and is given to the project that is seen as being the most robust and well-presented by those in attendance at the event.

The Industrial Cadets awards simply cannot run without staff being willing to go above and beyond so my thanks go to Mrs Van Roy, Mr Perry and Mr Khan for their tireless efforts this year.

My thanks are also extended to our sponsors, Arup, who provided us with outstanding mentors to support both teams.

Finally, thank you to those students who took part and selflessly gave their own time to ensure that the standard of work we present is raised year on year.

Industrial Cadets will run again next year at Bronze (Year 8 or 9 students) and Gold (Year 12 students) level - look out for a message in September if you would like to be involved!

Mr Hodgkinson



INDUSTRIAL CADETS GOLD AWARD - UOB RESIDENTIAL

A slightly chilly Wednesday morning saw six Year 12 students arrive at The School of Engineering at the University of Birmingham ready to embark on a two-day residential programme to aid the development of their passive energy generation project.

Initial planning meetings were swift, jobs were divided up, teams were assembled and the hard work began.

Whilst some of the team were outside taking measurements of airflow and analysing the performance of their turbine concept, the remainder were optimising the design and determining how best to fit their solution into the UoB campus.

Expert advice from Syed Ahsan (Arup) and Dr Richard Hood (UoB) guided the students through some of the finer details of sustainability and manufacturing and, with full access to the University's new Maker Space the team had a productive day of development work.

Mr Perry arrived on site at 4pm to lend a hand with navigation and, with rumours of trains running late, the group set off on their epic journey to Birmingham New Street.

An overnight stay at a local hotel provided an experience of what it is like to be in student accommodation and after a long day (and disappointing football result!) the group headed for a well-earned rest.

Day 2 saw the use of computer simulation to test possible turbine blade designs, three new prototypes created using the university's 3D printers and a clear plan put in place for how the project will continue in January.

Excellent work by all involved!

Mr Hodgkinson

HOUSE CROSS COUNTRY

Congratulations to FLOYD on their victory.

Thank you to the PE department for organising and for all students who participated.

	BRANDON	FLOYD	HAWLEY	MANTON	TEMPERLEY
6th Form	2	5	1	4	3
11	3	4	1	2	5
10	5	3	2	1	4
9	4	5	1	2	3
8	3	5	2	4	1
7	1	2	4	5	3
TOTAL	18	24	11	18	19

FIRST PLACE	FLOYD
SECOND PLACE	TEMPERLEY
JOINT THIRD PLACE	BRANDON / MANTON
FIFTH PLACE	HAWLEY



SYMPHONY HALL

In February, Year 7 had the opportunity to visit Symphony Hall in Birmingham city centre to attend a concert by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.

With 2262 seats this world class concert hall can hold more than two and a half times more people than an Airbus A380.

The CBSO performed eight pieces of music in a concert that lasted around an hour.

From 18th century pieces such as Finale from Symphony Number 1 by Johannes Brahms to more modern compositions like Alan Silvestri's Portals from Avengers: Endgame.

There were some unusual pieces such as Field Guide for Orchestra, in which the instruments were played in unconventional ways such as tapping on the bodies of

cellos and double bases and violins being played with pencils.

All of this was played over a compilation of sounds collected from the rainforest.

The other strange piece was titled Headbanger and it made every single person imagine something different.

It changed between dark, mysterious, action movie type music and happy, fun, magical sections.

There were around 80 musicians playing during the concert.

We would like to thank the staff at Symphony Hall, the CBSO, Mrs Mackereth for organising the trip and the staff who accompanied us.

Ben Cottle & William Brett | Year 7



FESTIVAL OF CULTURES 2023

This year, The Festival of Cultures comprised of 43 workshops and 98 sessions for students in Year 7-10. Activities included Samba Drumming, Korean Language, Origami, Manga Art, Croquet, Mehndi and many more.

Thank you to all the staff and students involved in making the Festival of Cultures a huge success.

"I learnt street dance is about expressing yourself in a chilled out way. I had a lot of fun creating a routine with my friends and showing it to everyone else. I also gained an appreciation for the difficulty of dance in terms of speed coordination and flexibility".

