



# Altwood Church of England School

Friday 9th November 2018

## Drum Head Commemorative Service

"Eleven strikes above the traffics roar, a moments silence turns our thoughts to war..." were the opening words spoken in our Remembrance service today by Head Student, Megan De Alwis. As the nation unites to pause and commemorate the centenary of Armistice, the Altwood School community has been actively reflecting, commemorating and playing our own part in the national events to mark this moment in history. Our thoughts and reflections have very much been centred on the tragedy of war, with a particular focus on the horrors of the First World War, but importantly on pondering the question of the aftermath – what challenges exist for those that survive the horrors of war through to the families that face the depths of coping with the loss of a loved one.



Last month a non-school uniform day was held to raise funds for the highly valuable work of the Royal British Legion. We were pleased to raise £740 from this event which has enabled the school to make a donation to obtain three 'Shadow Silhouettes'. These monuments have been erected around the school grounds and act as a visual prompt, with each silhouette representing a life lost. Throughout this week, the tutor curriculum has focussed on the theme of remembrance; students have been making individual poppies to contribute to a tutor group wreath, writing messages of support, prayers and words of thanks to represent their own feelings. Miss Brittain has led a series of house assemblies focussed on the meaning

of Armistice and understanding the significance of this event, whilst tutor groups have been exploring more details about the First World War through their theme of the week: Remembrance.

All of these activities have been leading towards today's whole school service, jointly led by our school chaplain, Father Jeremy and members of the Altwood community. We were delighted to welcome members from the Royal British Legion in Maidenhead who participated in our service and led the school in the minutes silence. Through readings, reflections and participating in the acts of remembrance through laying tutor group wreaths at our drum head altar, the school community has paid its respects to those that gave their tomorrow for our today.





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## Ypres Trip

By Max Haines

It's 6.00 am in half term and I am waiting for a coach in the freezing cold. We, Maidenhead Air Cadets, are off on a special visit to the WW1 battlefields and war graves. We meet up with cadets from other Wings and Squadrons and then we're off.

First stop we visited Essex Farm a British Cemetery and Dressing Station where the poem 'In Flanders Fields' was written. It is shocking how many graves there are. Next stop was Langemark a German Cemetery in Belgium which contains the bodies of over 42,000 soldiers in mass graves. It was such a contrast to the clean white graves of the British Cemeteries.

We then went to Poelkapelle in Belgium where the youngest known casualty of the war, only 14, is buried. We held a short ceremony where some 14-year-old cadets laid a wreath on his grave. It really brought it home how young some of the soldiers were.

The highlight of the trip was the fact that the Air Cadets were going to take part in the nightly service at the Menin Gate where every night there is a Last Post ceremony to remember the dead. We lined up and marched to the gate. Wreaths were laid and the service was held. The gate looks quite small from the outside but inside it is huge, with every inch covered with the names of the fallen. It was very emotional, and people were crying openly. We felt very honoured to be a part of it.

As part of the trip we also visited Passchendaele and Tyne Cot which is the largest Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery in the world with 11,954 men buried there.

It was an amazing trip which really made me appreciate the sacrifice that was made by so many. I feel so lucky to have had the opportunity to go and especially to be part of the ceremony in Centenary year.

## Year 11 Parents' Evening

We were pleased to welcome parents of Year 11 students into school last week to their Year 11 Parents Evening. The event was very well attended and high-quality conversations provided a real focus for students, parents and teaching staff to ensure that progress was being maximised in the coming months. As students prepare for their forthcoming Pre-Public examinations, specific feedback and advice regarding key areas to target in their revision was timely in aiding further preparation.

Thank you to all parents/carers who took the time to complete a school questionnaire, we were pleased to receive the very positive feedback, some examples of which are:

'Very informative and helpful. Very well organised. Thank you'

'Very friendly and approachable staff, keen to help my child do well. Well organised and plenty of info provided'

'Talking about the difficulties and how we can solve them'

'Tips for revision and upcoming exams'

We look forward to continuing to work together in the coming months.

