



Light in the Darkness

The winter months can often be a somewhat gloomy time, with short days and long, cold nights making summer seem a long way away. However, this period has been illuminated at Alec Hunter by some incredible events showcasing the many talents of our amazing students, all of which are celebrated in this edition of the *Herald*. From the Winter Concert in December, through the Castles Competition and Respect Project, to the recent Jack Petchey Awards Evening, we have seen our young people stepping outside their comfort zone, demonstrating their creativity and ingenuity, and gaining the recognition they so richly deserve for the way they embrace all our school has to offer.

Nothing exemplified these qualities more than the exhilarating production of 'Matilda' which brought the half-term to a fabulously uplifting conclusion. Over three memorable nights, students from all year groups offered the audience a real treat, with outstanding vocal renditions of the familiar songs from the West End hit show, slick choreography, and some sharp dramatic performances. All those involved should be extremely proud of themselves for contributing to such a high-quality event and I must extend my thanks to colleagues in the Performing Arts department, who gave up so many hours of their time to bring all elements of the show together.

This coming half-term is less than 5 weeks in duration so we have a lot to pack in, especially for Year 11, who will be undertaking their final formal written exams across all subjects whilst simultaneously completing actual GCSE practical exams in Art, Drama, Food Prep, Catering and PE. As ever, our staff will be supporting and encouraging them every step of the way, and we wish them, and all other students, every success in their endeavours as the half-term progresses.

Mr Lawn (Headteacher)

Diary Dates

March 2024

- 5th March – Drama 'Woman in Black' Theatre Trip
- 7th March – Year 7 Parents' Evening
- 11th-15th March – Year 11 Formal Speaking Exams
- 15th March – Year 10 BTEC Dance 'Move It!' trip
- 18th March – Year 9 Diphtheria, Tetanus & Polio and Meningitis ACWY vaccinations
- 19th March – Dance Showcase
- 20th March – Year 8/9/10 School Photographs
- 21st March – School Council Meeting
- 21st March – Year 9 Diphtheria, Tetanus & Polio and Meningitis ACWY vaccinations
- 21st March – Year 10 Parents' Evening (In-person)
- 22nd March – Year 10 Music Industry Taster Day
- 23rd March – BTEC Dance Trip to see Diversity, Cliffs Pavilion, Southend
- 26th March – Year 11 Make Happen 'Focus You' Event
- 26th March – Year 11 GCSE Drama Practical exam prep
- 26th March – Year 9 Duxford trip
- 26th March – Year 7 trip to The Globe, London
- 27th March – Year 11 GCSE Drama Practical Exam
- 28th March – Year 9 Virtual Options Release
- 28th March – End of Term (1pm School Close)

April 2024

- 1st-12th April – Easter Holidays
- 15th April – Return to school, Week A
- 18th April – Year 11 Parents' Evening (In-person)
- 23rd April-3rd May – Year 10 Formal Exams

May 2024

- 2nd May – Year 8 Parents' Evening
- 3rd-4th May – DofE Bronze Award Expedition
- 7th-13th May – Year 11 MFL Speaking Exams
- 13th-17th May – Year 7 In-Class Exam Week
- 20th and 23rd May – Year 8 HPV vaccinations

Winter Concert

Well done to all our students who took part in the Winter Concert on Thursday 14th December 2023. It was a fantastic evening celebrating the musical achievements of our students and included solo and duet performances as well as group ensembles.

Students who took part in the performance were: **Robert Badea, Zane Miller, Toni Cruz, Poppy Harris, Molly Lawrence, Thomas King, Oliver Simpson, Oliver Prendi, Katie Fehrenbach, Ella-Rose Hursit, Megan Selsby, Jessica Gibson, Lucy Jenkins, Whitney Asa, Lacie Thompson, Sophie Ryan, Harmony West, Spencer Gilson, Mia Green, Dylan Pritchard, Jamie Mayes, Harry Stiff, Toby Mayes, Kimberley Nunn, Owen Hurry, Demi Digby, Emily Perry, Michael Quartermain, Phoebe Hastrup and Isabella Cant.**