Jessy

"One of the more relaxing activities was origami where I made paper insects including a stag beetle, a butterfly and a cicada. I had some problems but overall, it was a great experience which I will probably try again in the future. Another activity I did was Warhammer quest which was fun. I enjoyed playing with other people going through the different levels. I laughed and found it very funny when I kept on opening doors and unleashing more enemies much to the annoyance of Kevin".

Thanh Dao

"I found Warhammer Quest very entertaining as we got quite far, despite having one of our teammates go knockers as they decided to open up all the doors while we were already struggling to go against the horde I had unleashed. I found it quite amusing that I had to take all the hits for the team. While I had done all of the hard work, everybody else had gained cool treasures and I was left with nothing".

Kevin Li

"The festival of cultures is a great opportunity to experience things that you may not have done before. I tried my hand at Film Study, Go and Fencing. In Go we were taught by a 1st Kyu Go player and in fencing we were taught by the coach of the top caber fencing team in the country. I'm already looking forward to next year".

Armaan Currim





STUDENT LEAVERS

Best of luck for the future!



**KING EDWARD VI
ASTON SCHOOL**

Educational excellence for our City



SPORT

RUGBY HIGHLIGHTS

ST JOSEPH'S

The Aston side began the game with high hopes as the St Joseph's squad only had 14 players and were coming off a heavy loss. This led to us scoring a try within the first 5 minutes, courtesy of Rohan Gogna and a conversion by Oliver Egan, leaving the score 7-0.

This however was followed up by the St Joseph's side responding with several tries within the first half, leaving the Aston side demotivated at the end of the 1st half. This as a result led us to concede several more points within the first 15 minutes of the second half. However, after an incredible speech given by Mr Hodgkinson the Aston squad was able to fire back and almost force a turnaround in the last 10 minutes. It began with Rohan once again scoring a try followed up by a successful kick. Immediately after we again scored two more tries, courtesy of Cruz Ngwashi and Ixmael Reyes. However, this was still not enough to cover the margin and the Aston side once again lost the game. This left the U15 squad with 6 losses and no wins.

Man of the Match was given to Seth Lenton for keeping the squads morale from dipping too low during the harsher parts of the match. For me, Rohan also had a spectacular performance and was equally worthy of being awarded Man of the Match.

Zain Khan | Year 10

CAMPHILL

The game began with the Aston side excited and eager to get out onto the pitch, seeing as this was expected to be the 1st win of the season as the Aston U15s had beaten the U15 Camphill repeatedly over the years. The game began with Rogan Gogna once again scoring a try, leaving the Camphill players fearful of Rohan's sheer size and power. This was followed up by a successful kick from Oliver Egan, who was able to convert every kick he took that game. The Camphill side responded with a try of their own, but they were not able to convert the kick, leaving Aston up 7-5. However, that would be the last point the Camphill side would score. The match continued with the Aston side dominating the pitch and scoring 2 more tries in the first half, courtesy of Rohan who was able to bag a hat trick.

At halftime, the Aston side were over the moon with the score being 21-5 but we were still able to keep ourselves grounded and motivated for the 2nd half. Once again, we were able to dominate the pitch allowing for Joe Box to score his 1st try of the season with a fantastic run which included him side stepping several players. Ixmael Reyes was also able to score a try after a series of rucks near the try line. A highlight from the match was Cruz Ngwashi placing the ball down 5 meters away from the try line rather than on the actual try line! This mistake was amended later in the match with

Cruz running through several players to score his first try of the match.

Towards the end of the match, the Camphill side was dejected, seeing as the score line was impossible to come back from. The Camphill side also sadly suffered from several injuries throughout the match, not helping their morale. Eventually, the match finished with a dominant win for Aston, 42-5.

Mr Cheney elected Gabe Brown as Man of the Match for his determination throughout the game despite suffering an eye injury. Mr Hodgkinson chose both myself and Cruz Ngwashi. Personally, I felt Rohan Gogna (10T) deserved the Man of the Match award for his spectacular hat trick. With our first win of the season we can only help to continue this form and win the GB tournament after half-term.

