



**Arden**  
 Station Road  
 Knowle  
 Solihull  
 West Midlands  
 B93 0PT

**Telephone:**  
 01564 773348

**email:**  
[office@arden.solihull.sch.uk](mailto:office@arden.solihull.sch.uk)

twitter: [@ArdenAcademy](https://twitter.com/ArdenAcademy)

## Charitable Giving

On Friday 22nd March we had a non-uniform themed around "identity". The donations we received in return for this privilege will be donated to a charity that the students will decide on after the Easter holidays.

## SSAT recognition

Arden has been recognised by the Schools, Students and Teachers network for the outstanding exam results last year—well done everyone!



# ad altiora news

ISSUE 45

SPRING TERM 2024

## Mr Warwood's reflections

Whilst the term has been short in length with two five week half terms it has most certainly been action packed. As you will see from the content of this newsletter our students have had a multitude of opportunities and there is, always a huge amount of things for us to celebrate and be proud of. On the note of celebration I had the pleasure to celebrate the induction of 14 Arden Students onto the Solihull Sports Federation Roll of Honour. Spanning a wide range of sports our students were awarded for their individual excellence as well as their contribution to the development of sport in the community, it was a great pleasure to be able to share in that success. Our sporting successes have continued with almost daily updates coming through from our PE department updating on further success and more accolades, which again makes us very proud.



But above all we have been proud this week to celebrate our students for the wonderful individuals that they are. Our identity week has been a great opportunity for students to explore the concept of identity and for us to celebrate our own individuality, culminating in a fabulous charity day today. The tag line of "we are Arden, I am me" will continue to be a focus for us throughout this year and next as we continue to celebrate each other and our own identity.

For now we wish you all a wonderful Easter, enjoy the break and the time with loved ones.

Mr Warwood, Associate Headteacher



## Identity Week

We have really enjoyed our Identity Week this year. The phrase "We are Arden, I am me" represents the collectivist nature of a school community whilst simultaneously celebrating our individual diversity. This week Year 7 have learned the joyous art of Bhangra Dancing, many smiles were seen. We have had a very inspirational session with a poet, BONES, who led us through a journey of impactful decision making and reflections. We have had 3 whole school assemblies, collectively hearing about Why is identity important, Understanding Ramadan, Diversity & Inclusion. The week has culminated with our Identity themed non-uniform day (photos appear later in the newsletter).

This identity project will continue after Easter with the creation of a video celebrating our identity and diversity, along with a mosaic art piece that all students will contribute to.



Arden is part of Arden Multi Academy Trust:  
 Chief Executive Officer, Mr M Murphy and Executive Headteacher, Mr D Burgess



## Staff News

We would like to offer our congratulations to the following staff who have had babies this term.:

Miss Blenkinsop and Mrs Hoskins

The end of term also brings about some staff changes as we see some colleagues relocate and move onto new ventures. Over this term we have said goodbye to :

Ms Hayward, Mr Shabban, Miss Hill & Mr Jennens

This term has also seen the retirement of one of our site team, Mr Potter—thank you for your service!

Since our last newsletter we have been joined by Mrs Baylis as Leader of Learning Support, Mrs Qureshi, Learning Zone administration. And Mr Chow, Site Team.

We are pleased to be joined after Easter by Ms Allyas in RE and Mr Edwards in PE - welcome to the Arden family!!

We are also delighted to announce that in the inaugural Arden Multi Academy Trust Staff Football Tournament, Arden came out WINNERS against Lode Heath, Park Hall and Henley-in-Arden.

## Year 7 Poetry Slam: A Fusion of Creativity and Expression at Arden

Arden School was abuzz with poetic energy during the recent Year 7 Poetry Slam, where students delved into the art of verse under the guidance of the dynamic Spoz. With his infectious humour and warm demeanour, Spoz led the students through a series of poetry writing sessions.

The day kicked off with a burst of laughter as students collaborated on a group poem dedicated to everyone's favourite indulgence – chocolate. But the excitement didn't stop there: students engaged in a spirited rap battle, showcasing their lyrical prowess.

