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# Aylesbury High School

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## Parents' & Students' Newsletter

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***This newsletter is being sent home to parents and we would be grateful if you can forward it to your daughter for her to read as well.***

## ***Happy New (academic) Year***

The second Wednesday of term saw us out on the field having our quinquennial (!) whole-school photo. Apart from fire practices, it is the only time when we have all 1300 students and 100+ staff in the same place at the same time and having everyone on the rather flimsy looking structure was slightly nerve-wracking, especially for those nearer to the sky.

It did, however, provoke nothing but praise from the photographers, who do this sort of thing every day, for how the whole school community conducted itself and reminded us all how the behaviour that we sometimes take for granted is actually unusually good. Thank you to everyone who was there and we hope to send home details of how to obtain the photo (and the form and individual photos taken the following week) shortly.

The following Wednesday at 10:10 was a mildly significant moment as it marked the end of the first full timetable cycle of the new year. It was a time to breathe a sigh of relief as it meant that all classes had taken place and the year was successfully under way. Our 242 new students and members of staff will have found their way around and, just as importantly, started to absorb the AHS culture - I hope everyone has settled in well.

We have known for some time that this is the first of several years of radical national changes to the curriculum, assessment, exams, funding, accountability and a whole lot more. It is quite tempting to hide in a cupboard and wait until it is all over, but that isn't our intention! As always, we are working hard to understand the changes and deciding how to exploit them to benefit our students. We will do our best to keep you informed of changes and consult wherever possible, so do keep an eye and ear open for news both from AHS and nationally so that you can keep up to date.

I hope that everyone has a great year.

*Alan Rosen*

Alan Rosen



## ***Welcome to...***

I am pleased to welcome a number of new colleagues to AHS.

Mrs Austin	Geography	Miss Mead	Psychology
Miss Brigden	Assistant Head and Geography	Mr Nuttycombe	Science & Biology
Miss Clarke	Drama	Miss Oatley	Spanish Team Leader
Dr Coles	Science	Mr Stanley	Maths
Miss Flynn	Maths	Mrs Start	Reprographics
Mrs Hamnett	Deputy Head and Maths	Miss Storrie	History
Miss Hunter	PE	Miss Weir	Science
Mrs Jones	Student Welfare Assistant		

During the summer holidays we said farewell and thank you to Mrs Brassington, who has patched up countless students and provided great support over a number of years, and to Mr Mishkovich who successfully completed his IT apprenticeship with us and is now heading to university with our best wishes.

## ***Building a Brighter Future***

We are launching our Development Campaign this month and next, so please look out for the details coming home soon. With your help we can carry out a fantastic refurbishment project on our science facilities next summer.



## ***Geography Quality Mark***

Well done to Mrs Kitchen and the Geography Team whose hard work means that AHS is one of 52 schools to be awarded the Geographical Association Secondary Quality Mark and one of just 10 schools nationally to be designated as a Centre of Excellence. Not only that but we are singled out in the GA's press release for having been recognised in this way for the third time, which the GA rightly applauds as "a significant achievement!".



## ***Any Sound Experts out there?***

We are looking for someone who would be prepared to give up a bit of time before and during our forthcoming performances of *Grease* to help set up the technical equipment. If "You're the one that I want" (sorry!) and have some sound expertise, could you please get in touch with Mr Druker [odruker@ahs.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:odruker@ahs.bucks.sch.uk).



## *The AHSA funds specialist equipment*

Each year the Aylesbury High School Association raises a significant amount of money to help the school obtain facilities and resources that are over and above the basic provision. In 2014, generous donations have allowed the purchase of equipment that we could not otherwise have afforded, including the following:

**Drying rack in Art**



**Music keyboards**



**3-D scanner and 3-D printer in DT**



**Microscopes in Science**



**Blast Chiller in Food Technology**



As well as joining in AHSA events and the 50:50 Club, one way of supporting the AHSA painlessly is through *The Giving Machine* which is a not-for-profit social enterprise that enables you to generate free cash donations every time you shop online.

Lots of online retailers including Amazon, John Lewis, Tesco and M&S support the scheme.

