

Editor Ms G Adamou



# AVS Newsletter May 2023



# Message from the Head

Dear Parents and Carers,

Back in January 2023, I decided to contact The Avon Valley School (AVS) to take up the offer of a tour with Miss Davies as part of the recruitment process to find a new Headteacher for the school. During my first visit to the school and meeting Miss Davies, I was also able to meet students and staff and have a good look around AVS. Everyone I met spoke passionately and positively about the school and the community. I saw students behaving well and working hard in lessons and it was clear that AVS is a special place to learn and work, where students have incredible opportunities to thrive in their education.

The visit to AVS left a very positive impression and it inspired me to apply for the role of Headteacher for September. During the subsequent two day interview process in February, the community's vision and passion for the school was evident. It was a pleasure to be able to get to know the school community even more including governors, staff and students. When I was offered the role by Chair of Governors, Mrs Gilbert, I was honored, accepted immediately, and I am now incredibly excited by the opportunity to lead AVS from September; building upon the excellent work by Miss Davies and the entire AVS team.

Joining AVS will be my second headship as I am currently the Principal at a comprehensive secondary school in Nottinghamshire where I have worked for the past 13 years. During this time, I have also had the opportunity to lead school improvement work in a number of other schools to help support colleagues in other contexts. As a result, I will bring with me significant experience, skills and knowledge which will stand me in good stead to lead the community and ensure that AVS continues to progress into the future, further strengthening our reputation as an excellent school.

As a leader in education, I am committed to the belief that education has the ability to inspire individuals to fulfill their potential. It is our duty as educators and parents to ensure that our children are encouraged to learn and develop so they can become well-rounded citizens who have the knowledge, skills and qualities for their future. Becoming a well-rounded individual is fundamental in this process, so I am devoted to the principle that all young people should have the opportunity to explore their interests and have access to the many wider opportunities that a school can offer; including trips and visits and extra-curricular activities. These personal beliefs as a leader also align completely with the AVS values, vision, ethos and culture that is already well established.

I am very conscious that a change of Headteacher for our school is a significant transition for the AVS community. With this in mind, my priorities in preparation for September will be to work with Miss Davies and other staff so that I have a good understanding of the schools journey to date, to make sure that the school is ready for the new academic year in September. I have already met several times with Miss Davies and other staff and governors so that we work together on ensuring a successful transition and ensure that what we already do really well continues seamlessly!

Engaging with parents and the wider community will also be a firm priority for us as part of the transition period. I would encourage all parents and carers to contribute to our future parent voice activities. Your feedback and views are extremely valued so that we can work collaboratively as a community, and ensure that we are 'Together on our Journey to Greatness'.



Finally, I would like to thank Miss Davies for her incredible service to AVS over the years. I'm sure that the community will join me in acknowledging her true dedication and excellent leadership and will wish her well for the future at the end of this academic year.

Blake Francis  
Headteacher Designate







# Volunteer It Yourself

Volunteer It Yourself is an organisation that challenges students to learn a trade and gain employability skills by helping to fix local community spaces and places in need of essential repairs and improvements.

This week, a handful of year 9 students have been volunteering their time at the Bradby Club in Rugby, they have been working with professional trades people to paint and decorate the club.

Students will gain a City and Guilds Qualification, in addition to learning decorating skills that will be of value to them in later life. Students have had a fantastic opportunity to develop their employability skills; communication, problem solving, working with others to name but a few.

All of the students involved have not only done the school proud, they have done themselves proud too. They have worked very hard to perfect their new found skills and contribute to a very worthy cause.

Well done to, Ellexie Butler, Faith Challenger, Icee-Lyn Gonzales, Caide Isreal, Matthew Lovegrove, Nicholas Mason-Drust, Patrisia Pescu and Connie Wallis.

**Mrs L Owen**

**Careers Lead**





# TEXTILES



It has been a busy few months for our Year 11 students who have been completing their GCSE NEA portfolios, as well as preparing for their final practical exams. For the NEA project, each student chose their own theme(s) and presented an A3 portfolio of work, alongside their final pieces. These ranged from dresses and corsets to wall hangings and cushions.

