

Aston Academy

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Dear parent/carer,

Another busy week draws to a close. Congratulations to our Year 11 Modern Foreign Language and Drama students who have completed their GCSE language speaking exams and GCSE Drama practical assessments this week. Staff and students should be very proud of their efforts.

Our Year 11 students also look extremely smart as they have been wearing their leavers' hoodies – a significant moment as they turn onto the final straight of compulsory education. Hot on their heels are the wonderful Year 10 cohort, who began their final laps towards GCSE examinations as *Team 27* was launched this week. It was great to see so many Year 10 students remaining after school to focus on revision. A culture of resilience, responsibility, and a desire to do well is continuing to grow and become the norm within our KS4 students. I must also thank the staff who give up their time to ensure students are supported and well-resourced as they complete these activities.

I was delighted this week to be informed by the PE department that seven students have successfully completed and passed the Sports Leaders Level 3 qualification, a further 15 passed Level 2, and 11 completed Level 1. This is a fantastic achievement that reflects their dedication, teamwork, and commitment. Throughout the course, they have developed valuable leadership skills, built confidence, and demonstrated a positive attitude — qualities that will benefit them both in and beyond sport.

We are incredibly proud of their hard work and the effort they have put into reaching this milestone. Well done to the PE team and course leader, Mrs Miller. As I mentioned at the beginning of my update, academic achievement is vitally important, but at Aston we also want to provide opportunities that enhance students' CVs and employability. Courses and qualifications such as the Sports Leadership Awards allow us to do exactly this. Congratulations to all involved.

Staying on the sporting theme, we are delighted to share some exciting news about a potential major development for sport at Aston Academy and within our local community.

Aston Academy has been selected as the number one local site for a new Astro (3G) Pitch, following a competitive application process led by Rotherham Borough Council and key sporting partners. Since November 2025, I have worked closely with Rotherham Borough Council, the Football Foundation, Sheffield & Hallamshire County FA, and other partners to bid for this opportunity, competing against several other potential sites. Being chosen as the preferred location is a significant achievement and an important step towards securing this much-needed facility.

What does this mean for Aston Academy?

Should funding be successfully secured (which will be the major challenge and not guaranteed!), the new Astro Pitch will bring substantial benefits, including:

- Enhanced PE lessons, sports clubs, and fixtures throughout the school week
- Increased opportunities for students to engage in sport and physical activity
- Improved facilities to support women's and girls' football (an FA priority)
- Stronger community links through managed use outside of school hours for adults and children



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We are also proud to be working in partnership with Aston Swallownest Junior Football Club, a well-established and respected local club with the capacity to grow participation and opportunities for children, young people, and adults. ASJFC already makes extensive use of our pitches, and we are very proud to be partnering with them on this project.

While our site has been selected, there is still considerable work to do — most notably securing the funding for the project. Funding is expected to come from a combination of:

- Football Foundation grants
- Local and national funding pots
- Section 106 developer contributions, where available
- Investment from partner organisations and local businesses

Funding applications will be prepared during 2026, and subject to approvals, the earliest delivery of the pitch would be from 2027. This development represents an exciting opportunity for Aston Academy and reflects our commitment to providing high-quality facilities that benefit both our students and the wider community. We are incredibly proud to have reached this stage and look forward to sharing further updates in due course. We will also be seeking any parents or carers with relevant skill sets or experience securing funding to support our progress or supporting the process.

Further reasons to be excited about the future of Aston Academy.

With temperatures beginning to rise and students enjoying spending more time outside during breaks and lunchtimes, this is a good opportunity to remind you to encourage your child to bring a water bottle (or two) with them each day. We have invested in four new water fountains located in Student Reception. Additional and more accessible water fountains were highlighted as a priority in our 2025 Summer Parent/Carer Voice. Student Reception was chosen as it is a highly accessible area of the school and is also next to the KS3 canteen. We encourage students to fill their water bottles before school and at break and lunchtimes. This will help keep them hydrated throughout the day and save money compared to purchasing bottled water in school.

Finally, from me, a huge, good luck to Miss Cant and our amazing Cheer team, who are heading to Florida to compete at the national cheerleading finals. This is an incredible opportunity and a very proud moment for our school. We wish them safe travels and the very best of luck.

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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