



# NEWSLETTER



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## HEADTEACHER'S MESSAGE

Welcome to a much shorter and very unusual AGS newsletter. In this brief update, we have focused on the time spent during the national lockdown from January to March and the way in which we were able to reopen school to all staff and students. There is lots happening in school at the moment, with all of the usual learning as well as additional preparation and support for those students who have had their exams cancelled. We are starting to see the return of the extra-curricular activities - which add to the rich and varied experience of our students - as COVID restrictions are gradually lifted, and we are beginning the series of virtual parents' evenings which will run from now until the end of term. There will therefore be plenty for us to let you know about in the newsletter which will be published at the end of this term.

I am very pleased to report that we are over-subscribed again this year, with more families wanting a place in Year 7 this September than we have places for. This is the fourth year in succession that this has been the case. Thank you for all that you continue to do to make our school this good. It is a huge compliment for everyone connected to AGS that so many families want to join us. In addition to another large intake in Year 7, we have currently 109 applications for Year 12 in September, with lots of students wanting to be part of our small (but perfectly formed) Sixth Form!

It has been a very strange year to date, for reasons we are all too well aware of, but it looks to be finishing better than it started and we certainly have lots to look forward to.

### Diary Dates

**13th May** - Year 7 Virtual Parents' Evening  
**31st May - 6th June** - Spring Bank Half Term  
**8th June** - Year 6 SEND Induction Day  
**9th June** - Inset Day  
**14th June and 15th June** - Year 6 Transition Mornings  
**17th June** - Year 8 Virtual Parents' Evening



The Minor Hall as a Covid Test Centre

## COVID TESTING IN SCHOOL

Our testing took place in the minor hall. Usually used for sporting activities in PE, such as basketball and gymnastics, it was taken over by tables, screens, anti-viral wipes and Covid-19 testing kits. Thank you to parents who booked appointments online for their children to take part in the testing via our Insight system. This made the booking process go smoothly and efficiently. Students made their own way down to the minor hall to get their test. Once there, they registered with a barcode, then they went and sat at a table with a volunteer to do the test. Once their test was done they registered it and waited for the results. Throughout the three weeks we were very happy to report that we didn't have any positive test results and are very excited for all our students to be back in school!

As you can see from the photo above, the testing room was set out so that all the testing stations were two metres apart. Due to the support of our staff and a large team of

volunteers it was a well planned and organised event.

At AGS we are very proud to say that throughout the three weeks of whole school testing, our students and staff (including our exam invigilators and site team) and volunteers (including Gell Friends, parents, ex students and trustees) did a fantastic job! Thank you to our excellent students who completed their testing without fuss in an efficient and helpful way, which was really appreciated. And a big thank you to our super team of staff and volunteers who processed over 3200 tests and helped make our testing process so successful.

We had 15 volunteers helping out and they were a key part of our testing. They registered the students when they came for their tests, they were cleaning the stations between students, instructing students on how to administer each test, timing the tests to achieve an accurate result and then registering the student's results.

Once the testing in school had been completed, students and staff were given home testing kits so they could administer tests at home. This is going well, with the tests being carried out on Sunday and Wednesday evenings.

