



Parents' & Students' Newsletter July 2016

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Reasons to be cheerful....

As the end of term approaches, this is a chance to thank everyone who has, in whatever way, contributed to another incredibly busy and successful year.

Education has continued to have a high profile nationally (even if it has been overshadowed for the last couple of months!) and it's difficult to overstate the scale of the numerous changes that we are working through, with an incredibly tight budget at the same time.

So we could be quite grumpy but the reality is that the atmosphere round school over the past few weeks has been fantastic, with all sorts of successful and engaging activities and events confirming what a great place AHS is to study and work in. Visitors invariably mention the impression they get of a purposeful and fulfilling place whenever they spend time here. None of this happens by accident and huge credit must go to students, staff, parents and governors for your positivity, creativity and general drive over the past twelve months and during around one million hours of lessons.

I hope everyone has a great summer and returns refreshed and ready for another action-packed year in September. For students who have finished their time here, our very best wishes to you for the future.

Alan Rosen

Staffing news

As always at this time of year, we say farewell and thank you to our colleagues who are moving on.

Pride of place goes to Mr Olushola (Computing) and Mrs Roberts (Art) who retire after 24 and 22 years respectively at AHS. Also retiring are Mrs Lee (English) and Mrs Greene (Art), each after eight years' service, and we wish all four teachers a very happy retirement and thank them for all they have done during their time at AHS.

Mrs Bevan (Food/Textiles and Head of Year 12) and Mrs McGowan (Computing) are both moving with our best wishes to other posts after seven and six years respectively.

Miss Heninghem is leaving to concentrate on her Dance School after four years, and a special word of thanks for all of her successful work with Rock Challenge.

Farewell and thank you also to:

Mrs Bywater	Maths	Mr Fialho	English
Mrs Caddick	Biology	Mr Fitzgibbons	Design Technology
Dr Chamboredon	Maths	Miss Lovell-Smith	History
Mrs Coakley	Italian	Miss Mayerhofer-Sebera	English
Mrs Coen	Psychology	Mr Pilkington	Geography
Mr De Chenu	Maths	Miss Rowley	Biology

At the same time, we welcome back Mrs Waugh and Mrs Williams (and Mrs Bywater) after their maternity leaves.

Following Mrs Thorpe's departure earlier in the term, Mrs Crafts is taking over the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator role and we have also appointed a Learning Support Assistant to provide more 1-1 support to individual students.

Our Year Head and Pastoral Support teams for 2016-17 will be:

Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Mrs Jarrett	Miss Storrie	Mrs Rust	Mrs Taylor	Mrs Johnson & Mrs Waugh	Mr Ochiltree Miss Weir	Head of Sixth Form Head of Year 12
Mrs Ray: KS3 PSA			Mrs Faulkner: KS4 PSA		Mrs Sutton: Transition Co-ordinator Mrs Powton: Sixth Form Pastoral Assistant (from 1 September)	

We are just about fully staffed for September and I will introduce our new colleagues early next term.

Development Director

We are currently advertising for the position of Development Director, a new post created partly in response to the parents' survey that we carried out earlier in the year, so that we can focus our fund-raising efforts more effectively to have a clearer message to potential donors, including parents, and to engage with former students and other 'friends of the school' to strengthen the AHS community. Closing date is this Friday (15 July) and details can be found on the [AHS website](http://www.ahs.bucks.sch.uk).

www.ahs.bucks.sch.uk

Speaking of our website, we are busy finalising a refresh of the design. Essentially the same information will be available but with an even clearer layout. Look out for the new website by the start of next term and we would appreciate any feedback that you can offer.

AHS designated as a Teaching School

We were delighted to receive an e-mail at the end of June appointing us as a Teaching School. This is fantastic recognition of the quality of education that the school has provided over many years and gives us an important role in the Government's vision of a 'self-improving system' where, essentially, schools support schools rather than the old structure which was much more centralised and top-down. The role of the Local Authority in school improvement is likely to disappear, changing the set-up that has been in existence for many decades, and this will be even more the case with secondary schools initially.

National Teaching School
designated by



**National College for
Teaching & Leadership**

We are the only Teaching School in this part of Buckinghamshire (the others are in Amersham, Wycombe, Marlow plus one covering the whole of Bucks with a focus on behaviour) and we will spend much of the coming year establishing what our fellow schools want as we create a Teaching School Partnership to focus on a number of vital areas including:

- School-to-school support to enable all schools to be Good or Outstanding
- Initial Teacher Training (to recruit more, high-quality teachers into the profession using a variety of entry routes)
- Continuing Professional Development which will support key priorities such as leadership training, succession planning etc
- Appointment of Specialist Leaders in Education (SLEs) who will be able to train and support other teachers and schools in the areas of their specialism (which may be subject-based but equally could be behaviour or assessment, etc)

We have a lot of planning ahead of us, with local schools, the Local Authority and the other Teaching Schools in Bucks, but are thrilled that this is a great opportunity to develop the school as an active player in a completely different landscape.

