

ASHLAWN

EASTER NEWS 2024



ASHLAWN
SCHOOL

Our best, always



Welcome from the Principal

Ramadan Mubarak and Happy Easter to our Muslim and Christian communities.

There has been a lot of celebration of success during the past half term, despite again it being a short one. I wanted to start this newsletter by congratulating all students who have done their best across the school this term. From improving their attendance, engaging more in learning and developing their community and sporting skills, we are so proud of our students as they strive to become the best version of themselves. As teachers and staff at Ashlawn, we have continued to commit to being our best too. From our successes in sporting activities, the work that we have seen in classrooms, the opportunities to go out of school and put their learning into action, we continue to bring our students' learning to life in practical and inspiring ways.

Our exam groups across years 10 to 13 have been incredibly focussed on preparations for their exams that start

after the Easter break. Teachers have been delivering additional revision sessions that have been widely attended by our dedicated students. Lessons have been focussed, not only on content, but on the skills that the students will require to show their knowledge in exam conditions.

This term has seen the launch of our school pledge:

- demonstrate kindness and help those in need
- be proud of our uniqueness and champion the differences of others
- celebrate our successes together
- express gratitude for things that others do for us
- show respect and pride in our words and actions
- challenge ourselves and each other to be our best, always

This is a challenge to all members of our community in becoming the school where everyone is encouraged to become the best version of themselves.

I have been reflecting on the meaning of both Ramadan and Easter. Both celebrations recognise the need for all of us to give thanks for what we have and look at how we can serve our neighbours and help those in need. We saw the school embrace this philosophy during our Red Nose Day activities. The school came together and enjoyed some fun activities while raising funds that support those less fortunate than ourselves.

I am, as always, proud to work with such amazing students and great staff.

Over the Easter break and during Ramadan, I wish everyone a time of calm and reflection.

Paul Brockwell
Principal,
Ashlawn
School



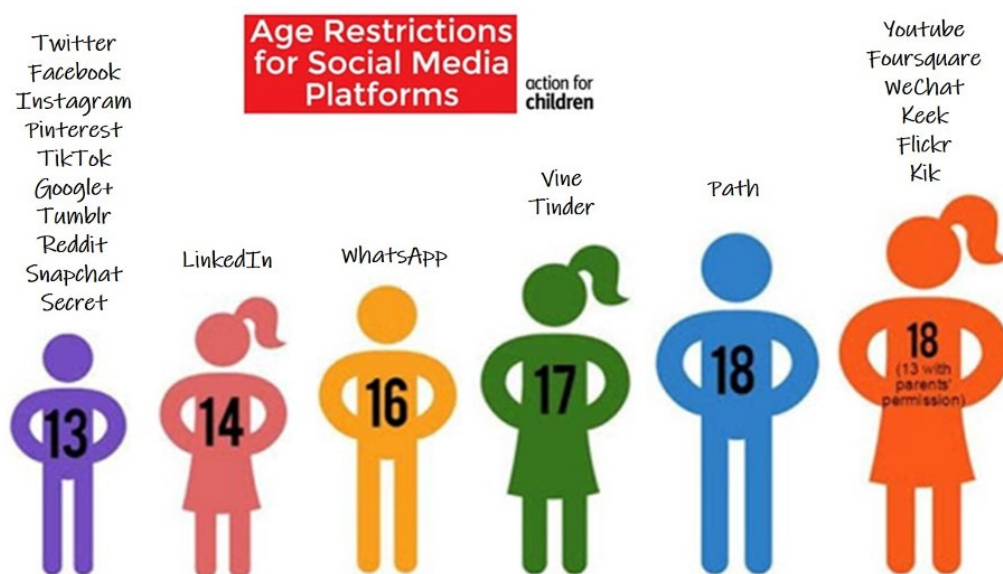
SAFEGUARDING

Smoothwall Monitoring and Filtering

Smoothwall monitoring and filtering has now been installed on all computers in schools across our Trust, and all children have received an assembly on how to conduct themselves online.