Zain Khan | Year 10

GREATER BIRMINGHAM TOURNAMENT

The Year 10 first XV went to KES to play in the annual GB tournament. With four other teams and short games the boys needed to come out firing and they certainly did against the hosts KES; some surging powerful forward play led to a text book pick and go try, 5-0. The rest of the game was tight and the boys showed they could match the forward play and held out and a superb tackle from Joe on our try line gave us a penalty and the last play (won 5-0). Next up were Bishop Vesey and I think they were surprised with the aggression and physicality in and around the breakdown with Zain and his pack working tirelessly. Rohan powered over and the second try was a great team effort with an off load off the ground in midfield to Joe and he went under the posts. Although we conceded a try, we were able to close the game out (won 10-7). The third game against Five Ways was always likely to be the game that decided the outcome and so it proved. The game started evenly with both teams

having some decent moves up front. The loss of Rohan to injury seemed to impact on the cohesion in the pack and three late tries from the opposition flattered the overall result (lost 0-21). The final game was against our nearest rivals Camp Hill. The boys dominated the game both in the breakdown and with some good hands across the back line to create and score some exciting tries. The pick being Ixmael who danced his way stepping up the field for a great score. I finally got my kicking going with 3 drop goals and the game was ours (won 21-0). The win meant the boys finished second behind Five Ways and a fantastic outcome and we all left delighted.

Oliver Egan | Year 10

ASTON U14 HALF TERM SUMMARY

We had only one training session before our first match with Wrekin, however this was not a problem for us as we won 15-7 and attacked very well as a team. The following week we played Fairfax, where again we dominated when moving forward but still needed to work on our defence. We outscored Fairfax 29-10. Our next match was Abraham Darby, throughout this match we started slowly because we played poorly until the second half. In the second half we dominated scoring three times. In this half we both defended and attacked well.

After our 24-7 victory against Abraham Darby we played our first ever home game against Adams Grammar. In this match we went forward incredibly well but yet again should have defended better. Due to us not putting our tackles in we conceded three tries and the match ended with Aston victorious, 36-19.

Against St Joseph's we improved our defence significantly only conceding once, and we kept up our attacking form by scoring five tries and five conversions. In this match we improved a lot and this gave us some momentum going into our last match against Camp Hill, which was on



Tuesday. We ran riot and scored a whopping sixty two points whilst only conceding one try. Although it would have been nice to keep a clean sheet we still played well as a team.

Over this half term, the Year 9 Aston team has won all of their games scoring over two hundred points whilst only conceding fifty five. Our team has made so much progress and we are starting to see a lot more use of tactical formations going forward and defending.

William Jewell | Year 9

MATCH REPORT v FAIRFAX u14

Aston started the game with Hassan Hanif scoring to put us ahead by 5. Not long after, John Sepo breached through Fairfax's defence to score again this time with a successful conversion to further add to Aston's score making it 12-0. Before the end of half time, Kyle McQueen scored to make it 17-0. Not long into the second half, Fairfax started to fight back and scored twice, the second time came from a blindside run. Aston regrouped and things started picking up again. After a kick Aston

regained the ball allowing John Sepo to score his second. With a successful conversion this made it 24-10. Just before the end of the game Kyle McQueen scored his second, but with an unsuccessful conversion this kept Aston in the lead winning 29-10.

Overall, Aston played incredibly well with minimal errors. This win continued Aston's incredible form and puts us in a good mood going into our next match.

Mr Cheney

MATCH REPORT v FAIRFAX u12

We had a slow start to our first match of the season trailing behind 2 tries in the first 10 minutes. The team settled into their positions and environment with some fantastic tackles and great passes. Our rucking was strong, and the forwards were hitting and winning all the rucks we defended. By half time we were confidently leading the game with a full-time score of 13-2 to Aston, a fantastic first game and a great team effort.

Tom Stevens | Year 8

FOUNDATION LIONS



On Friday the 27th January, Year 12 students Kobi James, Josh Field, Jude Miller and Kieran Gallagher had the opportunity to represent Aston as part of the Foundation Lions side facing Solihull School.

The match was hosted under the lights with a good turnout from all five schools involved.

Aston had a massive turnout, which kept the atmosphere buzzing throughout the game.

The Aston delegates made an especially large amount of noise when Jude went over the line for a try. S

ignificant excitement was generated when Kobi made a burst down the line, Josh made a big carry and Kieran put a few big tackles in.