German Christmas Biscuits

In December, Year 7 students were given a recipe written in German and tasked with translating it to bake some Christmas biscuits to win house points. Students were asked to select their best biscuit and a judging panel of staff chose the winner based on presentation and design. Well done to the three joint winners, who each win 50 points for their respective House:

Holly Cartwright 7L (Hawking)

Chloe Jackson 7E (Attenborough)

Markus Jones 7T (Hawking)



Fantasy Football

In October, we launched a competition for students and staff to join the Alec Hunter Fantasy Football League and win points for their House. Points are awarded to the manager in 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th place each half term. The winners for the first half of the Autumn term were:

1st – Mr Lee (Gandhi) 462 points

2nd – Noah Yeaman 7H (Attenborough) 447 points

3rd – Mr Booth (Attenborough) 429 points

4th – Joshua Jones 10H (Attenborough) 427 points

Top Achievement

We were delighted to learn that **April Kettle** in Year 9 was recently awarded the Lloyd Newell trophy at the Army Cadets. The award was commissioned by the Essex ACF in honour of Lloyd, who was killed in action in Afghanistan in June 2012, and is given to the highest achieving cadet in the county over a year.

CDT Kettle was given this prestigious award for getting involved in lots of different events, from sports to fieldcraft weekends. She has represented Essex at a regional level in football and athletics, achieving medals at both events. CDT Kettle has also regularly paraded on detachment parade nights and developed into a role model within the detachment, leading younger cadets as they join. Well done, April - what an amazing achievement!



Contact Details: Please remember to contact us via Admin@alechunter.com if you change your telephone number or email address to ensure your contact details are kept up to date.

Essex Boys & Girls Club – The Respect Project

Congratulations to four Year 9 students who recently completed the Respect Project. The project is designed to help young people increase their ability to deal with life's problems and help participants become more resilient. The project takes place over four months and includes evening workshops covering different life skills as well as a seven day residential in Wales where students are given the opportunity to take on challenges not normally available to them. The residential included staying away from home in an alien environment, wild camping and climbing a mountain. All four students were awarded with their certificates at a graduation evening.



Library Monitors

Our Library Monitors for this year are:

Lewis Pearson, Toby Ghosh, Phoebe Haastrup, Alfie Holmes, Katie Fehrenbach, Jessica Slimming, Flo Rose-Rogers, Luke Tuttlebury, Maddison Holmes, Hollie Hall, Katelin Chandler, Elizabeth Jarman, Teigan Snell and Katie Ashford.

Thanks to all of them for taking on this important role.



Drop In Sessions

Our Family Liaison Worker, Sharon McCormick, will be holding parent/carer drop-in sessions at Alec Hunter on the following dates:

Tuesday 12th March, 8am-9am

Tuesday 16th April, 8am-9am

Tuesday 14th May, 8am-9am

Tuesday 11th June, 8am-9am

Tuesday 9th July, 8am-9am

Sharon supports families across our local community. She is available for any parent/carer to pop in to discuss any worries or concerns you may have regarding your child or family (for example: attendance, difficulties at home, or if you are looking for advice or support resources). Please note, this is a 'without appointment' session so there may be a wait as parents and carers will be seen on a first come, first served basis. Please sign in at reception.

ALEC
HUNTER
ACADEMY'S

**DANCE
SHOWCASE**

TUESDAY 19TH
MARCH 7PM

£4 ADULT £2 CONCESSION
AVAILABLE FROM MAIN OFFICE



Jack Petchey Awards Evening

On Tuesday 30th January, the Jack Petchey Achievement Awards Presentation for Braintree Schools & Clubs took place at Alec Hunter Academy. Students from schools and clubs across the district were presented with their awards. The Jack Petchey Award Scheme is a reward and recognition initiative which enables schools and youth organisations to celebrate the achievements of their young people and receive additional funding. Congratulations to **Ashton McKinlay, Amber Guilder, Lilly-May Young, Timothy Garnett, Ava Bell, Poppy Keeble, Luke Tuttlebury, Robson Todd and Michelle Chiyaka** who were each presented with their award by Councillor Diana Garrod, Chairman of Braintree District Council. Students are nominated by members of staff and each winner receives a grant of £300 which they can then choose to spend on a specific project or resource in school. Two of our staff were also presented with a Leader Award, science teacher Mr Bonnaud and maths assistant Mrs White. Two of our students, Zane Miller and Robert Badea, played musical pieces brilliantly to entertain the audience. Well done to everyone involved!