It is so important that we monitor what children are searching for online so that we can intervene, educate and communicate with both our students and their parents. Smoothwall has enabled us to see what our students are interested in and has allowed us to target interventions where necessary. While we have a duty to monitor this in school, it is also important that parents monitor their children at home when they are on their devices.

smoothwall[®]
by Qoria



Here are some top tips to remind you of how to monitor your child's activity at home:

The basics of online safety: Parental controls and privacy settings

Ensure that the parental controls on your child's devices are activated and that any platforms they have access to have child safety measures in place; on YouTube, that means turning on YouTube Restricted Mode, on Google setting up Google Safe Search as well as Google Family Link, and on TikTok setting up Family Pairing. Both Instagram and Snapchat have taken steps to improve their parental control options over the past few years. As a general rule, it is not recommended that children younger than 13 have independent access to social media platforms (with the exception of YouTube, and that's only if parental controls and privacy settings are activated). For children 13+, ensure that they always enter their true age when creating a new social media profile, as that sends them to a 'safer' and more age-appropriate version of the platform.

The basics of content consumption: Sources and dosage

The coexistence of the Internet and the 24-hour news cycle means that information about tragic events from around the globe is never more than a tap away. Consider reducing the amount of news you currently consume and tapping into less 'charged' sources like newspapers and magazines. If you have tweens and teens, it's likely that they have already become

accustomed to relying on social media and influencers for news and information. Talk to them about the importance of controlling news consumption during times of serious global conflict and being highly selective of your sources. Help your children internalise the fact that the digital content we consume affects us just like the food we consume – both require us to be intentional.

Should I talk to my child?

You may wish to be more present than usual in your child's online life for a period of time. This doesn't mean heavy monitoring (unless your child is young and not ready yet to manage their own tech use), but instead, keep a line of communication open with them about any upsetting content they may encounter and observe any emotional or behavioural signs that suggest they may have seen it already (more on that below).

How should I decide if deleting social media apps from my child's device is the right thing to do at this time?

There are various things to consider when making this decision. First, you know your child better than anyone – their age may be a factor in this decision, but so is their maturity. Important signs are also their ability to discern between real vs fake online content, credible vs dubious news sources, and reliable vs unreliable individuals and organisations to

follow online. For younger children, you may want to consider removing social media apps so that they don't accidentally see something distressing, but if you have an older child we recommend you have a conversation with them before you come to this decision. For older children, some alternative approaches include limiting their news consumption to only one news source and/or checking on news only once a day (or less frequently), not engaging with friends and followers online in discussions around politics at this time, and under no circumstances clicking on dubious-looking links.

How are the different social media platforms responding?

Most social media companies are reiterating their platforms' Policies and Terms of Use, and assuring the public that they are doing everything they can to remove inappropriate content as soon as it goes up. Conversely, X (formerly Twitter) has stated that: "In these situations, X believes that, while distressing, it is in the public's interest to understand what is happening in real-time." It is also important to note that X has had several fake videos go viral on their platform already. If you or your child frequent this platform, we recommend you remain vigilant. You may wish to consider suspending use for a period of time.

How can I talk to my child about staying safe online?

The best approach is part-telling and part-modelling. To prevent children from becoming overwhelmed by fear and the threat of online danger, it's important to strike a balance between caution and the enjoyment of positive online content.

When living with older children, you may wish to talk to them about your own fears and sadness about what is going on. Yes, children need to know that we will keep them safe, but that doesn't mean we can't show them our emotions and vulnerabilities too. Encourage them to ask questions and seek out more information (or not, whatever they prefer), and emphasise the importance of using their media literacy skills when choosing news sources. Discuss the potential for very disturbing content to make its way online and how important it is to talk about that experience, should it happen. Practices like taking intentional social media breaks or watching favourite movies together as a family can be incredibly helpful. If you have a creative child, encourage them to use their art as a self-care tool, and if you are a religious or spiritual family, engaging with those practices can bring you much-needed balance as well.

In secondary schools, students are likely to have accessed social media already, even if they don't have their own account yet, and so they may have had some exposure to a news story already. Don't be afraid to bring the topic up proactively and without getting into too much graphic detail. Ask them what they've seen and heard already, where they came across that information, and how they feel about it. Use that as a conversation starter on trusted news sources online and the importance of keeping those to only one or two in times like these. Share that you want to take steps as a family to use your devices very mindfully over the next week or so and let them know what you'd like that to look like. One recommendation is to also minimise the time they spend alone on their device(s) behind closed doors in solitary use.