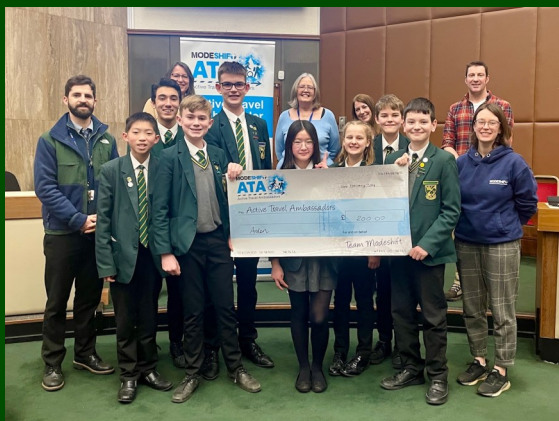
As the day progressed, students were challenged to channel their creativity towards a more profound theme – Refuge. Students worked in groups to craft poems, which they performed to each other, and the judges: Mrs Hodgkinson, Mr Ord, Mr Simpson and Miss O'Brien.

There was an overall winning group of the day and individual stand-outs were invited to attend the grand final at The Palace Theatre, Redditch.

Miss O'Brien expressed her pride in the students, applauding their enthusiasm and engagement throughout the day.

Stay tuned for more updates about the grand final!

~ Miss O'Brien



## Eco Club

Our Eco Club presented a bid to improve active travel in the Solihull council chamber, and came away with a big novelty cheque for £200! They received excellent feedback on the professionalism of their pitch.

Congratulations to

George Burns, Rohan Sethi, Dominic Penfold, Karson Law, Pearl Barker, Samuel Blackburn, Emre Hodgetts, Ava Ho

# English department

In honour of World Book Day, the English Department celebrated with Book Week. Pupils had the opportunity to take part in lots of exciting activities connected to the world of books.

Combining a love of books and cookies, pupils had the chance to create their own "Bookie" based on a popular children's book or character. We had over 50 pupils come and enjoy making a sticky mess with coloured icing, sprinkles and gingerbread men. Can you identify the popular characters from these standout designs?



There was a tricky emoji quiz of popular children's books. The amazing **Charlie Hutt** (7S) and **Jude Mason** (8H) both managed to get every single book and author correct! They will be receiving a prize from the Arden Book Vending Machine as a reward.

All week, pupils were seeking out the 60 Arden Bookworms amongst the staff to show that reading is not just part of English, it is something that people across all subjects can enjoy. We had so many pupils completing their bingo cards and finding out which of their teachers were Sci-Fi Lovers, Audiobookers, Escapists or Holiday Readers. Reading is fundamental to progress in education so it was wonderful for the pupils to see that it doesn't matter whether you love fiction or non-fiction, or whether you only have time to read for 30 minutes a day rather than 2 hours, because you are still doing something that will have a positive impact on your future prospects and mental health.

The week ended with a Literary Treasure Hunt through the English Department where pupils had to shoot an arrow like Katniss Everdeen from *'The Hunger Games'*, build a house of cards for the Queen of Hearts from *'Alice in Wonderland'*, find the hidden messages in *Charlotte's Web* and many more challenges. The English Department looked amazing in an array of costumes to kick-start lots of wonderful conversations about the books we love!



# F1 in schools

## Rocket Racing

"We found this an incredible experience. We entered and I was hit by a wave of noise. There were cars here, the track there, some photo boards by the wall. We entered our car for scrutineering and then left to set up the pit display. The pit displays were vivid, hi-tech and more advanced than we had ever expected it to be. We wandered around a bit, talked to some other pit display owners then were given the best hats we had ever worn in our lives. We then thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. We ended our adventure in a Wok and Go, where we dreamed about our ventures again for next year".



## Rhino Racing

"We had an amazing time at Aston University. It was such a great time competing and seeing the work of other teams. In terms of our competition as a whole we gained valuable skills in teamwork time and money management and also how to create merchandise and use CAD software while designing this engineering project. We loved doing the competition and would highly recommend this to any other people interested in engineering".

## Horizon

"As we left for Bristol, we were all very excited for the day ahead. We entered our car for scrutineering and then left to set up the pit display. The pit display was a standout piece compared to the other teams. It was disappointing that we didn't win the pit display award. As we are very proud of our pit display, and hopeful of getting a good score for the pit display. We wandered around, talking to other teams and some believed that the pit display was pro class and we were a pro team even though we were only development class. We then went back home after being very surprised by the competition and were disappointed that we did not get through but we will be back better next year in pro class. Overall, it was one of the best experiences of our lives to date".