The camaraderie between the players in the squad made the whole experience amazing and, while they fell just short – losing 26-22, they certainly represented Aston and the Foundation well.

THE BIGGEST EVER FOOTBALL SESSION



On the 8th March, the King Edward Aston Partnership hosted The Biggest Ever Football Session for primary and secondary girls across the partnership.

This is a national programme run by the Football Association and the Youth Sport Trust to lobby for equal access to football for girls during curriculum and extra-curricular time. 24 primary teams and 20 secondary team took part in the festival, with 506 girls participating in our tournament.

We were lucky enough to be joined by representatives from the Football association and ex England Lionesses: Faye White and Laura Bassett.

Despite snow all day, all the games were played in a great spirit, with schools representing a country playing in this years' women's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand.

After a very close first round stage, the four teams who won their groups progressed to the semi-finals. In the primary event, the bronze medals were shared between King Solomon International Business school and Mansfield Green Primary.

In the gold medal match, Paget Primary overcame



Conway Primary to win the title of the Biggest Ever Primary Football Session Champions 2023.

As the snow continued to fall, 20 secondary schools competed in four different pools. George Dixon Academy, King Edward Handsworth Girls, Holy Trinity and Washwood Heath all won their groups and headed into the semi-finals. In the bronze medal match, King Edward Handsworth Girls and Washwood Heath shared the bronze medals, with George Dixon Academy pipping Holy Trinity to the gold medals.

All the matches across the day were played in a great spirit, with some exciting talent on the pitch. Well done to all the girls who took part and a big thanks to the FA, Sport Birmingham, our referees, Aston Villa FC, young leaders from Hall Green School and to all the staff who supported the event.

Highlights were shown on ITV Central news, as well as live radio interviews with some of the staff and girls at the event. A future case study will be produced by the FA and Youth Sport Trust in due course.

Across the country, 285,000 girls took part in the Biggest Ever Football Session - enough to fill Wembley Stadium three times over!

SPORTS PSYCHOLOGY PRESENTATION

Zain Khan is an Aston Old Boy who left in 2018 and in March 2023 he returned to the school to give a talk to psychology and PE A-level students about his degree in psychology and his masters in sports psychology.

Zain has done extremely well since leaving Aston and achieved a first-class degree in psychology.

He hopes become a full-time sports psychologist once he has finished his masters at Loughborough University.

His talk focused on some of the main aspects of sports psychology using examples from basketball, cricket and football.

The current students found it very interesting and it was a great opportunity for them to be able to hear about the experience of university from someone who is currently attending.

They asked some insightful questions about the psychology of sport but also about university life in general, including questions about university accommodation; clubs and societies and student finances.

CRICKET SUCCESS



Congratulations to Bryan Mudalige in 7T who captained Warwickshire in a cup victory against Yorkshire U12s.

FOOTBALL TRIP TO MADRID

On the early morning of Tuesday 14th March, the Year 10 KEA football team took off on their journey to Spain.

Landing in Madrid around midday, the weather was quite the opposite to England: no rain, 25 degrees and sunny. The first activity was a training session at the Valdebebas training ground, where we started off with simple passing drills and ended with a full-sized pitch game. Sadly, Ollie broke his arm during this session meaning he was bandaged up for the rest of the trip, apart from this it was an enjoyable experience. As the day drew to a close, we took a trip to the local Aldi to stock up on ice cream which was all eaten or melted by the next day.

Day two started off promptly with a tour of the Santiago Bernabeu football stadium. With a seating capacity of over 85,000 it is the second largest seating capacity for a football stadium in Spain.

We got to see the trophy room and felt the chills when we walked out onto the pitch itself.

Another trip to Valdebebas and another training session followed. This time we took part in small sized games finishing off with a penalty shootout. Stand out penalties came from Mr Ibbetson and Cruz but the best penalty had to be from Rafi who took brave chip down the middle.

Later that night we walked down to a local venue to watch the Liverpool vs Real Madrid match which ended in a 1-0 win to Real after a poor display from Liverpool.

On the Thursday we had our final training session at the Valdebebas. This time Real Madrid gave us all special kits for a final session.

