ARTICLES FROM ALL OUR SUBJECT FACULTIES!

BRAND NEW HOUSE FEATURE!

DIARY DATES FOR SPRING 2018

AN UPDATE FROM THE HEAD OF ACADEMY
FROM THE HEAD OF ACADEMY

It is my pleasure to introduce the third and final newsletter of 2017. What a year it has been at the Academy! Since the New Year is often a time for reflection I thought I would look back on some of the highlights.

Tile Cross Academy came into being back on the 1st May. As a proud member of Washwood Heath multi-academy trust (WHMAT) we took our first steps into a bold and secure future working together as a group of strong schools from all phases in East Birmingham. After only seven months it is clear what benefits there will be for all Academies in WHMAT through regular collaboration, support and sharing of good practice.

In July we received confirmation of our successful bid to develop a centre for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) at the school. Arconic, a multi-national local employer, awarded us their maximum grant of $50,000 dollars towards developing the project. Over the summer holiday we started the hard work and moved our resistant materials workshop into the proposed STEM block and developed a completely new state of the art Science laboratory. With over £500,000 of work already completed and another £1.25 million of development for this block proposed from summer 2018 it should be a truly fantastic asset to the Academy and our local feeder primary schools.

In September we launched our new house system and it has been a very positive change for the school. The centre pages of this newsletter show you some of the highlights but the key message from me is that pupil participation rates are high and the events put together by the dedicated staff here at Tile Cross have been absolutely tremendous! I look forward to finding out which House wins the competition in July.

September also brought us more fantastic news of the proposed £3.25 million development of a new full size Sports Hall, fitness suite and two all-weather football pitches at Tile Cross Academy. We hope to become a school at the very heart of it’s community and this development, alongside four new specialist classrooms, means that we can be the number one facility in the area for sports and community groups. Both this sports development and the STEM centre will be ready for September 2019. Details of the plans will be a large part of our next newsletter.

Our Sea Cadets Corps continues to move from strength to strength and the Erasmus+ project has provided numerous opportunities for our pupils and staff to have diverse experiences with partner schools all over the world. I really hope you enjoy reading about them in the coming pages.

All that is left for me to do is wish you all a very restful and relaxing break this festive season and a prosperous New Year.

Merry Christmas

Chris Etheridge
Head of Academy

OUR AMAZING MATHEMATICS AMBASSADOR!

We are proud to share with everyone our very first Mathematics Ambassador at Tile Cross Academy. Phavandip in Year 7 has the role to support students with key skills to improve their numeracy.

Phavandip is currently in Set 1 and is working towards becoming our first student to enter GCSE before she ends Year 9. Her attitude to mathematics is exceptionally good and positive. Her enthusiasm to develop herself and others around has been a radiating factor in becoming our very first Ambassador. Well done Phavandip!

The Mathematics Faculty are always looking for new Ambassadors and will be recruiting new passionate mathematicians throughout the year to support students and be part of our STEM (Science, Technology, Mathematics and Engineering) Programme.

Phavandip, our first Mathematics Ambassador

Phavandip is normally supporting our students in the library during break times and most lunch times. If you’d like some support please come and see a member of the mathematics team to arrange a support session. Places are limited so book early!

Mr Wazir
Head of Maths Faculty
Sizzling Science for Year 7
Year 7 students have been busy burning crisps! The students had to carefully consider how to independently plan a scientific investigation to compare different brands and flavours of crisps to see which ones can supply the most energy. There were some interesting results and shocked faces at just how much energy is stored in a single crisp!

Investigating the energy values of different crisps

Heroic Homework from Year 9
All students in all year groups have been given increased opportunities for extending their learning of science from the classroom to home, in a variety of different forms. The science department have been very pleased with some fantastic work completed by students that has really helped their understanding in class and is leading to accelerated progress for many students. But, a particular mention is needed for students in Mrs Mvura’s Year 9 class who have been set a series of model making challenges for homework. The students have produced some really outstanding pieces, including 3D models explaining how fractional distillation works and a fantastic model of the DNA double helix.

3D models and the double helix

Spelling Success!
All of Years 7 & 8 have been ‘treated’ to a homework booklet so they can improve their Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar. Every week homework is being set to support improvements to their written work. Students are recording their homework in their planners and completing it in the books, every week this is marked and students are able to see the improvements they are making. If a student loses their book then they can speak about this with Ms Flynn in CF06.

Competition Time!
English Competition Club has started! There will be a range of inter-house and nationwide competitions. House points will be awarded for turning up! First competition is BBC School Report – a national competition that lets you report the news! Where: LRC (library) When: Tuesdays after school Time: 3 – 4pm.