BRAINTREE SCHOOL & CLUBS 30TH JANUARY



KS3 Music at Alec Hunter

Key Stage 3 students have been working really hard in the Music department this term. **Year 7 and 8** students have been developing their piano skills and **Year 9 students** have been refining their guitar, ukulele, keyboard, voice and ensemble skills. Students in **Year 7** have been working on Independent Learning. This topic focuses on giving students all the musical tools they need to succeed, but it also has a strong emphasis on resilience and working things out for themselves. Their progress has been amazing and it's so good to see the pupils taking charge of their own learning, setting themselves targets and pushing themselves to achieve them.

Year 8 students have been working on Beethoven's '*Für Elise*'. They have taken on the challenge of playing both hands together, practicing fearlessly and with outstanding results.

Students in **Year 9** have been learning the song '*Riptide*' by Vance Joy, a topic that requires them to play as part of an ensemble, but also spend time learning their own part. Many pupils have tried the guitar or ukulele for the first time. Well done to all the students who have been working so hard!



Year 7 Castle Competition

The Castle Competition is an opportunity for students in Year 7 to get creative whilst also showing off what they have been learning in History about the purpose and development of castles in England. The students are invited to design a historically accurate castle, and we encouraged the students to use reusable/recyclable materials within their design. The 25 entries this year made 2024 one of our highest entry years to date. We also had a wide variety of materials used, from the traditional paper and cardboard, to Lego, foods and even online platforms such as Minecraft, Fortnite and Terraria.

Teachers within the Humanities department, the Year 7 team, as well as previous winners of the competition voted, and the results were as follows:

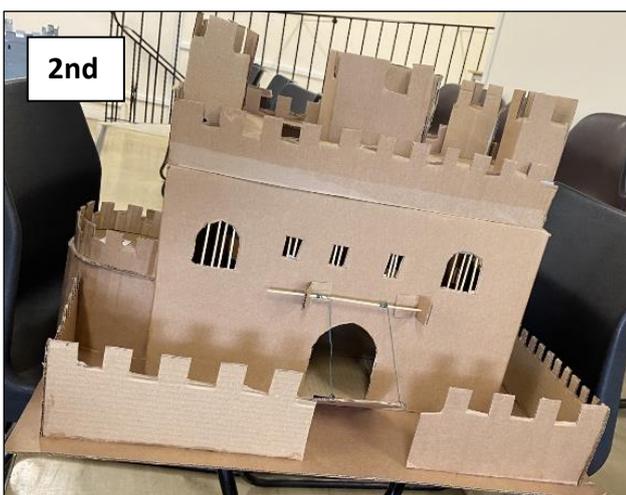
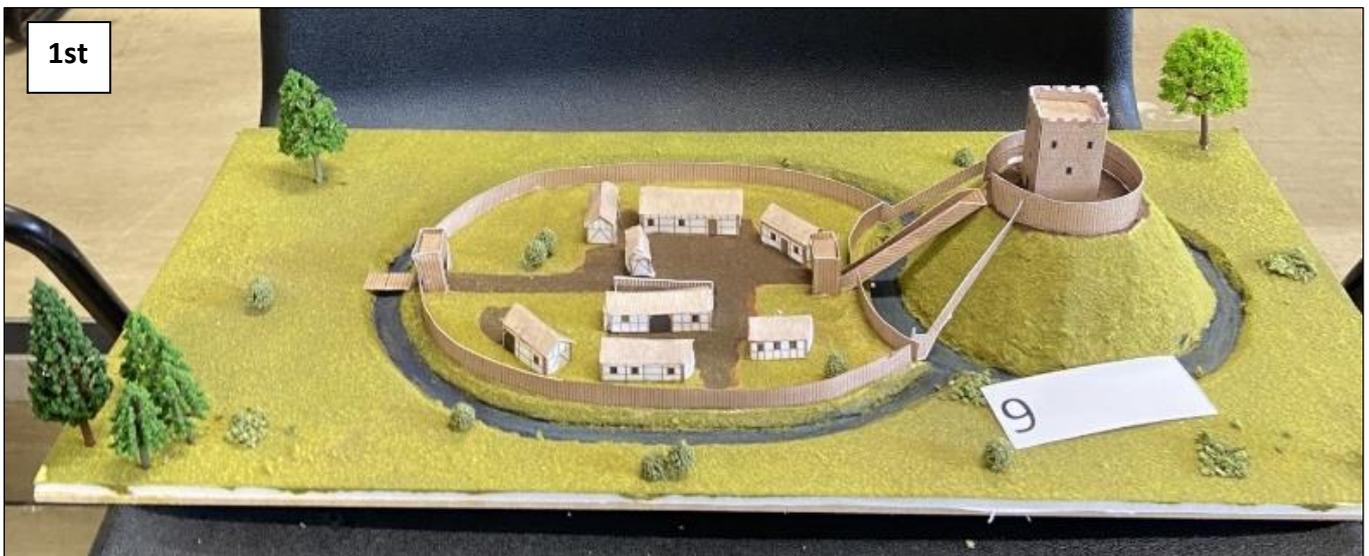
1st Place = Harry Murr (Hawking)