For the externally set task, each student chose from a supplied list of themes, researching and developing their ideas before completing a ten hour practical examination!

There were such a wide range of different practical outcomes this year, demonstrating a broad selection of textile techniques and a huge amount of creativity by our talented students. Congratulations to the class of 2023! It was fantastic to see all of your hard work out on display; Well done for all of your grit and determination.



**Mrs Jesson**

**Subject Leader - Textiles**

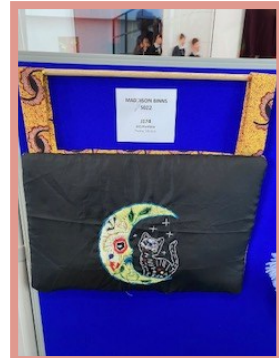
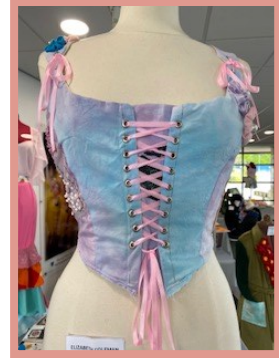
**Achieve**







# TEXTILES



# Achieve

**Mrs Jesson**

**Subject Leader - Textiles**







# TEXTILES



Meanwhile, in KS3 our younger students have been working on smaller design and make activities, including decorating Tote bags inspired by the Day of the Dead festival, creating juggling balls using their own tie-dyed fabrics and designing fabric landscape wreaths inspired by the Austrian artist and architect Friedrich Hundertwasser. It has been lovely to see their creative and colourful responses to these projects.

Feeling inspired? then why not watch the new series of the Great British Sewing Bee which starts on Wednesday 24th May.

For now it's "needles up" until the next newsletter update.

## Year 7 Tote bags



## Year 8 Juggling balls



*Mrs Jesson*

*Subject Leader - Textiles*







# TEXTILES



## Year 9 - Hundertwasser Landscapes



*Mrs Jesson*

*Subject Leader - Textiles*

## The Great British Sewing

### Bee - Series 9

Episode 1 Of 10  
Wednesday 24th May 2023  
21.00

The episode sees twelve brand new sewers follow the pattern for a twist top, transform office wear and create cut-out, made-to-measure dresses.

## Donations

If you are having a clear out at home and have any Textile items that you no longer need/want. Why not donate them to the school.

Items such as wool, buttons, old tablecloths or sheets can all be used within the department.





# Rail Industry STEM Day

## Engaging Railway STEM Day

Year 9 students have recently taken part in a hands on STEM day focusing on the rail industry.

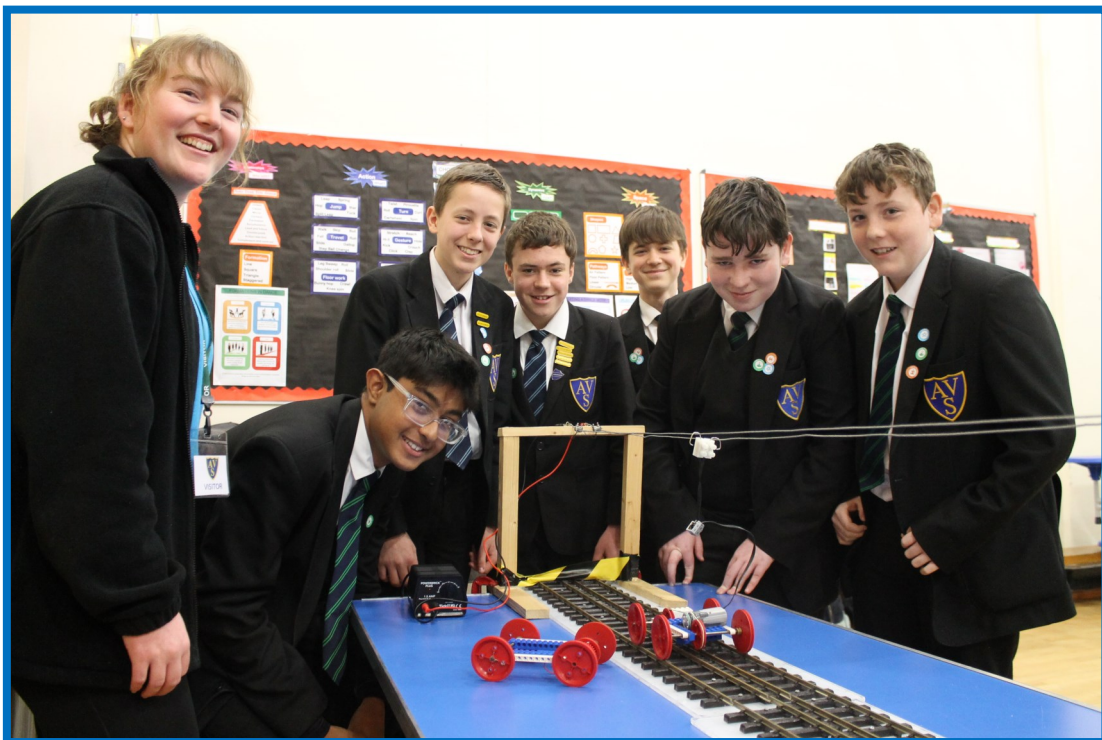
As part of the full day's activities, students took part in a range of tasks that included designing a railway station, and experimenting with pulleys and gears to enable a train model to move efficiently - this was then tested on a model track. The students were also tasked with delivering a presentation about the findings from their activities.

