



Alleyne's

A C A D E M Y

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Staffordshire  
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NEWS FROM DEPARTMENTS  
&  
YEAR GROUPS

Autumn Term 2017

## **KEY STAGE CO-ORDINATORS**

### **Year 9 - Mr C Whalley and Mr A Goodfellow**

The new Year 9 intake have had a very positive start to life at Alleyne's Academy. They have settled in very well and I am optimistic that they can go from strength to strength throughout this academic year. The attendance for Year 9 is 96.7%. This is a very encouraging statistic and is proof that the transition process with middle schools during the summer term was successful. The form with the most 100% attendees (19) was acknowledged in the praise assembly.

The first set of Year 9 monitoring data was for Attitude towards Learning (ATL) only. 203 students received a total of 318 'outstanding' ATL judgements and 1342 'good' judgements. This represents a fantastic start to the year. The Year 9 team will continue to work hard and put strategies in place to maintain this positive Attitude towards Learning trend. At the end of half term 1 we held the praise assembly where the top performing students across numerous areas of academic life were recognised and received prizes. Text messages have also been sent out by Mrs Hewson to all those students who have received Good or Outstanding ATL grades in every lesson so far.

The school has now subscribed to the Duke of Edinburgh programme again, with a brilliant uptake in Year 9, with initially over 40 students expressing interest. Over the course of the next month, students will be introduced to Duke of Edinburgh and the different elements required to achieve the award.

### **Year 10 - Mr P Farnworth and Mrs C Powell**

Year 10 have made a positive start to the year and are engaging well with their options subjects after being able to select them at the end of Year 9.

We have already had our first praise assembly lead by Mrs. Powell; a great opportunity to celebrate the success of the pupils. Prizes were awarded for the following categories: Attendance; Attitude towards Learning; School Spirit. In addition, praise letters have been sent home to those achieving 5 or more 'outstanding' grades on last term's monitoring. Text messages have also been sent to parents/carers where a student has consistently been awarded a Good or Outstanding grade during lessons. This new initiative is designed to recognise those students who may not achieve a praise assembly award.

Year 10 have had one minuted School Council meeting, following the appointment of new school representatives from each Tutor Group. The Council have appointed two representatives for the School Parliament which will take place during the autumn term.

Looking forward to the events for the next few months, Mrs Mansfield is busy preparing for the Year 10 Annual Christmas Market to raise money for the Teenage Cancer Trust. Mr Eldershaw is working hard to support the placement of students in a suitable work experience position which will take place during February 2018.

## **Year 11 - Mrs H Broadist and Mr B Molloy**

It has been a busy start to the year for Year 11. They returned from the summer break to the news that they had done fantastically well in their RE GCSE. I am sure that this will spur them on for the year ahead.

Just before half term Year 11 took part in a careers morning. This involved a talk about future options in the theatre by Mr Tweats and then the opportunity to research different careers and the path that they need to take to ensure that they reach their chosen destination. Some of the students who are interested in apprenticeships were invited to a work shop by 'ASK' who gave them the chance to ask questions and register interest for future apprenticeships.

The students are already working hard to make sure that they achieve their potential next summer by attending the many revision clubs we offer here at Alleyne's. They are also working towards their mock exams in January. A great start to their final year!

A great start to their final year!

## **Sixth Form**

### **Year 12 - Miss M Rees**

This half-term has been a busy start to a busy year for Year 12, with students acclimatising to life within the Sixth Form. Many students have settled into their courses well and are showing a good start to their new qualifications. Some students have changed courses, and some have returned that initially left; however students are now settling into the content of their subject.

Year 12s have also had their first "settling in" parents' evening, which was well-attended, with teaching staff having that first opportunity to touch base with home and discuss the progress of students on their courses. The feedback received from this, from both staff and parents, has been positive, helping parents to understand the demands on their children within their education.

Within the first half-term we have met with the student council, of which each year groups have representation, discussing various topics and hearing some enlightening feedback from the pupils.

We are now focusing on the Christmas Mocks, with students having been issued revision information from teachers to ensure that they are best prepared to proceed with their further education. Students have also been given exam timetables, complete revision lists and any additional information regarding their exams, which will also be shared with parents in correspondence home.