We started off with shooting practice with an outstanding freekick from Uwais and a



thundering volley from Isa. We played another full pitched game this time with Mr Cheney running down the wing and Mr Hall controlling the midfield.

Sadly, neither of them managed to make it onto the score sheet. Later on, we were given some free time to roam around Madrid city centre and do some shopping. there were many questionable buys from many people.

After that we spent an enjoyable evening bowling with Shazad winning.

After tidying our rooms, we had some time for some last-minute gift shopping before heading to the airport. Once there, a vote was held on 'best tourist' who would go on to win an authentic Real Madrid shirt from Mr Hall himself. The result of the draw was close with six votes for Oli and seven for Ismael.

This was great trip that none of us will ever forget and we would like to thank Mr Hall for setting it up for us.

Cruz Ngwashi | Year 10



ULTIMATE FRISBEE

Ultimate Frisbee is a non-contact team sport that has its origins in 1960s America.

Players can not run when holding the disc and a goal is scored when a player catches the disc in the end zone that their team is attacking.

The KE Aston Ultimate Frisbee Tournament was a momentous event which enlightened us to the key aspects of ultimate frisbee. We came second in our group and in all the games the team gave their best.

Captain Eesa Shah Nawaz and the co-captains Archie Swinbourne and Mohammed Hajer led the way. The defence was on point with the help of Kifayat Kazi, Rishi Panchal, Aayan Habib and Nathik Verma. Similarly in attack, with the help of Adam Khan who was our top scorer as well as Archie Swinbourne claiming the title of most 'assists' (passes thrown for a score).

We were a real threat at both ends. This was our first outdoor tournament for ultimate Frisbee and the team were reasonably pleased with the result. We hope that this is the beginning of a long and prosperous history of this sport at the school.

HOCKEY HISTORY IN THE MAKING...

Whilst the frost may have prevented the 1st XI from hosting KES Stratford, the 2nd XI journeyed to the sunshine and circling buzzards of Bromsgrove for the reverse fixture.

The journey proved to be most worthwhile, because not only did they notch up Aston Senior Hockey's first victory of 2023, but also the first for this season and, for that matter, of the previous one too.

Aston matched the weather with a bright start, full of attacking play, but found themselves thwarted by the brave and skilful Stratford keeper.

This proved worrying, when the opposition broke away to capitalise on tentative defending to take the lead.

What's more, this remained the situation as the game entered its dying stages, but then Eshan Ahmed made up for messing up a great opportunity moments earlier, by keeping his composure and finally getting the better of Stratford's valiant goalminder.

Moments later, it was a cruel irony that the latter's attempt at a kicked clearance led to Kush Desai having the opportunity to slot home coolly a late, late winner.

Mr Smith

After drawing the last match against 'OSH', the team was feeling optimistic about the outcome of our game against KE Stratford.

With a huge portion of the First XI missing due to it being an away fixture, we set off to play KE Stratford. We started off the match strongly, with Aston making the most of each counter-attack and having possession of the ball a great deal of the time.

The defence also incredible, with players like Rizwan Sattar making some great saves. However, the tables turned after Owen Lau (A.K.A the prodigy) took a particularly nasty blow to the shins.

After being such an influential player, the mood of the match shifted without him.

After a few solid saves by goal keeper Amin Jelani, KE Stratford scored.

However, Aston's spirits were still high. A good 10 minutes into the second half of the match, the mood completely changed, with Aston making run after run into KES' 'D'- reminiscent of the great start we had.

After a few amazing pieces of dribbling from striker Ahsan Masood, he cleanly pushed the ball into the back of the goal.

Not two minutes after our first goal, Kush Desai scored an amazing goal, hitting the ball right between the keeper's legs- which led to our first victory of the season. Commendation has to be given to our new Captain Aayan Khan, and Ahsan Masood, whose commitment has meant that this victory was possible.

Yusuf Nadeem | Year 12

1ST XI HOCKEY - WARWICK SCHOOL

After an arduous journey down the dire M6, the Aston first XI Hockey squad hopped off the coach at Warwick School, with one team member down.

The air was filled with exuberance - with laughter echoing the pitch and a smile on everyone's face. Aston started strong, with the ball played to Captain Parameth Yingchankul, who injected it wide, making Aston start on the offense.