The engaging STEM day was made possible through The Heart of England Community Rail Partnership who have partnered with the Smallpeice Trust to deliver an exciting science, technology, engineering, and maths (STEM) programme to secondary school students across Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull.

Funded by CrossCountry Trains, the five year STEM project aims to provide students in year 9 to year 11 with STEM days, visits to offsite rail locations and rail careers events.

Andrew Mushing, science teacher and STEM coordinator, said: "The day gave our students the opportunity to put what they learn in the classroom into action within a real life scenario. This gives our students a real insight into where a range of science based subjects can take them in the future, and how these subjects apply to everyday life."

***Mr D Phelan - Achievement Leader - Fortune***







# Psychology News

## GCSE Psychology

We are often baffled by the behaviour of others. Why people lie, why people betray friendships or don't help a person in a time of need.

Studying GCSE psychology is an excellent way for students to gain a foundational knowledge of how the human mind works, understand social behaviour and human development.

## Year 10

Year 10 students are currently studying social influence; a unit they are very much enjoying! They have been looking into obedience and conformity, assessing whose instructions they follow in society and why. We have also studied the process of deindividuation, whereby we have a loss of personal self-awareness and responsibility as a result of being in a group and the behaviours we may exhibit as a result of this.

Students will soon be moving onto studying bystander intervention, along with key psychological studies by Piliavin et al. (1969) on the 'Good Samaritan' phenomenon and the case of Kitty Genovese in New York.

The aim of Piliavin's experiment was to investigate whom we are more likely to help when in need, and how we make those decisions based upon both situational and personal factors.



Students will also look at controversial experiments by Milgram (1963) and his study into obedience to authority figures through the administering of electric shocks, and the work of Zimbardo et al. (1973) on prisoner-guard conflict in a simulated prison.



The unit is a fantastic eye opener for students on the impact of others on our own behaviour.

Year 10 have also recently studied neuropsychology, looking at the structure of the brain and the integral role each part plays. They have researched potential brain differences across the sexes and the impact of neurological damage on the brain, such as prosopagnosia – face blindness, and trauma.

Students have been constructing brain hats in order to learn about the structure of the brain and the role of each of the lobes.



Year 9 - Psychology is one of the most interesting and dynamic fields in the world currently which in part is due to the growing awareness of mental health issues.

In year 9, students are currently studying psychological problems as an introduction to mental health issues, the significance of these challenges and the impact they can have on society.

They have looked at unipolar depression, the characteristics of addiction and theories underpinning these such as genetic theory and social learning theory.



*Miss K Waudby*

*Faculty Leader - Social Studies*

*Subject Leader - Psychology, RE & PSHE*





# Athletics Success

In March, six year eight boys won the Rugby Town Indoor Athletics Competition hosted by Harris School. As a result, the boys went on to represent East Warwickshire at The County Athletics Competition, vying against many big schools!