Students have engaged with a wide range of enrichment opportunities, with many students opting to work with lower-school classes, whilst others have been more adventurous in their selection, finding voluntary places within the community, such as at the Citizens' Advice Bureau. Students have also been introduced to their work experience, and are beginning to organise places in preparation for January.

The Citizen 3C programme and the NCS programme have been offered to students as well as the Duke of Edinburgh Gold award; an excellent opportunity to advance skills, explore the countryside and aid

their local community. Approximately 10 students are currently interested in the award, and will be introduced to the different elements shortly.

This has been a fantastic, positive start to the year which will hopefully continue.

### **Year 13 - Mr R Haydon**

Year 13 enter the year on the back of some promising results in the Mocks last summer. Many students have commenced their UCAS applications with six students completing this by the Early Entry deadline for courses in Medicine and Veterinary Medicine with some looking at Oxbridge destinations. Others have spent the summer researching their options at different Universities or at alternative routes such as Apprenticeships.

A new prefect team has been appointed with 25 representatives on this team. The team worked well at their first official engagement on the Open Evening showing themselves to be the excellent ambassadors to the Academy that they are when showing parents around the school on the night. Head Boy (Thomas Hales) and Head Girls (Catherine Jones and Ella Williamson) also spoke on the evening to give an insight on student experience at Alleyne's and did so with great maturity.

Sixth Form Council has also been elected with each tutor group represented. The first meeting has taken place and work has already begun on some of the issues raised. Such a positive student engagement is hoped to be at the heart of the Sixth Form.

Academic studies have also begun with a focus on Mock examinations in December. With many students setting themselves goals for the future they are well motivated to achieve. As such they are using their time well to engage with their subjects completing Independent Learning activities alongside their lessons.

Outside of lessons many students are engaging in enrichment activities helping in lower school or other voluntary based activities. On Wednesday afternoons others are participating in sports activities. Both the football and rugby teams have progressed in the County Cup with wins against the Cheadle Academy (4-1) in the football, and, Wolverhampton Grammar (34-17) in the Rugby. Well done to all concerned.

15 students also received Student of the Month awards for September as well as postcards being sent home to celebrate their achievements. Early plans with regard to the organising of the Prom at the end of the Year have already been set in action.

Overall, a busy but positive Half Term to start the Year.

## AROUND THE DEPARTMENTS

### **Expressive Arts Faculty - Mr S Butler (Head of Faculty)**

#### Art

Once again, students achieved excellent exam results in the Art department and were very pleased with the outcomes of both GCSE and 'A' Level pupils. The end of year, annual moderation exhibition was curated in June and July and gained high praise from examiners and observers alike! I encourage everybody to keep an eye out for art work displayed throughout the school; it is of an extremely high standard.

Below: A sample of work, showing a range of ability levels.



Year 9 pupils have settled into their studies successfully and are currently studying their Formal Elements and GCSE introduction work. Our exam courses continue to excel whilst integrating new specifications and marking criteria. This obviously includes the new 9-1 grading system and, for the first time, pupils developing their GCSEs from Year 9, instead of Year 10.

The Art Department Sixth Form trip to Liverpool took place in July and pupils gained strong experience in the analysis of art work and development of ideas, for their A Level portfolios. We visited The Walker and Tate Galleries.



After school and lunchtime art clubs continue to be very popular and we are embarking on our annual art installation for the Stone Advent Windows project. This is in its eighth year and we have supported it from the beginning. In addition, the Stone Town Council Christmas Card Competition is due to be entered shortly.

## Drama

Rehearsals are going well for this year's school play 'Grimm's Fairy Tales'. We have an excellent cast following an audition process and even have Sixth Formers broadening their skills and taking some lunch time rehearsals. We are hoping to create a 'twist' on the usual happy endings by fusing live music, a haunting set and physical theatre.

Year 10 are busy devising a piece of theatre to be examined on 8th December. The stimulus was board games and the metaphor of life being a game. They are considering fate and chance.

Year 11 have been studying the play 'Noughts and Crosses' and are about to embark on their practical assessment based on John Godber's 'Teachers'.

Year 12 are busy devising a piece of theatre based on the stigma behind mental illness. This will be showcased to a live audience. They are enjoying the new AQA specification.