## High Voltage



"When we got to school at 6:30 in the morning we were all tired. All getting in the minibus at 6:45 all hyped up we were ready to win. Arriving at Bristol at about 9:00 we were ready to win. Instantly setting up the pit display and getting ready. When we raced it went really well as Matt won all our races in total our car came in 5<sup>th</sup> as Matt had the fastest reaction time. Ready for the verbal presentation we went into the room and faced 2 problems. The internet we had connected to Matt's laptop from my hotspot had disconnected and Noah had forgotten about Jess so we had to incorporate her somewhere else. After that we went up to pit display judging that went quite well. At the design judging it went ok. After we waited for the rewards

ceremony sadly not winning anything but it was a good day overall"

## Swifter Racing

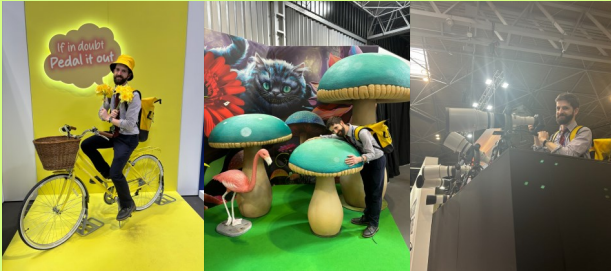
Throughout the process of F1 in Schools, we worked after school to achieve the final car and pit display in the time necessary. For race day, we had to arrive at school at 6:30 in order to get to Bristol on time. Once we arrived, we were set down at tables and witnessed what everyone else had created. It was incredible to see the effort that everyone had put in and our own pit display felt very up to standard. At the event, there were many people from similar groups and with similar ideas (and very similar team names). We were nominated for best pit display and managed to win 'Judges best choice'. Our goals for next year are to have a much lighter car when we move up to pro-class and improve our portfolios.



# Art department

## Photography Club Round 2

The second group of Year 10 students started their Photography Workshops, learning key camera and composition skills as well as how to create digital art using Photoshop. They really impressed us with how much technical knowledge they already had, and have started following some A-Level schemes of work already!

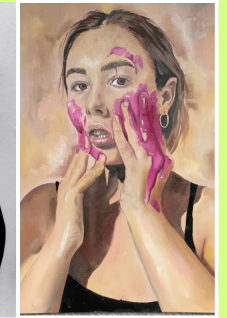


## The National Photography & Video Show

Year 12 and 13 Photography students and a couple of media students visited the Photography Show at the NEC where they spent the day attending personalised workshops, masterclasses and talks from experts in the field. They also saw the Photographer of the Year exhibitions and got some great ideas for their own projects! Mr Goldenfeld had a great time!

## Royal Academy Young Artists Submissions

We submitted some of our best GCSE and A-Level artist's work to the Royal Academy to be considered for their Young Artists Summer Show in London. We find out whether any have been selected in May- finger's crossed!!



## Solihull CEP Youth Board

A selection of our year 12 students joined the Solihull Cultural Education Partnership Youth Board where they have been given a platform to develop the creative community around us- watch this space to see what events they plan for our art, music, drama and media students!

## Y7 Monsters

Year 7 made some amazing recycled monsters for their homework, using materials super creatively to make a range of weird and wonderful characters!



# Ski Trip 2024

## Coach Journey:

The coach journey was simply fantastic. As many people may dread the coach journey, it was actually one of the best parts. The coach was just amazing, especially that one German McDonalds which was the best McDonalds I had ever been to. The atmosphere when everyone was excited to ski and even the ferry was extraordinary. Even though there were some minor disputes, the journey was overall fantastic and everyone was in a jolly mood. This coach is where you start to see a different, more bubbly side of the teachers that you haven't seen before, which was a joy to see. TRY NOT TO FALL ASLEEP ON MR. SINGH'S COACH as he is a master of mischief on this ski trip so be careful!