In April, the boys came fourth at Solihull Sports Centre, narrowly missing out on medals. It was some achievement indeed, especially given the scale and strength of the opposing schools. Mr Dignum and the whole PE department are very proud of the students' impeccable behaviour and their manners on the day, but moreover the determination and resilience they have shown.

Well done to: Jordan Thompson, Alfie Gibson, Harry Stobson, Tom Gladman, Tom Ouchouche and Harley Daysh.

*Mrs L Jackson*  
Faculty Leader - Physical Education







# KS3 Public Speaking and Debating Competition Trip

On Tuesday 25th April, Houlton School hosted their first debating competition and AVS were invited to participate in the event.

Six students from Year 8 were brave enough to take on this exciting and educational challenge. By debating topical issues, trying out different competitive styles of public speaking in front of a large audience of peers and judges, and debating in teams with other local schools, the students had the opportunity to cultivate a myriad of skills.

Six other schools from Rugby took part in the multi-round competition, all aiming to gain the maximum number of points in each round. We were pleased to be awarded points in every round that we entered during the day, and even managed to get through to the finals.

Unfortunately, we came a close second this time, losing to home team, Houlton!

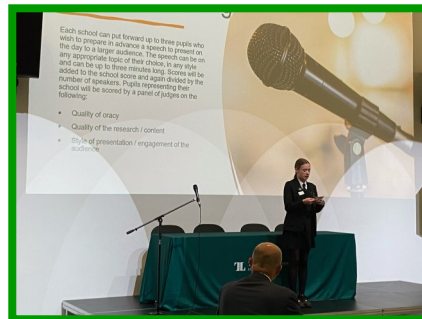
Well done to both the "For" and "Against" teams!

*Mrs Greatrex*

*Library Assistant*



the



**Grace Pallett, Mia Harris, Heidi-Lee Mariott, Naomi Mba, Isabella Silver-Vallance, Brooke Da Silva & Mrs Greatrex**





# Warwickshire Secondary Book Awards Trip

On Thursday 23rd March, seven students from Years 7 and 8 attended the Warwickshire Secondary Book Awards 2023 held at Kings High School, Warwick and hosted by the Warwickshire Schools Library Services team.

Each of the participating students had read a short listed book set and joined in various book talks and discussions at school before attending the Final Award Ceremony.

We were lucky enough to meet two of the listed book authors in person, and watch two others virtually by video link during the ceremony itself. We managed to get some signed copies of the books for the school library and had a group photo with the authors too.

In addition, there were various student competitions running during the event and one of our AVS students, Beatrice Swaffield, won the drawing competition. She recreated her favourite scene from one of the short listed books, 'The Summer We Turned Green'. Well done to all!

**Mrs Greatrex**  
**Library Assistant**



## Aspire







# Careers News

## Careers events this term

- ◆ Coventry Law school spoke to students about topical issues and studying law at university. Rebecca Gladwin-Geoghegan, the Associate Head of School for Recruitment and Marketing commented that, 'My students were all surprised at how rewarding they found the experience and were impressed at the participation from your students'.
- ◆ Dr Tan a STEM ambassador spoke to a select few of our year 8 and 9 students about his career path as an engineer.
- ◆ Jason Cleaver came in and talked to a small group of year 7 students about working for Microsoft.
- ◆ Students have been improving their employability skills by participating in the many events arranged by staff at AVS, public speaking at Houlton, leadership assemblies and teamwork during the successful year 9 STEM day.



Well done to all who got involved.

## Work experience Y10 updates

We are currently finding it challenging to find the necessary number of placements to guarantee that your year 10 child can take part in work experience week. Therefore, I am asking if you could begin to help your child to find a placement. Furthermore, if you are able to offer work experience at your workplace, I would be interested to hear from you.

Very soon, we shall be providing details about our new virtual work experience offer and our Talk & Tour workplace visits for year 10.

## Notice to parents

The careers team will shortly be inviting all parents to complete a Google form to help us evaluate the careers programme that your child has experienced at The Avon Valley School. Your participation and feedback would be greatly appreciated.