What if my child doesn't want to talk about what they have seen?

This can certainly happen, and it is a normal reaction. There are various reasons why a child may not want to talk about something like this: it may be too disturbing or cause too much distress; they may not be ready to discuss it, they may fear getting into trouble; or they may simply not have the words to express how they feel. Regardless, you can always support them by trying to create a safe space for them to open up and offering them unconditional support. Spend time with your child without the pressure for them to do or say anything; often, other activities, like a board game or a walk, can open the door for a spontaneous conversation around a difficult topic.

Talking to other parents

Feel free to share your personal experiences around these events with other parents and, if needed, help them find out if their child may have encountered any distressing information about these events already; however, if that does turn out to be the case, be aware that seeking out information raises its viewership and popularity. Sharing links or descriptions in online groups or messaging apps like WhatsApp will do the same. Also, remember to always double-check if any children are around when you're discussing these topics with other adults.

How can online images and/or videos cause distress to my child?

At the very least, one-off or otherwise brief interactions with this type of content can shock your child and leave them with thoughts and emotions they simply can't understand. Research has shown that these brief moments of intense stress don't necessarily lead to long-lasting effects, and they can usually be worked through if the individual is able to talk about them as soon as possible after exposure. When it comes to more long-term effects, research after the events of 9/11 found that the consumption of hours of continuous broadcasting of distressing videos caused a significant increase in individuals across the United States reporting symptoms of stress and/or trauma. This is called Vicarious Trauma or Secondary Trauma, and it can go as far as contributing to PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) symptoms in some individuals.

What are some things that I should pay attention to in my child?

Look for signs of behaviour change. You know your child best – if there are changes in behaviour or mood, pay attention to those signs and use them as a conversation starter.

What are some signs of distress?

Signs of emotional distress can vary with age, and different children may also exhibit these signs in different ways depending on their personalities and levels of maturity. This list is by no means exhaustive, and please note that it is also not an attempt to diagnose or offer medical advice.

- Clinging to caregivers more than usual
- Regressing to the behaviour of a younger child, for example, a primary school child acting like a toddler
- Increased signs of separation anxiety, or withdrawal
- Changes in emotional displays – could be increased crying, anger, or other displays of emotion
- Increased irritability
- Increased hyperactivity or decrease in energy
- More demanding

- Nightmares or interruptions in sleep
- Too much or too little sleep
- Changes in food consumption or trouble digesting food
- Physical complaints like head or tummy aches
- Increase in generalised fear
- For older children, consumption of substances like alcohol or drugs

Moving forward

To guide what content your child consumes online, consider setting up a Family Digital Agreement. By outlining rules for what your children can watch on television and online and which platforms they can access, you can help manage their technology use and content consumption and ensure they are fully aware of your expectations around their online behaviour. Because inappropriate content often slips through the cracks, remind them on a regular basis that they will not be in trouble if they come to you and tell you that they've seen something they shouldn't have. Observe your child during times when dangerous viral trends or news about traumatic world events overpopulate the online world, and ensure that they know you are always a resource for comfort and information.

How do I know when to seek additional support?

Making the decision to seek additional support is not always easy or clear cut. If changes in mood or behaviour persist without getting better, it may be time to seek outside help.

Ashlawn School is committed to supporting our families and is happy to offer advice and support around online safety. If you wish to contact us, ask for a DSL when you call.

Support resources

The following free educational and support services are also available to you and your family:

	Childline: www.childline.org.uk
	Samaritans: www.samaritans.org
	Papyrus UK: www.papyrus-uk.org
	NSPCC Helpline: www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/nspcc-helpline
	Warwickshire Family Information Service: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/children-families

WORRYING ABOUT THE EASTER HOLIDAYS?

School holidays are different for everyone. You might be excited about a holiday or having time off, or you could be thinking about what might happen or how you'll cope.

You might be worried about:

- Feeling lonely or not going out
- Not seeing people who normally support you
- Problems at home or having to care for your family
- Coping without a routine
- Worrying about your exams next term or the results you might get
- Being hurt or abused

Remember there are many ways in which you can get support and you are not alone!

Why not take a look at the agencies and support lines that could help you. Remember if you are in immediate danger phone 999.

Childline is always available throughout the holidays to support you, whether that's having someone to talk to, giving you ideas of things to do or helping you to get support when you need it.