After a squandered Aston 'free hit', Warwick





launched a fairly fast-paced counterattack, passing the ball efficiently from player to player.

This was put to an abrupt halt by Anoop Gagneja, who seamlessly dribbled past most of Warwick's midfield. However, after 15 minutes, Aston began to get tired - with no substitutes (in contrast with Warwick's 12 substitutes), Aston played on - inevitably conceding a few goals, after a few jaw-dropping saves from impromptu keeper Amin Jelani who was using a few outlandish methods, including 'upper-cutting' the ball out of the 'D'.

After a few valiant efforts from players like Ahsan Masood and Jensen Fung, the whistle was finally blown.

Despite the defeat Aston took, the whistle didn't merely signal the end of the match- it symbolised the teamwork and resilience the Aston First XI collectively displayed - playing with no subs, but still making every run, whilst also encouraging and supporting each other throughout the entire 50-minute match.

It's safe to say that elegies of jovial synergy truly eulogize Aston's first team. Well done!

Yusuf Nadeem | Year 12

2ND XI HOCKEY - WARWICK SCHOOL

Having selected 32, it was disappointing that the senior hockey sides travelled with only 20 players to Warwick School.

The 2nd XI made every effort, however, to protect the name of the school, with a brave, fighting display against lively opponents.

Despite Warwick having Manchester City type possession stats, Aston restricted them to a 1 - 0 half time score line.

Special mention should be made of Ibrahim Hussen, who typified the team's spirit by volunteering to go in goal and making some good saves.

Even he could do nothing to prevent the 4 - 0 final score.

Mr Smith

SWIMMING



Joe Box being awarded his national medal by the mayor of Sheffield.

I have been swimming competitively for about seven years. I currently swim for City of Birmingham.

This year, I qualified for the English national championships in three events: 400 metres IM, 200 metres freestyle and 200 metres butterfly.

I managed to get into 2 finals which was great and I came away with a bronze medal in the 200 metres butterfly. It was really satisfying coming home with a medal as I had been training extremely hard for it.

I currently train over 15 hours a week including some morning sessions that start at 5am. I'd really like to make the finals of the British championships this year which is my next goal.

Joseph Box | Year 10

WHITEMOOR LAKES

The adventure began on Monday 13th March as we departed KE Aston at approximately 10am and arrived at Whitemoor Lakes, Lichfield, after a short 40-minute journey.

The staff at Whitemoor Lakes welcomed us and ensured we were all aware of our surroundings with a tour of the facilities.

The tour was followed by unpacking and settling into our dorms, after which we refuelled ourselves ready for the day.

Activities throughout the stay were assigned to each of the nine groups which were supervised by both KE Aston and Whitemoor Lake staff.

'Ice breaker' was our first activity as this allowed us to familiarise ourselves with members of our group.

After this a wide and varied programme of activities were set, which not only allowed some to overcome any fears, but also to try something new.

These included, abseiling, team games, night walk, canoeing, zip wire, rock climbing, circus skills, compass course and much more.

Canoeing was by far my favourite activity as this was a new and exciting experience for me.

Our spare time was spent playing table tennis, pool, foosball, board games and relaxing in our dorms or the common room.

Lights out was at 10.30pm in order to be up and ready for another day at 7.30am.

We returned to Birmingham on Wednesday 15th March, tired, with muddy and wet clothes ready to be washed, and ready to relay the experience with our families at home who were anxiously awaiting our return.

A note to all future Year 8s – definitely take up the opportunity to attend Whitemoor Lakes as not only will you take part in activities which you

may not have experienced before, but you will also have a chance to form stronger bonds with your peers and teachers outside of a classroom environment.

Finally, I would like to thank Mr Brady, who took time out of his busy schedule to drop by and see us in action, and a special thank you to all staff members that organised the trip.

They stayed away from their families to ensure our safety and enjoyment before, during and after our adventure to Whitemoor Lakes.

Armaan Currim | Year 8





"My favourite activities at Whitemoor Lakes were High Ropes and Canoeing because we were constantly doing something, and we didn't have to wait for a long time for our turn".