National Support School
designated by



**National College for
Teaching & Leadership**

2015-16 – how have we done?

Since students receive a school report looking at their progress, perhaps the school should as well.

Our exam performance last year was very strong and this was recognised in the Government's Performance Tables (as well as by the BBC and newspapers who run their own tables).

Particularly pleasing were our Value Added scores, showing the effect of AHS on its students: At Key Stage 4, the old measure was 1036.8 (1000 is average) and performance by Pupil Premium students and those with lower Key Stage 2 results were also strong. The new measure, called Progress 8, is being trialled nationally this year and unlike most schools we chose to join the trial. Progress 8 shows that our students, on average, achieved grades around 0.6 of a grade higher than the average school per subject. Ironically, this score might go down this summer even if our performance stays the same, because other schools are changing their curriculum to improve their performance at Key Stage 4 (so the average will go up). In the Sixth Form, we were pleased with our Value Added score of +0.22 (0 is average) while feeling that there is probably scope for doing even better.

Admissions to Year 7 have been strong and we are admitting more from within our catchment, although we will continue to admit from outside the catchment for many years to come. The Transfer Test (which used to be called the 11+) continues to evolve from year to year and while no test is perfect there is a feeling that the changes we have brought in over the last few years have improved its fairness.

Staff and Governors have been evaluating our 2015-16 Improvement Plan (which outlines the priorities for the school each year); here is a very brief summary of the progress that has been made:

TL1: Quality of Teaching & Learning

We have been focusing on:
Smarter marking, increasing consistency within teams and sharing best practice between teachers.

Our system of academic and pastoral reviews shows that the overall quality of teaching is very strong; students are typically having enjoyable, challenging lessons, although there is always room for improvement. Marking is generally very effective although very time-consuming for teachers and not always done as consistently as we would like within and between subjects.

Next year this work will continue, with an added focus on setting the most effective homework.

TL2: Curriculum Change

Almost all subjects are in the middle of enormous curriculum changes; for many this is at Key Stage 3, GCSE and A Level at the same time, so considerable time has been spent on re-writing schemes of work and preparing for the new courses/exams. It is not as simple as simply replacing topic X with topic Y - the expectations for each subject have changed considerably so much time has been spent understanding the changes in style and demands (eg the mathematical content in non-maths A Levels, the expected level of spelling, punctuation and grammar in each subject, the place of practicals in science subjects).

In 2015-16 we changed our Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and Sixth Form Curriculum models to ensure that our students were studying the right mix of subjects for the new exam structure.

TL3: Data

GCSE letter grades have been with us since 1975 (A to G, with A* added in 1994), while the National Curriculum used levels 10 to 1. Last year the government introduced the idea of 'Life without levels' at the same time as the new GCSEs were designed to use grades 9 to 1.

We decided to use these changes as an opportunity to have a consistent system of assessment for Years 7 to 11, so 2015-16 has been about converting our old systems. While there is still work to do on making sure that everyone understands 9-1 and that subjects are able to use assessments to inform future work, considerable progress has been made.

At the same time, we have trialled a new style of reports (with Year 7) with the aim of them being more informative and also easier for teachers to complete.

TL4: ICT in the Classroom

We have made great progress in exploiting the features of our Google-based system to support teaching and learning, two examples are the use of Google Classroom for collaborative learning and using on-line forms for options choices and surveys.

Staff have been able to make use of (secure pages of) the website to greatly improve communications, eg form notices, weekly bulletins, room changes etc which has been very successful.

Our iPads are being well-used and we are likely to be buying more devices (probably tablets rather than iPads) in the near future.

TL5: Outreach

We have run some very successful projects in partnership with primary schools, involving our staff and Sixth Form students running activities for (eg) Year 5 pupils that have supported the work being done in primary schools.

Staff have also been linking with other schools for a number of initiatives.

We have welcomed twelve girls from China for 11 weeks in the summer term, and have an exchange with Sweden for the first time.

TL6: Developing Students'...

[...Confidence] The Cabinet have done a fantastic job in promoting confidence in public speaking this year.

[...Careers Provision] The careers programme has been expanded and we have had popular and informative lunchtime talks from a wide range of professionals.

[...Resilience] The Penn Resilience Programme has been extended into Year 8 and we are currently evaluating its impact.

P1: RIFT Year 2

Staff teams have again been focusing on RIFT (Right First Time) – doing things sufficiently well and on time, eg completing reports and taking good care of the premises.

