



NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2026

ISSUE 71



Welcome from Mr Kelly

Welcome to the 2026 Spring Newsletter!

This term has seen AGS students going on three trips to the continent. You will be able to read about two of these contrasting visits in this newsletter and there is a trip to Tuscany happening as I write. These extraordinary international opportunities for our children and young people will be followed by trips to Spain and Germany next term.

There has been so much happening beyond the timetabled curriculum this term. Far too much to fit into one newsletter. The articles that have made it to print will, I hope, give you a glimpse into life at AGS in 2026.

As well as being outstanding ambassadors whilst away from school, our students have continued to excel in their studies. Many of them are beginning the final approach to the exams and assessments that will lead to them succeeding in a range of qualifications this summer.

We wish all of our amazing students well, as they continue to work hard whilst benefiting from the support in school and at home.

Mr Kelly
Headteacher

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DIARY DATES

- 21st / 22nd April - Year 7 Residential trip to PGL
- WC 27th April - KS4 Careers Week
- 30th April - Year 7 Parents' Evening, Year 8 Vaccinations
- 14th May - Year 10 Parents' Evening
- WC 25th May - Half Term
- 23rd June - Year 13 Prom
- 2nd July - Year 11 Prom
- 8th July - Year 6 Visit Day
- 9th July - Year 6 Parents' Evening
- 22nd July - Activity Day 1
- 23rd July - Activity Day 2

The 2026 Ski Trip got off to a fantastic start, with fresh snowfall overnight creating perfect conditions for our first day on the slopes. We are incredibly proud to report that most groups successfully completed blue runs on day one – a brilliant achievement and a testament to the students' enthusiasm and determination.



The fun certainly didn't stop once the skis came off. Evenings were packed with activities, including a lively bowling night (with one confirmed strike... though we won't name names!) and an exhilarating ride on the alpine coaster. A relaxing trip to the pool helped soothe some well-earned aches and pains after long days on the slopes, and we even celebrated a birthday while away – a memorable way to spend a special day.



AGS Ski Trip 2026

As the week went on, the progress made by everyone was remarkable. By the second and third days, many of our students had reached the top of the mountain – an exciting milestone and a real highlight of the trip.



The week was also filled with some well-deserved treats, including a much-anticipated pizza night that everyone thoroughly enjoyed.



As the trip came to an end, it was clear what a special week it had been. Our students made incredible progress with their skiing and snowboarding, shared lots of laughter, and created memories that will last a lifetime. Throughout the trip they represented the school brilliantly and were a real credit to AGS.



YEAR 9 STUDENTS SOAR AT MOUNT COOK ADVENTURE CENTRE

Year 9 students recently enjoyed an exciting and memorable trip to Mount Cook, made possible through funding from the Young Futures Programme by UK Youth.



The trip was packed with adventure, teamwork and plenty of laughter. Students had the chance to challenge themselves on the thrilling zip wire, soaring through the air and cheering each other on from below. They also took part in the Across the Divide activity, where teamwork and communication were key as groups worked together to solve challenges and support one another.

There was also plenty of opportunity to test new skills. Students tried their hand at archery, showing impressive focus and determination, while Puzzle Pursuit had everyone thinking creatively as teams raced to crack clues and complete the challenge. Throughout the trip, our Year 9 students demonstrated fantastic teamwork, resilience, and enthusiasm. It was wonderful to see them encouraging one another, stepping outside their comfort zones, and making lasting memories together. It was a fantastic experience that our students will be talking about for a long time!



U13 CRICKET SUCCESS!



Huge congratulations to our U13 girls' cricket team for their fantastic performance in the recent county championships. The girls played brilliantly throughout the competition, winning their semi-final in style to secure a place in the final.

They continued to show incredible determination, teamwork and skill in the final, finishing as proud runners-up and bringing home well-deserved medals. Every player gave their all and represented the team wonderfully.

We are incredibly proud of their effort, sportsmanship and positive attitude throughout the tournament. Well done, girls!

U15 FLAG FOOTBALL SUCCESS

Our U15 flag football teams have had a fantastic run, with both sides showing great skill and teamwork.