If you would like to take part in the AVS careers programme by giving a virtual talk, offering a work experience placement or would like to receive further information about post 16 destinations / applications, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Owen ([lowen@avonvalleyschool.uk](mailto:lowen@avonvalleyschool.uk)) or Mr Ogali ([cogali@avonvalleyschool.uk](mailto:cogali@avonvalleyschool.uk)), or you can view the information available on the school website:

<https://avonvalleyschool.uk/>.

The careers section of the school website is located at <https://www.avonvalleyschool.uk/> under the tab Student Life.

**Mrs L Owen**

**Careers Lead**





# Art News

Year 11 have worked so hard this year on their GCSE Art work. It was the first time since COVID that the external set task has been reintroduced.

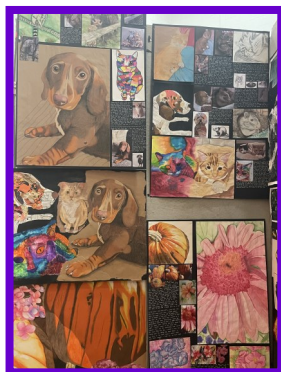
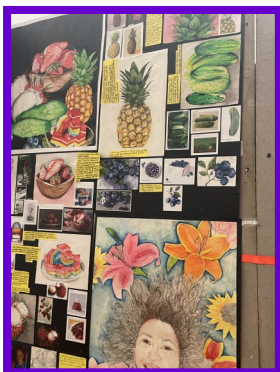
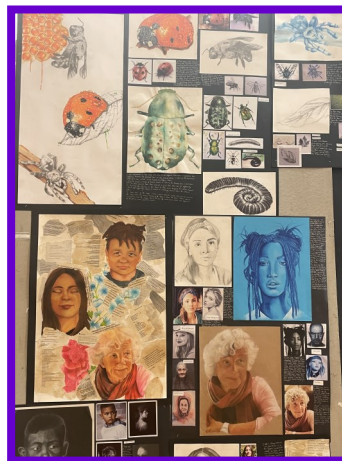
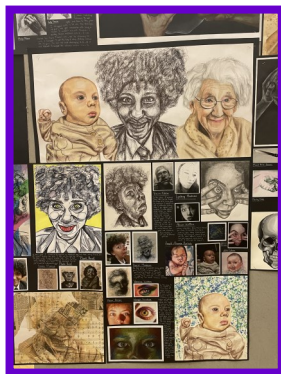
Students were given a choice of five different themes to choose from, including Surface Texture, Agriculture, The News, Journey and Isolation. Students have created some interesting work based on their own personal art journey and then completed a 10 hour exam. We are all so proud of the work the students have done.

Students have also done a great job in completing their coursework, where students were given free choice of their themes.

We saw a whole range of ideas, from portraits, butterflies to buildings and cars. Students have looked at over 100 different artists, working in a range of media and techniques to create fabulous bodies of work. It has been an absolute pleasure to mark 70 different art projects over the last few weeks, seeing all of the hard work the students have put in over the last 2 years. Well done Art Students of 2023 - you did it!

