



St Alban's Academy

NEWSLETTER SPRING 1

ST ALBAN'S ACADEMY STUDENTS INTERVIEWED BY THE GUARDIAN

مقابلات طلاب مدرسة سنت البنس الاكاديمية مع صحيفة غارديان

Ardada dhigato St Alban's Academy waxaa wareysi la yeeshay Jornaalka la yiraahdo Guardian



The Guardian newspaper has praised St Alban's Academy, calling it a 'school that unites faiths', after staff and students worked to create an inclusive and tolerant atmosphere in the community.

Sally Weale, the paper's Education Correspondent, visited the school to find out how the school was nurturing a sense of community in one of the UK's most diverse cities. Weale found "a school shaped by the idea of multi-faith integration and inclusion", noting that the school, which has an 80% Muslim student intake, was responding to recent news events by emphasising common beliefs and values across different religions.

The school's head boy, Nisar Shah, said: "We are

trying to deliver a positive message to the local community and to maintain peace around school. We've been discussing the positive aspects in school, how we maintain our multi-faith approach."

The school, whose 'outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development' was praised by Ofsted, has quotes from both the Bible and Qur'an displayed prominently around the school.

Weale also praised St Alban's student council, writing: "The students on the council are articulate and thoughtful about their school and its efforts to be genuinely multi-faith."

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

British Values

We have heard a lot recently about the need for schools to teach British values. There is of course considerable debate about what British values are. Democracy, freedom of worship, freedom of speech, respect for human rights, the rule of law, are fairly obvious areas of agreement. Another that is often included is tolerance but this is not always a value. It would be wrong to tolerate bad things like poverty, injustice, cruelty or racism. If, however, what we mean by tolerance is really inclusiveness, respecting all human beings whatever their background as God's children created in his own image, then this is indeed a British value that we can all celebrate.

Freedom of Speech

There has been some debate in the academy in recent times about freedom of speech. There is general agreement that, although it may not be against the law to say or publish things that cause widespread offence, it is still wrong and people have a right to feel offended. However that understandable feeling of hurt cannot justify retaliation or threats of violence.

Guardian Article

The Guardian newspaper article reflects positively on our inclusive religious ethos. As I explained to the education correspondent: "At St Alban's we value every child. We value their culture, their tradition and their faith. Whatever we do in the school reflects that ... it's a day-by-day, living-out-our-experience kind of working towards building this... It's got to be done over a long period of time." This is how we teach British values at St Alban's because we believe that values have to be lived and learned by example not by rote.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

FEBRUARY

School Closed For Students -
12-13/02/2015

Half Term -
16/02/2015 - 20/02/2015

Students Return - 23/02/2015

Archbishop of Canterbury visit-
23/02/2015

MARCH

Governors Meeting - 10/03/2015

Super Learning Day - 13/03/2015

Easter Holiday Starts - 30/03/2015

APRIL

School Reopens - 13/04/2015

Students Return - 14/04/2015

CHAPLAIN'S MESSAGE

If there is to be peace in the world,
There must be peace in the nations.
If there is to be peace in the nations,
There must be peace in the cities.
If there is to be peace in the cities,
There must be peace between
neighbours.
If there is to be peace between
neighbours,
There must be peace in the home.
If there is to be peace in the home,
There must be peace in the heart.

Lau Tsu

CLOSURES

12-13/02/2015

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BUSINESS IN THE CLASSROOM WITH BMW



St Alban's Academy sixth formers have once again embarked on an exciting project with BMW to develop employability skills and competencies which will help prepare them for university and a career of their choice.

Sixth formers recently visited the plant at Hams Hall, where BMW engines are manufactured, to meet apprentices who have set them

a task to develop a potential system for charging vehicles whilst on the road network - either stationary or whilst in motion.

BMW engineering and logistics apprentices will be visiting the academy regularly to facilitate the project and help prepare students for a 'dragons den' style presentation of their findings and recommendations to BMW staff on 2nd July 2015.

Good luck sixth formers!

ENGINEERING SKILLS

My name is Mohammed Zain. For my AS Level Product Design course, I made a cantilever design chair made from mild steel tubing, which was a most suitable material choice because the frame support structure needed to be strong enough to withstand a large amount of applied load pressure.

The material also ensured that the bending process of the 'z' shaped frame structure was easier to produce. Also, more importantly, it ensured that the chair frame was relatively light, enabling it to be moved easily to various places within a room setting.

Due to the material's protective finish and the exterior lighting, my illuminated chair combination can also be used outside at night on decking, a balcony or roof garden as a statement piece.



ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY VISIT

What an absolute privilege it was to take our seven Shakespeare Ambassadors to the RSC in Stratford on Tuesday 20th January to meet up with their respective buddy mentors. The students have all been assigned specific roles: directing, producing, front of house, marketing and graphics, stage management, education and props. These roles and responsibilities will be utilised in the upcoming production of, 'The Head That Wears The Crown' (including scenes from Henry IV Part One and Two and Henry V). The play will feature a cast comprised of Year 8 and 9 students from St Alban's in addition to students from four local schools. The performances will take place at both the magnificent Swan Theatre in Stratford and St Alban's Academy. This 'Shakespeare Festival' is the culmination of a three year collaboration between the RSC's 'Learning and Performance Network', St Alban's Academy and local Birmingham cluster schools. The performances will take place on Thursday 5th March at 2pm at The Swan Theatre and Friday 6th March at 1:45pm at St Alban's Academy. The students: Sunni Singh, Nikki Zarin, Rami Hassan, Jehan Ahmed, Ashraf Islam, Entesar Saleh and Sumayyah Mohammed were also privileged to have a backstage tour of both the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and the adjacent Swan auditorium. Sunni commented that it was great to see 'behind the scenes and the wings'.