Mrs Robinson
Head of English Faculty
Tile Cross talk

Sensational STEM Club for Year 7, 8 and 9
We have been very lucky to secure a partnership with the Royal Navy to run an after school STEM club designing, investigating and making a range of exciting projects, including model hovercrafts. This will run from the 16th January on Tuesdays for 8 weeks. Interested students should see Mrs Pemberton for a permission slip and be aware that there are limited spaces available!

Reviewing Revision Resources for Year 11
All Year 11 students have now been provided with a revision guide in Science. These should be an invaluable resource for students in preparation for their impending final examinations. Students should aim to use these to study and begin producing their own notes on key topics for half an hour at least three times a week over the coming months. Dedication and preparation now will improve results in the summer!

Mrs Pemberton
Head of Science Faculty

YEAR 11 GEOGRAPHY FIELDTRIPS
Going into the peaceful, serene village that is Bayston Hill was the more relaxing half of our geography fieldwork. Being a small village on the outskirts of Shrewsbury, a pattern has emerged where people are counter-urbanising away from Shrewsbury to live in this small sleepy settlement. We set out to find the reasons with the key question, ‘what are the causes and consequences of counter-urbanisation in Bayston Hill?’

In the two hours we were out in the village we had to gather primary data in small groups, through questionnaires, land quality and housing surveys. These three methods would help give us an insight into how life is in Bayston Hill, helping us find out the causes of counter-urbanisation. Walking around wasn’t really that tiring because the place was so small. You could literally walk from one end of the village to the other in minutes! We had to follow instructions carefully to complete the surveys accurately and collectively managed to quiz a few members of the public about their opinions on the village and their reasons for living there.

After we were done gathering our data we returned to the comfort of the classroom at Preston Montford Field Centre to collate our results and present them. We managed to put our data into appropriate graphs and find patterns and correlations. We found that the main reason why people would move to Bayston Hill was that it was a peaceful place and due to the fact it was easy to commute to Shrewsbury for work. Our methods for our investigation weren’t the best though because we did it during work hours, meaning all the younger adults and all the commuters weren’t available for questioning, which could have affected our results quite a lot. Something to consider for the Year 10 Geographers when they visit the village next year!

At about 6:30pm I was home and I had to rest and get ready for the next day, because the following day was when we were going to do our physical geography investigation and we were warned by Mr Sami that it was going to be a gruelling day!

At 10am we were back in the classroom at Preston Montford, where we were learning all we needed to know about Bradshaw’s Model before we could go to Carding Mill Valley, the river valley we were studying. The model stated that all rivers follow a set pattern. It was our aim to discover how strongly our river followed that pattern. Would the river get progressively wider and deeper or have humans tampered with the natural flow of the river? Our hypothesis (key question) was, “How does cross-sectional area change with distance downstream at Carding Mill Valley?”

After we dealt with the risk assessment to see if the place was safe we put on waterproofs (that were big enough to eat me alive!) and we set out to Carding Mill Valley. The waterproofs may have stopped us from getting wet, but nothing stopped the strong winds that were constantly throwing our papers about. When we weren’t whining about the wind or slipping on the jagged, sharp, wet rocks, we were concentrated on finding measurements to test our hypothesis. We collected measurements at 200 metre intervals downstream from the source of the river to make sure we could find a good correlation afterwards.

Students collecting their measurements in the river
After we had finished measuring everything and we were relieved of the task of trying to hold the data collection equipment with our numb fingers, we
warmed up in the canteen and ate some tasty lasagne to try get our energy back! Once back in the classroom, we managed to analyse all our data and come to the conclusion that cross-sectional area does increase with distance downstream.

At 9pm we were home and were able to rest properly and reflect on two amazingly productive days. We just have to ensure that we are prepared for the exam in the summer now, which will test us on our experiences!

Mohammad Aziz Rahim  
Year 11 Geographer

**MOCK TRIALS 2018**

The Humanities and English Faculties have joined together in an exciting new venture this year. We will be recruiting a team of 12 Year 8s and 9s, who will prepare to compete against other Birmingham schools in a ‘Mock Trial’ competition. Mock Trials are an effective way of helping young people to understand how the legal system works. We will be training the students over the following months, so that we can enter the first competition in the Spring. We will also be working with legal professionals and visiting the fantastic Magistrates Court in the city centre.

This is a fabulous opportunity to raise the profile of the talents of our students, improve their communication skills and develop their understanding of the law.