## Skiing:

The skiing in Austria was incredible; the ski instructors were very kind and knowledgeable when it came to the slopes. This meant every enthusiastic skier was welcomed to the piste through fun games and challenging exercises to enhance their skiing ability over the week. I found that these activities got me to really think about my body positioning whilst skiing and I became far more confident in my ability after the week. Though the skiing was very fun, by the end of the week everyone was absolutely shattered, and you could tell, as the journey on the way back was far less exciting than on the way there.

## Activities:

Quiz night was a blast, it helped me to see a new side to the teachers (especially Mrs. Mbofana) as well as having some very fun entertainment for the night. The odds may have felt slightly against us as team teachers were obliterating us, however everyone still achieved rewards which you will find out if you ever decide to go on the ski trip. Another exciting memory we made was the alpine coaster - it went so fast and gave everyone quite the fright (including Miss. Hyett, who could not stop screaming!) Though some nights were scarce of activity, the creative Yr.10s were capable of making their own fun activities. One in which including, discovering a secret disco room located in the basement that not even some teachers were aware of, that night consisted of blasting music out of the massive speakers, and raving out down in the basement with the fancy disco lights.

## Food:

The food was very nice; the soup really hit the spot for me after a long hard day on the slopes and the pasta was phenomenal. Some people complained about the food but sometimes you just have to let the haters hate because it was always the perfect meal after a heavy day of skiing with the perfect amount of energy and nutrients. One of my favourite parts of every ski day was the impeccable lunch that was waiting for our hungry bellies in the beautiful restaurants on the mountain with a lovely scenic view which gave us some great energy for the rest of the ski day.

## Disco:

Finally, the disco was definitely one of the highlights of this amazing trip with many exotic dances including: Mr. Singh's wonderful display of dancing skills which got everyone in a boogie mood, Rex's questionable act and George's flawless performance of "Ice Ice Baby" in which he did not miss a single lyric. With the perfect supply of sugary drinks to not give you a gigantic sugar rush, we kept this disco full of energy until it was time to sadly depart.

## Summary:

Overall, this trip exceeded our expectations by a mile and will probably go down as one of the best holidays I've ever been on; the memories that were made have brought this year's group more together than they ever have been. Everyone turned into one big community and had a laugh together, this then created new bonds as most people became friends. Whilst improving everyone's skiing ability so, so much. Thank you to Mr. Fletcher and all of the other marvelous teachers who took time out of their lives to bring this dream to reality!



Written by Ben Adams and Tom Fitzgerald

# Celebrating Creative Excellence: Y7 AIM High Poetry Workshop

On Fri 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb, Arden hosted an AIM High day with local poet, Emilie Lauren Jones. Year 7 students Daisy Keep, Sophie Richmond, Catherine R, Amelia Morris, Harley Wood, and Henry Javelleau-Hill, were chosen for their enthusiasm for creative writing. Throughout the day, they collaborated with peers from neighbouring schools, delving into diverse poetry styles and crafting their own poems.

One standout moment of the day was when Catherine R's poem was selected for publication in Brian Moses' prestigious poetry blog. The blog has had over 660,000 visits in the past 10 years and averages 100 visits per day in term time. Emilie Lauren Jones, the facilitator of the workshop, shared her insights into why Catherine's work stood out amongst the rest:

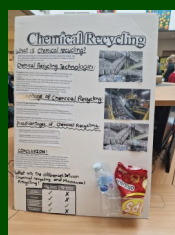
*This piece came about through our ekphrastic poetry activity where students' poems were inspired by pieces of art. Catherine continued writing and editing her poem over lunch time and this is the result. I loved the different phases of the poem as well as her use of repetition. The imagery is powerful and I related to the theme of finding hopefulness among the anxiety. I thought the way she described life as 'messy' worked really well and gave the poem a uniqueness.*

You can read Catherine's poem here: <https://brian-moses.blogspot.com/2024/02/a-poem-written-at-a.html>



## Science Fair

The Arden Science Fair took place on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March, there were over 20 entries from students with over 60 students involved in total (from all key stages). The students showcased their scientific models, investigations, creations and research, presenting projects to their parents and teachers. The student entries included the winner for Key Stage 5 which was a Cloud Chamber produced by Carrick Hayre, James Dowson and Gabriel Avery. The three went on to showcase a dry ice extravaganza with the help of Miss Campbell. The winning entry from Key Stage Four was from Billy Massey who gave a detailed presentation on the differences between different species of Rat Snake. His own pet rat snake Jackson stole the show. Finally, the winners for Key stage 3 were Shaan Bhopal and Ben Fowler who designed their own working miniature toilet to test how flushable wipes advertised as 'flushable' really are. Noah Henebury and Oliver Pirie were close runners up after designing their own robot and investigating whether it could lift its own body weight. All students involved put in so much effort and we were so proud to see them present their projects with such passion.