A range of trips are being planned. A recent trip to see 'Antigone' at the Lowry was 'thwarted' due to an accident on the M6!



## Music

Across Year 9, pupils are partaking in projects which form an introduction to GCSE and touch, briefly, on specific areas of study that will be covered in more depth across Year 10 and Year 11. The students have settled well and a pleasing learning environment has quickly been developed from the start of September.

A lovely group of enthusiastic and willing Year 10s who have started the term with a 'Riffs' project that allows the teachers to determine the capabilities of pupils. This, in turn, allows us to develop specific areas of study, based on individual's ability. The students have settled in well and seem to very much enjoy being in Music.

Year 11 groups have started very positively and are working hard. We are in the process of finishing 'Film Music' and will then move on to 'Conventions of Pop'. Once this is completed, we will commence a programme of revision and will be working on finalising coursework, ready for submission.

### **Business/ICT Faculty - Mr S Eldershaw (Head of Faculty)**

There have been a lot of changes to the department for the start of the new academic year. Most notably we have seen the introduction of Computer Science into our already thriving portfolio of courses, taught by Mr Millington. We have a group apiece in Years 9 and 10 and we hope to see them progress into Sixth Form by offering A Level Computing for the first time in 2019. We are delighted with the start to the new academic year and I am pleased at how well Mr Millington has settled in. Both he and Miss Newnes are establishing themselves quickly, getting to grips with the methods of our Faculty and building quality relationships with students.

We are proud of the fact that we continue to offer a wide range of courses to help the Academy provide a broad and balanced curriculum, with new courses in Years 9 and 10 for both Business and IT helping to complement the new Computer Science course. We are hoping to balance the new GCSE 9-1 Business course for Year 10 with the Technical Award BTEC Business course. We hope that we can help as many students as possible to achieve the highest possible grades, although we are aware that it means extra preparation time and marking for subject staff. Mrs Chadwick in particular has been a huge help, using her vast knowledge of BTEC courses and moderation.

We have completed numerous trips already, with Year 10 Business students completing their annual trip to Drayton Manor Park, Year 10 Computing attending sessions at Stafford College to use their Lego technology room and the Young Enterprise team embarking on their latest journey to represent the school at the World of Wedgwood. We find those types of experiences to be very important to help build relationships with students, and Mr Millington and Miss Newnes in particular have enjoyed getting involved with the Young Enterprise teams and helping improve the overall experiences of our dedicated students. We are also working hard to facilitate the Work Experience scheme with both Year 10 and 12 and December is the deadline for those students to register their placements, therefore allowing us to risk assess and complete the pre-checks.

### **Design and Technology Faculty - Mr C Bailey (Head of Faculty/Assistant Headteacher)**

The Autumn Term began with the Faculty celebrating its summer 2017 GCSE departmental results. We are extremely pleased with all areas of technology; this year again highlighted Technology as one of the top performing faculties here at Alleyne's.

Fifteen of our Technical Award BTEC Catering students were chosen to attend a specially designed careers day at Stafford College. We have some extremely talented catering students who wish to pursue this subject at Post 16 level and the day enabled learners to experience a full programme of professional activities to showcase opportunities for those Alleyne's students wishing to consider this career. This is organised as part of our PHSE programme and overseen by our food department.

The Technology Faculty will again be playing a huge supportive role in the Young Enterprise scheme. Year upon year we see great success for the teams in this area. Our skilled teaching staff are able to help facilitate the design and manufacture of products which go on to achieve national recognition in this exciting Business run venture for young designers from Alleyne's.

The Faculty's GCSE catering exams took place in November this year and these continue to prove successful as our talented students work with skill and creativity to produce their own unique culinary delights to impress both teaching staff and exam board alike.

The 2017 Year 8 Open Evening in September was an incredible success with many parents and students showing an interest in Technology. Mrs Allen, assisted by Mrs Paige, presented a superb display of food for our visitors. The interactive activities saw many students and parents engaged with the practical element of food and catering. Mrs Allen was assisted by our Year 11 talented students who helped to provide delicious refreshments for all, whilst Mr. Marsh was busy promoting both Graphics and Product Design to students of our feeder schools – ensuring the continued success of the Faculty.