Why not give them a call? 0800 1111

HELPLINES



Papyrus
Thinking about suicide, please call 0800 068 4141 or TEXT 209697



Bullying UK
0808 800 2222



Coventry CAB
Information/advice on issues facing young people. 02476 252066



NSPCC
If you feel you or someone you know is a victim of abuse. 0808 800 5000



Samaritans
Someone to listen 24/7 free of charge. 116 123 or TEXT 07725 909090



Compass
Support and advice for young people using substances. 0800 121 4043



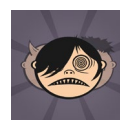
Stonewall
Support for anyone around issues of sexuality. 0800 0505 2020



Winstone's Wish
Helpline to support young people with the death of a loved one. 08088 020 021

APPS

These free apps mean you can access support wherever you are.



Stressheads: Support to lower our stress levels.



Stay Alive: Support to those who may experience suicidal thoughts/feelings.



Self Help Anxiety Management (Samapp): Support and techniques to help manage anxiety and panic.



Moodometer: Created by the NHS. Allows you to track your moods and what has influenced it. Also provides ways to lift your mood.



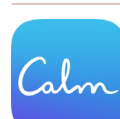
Calm Harm: Activities to assist in the management of self-harm.



Grief Support for Young People: Information about grief, bereavement and the feelings we may experience when we lose a loved one.



Insight Timer: A large collection of free guided exercises to help relieve stress, improve relaxation and wellbeing.



Calm: A large collection of exercises designed to calm us down.

STAYING SAFE

Top Tips!

- 1 Be careful of who you are talking to online – not everyone is who they say they are.
- 2 Stay away from railway lines. Harrisons Story.
- 3 Don't go swimming in lakes and quarries – it's too dangerous.
- 4 Eat, Sleep and Rest... it is the best way to feel the best you can.

Finally... **HAVE FUN!!**

TLET'S GOT TALENT

Students from all our academies joined together for the inaugural TLET's Got Talent competition – where young people from across TLET were able to showcase their impressive skills and talents.

With a judging panel consisting of Cllr Maggie O'Rourke, the Mayor of Rugby, Ethan J Smith from the Five Star Theatre Company and TLET CEO James Higham, students wowed the crowd with everything from dance performances to drum playing to balloon art.

James Higham said: "This was such an impressive night for so many reasons. The students shone, not only for the talents but also how they approached the evening with a

real sense of professionalism and support for one another. It was also fantastic that so many families came to watch the event.

"It is also important to acknowledge the staff team who helped put this event on. One of the things I have loved the most about our talent evening is it came from a conversation between staff and students. It was an idea that come from our community, and was put on for our community. That is exactly what I think makes this Trust so special."

The show included an exciting extract from Six, the musical about Henry VIII's wives, that recently received rave views after a run at Rugby's Benn Hall.

At the end of the night, one parent simply said: "It was a fantastic night. Even the younger children were so confident up on the stage and really made a huge impact on the audience. We had a great time."



BRITISH BIOLOGY OLYMPIAD 2024

The British Biology Olympiad is an advanced problem solving competition for A Level students and an entry point for the International Biology Olympiad. This competition challenges and encourages students with an interest in biology to expand and extend their talents.

Our students had to sit on a 45-minute multiple-choice paper online under supervised staff exam conditions.

Congratulations to our Year 13 biologists, Ben, Monty and Hassan, for competing in the British Biology Olympiad and being awarded silver medals and well done to Jacob in Year 12 for achieving Highly Commended, as well as to Luke and Abinusha for getting commended.

Fantastic efforts all round!



OUT OF THIS WORLD TRIP FOR YEAR 7

50 of our Year 7 students took a trip to the National Space Centre this term.

With six interactive galleries, the UK's largest planetarium, and the iconic 42m high Rocket Tower, the award-winning National Space Centre provided an out of this world experience for all!



Everyone had an amazing time exploring space equipment and learning more about the space race through the years. We finished the day with a planetarium show about the training an astronaut has to go through to be in space. It was a fantastic experience that students and staff all enjoyed.



VR HEADSET SESSION ON ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISIONS

Year 12 and Year 13 Criminology students welcomed PC Rachel Cartwright in for a VR headset session on road traffic collisions, including learning about 'The Fatal Five' - the five main contributory factors that cause serious road traffic collisions.