2nd Place = David Ciobanu (Attenborough)

3rd Place = Connor Beard (Gandhi)

Harry's design stood out from the others as it was incredibly detailed and historically accurate. As the overall winner, he received 100 house points and a family ticket to **Hedingham Castle**, which the museum itself kindly donated to the school.

The Humanities Department would like to give an honourable mention to **Jessica Slimming, Amelia Little and Isabella Cant**, who all entered a castle made in cake or biscuit form – their construction skills were very impressive and the entries were also delicious!



Matilda the Musical

On 12th, 13th and 14th February, over 50 of our students performed in Matilda Jnr, The Musical. It was a fantastic performance, and it was amazing to see all those involved having such a wonderful time. Well done to everyone who participated and please go to the [Gallery](#) section of our website to view more photos from this memorable production.





Prom Outfit Hire

We need your help!

We are very conscious that getting our young people ready for their Year 11 Prom is an expensive prospect. With the current Cost of Living Crisis, the financial outlay can be even more of a pressure for some families.

With this in mind, we are seeking to create a Prom Dress and Suit Hire service for students who wish to attend Prom whilst minimising the cost.

We have been lucky enough to receive donations of some lovely evening and prom dresses already, but would like to reach out to the Alec Hunter community to appeal for clothing to increase the options available.

We are asking for donations of the following items:

Prom/bridesmaid/evening dresses (Sizes 4-20)

Smart suits

Waistcoats

Ties and bow ties

Evening shoes

Evening bags

Any other suitable items of evening wear or accessories

If you have any items that you would be willing to donate, please bring them into Reception (marked for the attention of Mrs Aylott) or email Mrs Aylott at LAylott@alechunter.com for further information



Student Absence: Please remember to report any student absence via:

Tel: 01376 559356 / Text: 07598 393348 / Email: JJackson@alechunter.com.

Headteacher's Surgery: Mr Lawn will be available from 3:30-4:30pm every Thursday to meet with parents and discuss any issues they may wish to raise. No appointment is required, as parents will be seen in the order they arrive, but if you wish to book a specific time, please contact the school office.

LINE MANAGEMENT FROM SEPTEMBER 2023

Please find below our line management arrangements for students. The first point of contact for enquiries should be your child's tutor and then their Student Support Leader or Head of Year depending on the nature of your query.