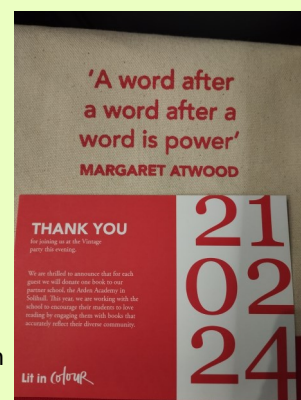
It was great to see so many of our students and staff embracing the non-uniform identity theme— you looked fantastic!

# Ambassador School for English Literature

We are an Ambassador school for OCR A Level English Literature. As a result of this status, we have already been sent 300 free books to use with our A Level classes – and some of our younger pupils – to promote reading engagement and to diversify the curriculum.

Also, as part of our Ambassador status, we have been fortunate enough to be selected as a partner school by the publishers Vintage. Vintage want to work with us to promote careers in writing and publishing as well as supporting our pupils as readers. They have already sent us a selection of ‘proof’ copies of new texts for our Year 12 students to read and then provide feedback. Despite our record of impressive exam results, both for A Level Literature and for the combined Language and Literature course, we are seeing a decline in pupils taken English A Levels and an even more marked decline in those going on to study English at University. We hope that our partnership with Vintage will enable more pupils to see careers in the Arts and creative industries as viable, attractive and important options.

Last month, Mr Lenton and I had the privilege of being invited to the Vintage annual party which was held in London. We were introduced to the managing director of Vintage who, in her keynote speech, explained how as a consequence of the partnership with Arden, they will be donating 350 free books to our school – one for every guest at the party. These books, as part of the ‘Lit in Colour’ programme, will be used to enhance and diversify our Year 9 curriculum and we are very excited to be able to share these books with our pupils. All attendees at the party – which included Neneh Cherry, BBC journalist Rory Cellan-Jones, Afua Hirsch, Howard Jacobson, Nazanin Zaghari-Radcliffe and Nigella Lawson – received a postcard, which you can see here, explaining the partnership between Vintage and Arden.



We are very excited to be working with Vintage and look forward to the interesting and enriching opportunities we know this partnership will bring.

## Revision trip

Year 13 students embarked on a trip to the Tutor2u conference, where they delved into A level workshops in preparation for their upcoming Business and Psychology exams. This insightful day proved instrumental in solidifying classroom knowledge and honing exam techniques. Led by experienced examiners, the workshops offered invaluable advice on optimising exam performance and addressed common pitfalls encountered by students nationally. The event was met with great enthusiasm by the 20 attendees, who appreciated the learning opportunity it provided.

## University insight

Dr Wendy Tabrizi from Aston University Business School came to speak to Year 12 students about the university and the marketing course in particular. She spoke about future careers in marketing, including how some students had gone on from placement years within their degree to work for the company that they were on placement with. The students were able to ask a range of question around the university and the course, giving them an idea of the expectations of university academic life.

The students said “It was really insightful to gain more of an idea as to what a Marketing degree involves”, with another saying “It was nice to be able to ask someone questions from a university, and have them answer them on a more personal basis”.





# Arden Students Triumph at Worcestershire Poetry Slam with Poignant Piece on Refuge and Friendship

Arden's Year 7 students Harlow Grant, Maksym Drachevskyi, Abi Reeves, and Zara Kaval were chosen to compete at the prestigious Worcestershire Poetry Slam, alongside Year 8 student Daniel Shooter who was initially co-directing alongside Miss O'Brien however, a last-minute dropout saw Daniel stepping in to lend his talents.