Alleyne's technology students have a reputation for success and for reaching the final rounds of the National KMF Design Competition. We are extremely pleased to again be taking part in this prestigious event which this year sees students faced with the challenge of not only building, but racing a hand-built racing car! All Year 10 technology students have been encouraged to enter and to have fun with technology - just fifteen places are available and the race is on to secure Team Alleyne's. The competition offers an excellent opportunity for students from Alleyne's to showcase their engineering talents against other technology students from across the county and receive recognition for their creativity, skill and competitive edge. A huge thank you must go to KMF for continuing to sponsor this event.

As the first half-term drew to an end, we continued to monitor our students closely using SISRA data; this on-line system allows us to carefully target any students who may need additional tuition or specific intervention to ensure they reach their full potential. The Technology Team is to be praised for its ongoing commitment to helping students outside of school hours and for the support given both during lunchtimes and after school. Mr. Marsh has already run several weekly after-school Product Design and Graphics Clubs, whilst Mrs Allen and Mrs Stenson are delivering regular coursework sessions on alternate nights.

We used the Sixth Form Open Evening to show students and parents that we are an approachable team of specialist teachers who enjoy excellent relationships with both pupils and parents. Through working closely with parents of not just our sixth form students, but also lower school too, we ensure a supportive and positive study programme for all technology learners.



## English Faculty - Mrs R Rutter and Miss D Hunt (Joint Heads of Faculty)

Following the celebrations of another year of excellent results, we have set aside some time to act on the knowledge we now have from the first round of this new exam board specification. At GCSE we had a series of exam papers re-marked and interestingly the vast majority of these students have improved their grades. This has again supported us in developing an even better understanding of how to ensure that our students are successful in the terminal exams, as we have called-for a focus group of exam scripts and are using them as a means of Continuous Professional Development within the department. We will be using these texts to support learning in lessons and as exemplar materials. At A Level we have also sent for exemplar scripts from our students, as this is also the first exam series for the new specification, and this will also be most helpful in our teaching and learning. In response to the results in English Literature A Level, and following a lot of contact and guidance from the exam board to strive to improve this year, Mrs Mansfield has attended a course run by OCR to further our knowledge and understanding of the demands of the non-examined unit; something which has already positively impacted on the students' coursework.

In September, the new Year 9 cohort completed their Reading and Writing Baseline tests. The department was very pleased with the way in which they conducted themselves in exam conditions. The purpose of these exams was to allow us to see not only which skills they already know, but to see how they could perform under pressure, especially so early in the new school year. As a whole, we were very pleased with the results.

From the baseline tests, we can see that the Year 9s are settling in at Alleyn's very well indeed. They have adjusted to life in a high school and are completing tasks with enthusiasm and commitment. Teachers are working through The Gothic scheme of work and are seeing some brilliant short stories that show their creativity and passion for the topic. Many of the students like to monitor their progress and ask the teacher to read parts of their story throughout the task, which is very pleasing as it shows that they are enjoying the lessons. Teachers are also completing tasks on *Of Mice and Men*.

This academic year, we have also introduced a third teacher to the Year 9 long term plan, whose responsibility is literacy. In this new structure, there is an intensive literacy lesson for an hour and this is done once a fortnight. This is proving to be successful as the skills they are learning and revising can be seen in their work throughout the rest of the department, and in an effort to improve whole school literacy.



On Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> November, Year 13 students and a small group of gifted Year 11 students were given the opportunity to carry out independent research at the British Library in London. As part of the A Level English Language and Literature courses, students study the way language changes over time and the importance of context respectively for their final examination. Alongside visiting the "Treasures" gallery, which features important historical texts, students also visited the "Harry Potter: A History of Magic" temporary exhibition. This tracks the theme of magic over time and also includes artefacts connected to the Harry Potter books and films.

We have many exciting opportunities for students to see performances of Shakespeare this year, thanks to the Royal Shakespeare Company beaming productions live to schools around the

country. Students are able to watch the performances in our very own theatre, enriching their understanding of Shakespeare's work without the cost of travel. A Level students had the chance to watch "Julius Caesar" in November, Year 11 will be watching "Macbeth" in April and "Twelfth Night" will be shown to selected Year 9 students in March, with the feeder schools invited as last year.