**Mrs J Smart**

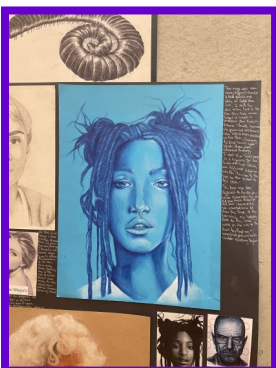
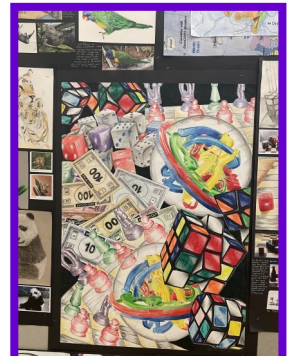
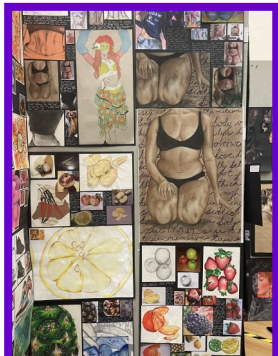
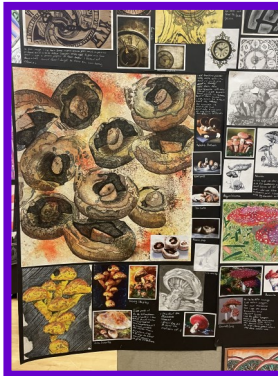
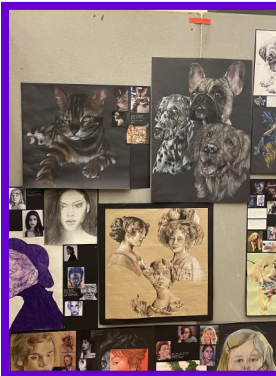
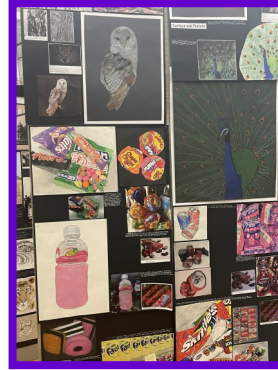
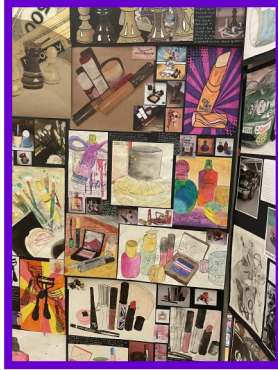
**Faculty Lead - Art and Technology**







# Art News







# King Charles III Coronation







# King Charles III Coronation





# Design & Technology

## News

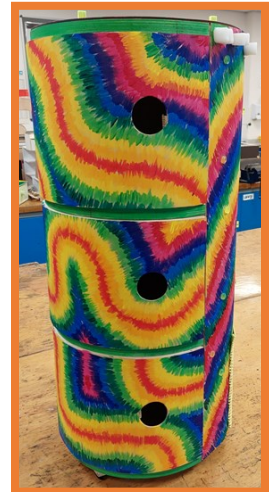
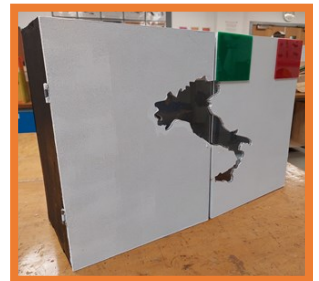
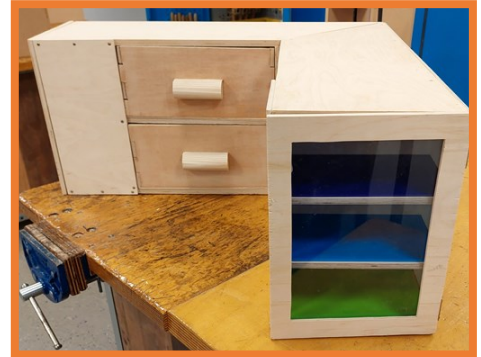
Another year passes with our year 11 students having been kept super busy by another set of challenges. We have had 8am starts and 6pm finishes, but, to see the end results it is always worth it.

Every June the exam board release three challenges for our students to investigate. This year, they were asked to look into either 'Travel', 'Rapid changes in Society' and 'Design is more than just problem solving'.

These challenges are intended to really make our students think about problems surrounding them and to work with a client to come up with a solution. There have been a wide range of proposals this year, and it is great that every year I see so many different products being designed and manufactured.

We have seen everything from aesthetically pleasing hospital storage solutions, to an emergency survival kit for use if a family were to lose their home in a disaster. The thinking skills of the students has been excellent, and the external examiner was complimentary of their work when visiting the school. However, this only represents 50% of the overall qualification and now as our year 11s time at AVS comes to an end, we are working hard with them to ensure they are prepared for their two hour written exam. We wish them all the best in their future studies and chosen careers.