The U15 boys dominated their group stage, winning all their games comfortably before going on to beat Chellaston in the final. Their impressive performance means they have now qualified for the regional final on 22nd April – a brilliant achievement!

The U15 girls also performed very strongly, finishing joint 1st in their group. They narrowly missed out on the title in a closely contested final against Chellaston, losing by just one score.

A huge well done to both teams for their outstanding efforts!



A STANDOUT STUDENT ASSEMBLY



We were delighted to see one of our students take centre stage recently, delivering a fantastic assembly all about the famous Royal Shrovetide Football in Ashbourne.

Speaking confidently to his peers, he shared the history and traditions behind this unique local event, helping everyone understand what makes it so special. To make the assembly even more memorable, he brought in an official Shrovetide ball, giving students a rare opportunity to see it up close.

He represented both AGS and Ashbourne brilliantly, and we are incredibly proud of the way he shared such an important part of local heritage with the school community.

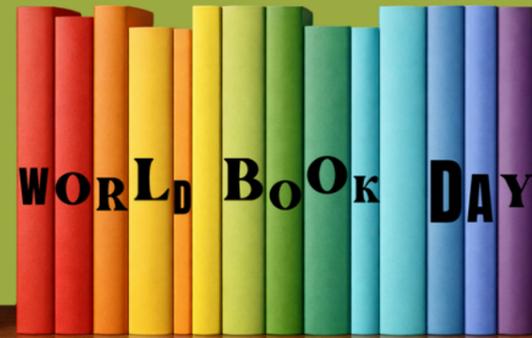
Shakespeare on the Big Screen!

Year 12 and Year 13 English Literature students recently enjoyed an evening trip to watch a live screening of Othello at the Northern Light Cinema on Wednesday 4th March.

Seeing the famous play by William Shakespeare performed brought the story to life in a whole new way. From dramatic moments to powerful performances, the production helped students see the characters and themes they've been studying in class in a much more exciting way.

Students and staff both agreed that it was a brilliant evening out. As one student put it, it was "a highly compelling production which has enhanced our study."

Trips like this are a great way to experience literature beyond the classroom - and prove that Shakespeare can still be gripping, dramatic, and full of surprises!



ROLLING THE DICE ON CREATIVITY



Mondays have taken on a new level of excitement thanks to our Dungeons & Dragons Club, a unique offering that sets our school apart. Led by the legendary Mr Wharmby, the club brings together students from across year groups to dive into epic adventures filled with dragons, daring quests, and clever problem-solving.

Students work collaboratively to create characters, navigate puzzles, and battle monsters, all while honing their creativity, storytelling, and teamwork skills. The atmosphere is full of imagination and fun, with every session offering a new adventure for seasoned players and newcomers alike.

It's wonderful to see such enthusiasm for a club that blends strategy, creativity, and camaraderie - a truly special part of our school community.



From Sparks to Snacks: Bushcraft Skills in Action

On 24th February, our students went back to basics and tried their hand at some fantastic bushcraft skills.

Working together, they learned how to build their own fires before putting their new skills to the test by cooking bread over the flames. Of course, no campfire experience would be complete without marshmallows, and the session finished with some perfectly roasted treats!

It was a brilliant hands-on experience that encouraged teamwork, resilience and a willingness to try something new - with plenty of slightly smoky smiles along the way.



Books truly came to life across the school as students and staff celebrated World Book Day in style. Corridors and classrooms were filled with colour and creativity as everyone embraced the occasion with some fantastic costumes inspired by favourite literary characters.

From well-known heroes to much-loved storybook figures, the effort and imagination on display made for a wonderful celebration of reading. It was fantastic to see so many members of the school community getting involved and sharing their love of books.