It was an eye-opening and important session for our students, both in terms of subject knowledge and practical driving advice, and they discussed the importance of seatbelts, drink and drug driving, and reckless driving.



YEAR 12 CRIMINOLOGY AND LAW TRIP TO THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHAMPTON

Year 12 took a trip to the University of Northampton this term, to learn more about studying the subject at degree level. It was interesting and informative!



YEAR 13 SOCIAL SCIENCE TRIP TO SHREWSBURY PRISON

Our Year 13 Social Science students took a memorable trip to Shrewsbury Prison this term! Students took a guided tour around the historical landmark, hearing firsthand what life inside a prison was like, going back over 200 years.

The tour included a visit to all areas of the prison, including the reception (where prisoners were processed), two prison wings, 178 cells, the exercise yard, healthcare and the execution room.

Tours included an In-Cell Experience, giving students the opportunity to step behind the cell doors and get a glimpse into the life of a prisoner.



WORLD BOOK DAY 2024

World Book Day 2024 was really World Book Week at Ashlawn this year! The week was packed full of fun, competitions, fancy dress and of course reading.

Students took part in a range of quizzes and got families involved by asking them to share the first book they read themselves or can remember having read to them, with some lovely reading memories being shared.

We would like to say a huge thank you to all students and staff at Ashlawn for their effort and support for World Book Day 2024.

There were some amazing costumes, and it was lovely to see so many people getting involved.

World Book Day changes lives through promoting and encouraging our young people to love books.

Our mission is to promote reading for pleasure, offering every child and young person the opportunity to have a book of their own, giving them the chance to discover the many different worlds that are out there, hiding beneath the pages of the millions of books available to us all.

Have a look at some of the incredible outfits. Who is your favourite?

Miss Rogers
Joint Head of Faculty



"Books are the plane, the train, and the road. They are the destination, and the journey. They are home."

- Anna Quindlen,
How Reading Changed My Life

WARWICKSHIRE SCHOOLS BOOK AWARD FINAL CELEBRATION

A small group of Year 7 and 8 students have been participating in the Warwickshire Schools Book Award over the past few months, reading six shortlisted books along with students in other participating schools across Warwickshire.



All students then had to vote for their favourite book. The winning title was announced at the final celebration held at Kings High School, Warwick on Wednesday 20th March.

The students got to listen to the authors talking about the inspiration behind their books and the process they go through until the book is completed....in some cases the finished book taking nine years!

At the end of the event, the students had the opportunity to meet the authors, chat to them and get their books signed.

Arriving back at Ashlawn they all declared how much they enjoyed the trip and that they want to participate again next year... We think that says it all!

Thank you to the students who went on the trip, you were all amazing. A special mention to Ronniee in Year 8, who won one of the competitions with her alternative ending to one of the books. Well done!



For anyone who would like to read it, the overall winning book was 'When I see Blue' by Lily Bailey – also the winner of the Ashlawn vote!

Mrs Mills

POETRY BY HEART

I would like to extend my congratulations to all the students who have worked so hard to learn their poems for the Poetry By Heart competition being held on 21st March.

Poetry by Heart is a national poetry speaking competition for schools in England. Students will learn and perform two poems from a collection on the website and the best performances will be entered into a national competition. Students have been learning and practising their recitals over the past term and I have been particularly proud of the way they

have encouraged each other and helped each other to remember their lines in our break time sessions.

Mrs Williamson



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Despite the weather and a short term, there have been a number of boys' Rugby and Football fixtures this term.

The Year 9 football team is through to the final of the Warwickshire Schools County Cup after winning 5-4 on penalties against Stratford upon-Avon School last night.



They took the lead early in the game with a Brody thunderbolt, which hit both posts and went in; however, we were down 2-1 until the final minute of normal time, where Max scored a crucial equaliser, taking us to extra time.

Despite us hitting the post during extra time, the match went to penalties. Max, Brody, Joe, Rudy and Henry all converted, with Tyler pulling off a great penalty save. Well done to all involved! The final against Kenilworth School will be played next term.