BIOLOGY FIELD TRIP

The AS Biology group went to Rhyd-y-creuau in North Wales on a four day residential to study biodiversity. On the day of arrival we were thrown straight into the activities which involved looking at fresh water sampling in rivers, we then identified different species using microscopes and classification keys, drawing conclusions about the river's diversity. Kayleigh Clewer, Y12 reports: "On the second day we went to the beach to investigate the sand dune system and the succession of plant life. On the day of investigating we went to a rocky shore to make comparisons between different rock pools, despite it being cold and wet we still enjoyed ourselves. We then went to Cwm Idwal, looking at the plants present and analysing how the environment has affected their growth. On the last day we sat our practical exam using all of the skills we had learnt over the weekend. However, it was not all hard work, during free time in the evenings, we met with students from the other sixth forms. Overall the weekend was a great experience which made biological concepts a lot easier to understand. The group as a whole would recommend the trip to future AS Biology students because there are some things that are very hard to understand without visualising them and this trip allowed us to do just that.

YEAR 7 CHRISTMAS GIFTS



In November 2014 Year 7 students wrapped up 34 shoe boxes filled with gifts to be sent as Christmas presents to children that don't get Christmas presents. Each form class had been given a number of shoe boxes, some wrapping paper and some ribbons for decoration. We collected donations from staff and from each year group and sorted out the presents into gender and age. We did this because we wanted suitable and appropriate presents for children.

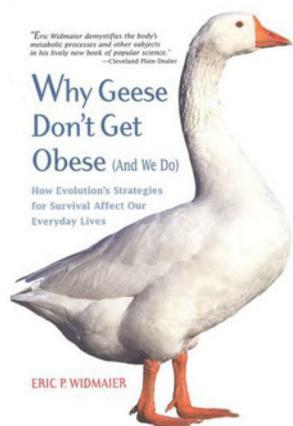
There are some unfortunate children that don't have the fun, education and shops we have. So it is very important we donate and give the things we don't need. It is a gift from St

Alban's Academy and a lesson for us to remember to be ever so kind. This makes us feel proud and grateful.

I am sure on Christmas Day all those of us in Year 7 remembered the achievement and the efforts we made in November. I am also sure that those who received the presents would be joyful and thankful. I hope we never forget what we have done and what we learnt from it, but most of all I hope we all remember every Christmas how important it is to give and to share.

By Maryam Guled (Year 7)

RECOMMENDED READ



Why Geese Don't Get Obese (and we do)
By EP Widmaier
Publisher: WH Freeman

Why are elephants' ears so big? Why do humans get the bends when dolphins don't? Imagine being able to consume 250,000 calories (50 Christmas dinners) daily without gaining weight! Why can birds breathe at high

altitudes but humans can't? Why do many animals, including humans, have two sets of sensory organs? In this book, Eric Widmaier offers a physiologist's view of the features and abilities humans and other creatures have evolved to meet the seemingly impossible challenges of survival.

MATHS PUZZLE



A balloon propelled by some mechanical device travels five miles in ten minutes with the wind, but requires one hour to go back again to the starting point against the wind, how long would it

have taken to go the whole ten miles in a calm atmosphere, without any wind?

YEAR 10 TASTE CONSTRUCTION TRADES

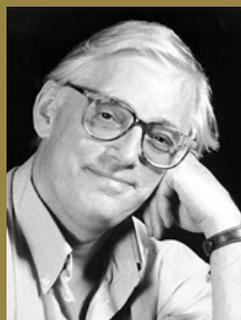


A group of Year 10's visited Birmingham Metropolitan College's Construction Campus in Sutton Coldfield to get some first-hand experience of careers in construction.

They took part in a series of workshops and had the opportunity to do some painting, plastering, plumbing, bricklaying and electrical work. A little messy, but enjoyed by all!

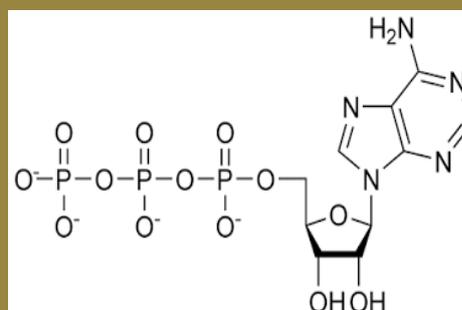
College staff talked to students about how to access these courses and the career opportunities available to them in the short and longer term. All teaching staff at the college were qualified construction professionals who became teachers later in life. We met people who had started their career as a bricklayer or plasterer and moved on to managing huge construction projects.

CHEMIST OF THE MONTH



Sir John E. Walker studied chemistry at the University of Oxford between 1960 and 1964. He then went on to undertake a PhD investigating antibiotics at Oxford. During the course of his PhD Sir John became fascinated by the huge advances in the area of molecular biology. Professor Sir John E. Walker studied the structural composition of adenosine triphosphate (ATP), a molecule that transports energy in cells. He has also studied human nutritional processes and proteomics, the branch of genetics that studies the full set of proteins encoded by a genome. In 1997, Sir John and his colleagues - Paul Boyer and Jens Skou -

won the Nobel Prize for Chemistry for their seminal work, which would swiftly become a staple of scientific understanding and teaching.



Structure of ATP (Photo Credit: Wikimedia Commons)