

Aston Academy

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22 May 2026

Dear parent/carer,

Half term 5 draws to a close today—time really does go fast. On behalf of all our staff at Aston Academy, I would like to thank our parents and carers for their support for the academy throughout this half term. I always sign off my Friday updates with the line, *“the combination of home, school and student will make a difference.”* I truly believe this. When these three elements work together, it results in a child who feels a sense of belonging, has the confidence to thrive, and the tools to achieve throughout their school life—and hopefully beyond.

I must also say another huge well done to our Year 11 and Year 13 students, who have had a tremendous start to their summer exam series. The staff have been extremely impressed with their resilience, work ethic and positive attitude. Rest and recover over half term and prepare for the final push.

My Friday update will take a ‘Gold’ theme this week. Gold is commonly seen as the standard of excellence, awarded to the most deserving, and frequently indicates top performance. Therefore, it is a very proud Principal moment that we can celebrate two more golden achievements for Aston Academy and its staff and students.

The first of these is in recognition of our dedicated staff team for their outstanding work in promoting, organising and running The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award. Aston Academy is officially the fastest-growing Duke of Edinburgh centre in Rotherham, doubling in size this year to offer 51 students the chance to complete their award.

In recognition of the outstanding opportunities, we offer our students through The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award, Aston Academy has been invited to attend the prestigious Gold Award Celebration Event as part of the Award’s 70th anniversary celebrations. Mrs Cadman has been nominated by the Academy Duke of Edinburgh team to represent the school at this wonderful event, which takes place this afternoon in the Gardens of Buckingham Palace, hosted by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh. It is a significant honour to be invited, reflecting the dedication and commitment the school has shown in enriching the lives of our students.

The second golden moment this week for Aston Academy comes with the incredible news that we have been awarded the Gold School Games Mark for 2025/26, securing this honour for the second consecutive year.

This continued success highlights the Academy’s sustained commitment to delivering high-quality physical education, promoting active lifestyles, and ensuring all pupils benefit from a diverse and enriching sporting experience. The School Games Mark Gold Award is a government-led scheme facilitated by the Youth Sport Trust. It recognises schools across the country for their commitment to developing physical education, competitive school sport, and physical activity within both the curriculum and the wider community.



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Earning Gold status places Aston Academy among schools demonstrating excellence in these areas. To secure the Gold award, schools must meet strict national criteria, including:

- Participation – maintaining or increasing the number of students actively engaged in extracurricular physical activity
- Competition – offering a wide range of inter-school and intra-school sporting events throughout the academic year
- Inclusion – ensuring every student, regardless of background or ability, has equal access to physical activity opportunities
- Leadership & Workforce – providing opportunities for students to develop leadership skills by officiating, coaching and organising sports events

This remarkable achievement reflects the dedication of our students to sport and physical activity; our staff, who deliver inclusive and inspiring PE and sports programmes; and our parents and carers, who frequently need to be *taxi drivers, kit washers and cheerleaders*, and whose continued support makes these opportunities possible. We greatly appreciate this. Securing the Gold School Games Mark for a second consecutive year demonstrates that Aston Academy is not only maintaining excellence but continually striving to improve. The Academy remains committed to expanding opportunities, developing leadership, and inspiring a lifelong love of sport and physical activity.

Just to prove that our PE team are worthy of this golden accolade, yesterday we celebrated the news that nine of our students qualified to compete for Rotherham at the South Yorkshire Athletics finals in June. It is amazing that nine athletes from one school can be selected to represent Rotherham!

I hope our students have a wonderful half term and use the time to refresh, recharge and get ready for an exciting half term 6.

Golden moments are wonderful to celebrate, and we are all very proud of the achievements, but what we should celebrate even more are the core values our students and staff show in striving for improvement. Olympic gold medallist in freestyle wrestling, Dan Gable, summed this up when he said:

“Gold medals aren’t really made of gold. They’re made of sweat, determination, and a hard-to-find alloy called guts.”

Our staff will be ready to welcome your child back to school when gates open at 8:10am on Monday 1st June. Please can I ask for your support in checking that your child is ready to return with full uniform and equipment restocked if necessary. As the weather begins to warm, two water bottles will help ensure that students feel refreshed and hydrated.

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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