For parents and students of Year 9, a reminder that your parents' evening is being held on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> November. We look forward to meeting you on this important evening.



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## Examinations

As the Pre-Public Examinations for Years 11 and 13 are nearly upon us, please can we remind you of the importance of reading and understanding the exam processes and procedures. All examinations at Altwood School, whether internal or external, are conducted under full JCQ guidelines so as to ensure full compliance. The Exams Information section of the schools website has full details of the different processes and procedures, particularly what to do in the event of illness on the day of an examination and the schools policy on mobile phones in an examination room.



Please can we also highlight that it is an individual candidate's responsibility to have read the JCQ guidance documents, which are contained on this section of the website as PDF downloads. These cover JCQ guidelines relating to completion of non-examined coursework, conduct in an examination room and assessment malpractice/plagiarism.

Should you have any questions on this information, please do not hesitate to contact our new examinations coordinator, Mr Burdett through [exams@altwoodschool.co.uk](mailto:exams@altwoodschool.co.uk) who will be glad to assist you.

## GCSE Drama Performance

Our GCSE students had their final devised exam in 'Drama Performance' on Thursday this week. The students produced highly creative and original work from a stimulus. They spent the day off timetable in order to prepare for the evening performance. All students performed and supported each other in the technical aspects. We would like to say a public 'Well done' to all the students involved.

## Governors Learning Walk

We were really pleased to be able to invite some of our governors in to school for another learning walk last week. This time they were focusing on teaching and learning in the sixth form. They spent two hours visiting a variety of sixth form lessons.

This gave some of our governors a fantastic opportunity to see what great teaching and learning goes on here at school. The governors took the opportunity to talk to students and find out about how their studies were progressing in particular how they are preparing for their PPEs in November and also find out about their plans for their future after their time at Altwood.

Governors also spoke to teachers, they were particularly interested in finding out how our staff have adapted to the recent changes in the sixth form curriculum. The governors commented on the wide range of teaching and learning styles they observed and the highly productive atmosphere that they saw in all the lessons visited. For example, we saw students discussing the research they had undertaken on the context of poems they were studying in English Literature. We also saw impeccable behaviour in the biology class where students were undertaking an assessment no one looked up when we walked into the room so focused where they were on their work. They enjoyed meeting students in business as they researched types of successful leadership models and also our FAB (Football Academy Bisham) students undertaking their BTEC sports science work.

The governors were warm in their praise of what they saw as they undertook this learning walk and commented on the general learning environment as they walked around the school meeting our polite and friendly students from all year groups on their tour. We look forward to inviting the governors in again, as they are keen to get a deeper understanding of our school during its working day. Thank you to our governors who give up their time freely to support us.



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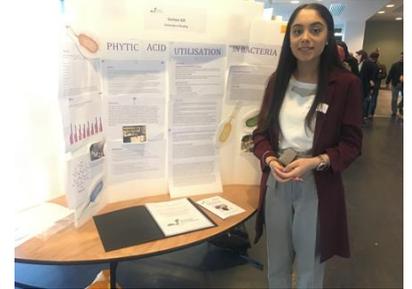
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## Gurleen's Nuffield Science Project

It was a very proud moment to see Year 13 student Gurleen Gill presented with her certificate at the Nuffield students celebration at Reading University over half term.



Gurleen applied to be part of this prestigious project when she was in year 12. She successfully gained a place on this competitive experience and joined the microbiology department at Reading University to undertake a project overseen by a postgraduate student. Gurleen's project focused on the utilisation of Phytic Acids, which in layman's terms meant she was researching whether Phytic Acids might be beneficial for good bacteria and how this knowledge might be used in the future. Gurleen spent four weeks over the summer holiday working at the University. This experience of working in the university lab at undergraduate level will put her in good stead as she applies for further study in this type of field.



This is an excellent experience for sixth form students, other projects undertaken last year included 'Flexible Circuits in Space', 'The value of Curiosity', 'Missile Health', and 'Eyewitness Reliability Videos'.