Our English and Media Club has been a successful new addition this year. At this club, students can work on their English Language skills through exploring different media texts. Over the past half term, the group have produced work using Christopher Nolan's 'The Dark Knight' as their inspiration. The group has been well attended and we were very grateful to them for their support on Open Evening where they came to speak to parents and showcase the work in the department. This club has proven to be useful for many students, especially those who might struggle in English, as they can take time to develop skills for their exam in an interesting, fun and relaxed setting.

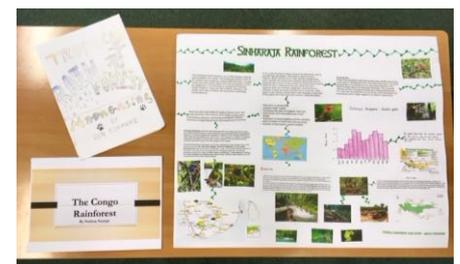
The English extra-curricular booster sessions have also seen increased attendance from a range of groups in Year 11. This group gives students the opportunity to attend the session and work with department staff on the topics and texts they would like more help with. So far this year, we have seen a large amount of students attending to catch up on missed work; go over feedback in a one-on-one setting; make revision tools and even get ahead on the next texts they will be studying. The feedback from these sessions has proved invaluable. Based on the comments made by students, we intend to offer Macbeth revision sessions and transactional writing sessions for boys using real-life scenarios over the coming terms.

### **Geography Department - Mr S Blood (Head of Department)**

As we begin another new academic year in the department, we continue to cope with a great deal of change but do so off the back of a great deal of success. We are now entering the second year of both the new GCSE and A Level specifications. Both continue to require the ongoing development of new lessons and resources from all members of the department and we are working tirelessly to achieve this. The success comes from the achievements we made last academic year particularly at GCSE and A Level. Both courses witnessed improvements in the grades and pass rates achieved. At GCSE this improvement was for the second year in a row and at A Level the success was significant.

The summer results at GCSE rose from 71.2% A\*-C (Summer 2016) to 72.3% this year. We are incredibly proud because the Year 11 cohort was again a staggering 130, so as a department of only 3 staff, we had to work extremely hard to keep them all focused on achieving their full potential. We continued to provide tailored revision, holiday revision sessions, and set many past papers to support their progress.

This success has once again impacted our uptake at A Level with initial numbers of 20. This has since grown as we started the year to 23, due to a new student joining us from another college and two students switching subjects to join us. They are currently covering topics in relation to tectonic hazards and globalisation and will very shortly begin topics on rebranding places and coastal processes. All students have returned eager to succeed and are becoming aware of the new



**Year 9: Rainforest Case Studies – October 2017**

challenges posed by this now new and more rigorous specification.

Our final A Level results from the old specification were very impressive with our A\*-A% up 40% on last year's results and the A\*-B% up 47% on last year. This cohort were extremely committed to the course and succeeding. We are all extremely proud of their efforts that have now led to all of them achieving their first-choice university courses, studying subjects such as chartered surveying and geography with business management, to name but a few.

Year 13 have spent the summer working on their NEAs which are due to be submitted and marked in December. We have also run a series of revision groups spread over after school and lunch time sessions to help to prepare students for their mock exams. We are also continuing to utilise the parental group email set up last year to keep parents informed of the support we are offering, and the expectations required of the students so that they remain fully aware of their child's workload and progress.

The current Year 11 groups have returned with a good level of focus and many with good RE results from Year 10, which has given them a boost. We have recently returned from an overall successful series of 3 fieldtrip visits to New Brighton. Here, in line with the requirements of the new specification they investigated two questions - 1. How has change to the urban area of New Brighton increased opportunities for recreation and entertainment? 2. Are the coastal management strategies at New Brighton effective? They have since returned to write this work up. We are also running a series of revision sessions to support the students ahead of their mocks in January.



**Year 11 – Rio Urban Project – September 2017**

At Year 10 our numbers are strong once more with 126 students opting for the subject from Year 9, leading to a good-sized cohort and 6 groups, which is evidence of our continued fantastic work. Regardless of this being a new specification they have started strongly and they are all very committed and focused so far from what I have seen in my lessons and the feedback I have received from within the department.