The performance unfolded with Daniel taking on the role of narrator. He set the scene for a poignant tale of a young boy, portrayed by Maksym, fleeing his war-torn homeland of Ukraine to seek solace in a new life in the UK. Upon arrival at his new school, he encounters Harlow, who is grappling with the harsh realities of bullying.

As the story progressed, the antagonists (Abi Reeves and Zara Kaval) turned their attention towards Maksym, offering Harlow a choice between being liked or being kind. After a persuasive poetic monologue from Maksym, Harlow chose friendship. United, they stood up to the bullies, who also chose friendship over unkindness.



Their performance delivered a powerful message of empathy and compassion. Competing against thirteen other schools and facing scrutiny from four poet judges, Arden's performance earned them a well-deserved third place.



The success of the performance was a testament to the students' hard work and dedication. In the end, Arden's students proved themselves not only as talented performers but also as advocates for unity and compassion whose message was clear: "Refuge: Celebrate Friendship. No Borders."

~ Miss O'Brien

## Paris Trip

During February half term 90 year 10 students attended a 3 night residential trip to Paris.

Students visited famous land marks such as the Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame, the Arc de Triumph and even found time for a spot of shopping on the Champs-Elysées. The trip was concluded with a visit to Disneyland.

Students represented the school to the highest standard and staff stated it was a pleasure to share the experience with them.

Massive thanks to everyone that supported the trip.



## Netball

The year 10's did superbly in a recent netball tournament at Alderbrook school.

Their scores were:

20-0 against Lyndon

16-0 against Heart of England

14-3 against Tudor Grange

18-1 against Alderbrook

17-1 against Langley.

Each and everyone of them played brilliantly. Great interceptions throughout the court and great shooting. The movement across the court was really good with great changes in direction and good foot patterns. They were great in changing the channel and the feeds into the circle were well timed and accurate.

Well done to them all! And especially well done to Imogen Ager in year 9 for playing with the year 10s .



## Go Lead...

The following girls recently attended a conference about girls football.

They focused on how we could develop and increase participation of girls within football.

Lottie Herbert, Taya Gudmonson, Adeliade Burke, Maia Danies, Emmie Spense, Emily Cox, Katie Scott, Gabi Anderson, Lola Peel, Darcy Garner, Maia Collet , Avian Quinn .

We are excited to see how the Arden Lionesses get on with this project.

## Ice Hockey star

We are thrilled to hear about Katie Anderton 's successful trials for the England Ice Hockey U15 Girls Team. She will be representing England in Lithuania in May—good luck Katie!



## Basketball star

We are also excited to hear about Luke Ager's promising basketball adventures. Luke was nominated for the aspire England talent pathway for basketball, back in November 23. He spent 5 days at skill camps/ trials for the under 13 age group. In December, there were 150 boys in his age group competing for a place and In Feb half term, he made it through to the last 20 boys and the final selection day—awesome Luke, well done!

## Football news

The U14 girls team are growing in stature and have reached the West Midlands Cup Final.

The Year 10 boys team are into the Solihull Cup Final after beating Park Hall in the semi-finals.

The Year 11 boys team are also in the Solihull Cup Final after they beat St Peters in the semi-final.

We will update you in the next newsletter about how these games go.

The year 8 boys football team have had an another excellent season so far. They went one round further and reached last 16 of the National Cup (losing 2-1 to former winners Thomas Telford School), semi-finalists of the West midlands cup, last 16 of the Birmingham cup but have reached the final of the Solihull Cup (they are reigning champions from y7). The team have continued to improve since the start of the season playing 11 aside now. The squad of players has also grown and notably Alfie Cox in defence has made a massive difference. Injuries have been an occurrence but others have stepped into the team and done well. The final will be played after Easter against Tudor Grange School. No date as yet. Well done to all the players and parents for your support. #BunsenBurnerFC

Dr Cannadine

## Indoor Athletics

Our Year 7 & Year 8 Indoor Athletics Teams have been busy at the start of their season. Both the boys and the girls teams in both years won the Solihull Championships and went onto the Regional Finals.

The Year 7 girls came 2nd and the Year 7 boys came 1st. The Year 8 girls came 2nd (by 1 point!) and the Year 8 boys also came 2nd. Huge congratulations to the many many students who took part and performed superbly.