Next time you do some on-line shopping, visit [www.thegivingmachine.co.uk](http://www.thegivingmachine.co.uk), register with them (it's easy and quick!) and then click through to whoever you are shopping with; the AHSA automatically receives a percentage and you don't need to do anything further.



Details of the AHSA Christmas Cracker Shopping Event will be coming home shortly – do look out for them on Schoolcomms.



### ***Home to school transport***

Hopefully almost everyone has settled into the routine of getting to and from school successfully, but there have been some issues with the home-to-school transport commissioned by Bucks CC. Some of the information was late coming out because of the re-tendering and re-configuring of the routes across the county and there has been a particular problem with lack of capacity from Milton Keynes. Bucks (and Amey who are contracted to run the service) say they have now sent e-mails to everyone on the MK waiting list with good news. If you think you should have received this e-mail but haven't, please get in touch with Amey at [Ameytrans@buckscc.gov.uk](mailto:Ameytrans@buckscc.gov.uk). If that doesn't work, please do let me know ([arosen@ahs.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:arosen@ahs.bucks.sch.uk)) and we will follow it up.

### ***Keeping your bugs to yourself...***

While we encourage girls to be in school even if they are not feeling 100%, a possible exception is anything which may spread easily to others. An example of this is suffering from vomiting, where it is advised to stay off school for 24 hours to avoid infecting others.



### ***Lost Property***

At the end of the school year we bagged up and disposed of large quantities of clothing and assorted lost property which was unclaimed, including prescription glasses and jewellery.



We always do our best to re-unite property with its owner when it is handed in but so much is un-named which generally means that the owner has little chance of getting it back. Please take a few minutes to write names into clothing and make sure that other items of property are clearly marked to avoid the inconvenience and expense of losing it.

## Exam Results 2014

As always, the second half of August was taken up with A Level and GCSE results days, followed by many hours of analysis.

We were very pleased with the statistics but, more importantly, the individual stories. University entrance went very well and we featured in a number of league tables and press reports on the strength of the results.

Well done to all concerned!

### AS

- Record average points score (equivalent to a B grade)
- Record 44% A grades
- 72 students with at least AAA results
- Particular praise to Art, Biology, Communication & Culture, English Literature, French, Geography, Music, World Development
- Positive value added using the ALIS system
- (these results may improve after a number of re-marks have been done by the Awarding Bodies (exam boards))

### GCSE

- 100% gained the threshold 5+A\*-C grades including English and Maths
- 69% A\*&A grades
- 47 students had A\* or A in every subject they took
- Average grade was an A
- Average 'best 8' score was well over 8 A grades.
- A number of very pleasing individual successes
- Particular praise to Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Maths (both awards), Food, Italian, Product Design, RS and Textiles.
- (these results may improve after a number of re-marks have been done by the Awarding Bodies (exam boards))

### A Level

- Record 17% A\* grades
- 31% A grades
- Average grade half way between a B and an A grade
- 99.8% pass rate
- 3 students with A\* in every subject, 35 with AAA or better
- Particular praise to Art, Art History, Biology, English Literature, English Lang/Lit, Geography, Further Maths, PE and Politics
- Significant value added using the ALIS system



**Happy staff!**

## ***Free School Meals and the Pupil Premium***

We would be very grateful if you could take a moment to check whether or not your daughter may be eligible for either Free School Meals or the Pupil Premium and to contact us accordingly.

Children whose parents/guardians are in receipt of any of the following are entitled to free school meals:

- Income Support *or* Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance *or* Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit; *however, you will not be entitled if you also receive working tax credit or have a total an annual income in excess of £16,190*
- Working Tax Credit 'run-on'
- Children who receive Income Support or income-based Job Seeker's Allowance also qualify.

Meals can be taken at breakfast, break or lunch as desired. The whole process is very discreet as, with our cashless system, no cash is involved and other students are not aware that a girl is having free school meals.

