

Aston Academy

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Principal: James Graham BSc (Hons), PGCE

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Striving for **Excellence**
Empowering Achievement
Shaping **Learning**

Dear Parent/Carer,

Another Friday arrives and a busy school week ends. The week started for us with a very well attended Y5/Y6 open evening. We welcomed enough families to fill our assembly hall twice. It was wonderful to welcome so many new families as well as parents who already have children at Aston Academy. My staff and I were especially proud of the number of Aston Academy students who supported the evening - as tour guides, subject experts and general helpers. In my opinion the best way to learn about school culture is to spend time with the students. The fact that we had so many students for the evening confirms how strongly that culture is beginning to shine through. If you attended the evening and would like a further chance to visit to ask questions, see the academy or observe some of our routines please contact using via transition@astonacademy.org and we will be glad to welcome you.

That invite goes to parents of children already in the academy - you are most welcome to come and see what we are up to.

Sticking to the theme of students making a difference to our academy, over the past year we have worked hard to improve the leadership opportunities available to our students. We already have a great tradition of producing sports leaders, we then have opportunities to volunteer, as well as activities that promote leadership such as our bronze and silver Duke of Edinburgh courses. To enhance further we have been busy implementing student councils and senior student leadership groups. The student leaders have opportunities to feedback to myself and other staff on student life at Aston Academy. This could include ideas for changes, feedback on our routines and improvements they would like to make.

Our leaders have also had the opportunity to take part in academy events and support at community events, representing the academy. For example, this weekend some of our student leaders are supporting the Revd Jo Reagan and the Swallownest Baptist church celebrate its 150th year. It first began in Swallownest 150 years ago with a small gathering under a tree! Our student leaders will be there to help welcome guests and serve tea/coffee at the church on Saturday 4 October between 2:30pm-4:30pm. We are eager to support our community with events such as this so please let me know if you would like some of our amazing students to help out.

To provide further meaningful leadership opportunities for our students, the following students undertook the SSAT Student Leadership Gold Award. This involved creating a portfolio of examples linked to their leadership skills. During the summer holiday their submissions were successful and all

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students achieved Gold. They are now able to use their leadership skills to recruit younger students and develop the leadership team even further. A big shout out for Y10 students: Izzy Craig, Sophie Barber, Ryale Mutsengi & Elisha Zindonda



NGRT tests for Year 8 students (begin 6 October) and Year 9 students (begin 14 October) are fast approaching. The students have completed these tests previously, so please reassure your child, as we will, that they are nothing to worry about and no preparation needed. An NGRT test or New Group Reading Test, is a standardised, online assessment that measures reading comprehension and decoding skills through two main parts: sentence completion and passage comprehension. It is used to monitor progress, and provide targeted support by comparing a student's Standard Age Score (SAS) to national averages. The test is adaptive, with questions automatically adjusting to the student's ability, and it provides instant results and suggested reading support strategies.

The test will give us a reading age and an indication of where our students currently are at with their reading ability; this enables us to direct any further support or intervention that may be required, whilst also stretching our most able readers. Our reading data is a very pleasing picture already because we prioritise and value reading across the academy. We are excited about our next set of reading data to see how much progress the students have made since their previous test in April.

Thank you for your continued support with reading. Please continue to encourage your child to read for pleasure as much as possible. We have many audiobooks and eBooks to borrow by clicking [here](#). The website gives instructions on how to download the ePlatform app. Your child can read books or listen to audiobooks via their smartphone.

We have had a very successful Reading Week this week; the theme has been real life events containing fiction and non fiction texts. New for this year is a dedicated bookshelf in the library that contains the novels included in reading week, giving students the opportunity to read the full text.

'Reading is the gateway for children that makes all other learning possible.'

Barack Obama

A reminder to all parents and carers that we have some calendared school closures fast approaching. Please see below:

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- INSET day on Friday 10 October -The school will be closed to all students. Aston Academy will be hosting teaching staff from Swinton Academy and Shirebrook Academy to work on the theme of oracy. We will be focusing on key vocabulary, effective questioning to build resilience and social confidence.
- Disaggregated day on Monday 13 October - The academy will be closed to all students and staff. We will open gates again to welcome our students back at 8.10am on Tuesday 14 October.

Finally, another reminder that the quickest and easiest way to make contact with the academy is through the email addresses below. Please make a note of the addresses most useful for you and your child:

Year Teams

Y7: aa-y7leadershipteam@astonacademy.org

Y8: aa-y8leadershipteam@astonacademy.org

Y9: aa-y9leadershipteam@astonacademy.org

Y10: aa-y10leadershipteam@astonacademy.org

Y11: aa-y11leadershipteam@astonacademy.org

Post 16: aa-post16leadershipteam@astonacademy.org

Safeguarding

aa-safeguarding@astonacademy.org

SEND and Inclusion

aa-send@astonacademy.org

Attendance

aa-attendance@astonacademy.org

I will leave you with a fantastic resource - it is our first Aston Academy [Careers Bulletin](#). It contains a host of really great information about the world of work our students will be going into. It may support some interesting conversations around the dinner table this weekend.

The combination of home, school and student will make a difference.

Have a wonderful weekend.

Best regards,



Mr J Graham
Principal

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