## House Competition Update

### Altwoods Got Talent

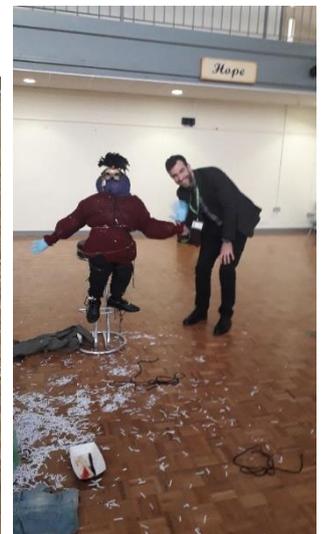
Our annual "Altwood's Got Talent" show saw its return on the last day of term, the 19th of October, when we 'welcomed' Simon Cowell, Alesha Dixon, Amanda Holden, and David Walliams as our guest judges. Students from all year groups showed off their talents ranging from dancing, drawing, banjo-playing, and singing. Notable acts were Daniel Molloy belting "Let it Go", Noor Bhatti singing "2002" by Anne-Marie featuring back up dancers Daniel Molloy, Jude Thuo, Adam Shrimpton, and Jack Potter, not to mention Megan and Peter Jones singing and playing the guitar. The hall was packed with enthusiastic spectators, who groups celebrated and applauded each other's talents which was so heart-warming - you could feel the school's community spirit in the atmosphere. Well done to everybody who participated, and we look forward to next year!

### 'Penny for the Guy'

Inspired by the upcoming Bonfire night, the house competition on the 2nd of November was "Penny for the Guy". The aim: to create the most realistic "Guy" from the clothes and stuffing provided to emulate the old British children's tradition.

In a race against time, refereed by Miss Horwood the three house teams worked hard to produce the best Guy possible. Luke Rose from Hope House described the task as "hard, but fun". Faith house leader, Mr Shepard said he was "so proud to see the Faith community pulling together to create an amazing Guy". He was right, with Faith using their final minutes to improvise a Simon Cowell mask, as the face of their Guy.

All teams worked hard and after a lot of mess and even more fun, Headteacher Mr Dimbleby judged Hope as coming 3rd, Faith coming 2nd, and Joy 1st. The winning Guy is seen here being welcomed into Joy House by Head of House, Mr Smith.





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## Head of House Commendations

The Heads of House are delighted to recognise the following students with a Head of House Commendation. This award is presented for outstanding commitment, enthusiasm and dedication to all aspects of school life. The students demonstrate themselves to be an excellent role model for others.

### Faith

Congratulations to:

KS3 Talitha Ssebanakitta  
KS4 Aaron Thomas-Watts  
KS5 Luca Calabrese

### Hope

Congratulations to:

KS3 Meda Dauksaite  
KS4 Adam Shrimpton  
KS5 Marcel Staron

### Joy

Congratulations to:

KS3 Amelie Sauvage  
KS4 Jonah Power  
KS5 Brian Lyons

## Diary Dates

### November

- 9<sup>th</sup> Whole school Remembrance service
- 13<sup>th</sup> Yr 12 Safe Drive Stay Alive
- 15<sup>th</sup> Yr 9 Parents Evening 4.45 – 6.15pm
- 30<sup>th</sup> Yr 9 Deposit deadline DofE students

### December

- 4<sup>th</sup> Sixth Form Information Evening
- 13<sup>th</sup> Carol Service – All Saints Church
- 19<sup>th</sup> End of term early closure – 12.15pm



## Theme for the Week

Armistice



armistice  
/ 'ɑ: mistɪs  
noun

noun: **armistice**; plural noun: **armistices**

1. an agreement made by opposing sides in a war to stop fighting for a certain time; a truce.  
"the Italian government signed an armistice with the Allies"

Synonyms: truce, ceasefire, suspension of hostilities, cessation of hostilities, peace

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**@AltwoodSchool**