Other Pupil Premium categories are:

- Children of Service Personnel
- Looked after children
- Children adopted from care

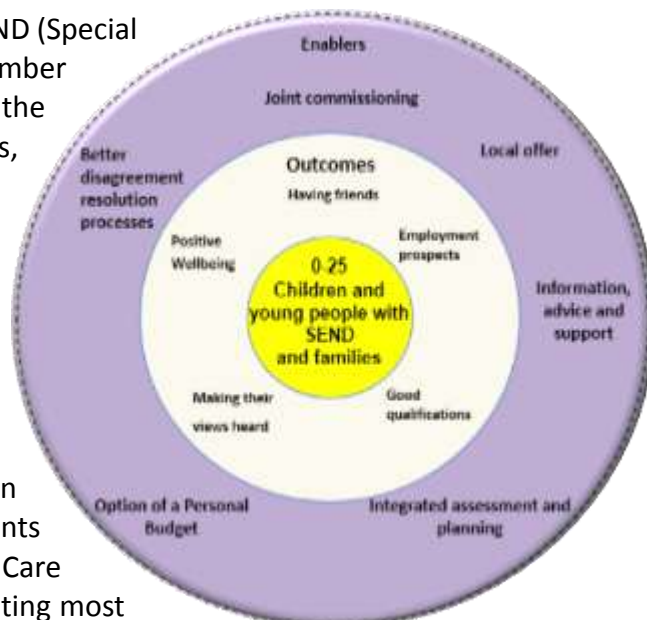
***If you think you may qualify please do get in touch, in confidence, with Mr Marshall, Support Staff Director, ([kmarshall@ahs.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:kmarshall@ahs.bucks.sch.uk) or 01296 388222) who will be pleased to provide the form to complete.***

## ***Changes to Special Needs***

There have been big national changes to provision for SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) starting from September 2014. The background to this is a realisation that, despite the enormous investment nationally in SEND over many years, the 'outcomes' (exam results, employment rates, health etc) for those children with additional needs are still lagging behind their contemporaries. There is also a wish to involve SEND children and their families more in the process and provide them with good advice and guidance.

The practicalities for us are that the categories of support are changing; the existing School Action and School Action Plus are being combined into one category, and statements are gradually being replaced by Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans. There is even more of an emphasis on meeting most needs in the classroom.

Linked to SEND are changes to the Access Arrangements for students taking public exams. These are guided by the Joint Council for Qualifications ([www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk)). For students starting GCSE and AS courses this year and subsequently, there will be no provision for 10% extra time in exams where this was previously judged to be appropriate; this will affect a small number of our students. The 25% extra time allowance will still be possible for those who are assessed as qualifying for it.



## ***Premises work over the holidays***

As always, the school was busy throughout the summer with 'white vans'. Much of the work was improving the infrastructure of the school; after several years of classrooms and curriculum projects it was time to invest in keeping everyone safe and comfortable.

Watch out for the Development Campaign brochure for details of our intentions for this year.

***The latest phase of our toilet replacement programme was completed, with around 20 new cubicles in Science and near to L16. In the October and February Half Terms and during the Easter Holidays we will complete our project to replace every old cubicle in the school.***



***There are now lockable lockers for musical instruments available.***



***The boilers serving the Library, Languages, Art, Psychology and the support offices have been completely replaced and should now be able to provide efficient and reliable heating and hot water - those areas had experienced problems over a number of years.***

***We have completely re-wired the school's fire alarm system and replaced much of the equipment; this will give an even higher level of protection both for people and for the buildings.***





## ***School Improvement Priorities 2014/15***

As usual, we worked with students, parents, staff and the Governors from Easter onwards to draw up this year's priorities. Each area is overseen by individual members of the Leadership Team and specific Governors' Committees.