P2: CPD to focus on...

The priorities for Professional Development this year have been:

- Curriculum change
- Leadership
- Pastoral/SEN/EAL awareness
- ICT in the classroom
- Improving the quality of teaching

P3: Consider Teaching School Status

We have been running three activities involving other schools, focusing on leadership and the quality of teaching.

We submitted a bid to become a Teaching School (see elsewhere in this newsletter).

R1: ICT Systems Development

We installed a new (faster) Internet connection which includes better control over filtering.

Staff are able to access more services on-line and they have organised their resources accordingly.

We have been investigating major improvements to our wireless network which will be implemented over the summer holidays.

R2: Strategic Review

The Governors have been reviewing AHS's long-term educational and financial position.

We have continued to manage our budget very carefully in a challenging financial climate.

We have looked at plans for fundraising, surveyed parents, and will be appointing a Development Director shortly to take this forward

Following the completion of the much-needed refurbishment of Science we have carried out a full analysis of premises sufficiency, suitability and condition to identify the priorities for the next few years.

Aylesbury High School Improvement Plan 2015/16

Governors' Committees

TL: Teaching & Learning

P: Personnel

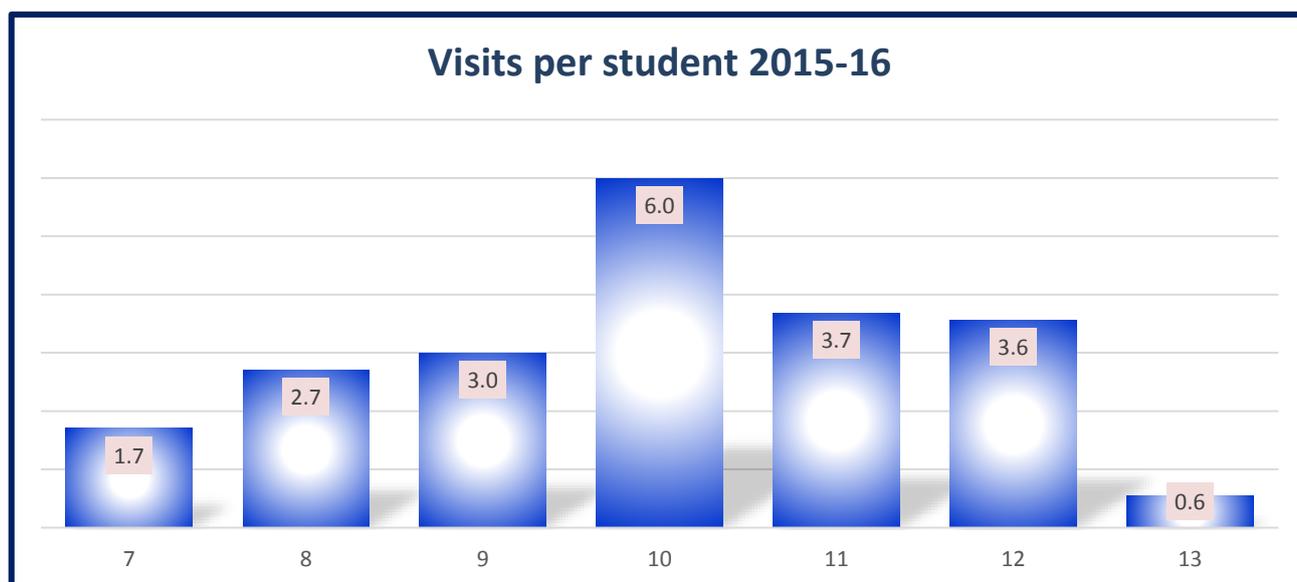
R: Resources

This term we have been developing the priorities for the coming academic year – as always there will be lots to do! Our plan will be published at the start of next term, but expect several of the themes above to continue to keep us busy and they will be joined by a focus on the Sixth Form and our designation as a Teaching School.

Trips and Visits in 2015-16

Total number of visits	111
Total number of students	3883
Total number of days	202
Total number of participant days	8235

Top trip providers (not including local trips/fixtures):
PE (35), DofE (9), Exchanges (7), D&T (6), Science (6)



Term Dates 2016-17 - reminder

Please note that these are not necessarily the same as other schools.



Term	First day of term	Half Term	Last day of term	Other days to note
Autumn 2016	Monday 5 September	Monday 24 – Friday 28 October	Friday 16 December	INSET 1: Thursday 1 September INSET 2: Friday 2 September INSET 3: Friday 7 October
Spring 2017	Wednesday 4 January	Monday 13 – Friday 17 February	Friday 31 March	INSET 4: Tuesday 3 January
Summer 2017	Wednesday 19 April	Monday 29 May – Friday 2 June	Friday 21 July	INSET 5: Tuesday 18 April Bank Holiday: Monday 1 May

The Giving Machine

Are you doing any on-line purchasing this summer?