YEAR 7	YEAR 8	YEAR 9	YEAR 10	YEAR 11
Attendance / Wellbeing / Behaviour /Safeguarding				
Form Tutor				
Mrs Willing Student Support Leader	Mrs Weaver Student Support Leader	Ms Swindale Student Support Leaders	Mrs Johnson/ Mrs Porter (Wed) Student Support Leader	Mr Cleevely Student Support Leader
Mr Booth (Assistant Headteacher) - Designated Safeguarding & Mental Health Lead Mrs Harold (Deputy Headteacher) - Deputy Safeguarding Lead				
Learning / Behaviour / Academic Progress / Standards				
Class Teacher				
Head of Curriculum Area *(see below)				
Mr Lee Head of Year 7	Mr Spooner Head of Year 8	Miss Jones / Miss McKinnon (Fri) Head of Year 9	Mr Holland Head of Year 10	Mr Moreno Head of Year 11
Mrs Steward (Associate Assistant Headteacher) Behaviour & Progress	Mr M Doolan (Assistant Headteacher) Behaviour & Progress		Mr Birley (Deputy Headteacher) Behaviour & Progress	
Mrs Gillett			SENCO	
Mrs Jackson / Mrs Holmes			Home-School Attendance Officers	

*** Should you have a subject-related query, for example, regarding homework etc., the first point of contact should be the class teacher. Listed below are the Heads of each Curriculum Area, along with the member of the Leadership Group responsible for each Curriculum Area, to help parents in knowing who to approach for assistance.**

	Head of Subject/Curriculum Area	Senior Leader
English	Miss Schunmann	Mrs Harold
Mathematics	Mrs Baird	Mrs Harold
Science	Mr Fernandez	Mr Lawn
Geography	Mrs Hughes	Mr Doolan
History	Miss Depper	Ms Woolnough
Religion, Philosophy & Ethics	Mr David	Mr Doolan
Technology/Child Development	Mr Todd	Ms Woolnough
French/German/Spanish	Mrs Peralta Jimenez	Ms Woolnough
Vocational Education/Computer Science/ICT	Miss Judson	Mr Jones
Physical Education	Mr Edwards	Ms Woolnough
Performing Arts	Mrs Green	Mrs Watson
Art	Mrs De Kadar	Mrs Harold
Special Educational Needs	Mrs Gillett	Mr Birley
Learning for Life	Mrs Hewes	Mr Booth

Academic Year 2023-2024

September 2023							October 2023							November 2023							December 2023						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
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							30	31																			
January 2024							February 2024							March 2024							April 2024						
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May 2024							June 2024							July 2024							August 2024						
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
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20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31				26	27	28	29	30	31		

	= Schooldays		= School holidays		= Bank holidays
	= Weekends		= Non-Pupil Days*		

***NB. One non-pupil day is still to be allocated and will be used for in-year priorities. Parents will be notified once this is scheduled.**

Autumn Term:	Friday 1 September 2023 – Wednesday 20 December 2023 <i>Half Term 23 October – 27 October</i>	74 days
Spring Term:	Thursday 4 January 2024 – Thursday 28 March 2024 <i>Half Term 19 February - 23 February</i>	56 days
Summer Term:	Monday 15 April 2024 – Monday 22 July 2024 <i>Half Term 27 May – 31 May, and May Bank Holiday - 6 May</i>	65 days
		<u>195 days</u>

Academic Year 2024-2025

September 2024							October 2024							November 2024							December 2024						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30		23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30																					30	31					
January 2025							February 2025							March 2025							April 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30				
														31													
May 2025							June 2025							July 2025							August 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30	31
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<input type="checkbox"/>	= Schooldays / Weekends	<input type="checkbox"/>	= Bank Holidays
<input type="checkbox"/>	= School Holidays	<input type="checkbox"/>	= Non Pupil (INSET) Days (There is one further date to be confirmed)

Autumn Term:	Monday 2 September 2024 – Friday 20 December 2024 <i>Half Term 28 October – 1 November</i>	75 days
Spring Term:	Monday 6 January 2025 – Friday 4 April 2025 <i>Half Term 17 February - 21 February</i>	60 days
Summer Term:	Tuesday 22 April 2025 – Tuesday 22 July 2025 <i>Half Term 26 May – 30 May, and May Bank Holiday - 5 May</i>	60 days
		<u>195 days</u>

Please note: The above dates may vary for individual schools, especially Foundation, Voluntary Aided schools and Academies. You are strongly advised to check with your child's school before making any holiday or other commitments.