The main external pressures (and opportunities!) for us are very similar to last year's:

- Radical changes to the National Curriculum, GCSE and A Levels from now until 2018 at the earliest
- A reducing budget as national funding for schools continues to decrease and will do so for the foreseeable future, both 11-16 and post-16
- Demographic changes in the area with, for example, new housing around Aylesbury planned over the next few years
- Changes to accountability measures for schools including the introduction over the next two years of *Progress 8* and *Attainment 8*
- Changes to Ofsted

Our own priorities are divided into three areas, overseen by the three Governors' Committees; here are some of the headlines:

### **Teaching and Learning**

- Designing and implementing a new post-16 curriculum for 2015 onwards and reviewing Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 in the light of the new national curriculum and exams
- Continuing to develop teaching to make learning as effective as we can
- Working with primary schools to improve transition and mutual understanding
- Continue to explore the use of ICT in lessons to aid learning
- Use student and whole-school data to better monitor progress and evaluate how we are doing
- Launch a student resilience programme

### **Personnel**

- Revise the Governors' Committee structure to better match the school's needs
- Review the training offered to staff
- Implement the second year of the revised Teacher Appraisal process

### **Resources**

- Budget to deal with a reducing government funding while maintaining our ethos and excellence
- Launch a major Development Campaign to enhance the school's facilities
- Review our use of social media and other means of communications
- Continue to exploit ICT for communications and administration

Students and parents will see these evolving over the next few months and I will report on how we are doing during the year.

## School Calendar 2014/15

Here are the main events and term dates; please refer to the school website and more detailed information sent out prior to each event for times and venues.

AUTUMN TERM 2014	
<b>Mon 22-Sep</b>	AHSA New Year 7 Parents Evening
<b>Wed 24-Sep</b>	Open Evening for 2015 entry and beyond
<b>Fri 26-Sep</b>	Open Morning for 2015 entry and beyond
<b>Wed 01-Oct</b>	Y12 Elevate Study Skills session
<b>Wed 01-Oct</b>	Y12 Elevate Parents' session
<b>Fri 10-Oct</b>	Inset 3 – school closed to students
<b>Fri 17-Oct</b>	Y11 Geography field trip to 19-Oct
<b>Mon 20-Oct</b>	House Dance 1
<b>Tue 21-Oct</b>	Open Morning for 2015 entry and beyond
<b>Wed 22-Oct</b>	House Dance 2
<b>Fri 24-Oct</b>	House Dance 3
<b>Mon 27-Oct</b>	Half Term to Fri 1-Nov
<b>Mon 03-Nov</b>	Y12 November tests week to 7-Nov
<b>Wed 05-Nov</b>	Y7 Parents' evening
<b>Sun 09-Nov</b>	AHSA Girls Night Out
<b>Tue 11-Nov</b>	AHSA AGM
<b>Wed 12-Nov</b>	Y11 Ace your Exams Seminar
<b>Wed 12-Nov</b>	Y11 Memory Mnemonics
<b>Thu 13-Nov</b>	Y10 Parents' evening
<b>Wed 19-Nov</b>	Year 11 into 12 Information Evening
<b>Fri 21-Nov</b>	Mufti Day - fund raising for OFCP
<b>Mon 24-Nov</b>	Y8 Aberdyfi Information Evening
<b>Wed 26-Nov</b>	Y12 Elevate Study Skills ii session
<b>Fri 28-Nov</b>	AHSA Quiz Night
<b>Mon 01-Dec</b>	Y7-13 data home this week
<b>Wed 03-Dec</b>	Y9 German trip to Boppard to 7-Dec
<b>Fri 05-Dec</b>	Christmas Concert 1
<b>Mon 08-Dec</b>	Christmas Concert 2
<b>Fri 05-Dec</b>	Y13 Trip to CERN-7-Dec
<b>Thu 11-Dec</b>	Y12 Parents' evening
<b>Mon 15-Dec</b>	Y11&13 Reports home this week
<b>Mon 15-Dec</b>	Old Folks Xmas Party & Fundraising Week
<b>Tue 16-Dec</b>	Carol Service
<b>Wed 17-Dec</b>	A/L Certificate Evening
<b>Fri 19-Dec</b>	Last Day of Term