If so, could you spend a couple of minutes registering at

www.thegivingmachine.co.uk?

Companies such as Amazon, John Lewis, W H Smith and M&S will all make a donation to the AHS, **at no cost to you**, if you go via The Giving Machine to buy anything.

It is completely pain-free so please do sign up before you reach for your credit/debit cards!



Please spread the word to anyone who attended AHS about fifty years ago

AYLESBURY HIGH SCHOOL 50th YEAR REUNION 1966 - 1973

Hope you can join old school friends to share memories on

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 3rd 2016

14:30 onwards at Hardwick Village Hall HP22 4DZ

Champagne Afternoon Tea

Tickets £8 at the door

And afterwards at the Bell Pub for dinner if you want to stay on (partners welcome)

RSVP to hilaryjbrian22@gmail.com (Hilary Wilson)

Summer 2016 GCSE and A Level Exam Results

We are changing our system for distributing exam results this year.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18 A Level	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 GCSE	26	27	28
29 (Bank Hol)	30	31	Sep 1 (INSET)	Sep 2 (INSET)	Sep 3	Sep 4
Sep 5 Start of Term					AUGUST 2016	

Results will be sent to students' school email addresses on the two results days at approximately 7 am. The results sent out will show overall grades but will not show unit marks; students who need more detail will need to come into school to collect their printed results.

If there is any problem with the e-mails going out, we will post a message on Twitter (@AylesburyHigh) and students will need to come into school to collect their results at the time stated below. Results cannot be given out over the telephone. Paper copies of results can be collected from school between the following times:

A Level Results - Thursday 18 August

Y13 only	9 – 10 am
Y12	10 – 11 am

GCSE Results – Thursday 25 August

Y11	9 – 10 am
Y10	10 – 10.30 am

Year 11 students will be sent a link to an on-line form to confirm their intentions for 2016-17, including subject choices. Anyone who wants to discuss their choices is welcome to come into school on the following days:

Thursday 25 August	9 am – 3 pm
Friday 26 August	9 am – 3 pm
Wednesday 31 August	9 am - midday

After midday on both results days, any stamped, addressed envelopes will be posted. Any uncollected envelopes will be kept in Reception until the start of the Autumn Term. No student's results will be released to any other person (including parents/relations) without a signed letter of authorisation from the student giving permission for her results to be collected by that person. A text message is not acceptable.

Parking restrictions in Turnfurlong and around school

After eight years of campaigning, I am pleased to report that new parking restrictions took effect recently, with a much more coherent approach to enable parking where it is sensible to allow it, while protecting the residents from thoughtless parking that has sometimes brought the area to a standstill.

The main changes are:

- Introduction of controlled parking further up Turnfurlong to deter commuters and those working in the town centre as well as school students, without banning parking completely
- Double yellow lines on corners which avoids parking that makes traffic flow very difficult
- Better protection of school entrances with zig-zag marking
- Better protection of the coach park exit

Local residents are grateful for the improved markings, but continue to be troubled by inconsiderate parking, including by parents dropping off and picking up students, so can I ask that everyone is both considerate and legal in the mornings and afternoons. This particularly applies to Walton Road, Highbridge Road and Turnfurlong.

A further reminder that we can't accommodate parents' cars on site at the start and end of school. However, for parents' evenings and performances etc we are very happy to have parents using the car park by the Sports Hall and our other car parks, wherever spaces are available.



New PE kit

Over the past few weeks we have been canvassing opinions on potential new PE kit. We have been looking for kit which is smart, modern and more comfortable for the students, and in doing so encouraging better participation in sport. It also needs to be easy to care for at home and be affordable. As a bonus, the new kit would also be used in dance and drama lessons. We have presented two options using modern breathable fabrics and, in short, the response has been very positive with everyone agreeing that new kit would be very worthwhile. Consultations have included the PE department, students, an open parents' event and the AHSA. There was a 65% to 35% stronger preference across all those canvassed for the kit supplied by Sportswear International (Kit A for those who took part in the consultations) and we will now work with them to finalise the designs. One idea that came out of the consultation included changing the logo to a white one which we will do, and there were some helpful comments which will influence what will be compulsory and what will be optional.

The intention now is to put a programme together to introduce the new kit for September 2017 for new girls. The existing items of kit will be able to be worn by our existing students until they leave the school, with items from the new range available when replacements are needed, so for a period we will have a bit of a mix and match in PE lessons!

Thank you to everyone who helped with the consultation process.