

# Issue 1 January 2023

ASPIRE  
ACADEMY



## WHAT'S COMING UP NEXT MONTH...

GCSE Math's Exams

Career's Event  
Dates to be confirmed

Warm Space Friday's  
Dates to be confirmed

February Half Term  
Finish Friday 10th and return  
Monday 20th February

## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

MS S WARD



Welcome to our first update bulletin:

The Autumn term saw a fantastic start to the academic year. We've welcomed a lot of new faces to our school and introduced a number of new initiatives and opportunities for our young people.

Our Wingfield and KS3 groups had the opportunity to attend Forest School as part of their personal development offer last term. We also expanded our therapy team with the introduction of Thunder, Autumn and Wynter through animal therapy. Year 11 visited the theatre to see their GCSE set texts live on stage. The staff surprised the students with a Spook-tacular Halloween themed day. Careers events took place all term and included a careers fair, college and university visits. We also had great feedback from our parent/carer and child workshops that were included as part of October's Parent Review Day. A significant number of students also sat external examinations in English.

The run up to Christmas is a special time at Aspire, with decorated classroom competitions, the end of term Xmas Quiz, Secret Elf Day, the Aspire Christmas Dinner, the Christmas fair and enterprise sessions. It was great to see the students enjoying themselves at the end of term Christmas Disco, complete with resident DJ Brown on the mic and MC Mr White.

Somewhere, within all of this, we had a visit from His Majesty's Inspectors. Our students were such a credit to themselves, their families and carers during the two days. Ofsted chose to speak to a large number of students and those chosen responded in a really respectful manner. They spoke honestly, articulately and, as expected, with lots of their own personality. We are really proud of all our students.

The Spring term calendar looks set to be just as full and we can't wait to get started. We hope you all had a great Christmas and we wish you a happy 2023!

# TEACHING AND LEARNING AT ASPIRE: THE READING EDITION

## Reading at Aspire:

Here at Aspire we have several reading interventions designed to support all levels of reader. We have two reading coordinators who work tirelessly to encourage reading and support students at Aspire.

## Phonics

We deliver the Fresh Start phonics intervention. Every day, students learn new letter-sounds and review previous sounds and words. They apply what they have been taught by reading words containing the sounds they know in lively, age-appropriate stories and non-fiction texts that are closely matched to their increasing phonic knowledge. By the end of the programme, they will be able to read these accurately and fluently.

## Reading Plus

Reading Plus helps students develop the skills they need to be confident, capable readers. Families can support their students' reading development while at home with resources available online. All students have a personal log-in so please ask for one if you don't have access at home.

## Reading for Pleasure.

At Aspire we are actively encouraging students to read every morning. Every student at Aspire is bought their own reading book each term based on their interests or their personal choice. Students read for 20 minutes every morning and are able to take their books home once they have read them. Reading helps develop vocabulary, comprehension skills and improves imagination.

## Top tips: Support with reading at home:

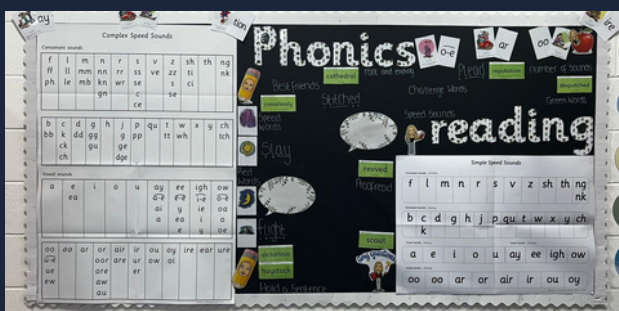
- Read yourself! It doesn't matter what it is – pick up a newspaper or magazine, take a look at a cookery book, read a computer manual, enjoy some poetry or dive into a romance or detective novel. And get your children to join in – if you're cooking, could they read the recipe? If you're watching TV, can they read out the listings?
- Give books as presents. And encourage your children and their friends to swap books with each other – it'll give them a chance to read new stories, and get them all talking about what they're reading.
- If you get a newspaper ask your child to read a story to you and then ask them questions. Can they work out the key parts of the story and explain what has happened?
- Encourage them to use Reading Plus at home. If you need a log in please just ask your child's tutor. Keep reading together.
- Just because your children are older, it doesn't mean you have to stop sharing stories – perhaps you could try the Harry Potter series or *A Series of Unfortunate Events*.
- Don't panic if your child reads the same book over and over again. Let's be honest – we've all done it and at least they're reading!



A number of Year 11 students visited Hull Truck Theatre in December to watch 'A Christmas Carol'. It was a great chance to see the book brought to life.

### Did you know?

The National Literacy Trust estimates that 5.1 million adults in England are functionally illiterate, meaning that they have a reading age of 11 or below.



### Did you know?

According to the 'Read All About It' report, 20% of all 15-year-olds have a reading age of 11 and below, and 10% a reading age of 9 and below. New and, in the words of the DfE, 'more demanding' GCSE exams were first introduced in 2017. This causes problems in all subjects as the average reading age needed to access a GCSE paper is 15 Years and 7 months.



# PASTORAL OVERVIEW



As a reward, Students who behaved best during the autumn term where invited to a school disco.

They took part in party games, had refreshments and had the pleasure of seeing Mr White show off his dance moves!

Here's a couple of photos from the party:



## SAFEGUARDING FOCUS

Aspire recognises that mental health is a big issue for our students and our community. We do lots to support our young people including:

- Having lots of staff your child can speak to such as their tutor, their teachers and support staff
- Staff who have done specific training in Mental Health, including Mental Health First Aid training
- Access to ELSA staff to help with managing feelings and emotions
- Two counsellors who students can see regularly or when they most need it
- Sessions in school about positive mental health
- Lots of opportunities for keeping active and enjoying learning such as PE and Enrichment

Some of our young people access other things like MIND and CAMHS too.

Aspire is there for families of our students too and can point parents and carers in the right direction for support and help. Do use our helping hands QR code at the end of this newsletter to self-refer or speak to your child's tutor!

Contacts: Designated Safeguarding Lead - C Boyton and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead - M Lane



## SEND FOCUS



Neurodiversity refers to the different ways the brain works and interprets information. Naturally people think about things differently and find some things easier than others. Neurodivergent people tend to find some things very easy and other things incredibly hard.

Neurodivergence includes a range of conditions including ASD, ADHD, cognitive functioning difficulties, stammering. Please see links below if you would like some more information;

- <https://www.local.gov.uk/lga-libdem-group/our-press-releases/neurodiversity>
- <https://childmind.org/article/what-is-neurodiversity/>

## TROPHY WINNERS



## ATTENDANCE REWARDS



## SHOUT OUT

Last term some students had the chance to go to **Forest School, in Springfield Woods, Skirlaugh.**



It was a opportunity to build their life and outdoor skills, build resilience, develop self risk-assessment skills and expand on their cultural capital. Research has demonstrated positive results in the personal, cognitive, social and confidence skills gained through Forest schools. It was an exciting opportunity for Aspire students and staff.



Weekly, there are have five Tutor Group trophies. The trophies are for:  
Behaviour, Uniform, Attendance, Reading and Above and Beyond.

These are rewarded based on a group collective of top points/numbers.

# 100%

**68** students achieved 100% during the autumn term. Here's a handful delighted with their chocolate bar!



## DO YOU NEED A HELPING HAND?



Scan for support with:  
Food, health, self, smoking, drugs, relationships, crime and more.

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