SPRING TERM 2015	
<b>Mon 05-Jan</b>	Inset 4 – school closed to students
<b>Tue 06-Jan</b>	First day of term
<b>Wed 07-Jan</b>	Y11 Exams to 20-Jan
<b>Mon 12-Jan</b>	Aberdyfi Week 1 (8ACH) to 16-Jan
<b>Mon 19-Jan</b>	Aberdyfi Week 2 (8MSW) to 23-Jan
<b>Sun 01-Feb</b>	Y12 Geography field trip to Devon-4-Feb
<b>Wed 04-Feb</b>	Y11 Parents' evening
<b>Mon 09-Feb</b>	House Music 2015
<b>Wed 11-Feb</b>	House Music 2015
<b>Wed 11-Feb</b>	Y10 & 12 trip to Murcia-18-Feb
<b>Fri 13-Feb</b>	Ski trip to 21-Feb
<b>Fri 13-Feb</b>	Y11 basketball trip to USA-20-Feb
<b>Sun 15-Feb</b>	Sixth Form trip to Washington-22-Feb
<b>Mon 16-Feb</b>	Half Term to 20-Feb
<b>Mon 23-Feb</b>	Y9 Options Evening
<b>Tue 24-Feb</b>	Y13 Parents' Evening
<b>Wed 25-Feb</b>	Joint Production - Grease - Performance night 1
<b>Thu 26-Feb</b>	Joint Production - Grease - Performance night 2
<b>Fri 27-Feb</b>	Joint Production - Grease - Performance night 3
<b>Mon 02-Mar</b>	Y8 Reports home this week
<b>Mon 02-Mar</b>	Y7-13 data home this week
<b>Wed 11-Mar</b>	Y9 Parents' evening
<b>Fri 13-Mar</b>	Mufti Day (Red Nose Day)
<b>Wed 18-Mar</b>	Y12 HE Evening: Fair
<b>Fri 20-Mar</b>	Joint Choral/Orchestral Concert
<b>Mon 23-Mar</b>	Y12 Reports home this week
<b>Mon 23-Mar</b>	Y7-13 data home this week
<b>Wed 25-Mar</b>	Y10 & 12 trip to Bourg-en-Bresse to 1-Apr
<b>Wed 25-Mar</b>	Y10 & 12 trip to Stuttgart to 2-Apr
<b>Fri 27-Mar</b>	Last day of term

Activity Day dates are still to be confirmed

SUMMER TERM 2015	
<b>Mon 12-Apr</b>	First day of term
<b>Wed 15-Apr</b>	Inset 5 – school closed to students
<b>Mon 20-Apr</b>	Y10 Exam week
<b>Fri 24-Apr</b>	House Drama
<b>Sun 03-May</b>	Joint Cabaret - AHS/AGS
<b>Mon 04-May</b>	Bank Holiday
<b>Tue 05-May</b>	Y7 Exam week
<b>Fri 08-May</b>	Y7 trip to Boulogne-9-May
<b>Mon 18-May</b>	Y9 Exam week
<b>Mon 25-May</b>	Half Term to 29-May
<b>Mon 01-Jun</b>	Y8 Exam week
<b>Mon 08-Jun</b>	Y10 Work Experience to 12-Jun
<b>Mon 15-Jun</b>	Y10 reports home this week
<b>Thu 18-Jun</b>	Y8 Parents' evening
<b>Fri 19-Jun</b>	Y9 trip to Paris-23-June
<b>Fri 26-Jun</b>	Mufti Day
<b>Thu 02-Jul</b>	Sixth Form Induction
<b>Fri 03-Jul</b>	Sixth Form Induction
<b>Fri 03-Jul</b>	Y12 Art trip to Paris-6-July
<b>Mon 06-Jul</b>	Y7 Reports home this week
<b>Mon 06-Jul</b>	Y7-10 data home this week
<b>Tue 07-Jul</b>	Y6 and New Staff Induction Day
<b>Wed 08-Jul</b>	Y6 Parents' Evening
<b>Fri 10-Jul</b>	Midsummer Movement, Muses and Music
<b>Sun 12-Jul</b>	Y11&12 World Challenge 13-Aug
<b>Mon 13-Jul</b>	Y9 Reports home this week
<b>Fri 17-Jul</b>	Last day of term
<b>Sat 25-Jul</b>	Y11 trip to Costa Rica-10-Aug
<b>Mon 31-Aug</b>	Bank Holiday

The August Bank Holiday is very late next year and this will affect term dates for 2015-16. The term dates therefore are still under discussion

## *Parent Governor Elections*

We are inviting nominations for Parent Governors; we expect to have two vacancies to fill this term.