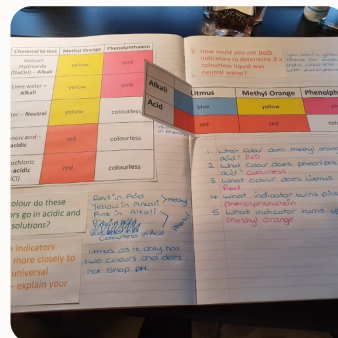
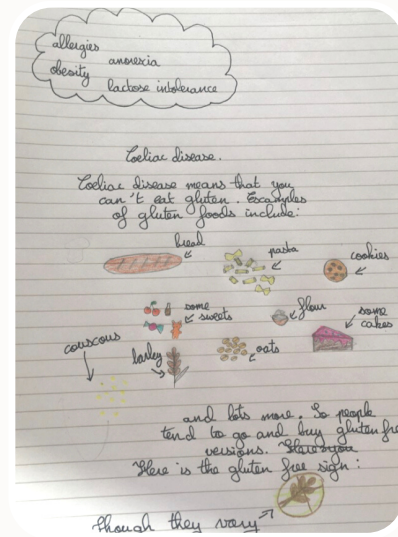
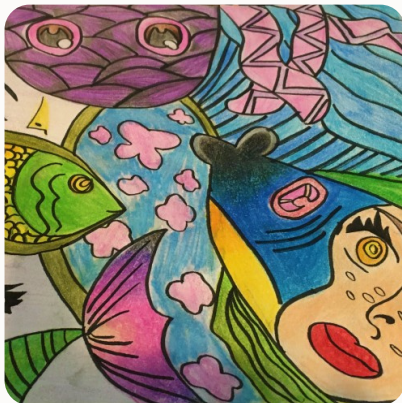
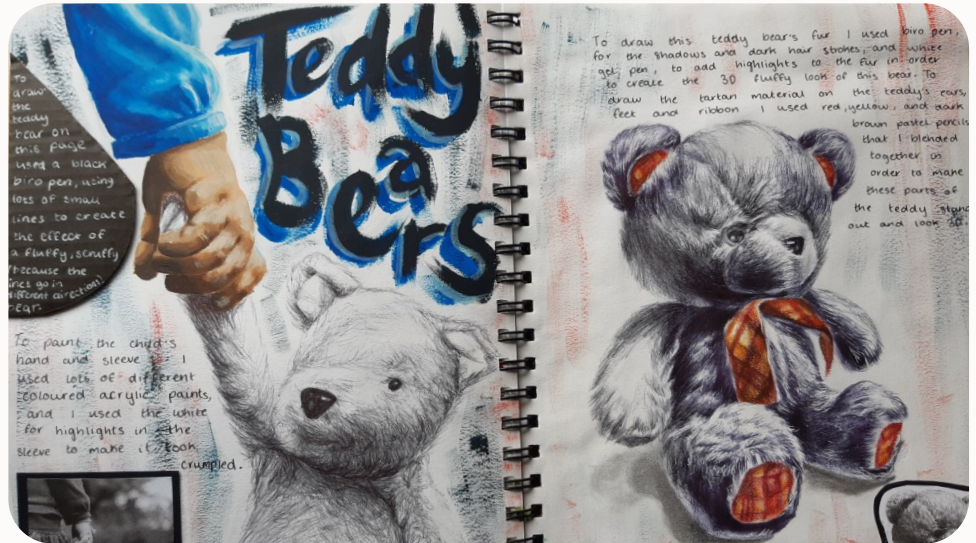
Overall, it was a challenging time for the school which was undertaken with a positive attitude, smiling faces and hard work from all involved.

**"A BIG THANK YOU  
TO OUR EXCELLENT  
TEAM OF STAFF AND  
VOLUNTEERS"**



# WHAT HAVE STUDENTS BEEN DOING OVER LOCKDOWN?

We are so proud of our students and the work they have produced over lockdown. They continued to show how creative and enthusiastic they are, so we would like to share some of their amazing work with you:



Just some of the

# Parent Feedback

"Please thank all the staff involved on our behalf for all the work put into making these online lessons happen so quickly and smoothly".

"Many thanks for all you have done in regarding keeping my child safe whilst in school".

"I applaud the school for taking the necessary steps to enable students to have the best possible learning experience despite the restrictions".

"Our children and those of friends have also stated how well organised things are with remote learning...so well done for giving the kids a positive learning experience in the circumstances".

"Thank you so much. I really appreciate everything Anthony Gell School are doing during these exceptionally difficult times".

"We just wanted to once again thank all the teachers and staff at AGS for the amazing work they are doing in such difficult circumstances".

"Your pastoral care at AGS is second to none and your ability to help our son enjoy and learn at school is a huge achievement!"

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and all staff at Anthony Gell for all your support through this year".

## Dear Students...

It has been a real pleasure to see the return of the students in March. Yes, it is true, teachers do genuinely miss them - we are not just saying it. Students have risen to yet more changes to the school with one way systems round school and mask wearing in class, which they have done brilliantly. You're bound to say that, I hear you say. However, it is true. Year 7, who from September has only known a small section of school due to the Year group bubbles, now were able to access all the rooms, which was most exciting, especially the specialist practical rooms like Science and Technology; they have adapted seamlessly. As have the Yr 11 and 13 who have sat their internal assessments. Their behaviour and attitude were impeccable and we are extremely proud of them. We are all aware of the stresses of a normal GCSE and A level year, never mind one that has had so many challenges. Many students have received lots of positive reward points – points mean prizes! Reward vouchers have been flowing along with e- certificates flying; many have already received over 300 points which ensures them a free activity and a place into the exciting iPad draw at the end of the summer term. As many students have personally gone through some challenging times, the support from their friends has been crucial; I believe this has further enhanced the caring ethos of Anthony Gell. As Head of Pastoral I am involved in many of the students' emotional journeys; I have been extremely impressed with how students have given each other the love and support they have needed. Students at Anthony Gell have always been polite and respectful, however, there are more thankyous when you open the door for them, there have been more doors opened for each other and more thankyous at the end of a lesson. I would like to say to all students – thank you.

...From Mrs Pickford