Do remember if you require any further information about Design & Technology, then please contact me at [jmurphy@avonvalleyschool.uk](mailto:jmurphy@avonvalleyschool.uk)



**Mr J Murphy**

**Subject Lead**

**Design & Technology**







**Do you work in an industry relating to Design & Technology?**

**If so and you or your company would be willing to donate offcuts of wood, plastic or metal then please get in touch.**

**If you work in the card industry and in particular deal in corrugated card and have offcuts of material then please also get involved. We would like to set up links with outside companies to see how you may be able to support our department.**

**Please contact Mr J Murphy – Subject Leader for Design & Technology at [jmurphy@avonvalleyschool.uk](mailto:jmurphy@avonvalleyschool.uk)**





# Leave of Absence

The Supreme Court recently reached a decision in the case of *Platt v Isle of Wight Council* which has clarified the law on unauthorised leave, including holidays, during term time. The parents of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that they attend school on a regular basis. The Supreme Court has made clear that attending school 'regularly' means that the children must attend school on every day that they are required to do so. As such, the parents of any child who is absent from school without authorisation for any length of time are likely to be considered as committing an offence under s444 of the Education Act 1996.

Head Teachers retain the ability to authorise leave in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. When considering such requests for a leave of absence, the school are obliged to act within the law. Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. If the leave is granted, head teachers are able to determine the number of school days a child can be absent for.

It is for the Head Teacher to decide what is 'exceptional' and it is at their discretion if the circumstances warrant the leave to be granted. The school can only consider Leave of Absence requests which are made by the 'resident' parent.

*Each application for a leave of absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.*

Where applications for leave of absence are made in advance and refused, the child will be required to be in school on the dates set out in

the application. If the child is absent during that period, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence, which may result in legal action being taken against the parent(s), by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Failure to make an application for leave in advance can also result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued to the parent(s).

All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service, part of Warwickshire County Council

**It is important to note**, Fixed Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each absent child, (for example 2 children and 2 parents, means each parent will receive 2 invoices in the amount of £120 each, totalling £240 for both children, this is reduced to £60 per child if paid within 21 days).

Where a Fixed Penalty Notice is not paid within the required timeframe as set out on the notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal proceedings under S444 Education Act 1996.

Fixed Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Warwickshire County Council's Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices.

**Your child's progress academically as well as socially is our shared priority**







# Dates for your Diary

## June/July/Sept

29th May - 2nd June	Half term
5th June	All students back to school
5th June	1 OGG2/Gg - Rivers Fieldwork Trip
5th - 8th June	Bradby Club Refurbishment Trip
9th - 12th June	Year 7 & 8 Paris Trip
12th June	1 OB/Gg - Rivers Fieldwork Trip
14th June	1 OD/Gg - Rivers Fieldwork Trip
15th June	1 OGG1/Gg - Rivers Fieldwork Trip
16th June	Year 10 Geographers Bristol Trip
19th June	Prefect Interviews
30th June	Year 11 Prom
3rd - 7th July	Year 10 Work Experience week
5th - 6th July	Year 6 Induction Days
13th July	Awards Evening
20th July	Sports Day
21st July	Splash Day/Activity Day
25th July	Last day of term finish at 12.35pm
5th September	Year 7 & 11 in school
5th September	Year 7 Photographer in school
6th September	All students in school





# WW1 Soldiers Workshop

Year 11 GCSE history students recently came face to face with Great War soldiers as part of a hands-on learning experience.

As part of their preparation for their GCSE history exam, which takes place in just a few weeks' time, the students took part in a workshop with First World War experts, David Allton and Richard Townsley, from Frontline Living History. In the two-hour long workshop, the students learned about developments in medicine and the treatment of wounds from the Great War.

The students learned about the types of wounds suffered by soldiers serving in the trenches, and got hands on with the equipment and weapons that would have caused those wounds over 100 years ago. During the sessions, the students had opportunity to handle relics from the period including both British and German rifles and hand grenades, a trench mortar, shells, and battlefield shrapnel.

Alison Moore, the school's subject leader for history, said: "Our students study a fascinating module called medicine through time, a section of this focuses upon World War One. It was brilliant to see the module come to life for the students in the session that was delivered by David and Richard. It's not every day that our students get to hold artefacts that their great, or even great-great, grandparents may have held and used".

Headteacher, Alison Davies, said: "Our students were thoroughly engaged throughout the session delivered by Frontline Living History. As a school it's always good to welcome external speakers to work with our students, as this really does bring their learning to life. David and Richard were fantastic and our students gained a lot from their workshop."

**Mr D Phelan**

**Achievement Leader - Fortune**