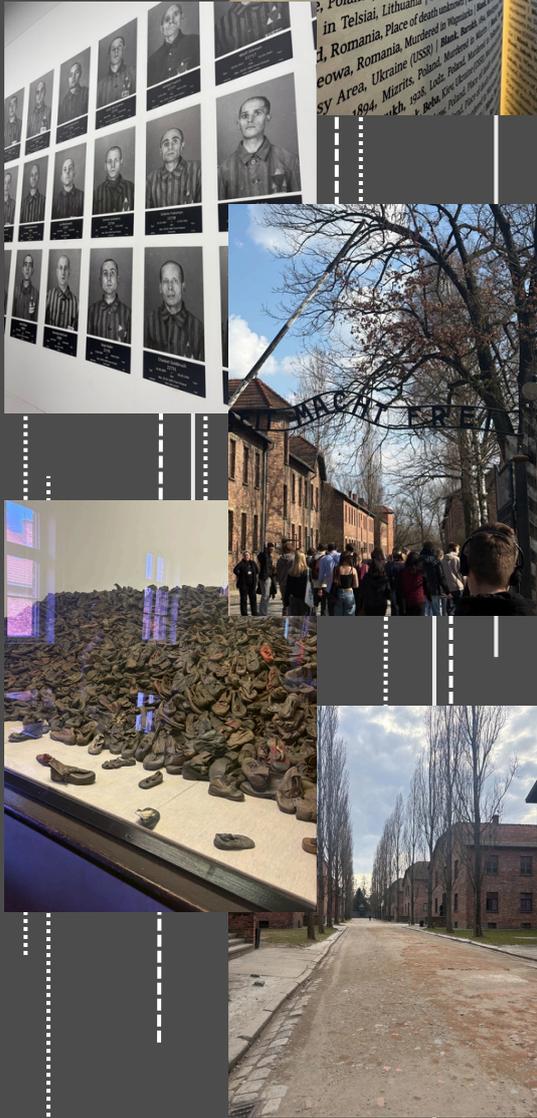
The day was packed with fun activities for students to enjoy. A 'Where's Wally?' competition had everyone searching around the school, while a book-themed quiz during tutor time put students' literary knowledge to the test.

At lunchtime, students also took part in a book swap, giving pre-loved books a new home and discovering new stories to take away and enjoy.

It was a brilliant day celebrating the joy of reading, creativity, and the wonderful world of books - with some truly fantastic costumes to match.



UNDERSTANDING HISTORY FIRSTHAND



This trip was a highly engaging and deeply important experience for everyone involved. We began our visit at Auschwitz I, the first camp established by the Nazis, where countless Jewish people and others were imprisoned and murdered. Walking through the site, we explored a range of powerful exhibitions, including rooms filled with personal belongings such as shoes, suitcases, and glasses, as well as photographs and detailed models that helped us understand what life was like during that time. These displays made the scale and reality of the Holocaust feel incredibly real and personal.

We then travelled to Auschwitz-Birkenau, the much larger camp designed for mass extermination and forced labour. This site was vast and overwhelming, highlighting the sheer scale of what took place there. We learned how the Nazis planned to build hundreds of barracks, creating inhumane living conditions for those imprisoned. We were able to walk through some of these barracks ourselves, which gave us a powerful insight into the harsh and dehumanising conditions people were forced to endure.

At the end of the day, we had the opportunity to hear from a Rabbi, who spoke to us about the Holocaust and the importance of choosing good over evil. His words were both moving and thought-provoking, encouraging us to reflect on what we had seen and learned. It was a very informative but also emotionally challenging day, one that will stay with us for a long time.

Nayana-Coco and Lyla - Year 12

SMART MOVES AND SHARP MATHS

Our Darts & Chess Club continues to be a brilliant part of school life, bringing together students from a range of year groups every Wednesday lunchtime.

Darts has quickly become a firm favourite, with its fast-paced, competitive nature making it both exciting and a great way to build confidence with numbers. Meanwhile, chess is growing in popularity, with students enjoying the challenge of developing strategies, watching matches unfold, and getting fully immersed in the game.

The club has created a really positive and inclusive atmosphere, where students support each other, learn new skills, and enjoy some friendly competition. With so much enthusiasm on show, there's even talk of a House competition in the future!

It's fantastic to see so many students getting involved and making the most of this opportunity.