Rugby games have been played in every year group. With fixtures against Lawrence Sheriff, AVS and Bilton. The standout teams have been the Year 7 and 8 teams (with many new players to the game), closely followed by the Year 11's, led excellently by Max B and Sam L. The weather also put a damper on our invitation to the prestigious KES Birmingham 7s Tournament, which we are hoping is rearranged.

Basketball, Rugby, Trampoline and Dodgeball after-school clubs have also been well attended, showing a broad extracurricular programme. Additionally, a number of Year 7 and Year 8 boys who have not represented the school previously, won an inclusive football tournament staged at Rugby Town Football Club.

Congratulations must also go to Sam L (Year 11), who has been selected for the recent Midlands Central Rugby Academy U16 games and has had Irish Exiles Rugby training/trials. Tom C (Year 13) has also been selected for the Midlands U18 Rugby Squad.

Maia T, Jacob V and Robbie D have represented Rugby and Northampton AC at the National Indoor Championships in Sheffield. Robbie came in 8th place in the country at 400m.

A fond farewell must also be given to Henry S (Year 9), who has been given a sports scholarship to Rugby School. Henry is an extremely talented sportsman who is in the Midlands Rugby DPP and has represented the school across a number of different sports.

Next term, we move onto Athletics, Rounders and Cricket fixtures.



BRITISH SCIENCE WEEK 2024

March is the time when schools across the country celebrate British Science Week.

Each year, a different theme is discussed and we use this theme to shape our lessons in a way that is different from our usual day-to-day.

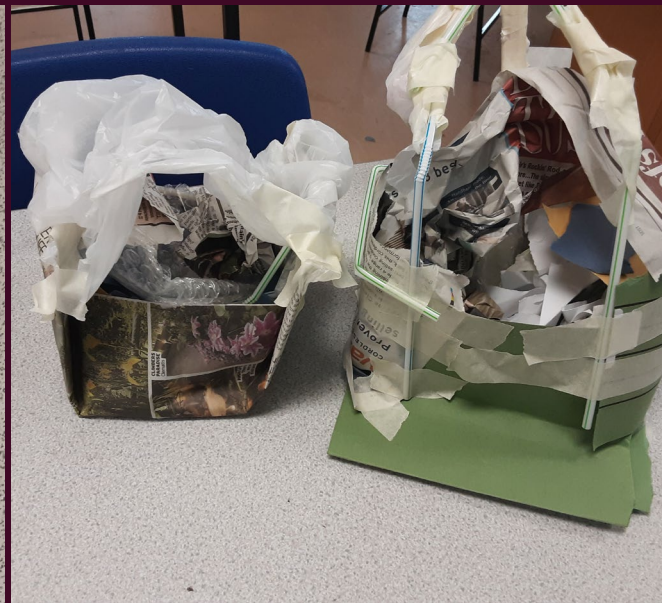
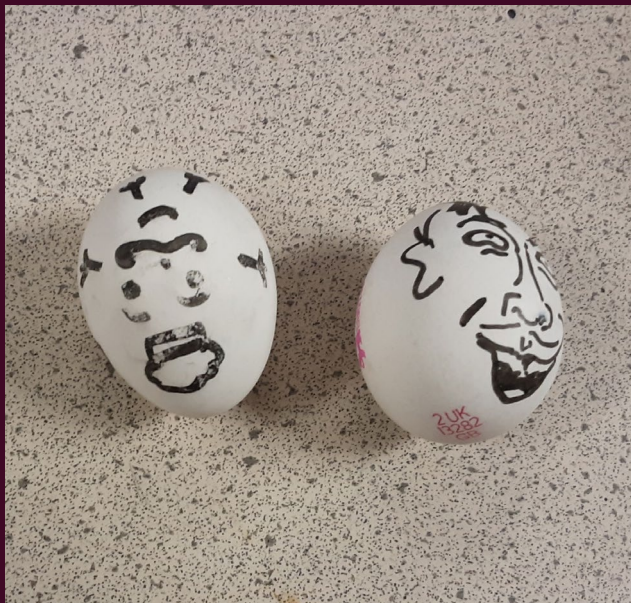
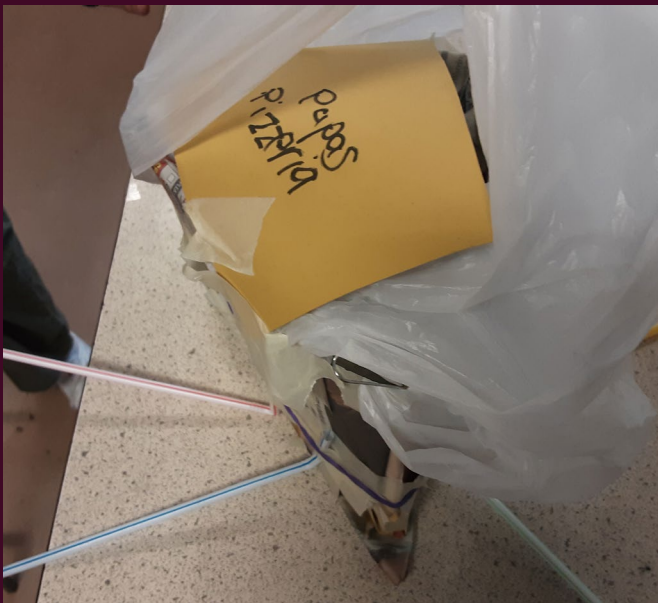
Our students took part in a variety of activities across the week to mark the occasion.