Year 9 have arrived this year, having made their option choices in Year 8 at the middle schools. This is so that they feed into our new 3-year GCSE programme. The cohort total is 102, which makes up half of the year's total cohort, so we are very happy. The course is also much more suited to being run over 3 years, so this has given us much more time to develop key concepts in more detail.

We had been working hard since our return to finalise the Iceland trip and have just returned from it with our biggest number of students to date (52). We once again had another amazing time and immensely unique experience. The students witnessed the northern lights, experienced 3 earthquakes recording 4.2 on the MMS, they scaled a glacier, crossed a plate boundary, walked behind waterfalls and relaxed in geothermally heated streams. We all immersed ourselves in once in a lifetime experiences that I am sure students and teachers alike will never forget!



We have a newly qualified First Aider in the department, having taken part in the 3 day “first aid a work” course, which is essential with trips like Iceland becoming much more popular, and field work remaining a key focus at both GCSE and A Level.

Overall, with a significant improvement in our results compared to National for the second year running, numbers across the Year groups generating high numbers once more, staff in the department remain excited about continuing to deliver the new specifications and we all hope that this is set to be yet another exciting year for the Geography Department.

### **History Department - Mrs J Davies (Head of Department)**

The most significant change facing the Department since the start of the academic year has been the shift to the three-year GCSE in Year 9. The subject has been popular among Year 9 and there are five classes running. We have begun with our study of the First World War, as many students are familiar with this topic. It is therefore a good basis with which to begin the more advanced study which GCSE requires. The new GCSE course is also very challenging with the amount of content that there is to cover, as we are currently finding with Year 11. The fact that Year 9 will have three years to study and then revise this course should therefore be extremely beneficial for student progress.

Year 11 will be the first cohort to sit the new GCSE examinations. They are currently studying Elizabeth I and the topic seems to be very popular with our students! Mrs Davies has been running revision sessions before the mocks, targeting exam technique.

In Year 13, students worked extremely hard in the first half term completing the first draft of their Non-Examined Assessments on the Tudors. These essays are approximately 3,500 words and these drafts were very impressive. Students have since had one-to-one meetings on these drafts and are now working on further improvements.

The department is looking forward to the mock season. While groups regularly complete short class tests, this year, students will sit full versions of the papers that they will face in the summer. This should provide them with valuable experience of working under the time pressures of the examination, writing for the extended period which is required and insight into the challenging nature of the full versions of these papers. This can only benefit student progress in the final examinations.

### **Maths Faculty - Ms M Justice (Head of Faculty)**

Excellent GCSE results in the summer saw the department excited for the new term. With 9-5 at 63% (5<sup>th</sup> in county) and 9-4 at 82% (7<sup>th</sup> in the county).

We continue to start lessons with either Numeracy Ninjas or Corbett Maths 5 day and follow the lesson routines of previous years. Homework continues to be set weekly with assessed homework every 4 weeks and a monitoring test each ½ term.

## Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) - Mrs V Durand (Head of Department)

Our new Year 9 students have settled well in the Department and they are already showing enthusiasm and motivation with the “book cover competition”. The competition was opened to both languages and we had the privilege to invite Mr Butler (Head of Expressive Arts Faculty) to be our judge. The winners were for Spanish: Ella Chapman, Daniel Mignonelli and Owen Fielding and for French the winners were Sally Moorcroft, Annelie Rawsthorne-Durand and Freya Hatton.

Spanish book covers:



French book covers:



At the moment, raffle tickets are being distributed for students in all year groups who are actively engaged in lessons and working to the best of their ability.

The Department has had a successful open evening for Year 8 in September where students’ work was on display along with the Department’s resources. Parents and future students had the opportunity to meet some of our Year 9 who asked to attend the meeting to support the Department: Ellis Nevitt, Annelie Rawsthorne-Durand, Annie Reynolds, Josh Parry-Thomas, Ellie Hickling and Rebecca Harratt (Year 10) we also had the assistance of a Sixth Former: Tom Smith.

This year we have 4 students participating in the Staffordshire-Limousin Exchange. The pairing will take place on Saturday 10-12am during a meeting with the Exchange coordinators. Students are already excited!



### **Physical Education - Mr S Powell (Head of Department)**

*Girls' Football* - Year 9 team won the Stafford and District mini-tournament.