Wealth Hambeh

"My favourite experience on the trip was having a sleepover as it was very good. I wish the trip was longer because I really enjoyed the experience. My favourite activity was canoeing as I have never been on a canoe before".

Noah Birch

"I really enjoyed the trip, and it was a great privilege to have been able to participate in the activities. I am proud of being able to achieve climbing about 15 metres of stones in the end and jump to the ground from 15 metres high".

Abdullah Zaman

"My favourite part of the experience was the leap of faith on the high ropes. The rush of adrenaline from the jump to the bar was exhilarating. While I enjoyed the leap of faith the most, I also enjoyed everything else". -

Ehsan Shahzad

"My favourite experience of the trip was the high ropes. The adrenaline and the rush and chanting of your mates while you take a literal leap of faith is something I won't forget".

Ayaan Ali

NEW ARRIVALS YEAR 7



KING EDWARD VI ASTON SCHOOL
Form 7B 2023 - 2024



Daya Singh Ahyar Ahyar Ihsan Ramiz Waleed Hamzah Samuel Nkoko Muhammad Faateh Abid Aysan Ali Shah Yehya Sadi
Mr Hodgkinson Sulaymaan Tariq Katees Thavakumar Sam Symons Kemdi Opara Atyaan Khan
Zaid Ali Yi-Xuan Gao Ali Iqbal Kanvaish Dhirga Zachary Belgis Yusuf Hussain Jibesh Saravanan Jasper Kong
Ahmed Ghani Joseph O'Rourke Shaurya Jha Imaeel Mahmood Azeem Mody Taha Salim Sami Chabouri



KING EDWARD VI ASTON SCHOOL
Form 7F 2023 - 2024



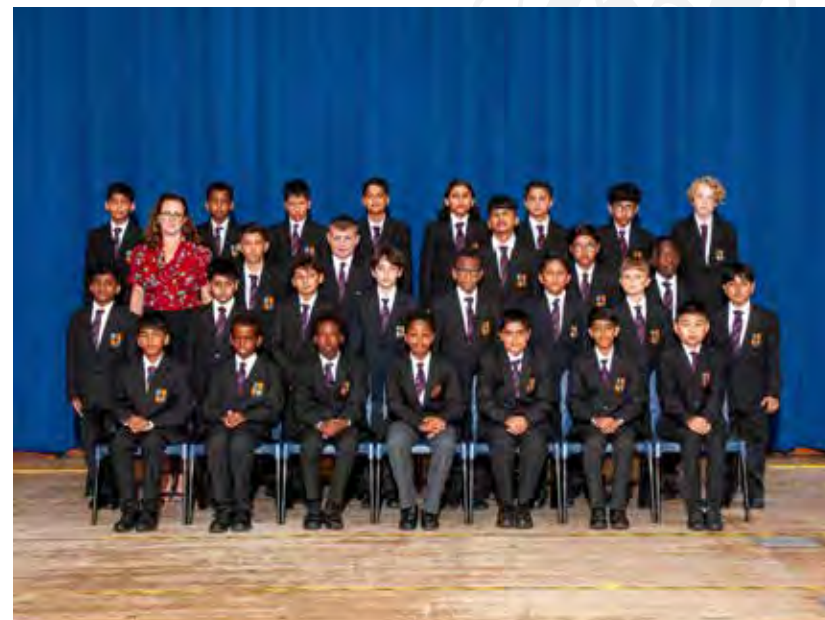
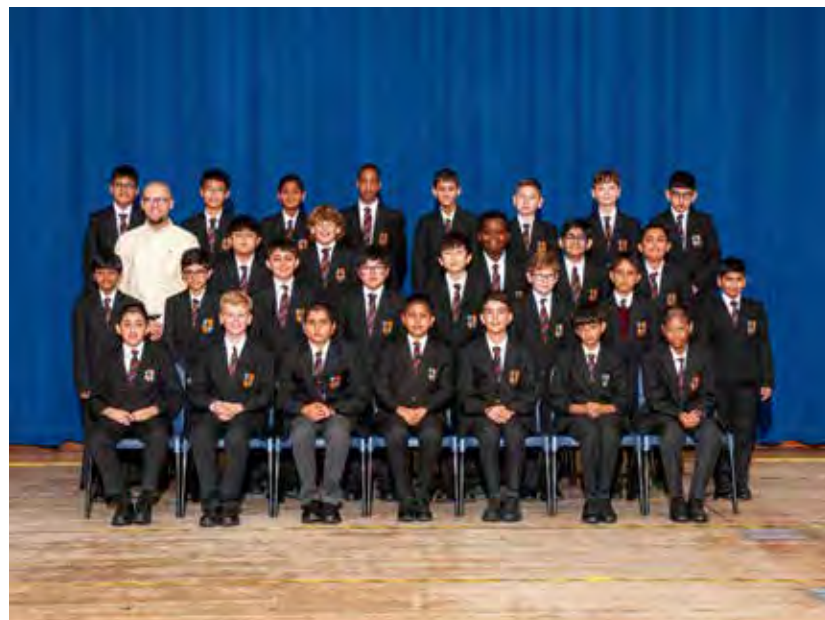
Asad Inran Zaim Zamsi Tahia Dhaleed Muhammad Hanan Raja Rudhra Brinj Christopher Asogba Dylan Bhopal Ibrahim Muhammad
Mrs Cresswell Yazeed Jaiba Heros Kidane Kaleli Tholaj-Mocausky Caleb Jordan Abdul Shahid
Kishan Sivasubramaniam Lath Salim Haider Ali Youssef Al-Tim Ari Seaman Josh Vind Zayan Jan Iyas Mohammed
Yeer Sandhu Selim Dorghem Daniel Dean Ismail Rafi Sheldon Lau Suleyman Karmar Sarim Akmar



