

Aston Academy

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Dear parent/carer,

Happy Friday.

Thank you for the tremendous support the school received during last week's extremely warm weather. Staff ensured that a range of hot weather adaptations were in place, including allowing students to wear PE kits, providing regular access to water, relocating classes where necessary, and adapting lesson content and practical activities. I must praise both our staff and students for the resilience they showed throughout the week.

I hope you agreed with our decision to close early on Friday. Our building retains heat during the summer months and became progressively warmer throughout the week. Friday was forecast to be particularly hot, with high humidity levels. The early closure ensured that staff and students remained safe and comfortable, while also allowing the building additional time to cool and air out before reopening on Monday.

My proudest principal moment this week came over the weekend – Aston Academy's cheerleading team are **National Cheerleading Champions!**

We are delighted to share the fantastic success of our cheerleading teams at this year's National Schools Cheerleading Championships. A total of 48 students from Key Stages 3 and 4 represented the Academy with pride, determination and outstanding sportsmanship. Our KS4 team competed in the highly challenging Level 2 category for the first time and delivered their strongest performance to date, achieving an impressive 4th place out of 7 teams.

Meanwhile, our KS3 team, many of whom were taking part in their first-ever cheerleading competition, rose to the occasion with an exceptional routine, securing 1st place out of 8 teams and earning the title of **National Champions!**

We are incredibly proud of all the students whose commitment, hard work and dedication since September have contributed to this remarkable achievement. Throughout the event, they represented the Academy impeccably, supporting one another and showing respect and encouragement to fellow competitors.

We would also like to extend our sincere thanks to the staff who generously gave up their Sunday to support the students and make this wonderful opportunity possible. Congratulations to everyone involved on an outstanding achievement.

A huge well done to our Year 8 students who, on Thursday, spent the day work shadowing a parent/carer, family friend or relative as part of our careers curriculum. We believe that giving students the opportunity to experience the world of work is critical to preparing them for their next steps.



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It has been wonderful to hear students talking about their experiences, and this is something we will continue to do next year with our new Year 8 cohort. The focus of work shadowing is not necessarily for students to experience a career they are certain they wish to pursue in the future, but instead to gain an understanding of the routines and expectations of employment. Whether it is early starts, late finishes, meeting new people, developing interpersonal skills, managing workload, or experiencing the satisfaction that a job can bring at the end of a busy day, these are invaluable experiences.

Thank you to all parents and carers who supported placements, as well as our careers team and Year 8 pastoral teams at Aston Academy, whose organisation helped make the day such a positive experience for our students.

Next week, it is the turn of our wonderful Year 10 students to have the fantastic opportunity to undertake a week of work experience, and we wish them every success. This has been a significant undertaking, led by our Assistant Vice Principal, Deborah Adams, alongside our careers team, Year 10 pastoral team and tutors.

We are incredibly proud of our Year 10 students and the mature, professional young people they are becoming. This experience can only enhance their journey. We look forward to welcoming them back into school and hearing about their experiences while continuing to support their preparations for Year 11 and beyond.

If you are a Year 10 parent or carer and feel it appropriate to do so, we would love to receive photographs of our students during their placements. We may use these in social media posts and when promoting work experience opportunities to future cohorts. If you would like to support us in this way, please send photographs to info@astonacademy.org

Our sports leaders have been incredibly busy in our local community over the last few weeks. A well done must go to our Year 9 Sports Leaders, who have spent two wonderful mornings supporting Waverley Junior Academy Sports Days. Despite the hot weather, they worked tirelessly to provide an enjoyable and memorable experience for pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. Their positive attitude, dedication and enthusiasm shone throughout the events.

We are incredibly proud of our Year 10 Sports Leaders, who recently supported a Special School Sports Day at the English Institute of Sport (EIS). Throughout the day, our students demonstrated professionalism, enthusiasm and outstanding leadership skills while supporting younger participants. They were excellent role models and represented the Academy with pride.

They have been a real credit to themselves, their families and our Academy, and we are extremely proud of the way they represented us.

Our sporting opportunities do not stop there. Today, our fantastic PE team hosted our annual Sports Day, involving a wide range of sporting events and activities. Please keep an eye on our social media for updates, results, photographs and no doubt, some fantastic action shots.

With our Sports Awards taking place next week, it has been an incredibly busy period for our PE staff, and I would like to thank them for their continued dedication and commitment to providing such wonderful opportunities for our students.

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Today, students and staff enjoyed our annual **Summer Snowflake Fayre**.

You will remember that the school hosts a number of fundraising initiatives throughout the academic year to raise money for Sheffield Children's Hospital, something very close to Aston Academy's heart. To date, the school has raised more than £35,000 for Sheffield Children's Hospital. The Snowflake Fayre is our most popular fundraising events and raises valuable funds for this fantastic cause while also providing a memorable experience for our students.

Students have the opportunity to enjoy:

- A variety of stalls
- Fun games and activities
- A tuck shop
- Opportunities to support a fantastic cause

The Snowflake Fayre is a wonderful part of our school culture. I would like to once again recognise Brett Sutcliffe, who leads these events with such enthusiasm and dedication, supported brilliantly by the PE team. Thank you, Mr Sutcliffe.

Next week, I will be sending a number of letters to update families on our end-of-term arrangements and preparations for September.

I will also share details about our final day of term on Friday 17th July, when students will be dismissed at 12.30pm, as well as arrangements for our return in September. Information regarding bus services and transport arrangements for these key dates will also be included.

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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