Students were invited to take part in two competitions: a poster competition which is then entered nationally and a home practical challenge for students over the Easter break (which is still available to take part in!).

Year 7 and 8 also took part in a practical challenge in which they had to engineer a device to allow an egg to safely survive a fall

of three meters. Some fantastic devices were made in lesson with many groups winning prizes for a safe landing!

During tutor time all key stages completed themed activities based around science and science-based careers, making it an informative and fun celebrating STEM subjects and opportunities.



SIXTH FORM NEWS

PROM PLANNING

The Year 13 Student Leadership team has been busy planning and organising their Year 13 Prom, which is being held at the Daventry Hotel on Friday 21st June. They are making decisions on costs, food, photography, activities and colour schemes and working well together as a team to plan this event to deadlines, on top of keeping focused on their studies. Well done, Team Prom!



YEAR 13 SUPPORT & REVISION SESSIONS

In less than eight weeks' time, Year 13 students will start their final exams, and students had an assembly this half term to support them with their revision planning and to help them focus on their studies as they approach these final key few weeks in school.

We talked to them about making the most of their free periods by completing a weekly revision timetable and going into these periods with a specific goal in mind.

Copies of revision timetables and goal setting booklets are available to students on Google Classroom.

We also reminded students to take advantage of the many revision sessions offered by form teachers. Please find attached a reminder of the many Year 13 revision sessions, running both during and after school, that teachers are running to support your child.



COMIC RELIEF 2024

On Friday 15th March, Ashlawn School celebrated Comic Relief with lots of staff and students dressing up and 'Doing Something Funny for Money' to support this great cause.

We had cake sales, karaoke, stand-up comedy, 2.5K sponsored runs, and a raffle, which consisted of a range of donations made by staff and parents.

It was a fabulous day, and we are so proud of the money that we have raised. So far we have collected £1583.76 and the money is still pouring in.

Well done to everyone involved and thank you to all the staff who organised and supervised the various events!



INCLUSION SUNFLOWER GROWING COMPETITION

Thank you to the PTA for facilitating our sunflower growing competition in Inclusion.

Students are encouraged to plant and take care of their sunflowers to see how tall they can grow!





ASHLAWN
SCHOOL



At Ashlawn we...

C A R E

COMMUNITY

We value every member of the Ashlawn family and treat each other with kindness and compassion.

ASPIRATION

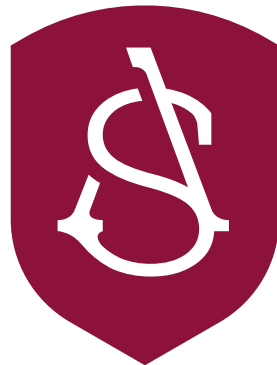
We work hard and make the most of exciting and challenging learning experiences, in order to open up the world around us and achieve our dreams.

RESPECT

We respect each other and our differences. We respect our learning environment and appreciate everyone's right to the best possible experience at Ashlawn.

EXCELLENCE

We are committed to trying our best and achieving the highest standards in our love of learning, so that we can be the best versions of ourselves.



ASHLAWN
SCHOOL

Our best, always

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