*Cross Country* - 3 students have qualified to represent the District at the County Championships by virtue of their placing in the top 10 of their age group in the District Championships recently held.

They are:

U18 Boys - Bill Chesters (Year 12) who finished 1<sup>st</sup>

U16 Boys - Luke Powel (Year 10) who finished 2<sup>nd</sup>

U14 Girls - Amany Williamson (Year 9) who finished 4<sup>th</sup>

*Rugby* - in the County Cup competition our Year 10, 11 and Sixth Form teams have progressed to the next round having comfortably beaten their opponents in round 1.

*Football* - again in the County Cup competition Years 11 and Sixth Form teams have made it through their first match, but unfortunately Years 9 and 10 both went out in the first round.

### **RE and Social Sciences Department - Mr R Haydon (Head of Faculty) and Ms T Aughey (RE specialist teacher)**

The new academic year began with the success of the RE GCSE last year when the current Year 11 (last year's Year 10) achieved some excellent results. Students achieving the top marks (A\*/A) were the best we had achieved in recent years. Both students and staff were congratulated on this overall effort. The challenge has now been set to Year 10 to achieve the best results they can on the new GCSE specification. Currently students are working hard for their mock examinations in January to ensure they are well placed moving forward and aware of any areas they may need to improve.

Year 9 have also started their study in RE on the GCSE course initially completing their introduction to the course with enthusiasm. It is hoped that they hit the ground running as they start their study of the two main religions and their beliefs as a foundation for the rest of the course.

We also now have groups within Year 9, 10 and 11 studying Health and Social Care at Level 2. All groups have made a positive start with both their lessons and coursework as they begin their journey within this subject area.

Similarly, in the Sixth Form, Year 12 students have made a positive start to A Level courses in RE, Psychology and Sociology. They have approached these new subjects with a willingness to learn new concepts and theories and importantly are developing their independent learning skills to aid this process. They too will undertake their initial set of Mock exams in December. Year 13 are progressing well and entered the year on the back of some promising Mock results last summer. Many students are completing their UCAS applications to follow courses within our subjects and this is testament to their enjoyment of their studies. Health and Social Care is also now part of the Faculty with a group in Year 12 studying for the Applied General BTEC Extended Certificate or Diploma at Level 3.

Overall, a positive start to another exciting year in prospect. Staff and students looking forward to the challenges ahead.

## **Science Faculty - Mrs R Eldershaw (Head of Faculty)**

Mrs Eldershaw is delighted to have now officially passed on the Sixth Form baton to begin her new role as Head of Science. We would like to welcome Mr Jack Mayland (Physics) and Mr Elliot Taylor (Biology, temporary post) to the department, who have settled in well already. In place of the departed Mr Paul Salt, we have an acting Second in Faculty, Ms Nikki Boumford, and this post will be reviewed in the New Year.

Students have made a positive start to the year in Science, and this year we set the Year 8 transition students a challenge, to research and produce a poster on any topic within the field 'Earth and Space'. This is the first time we have done this and we got a superb number of students who entered their research project (over 40 entries) and a winner will be announced, with prizes, for the Year 9 Christmas assembly.

Year 9 students have now commenced their GCSE studies and we are hopeful that by providing more time for this course, in the subsequent years that follow, we will have more opportunity for students to feel confident to complete the triple Science qualification. Year 9 students also completed baseline tests in Science in September, to allow us to assess their relative performance, and students have been moved to more suitable groups in light of the results. We do of course review groupings on a regular basis.

As a Science Hub School for AQA we will host three network events for the region again this academic year. We hosted the first session in November this year and gained even more information regarding the new 1-9 grading system, which comes into effect for this year's Year 11 students.

Year 12 and 13 have planned and prepared for their December mock examinations, and we targeted Year 13 students who we will direct to attend additional Year 12 lessons (Focus 13 scheme) to allow them to revise the Year 12 content for the mocks.

In November, Ms Boumford took a group of A Level Physicists to Manchester to attend a series of lectures at Science Live and Mr Mayland is currently exploring some possible trips for Year 9 in early 2018, so watch this space!

From members of Year 13, one person has applied for veterinary medicine, with several others completing entrance examinations for medicine. After improving our departmental results again in August 2017 I look forward to keeping you updated with more progress and improvements in 2018.