KING EDWARD VI ASTON SCHOOL
Form 7H 2023 - 2024

Waseem Chaudhry Anan Kataria Aysan Ali Islam Huzafa Sufyan Huzafa
Miss Khatun Hassan Farooq Waris Mohammad Huzafa
Sharjeel Choudhry Ehsan Mahmood Joel Yonatan Abu-Bakr J
Hasan Khan Bilal Hussain Athiyar Arasu Rafan Rahn

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KING EDWARD VI ASTON SCHOOL Form 7M 2023 - 2024



Amrinda Lalimahmood, Huriza Mughal, Adani Ahmed, Idris Rashid,
Mustafa Malik, Jos Jordan Chagwu, Sarshubh Choudhary,
Hawaid Zakariah Iqbal, Sami Shimal, James Fard, Ruban Kang,
Adnan, Adam Qurier Iqbal, Mustafa Mir, Zakariyya Zubair



KING EDWARD VI ASTON SCHOOL Form 7M 2023 - 2024



Khuzaima Saleem, Clement Yuen, Harveer Channa, Mohammed Said Mohammed, Saad Habib, David Sima, Ben Pegg, Taiha Rauf,
Mr Wilcock, Haashim Zeb, Sebby Armstrong, Ali Ise, Hadi Ali, Aycoob Ahmed,
Pawara Wickramasinghe, Imaeel Khan, Arjan Khanduri, Yu Han Ian Huang, Shun Yin Wong, Marcel Borouch, Ali Mughal, Mohammed Tasdik Khalid,
Mustafa Inarah, Harvey Scarth, Harris Dean, Daanyal Ahmed, Musa Ali, Shahab Rahmat, Tasmin Khan



KING EDWARD VI ASTON SCHOOL Form 7T 2023 - 2024



Diren Dahya, Maroon Hajar, Zeeshan Mahfooz, Hussain Zahoor, Abdur-Rahman Amin, Aron Khosla, Ebraheem Rashid, Gilly Fenton,
Mrs V Ologunde, Amos Aucutt, Jamie Milton, Mohammed Suhail, Ashar Anjad, Azyah Newby-Pryce,
Saifullah Mukabi, Maruf Ahmed, Esa Khan, Jacob Wright, Mohamed Ibrahim, Danyal Uddin, Alexandros Bowden, Yusuf Ali,
Zayan Hussain, Abdullahi Gombol, Hamza Ali, Zeyd Ahmed, Hassan Zahoor, Yuvan Sidhu, Kevin Yu Cao







KING EDWARD VI ASTON SCHOOL

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