A Governing Body's overriding responsibility is to work in partnership with the Headteacher to promote continuous improvement in the performance of the school. This involves the establishment of an improvement plan, the setting of challenging but achievable targets and the interpretation of information to assess progress and determine appropriate action. Typically, a governor's duties will average up to 6 hours of spare time each month and each Governor serves on two of the three sub-committees; Teaching & Learning, Personnel and Resources. As well as its improvement role, the Governing Body is there to be a 'critical friend' who can provide the right balance between supporting and challenging the performance of both the Headteacher and the school.

Being a Parent Governor can be stimulating, enjoyable and rewarding. If you have the enthusiasm and desire to become closely involved in the running of the school then please do consider putting yourself forward. Parent Governors are an important component in achieving an effective and well-balanced governing body. We are keen to recruit parents and carers coming from 'all walks of life' and representing all groups in our school community. You can find out more about the role by contacting the Headteacher or Chair of Governors on the main school telephone number or emailing [secretary@ahs.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:secretary@ahs.bucks.sch.uk). There is very good training and support provided through the Local Authority.

Parents/carers who are nominated for election must be proposed and seconded in writing, with nominations being signed by the proposer and seconder; the person nominated must also state in writing that he or she is willing to stand for election. Those eligible to stand are the parents or carers of students who are currently registered at this school. The proposer and seconder must also have a daughter currently in attendance at the school.

The term of office is for a period of four years. A parent/carer whose daughter leaves the school may continue as a Parent Governor until the end of their term of office, if he or she so wishes.

Nominations should be made on the next page, on or before the closing date for nominations which is **3.30pm on Thursday 9 October**. In the event that more nominations than vacancies are received then a ballot will be held.

The ballot will be entirely secret and a further letter about the arrangements will be sent to you. All parents/carers whose child/children attend this school will be entitled to vote in the postal ballot and voting will be on the basis of one vote per parent/legal guardian per place available.

If it proves impossible to fill all vacancies, the Governing Body has the right to make an appointment/s in order to fill the required number of Parent Governor places on the Governing Body. If the need to do this arises, the Governing Body would first of all consider appointing a parent/carer who has a daughter on roll at the school but, if they could not make an appointment, they would consider a person who was a parent/carer of a school-aged child but not necessarily a registered student at this school.

Please note that Governors will be required to produce evidence of identity and make a formal declaration of any convictions incurred, including any that have become spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. All Governors will be checked against the ISA First list (the list of people barred by the government from working in schools) and, in common with staff working in school, will be asked to obtain a DBS disclosure (previously a Criminal Records Bureau check).

The Governing Body is as follows:

- 7 Parent Governors
- 5 Community Governors
- 3 Co-opted Governors
- 3 Staff Governors, elected by staff at the school
- The Headteacher

A full list of the names of the School Governors will be available as soon as the appointments have been finalised.

Please do consider whether you could put yourself forward, or nominate someone else, to play an active part in shaping the future of AHS.

## AYLESBURY HIGH SCHOOL PARENT GOVERNOR ELECTION: Autumn 2014

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Please print and return in a sealed envelope marked Parent Governor to the school office, by 3.30 pm on Thursday 9 October 2014.

### NOMINATION

I wish to nominate ..... for the position of Parent Governor.  
PLEASE PRINT

Name of Nominee's child/ren at AHS	
------------------------------------	--

Proposer's name	PLEASE PRINT	
Name of Proposer's child/ren at AHS		
Proposer's signature		

Seconder's name	PLEASE PRINT	
Name of Seconder's child/ren at AHS		
Seconder's signature		

### NOMINEE'S ACCEPTANCE

I am prepared to accept this nomination ..... DATE.....

(Nominee's signature)

If you would like to nominate someone but are unable to print this form, please contact Mrs Hilary Osgerby, Head's PA, at [secretary@ahs.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:secretary@ahs.bucks.sch.uk) or telephone 01296 388222, and a paper copy will be sent home with your daughter.

In the event of an election, candidates will be asked to provide information about themselves and/or an election address of up to 200 words, for distribution to parents.