Mr. Bibb  
Teacher of Humanities

Ms. Mawby  
Literacy Co-ordinator

**CREATIVE TECHNOLOGIES**

**Design Technology**

The Tile Cross Academy DT staff have been working with 10 Year 4 students from Lea Forrest Primary School in building two Meccanoid Robots. When finished the robots will be 4ft tall with articulating head, arms and motorised feet. The robots know 3000+ pre-programmed phrases, feature voice recognition, LED eyes, and smart device communication. This amazing opportunity is thanks to local business Arconic who are passionate about expanding STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education opportunities within the community.

**Music**

Mr Hutchinson from the Music Department has been working with the Year 1s at Gossey Lane Academy. Initially the program was geared towards 2 sessions of African drumming. Subsequent to the completion of those sessions they have indulged in group singing activities. The students have been enthusiastically engaging in singing some of their favourite songs like “If you’re happy and you know it”, “Wind the Bobbin on” as well as introducing songs that they are familiar with from animated movies that they have watched. Long may this collaboration continue!

**Art**

Year 4 students from Shirestone Academy were introduced to the work of Keith Haring, an American artist whose pop art and graffiti-like work grew out of the New York City street culture of the 1980s.

We discussed the proportions of the body and the human figure and how movement is used in art. The students looked at movement in stick figures in order to create a Haring style figure in motion. They were then able to produce individual work using various types of lines to create a composition.

The students also worked collaboratively using a combination of formal elements - lines, shapes and colour to create a mural utilising Keith Haring inspiration with the theme building on the idea of staying fit and keeping active.

The final murals look totally captivating and will take pride and place in the Shirestone Academy foyer to commemorate the wonderful time they spent at Tile Cross Academy.

Mrs Gray  
Head of Creative Technologies Faculty
January 2018

The Tile Cross Academy House Competition has got off to a flyer this year! The students have had their first taste of competing for their houses, with the ultimate aim of coming out on top. Pride, passion and belief has been clear to see and that alongside the talent and effort on show has made for a truly amazing spectacle.

We stage the competition with basketball and competitions were intense, competitive but friendly. We have taken part so far as players and spectators. We encourage you all to get involved and to show your support for your house. We look forward to seeing all the houses that take part, our Quidling Common and basketball teams and housebands have been working hard to impress us but also to impress the judges.

Mr. Austin

Head of P.E.
House Coordinator

Finally, a special thank you to the Heads of House and staff who have come along every Thursday after school to support and cheer on their houses. We also can’t end without giving a special mention to Mr. Hutchinson for using his musical talents and emceeing for the events.

Thank you for your hard work and support.

Mr. Austin

Head of P.E.
House Coordinator

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Mr. Austin

Head of P.E.
House Coordinator
MS BEGUM
“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.”

As Kenrick leader, I could not be more proud of the effort and commitment pupils have shown towards representing their house. After a slow start, Kenrick have become a force to be reckoned with. Kenrick have set high performance goals by getting students to work to help each other build confidence through collaboration and taking risks as a group to achieve a common goal.

“Being a house captain has helped me to get involved with other year groups, improved my confidence and communication skills.”

HEAD OF KENRICK HOUSE

MR STANFORD
Since the start of the year International House have been amazing. They have taken to house competitions, participated in everything and supported each other. I am immensely proud of the things they have achieved and the current position they are in. They must remember it’s a marathon not a sprint, I believe that they will continue to outperform to get their hands on the house cup.

HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL HOUSE

MS THOMPSON
To all competitors of Central, well done for all your efforts of participation over the past term. Proud of you all, but we do need to club together and become more involved within our House. I would like to give a BIG thanks to our Yr7 House Captain, lamin luwawa, for attending all House meetings and sports competitions when possible. Please think of your participation in meetings, activities and events in order to build a strong House within our school.

HEAD OF CENTRAL HOUSE

MISS CARTER
What being a House Head means to me:
I’ve thought long and hard about this task, To describe my House Head role, I’ve decided to put my words into rhyme, And hope to make you LOL,

So exactly does it mean to me, To have this magnificent job, I smile, and cheer and shout ‘come on, guys’. At the top of my big loud gob

I know boys and girls that I didn’t before, And they all know me too, They wear their bright green tie with pride, And chant ‘Mighty Martineau’.

We always stand as a sea of green, And never do we fail, For even if we do not win, We never, ever bail.

We chant our song mostly in time, And we support each year group out, We celebrate every attempt made, And treat it like a final bout.

We have a mascot who cheers us on, Their name I cannot divulge, They’re big and green and from outer space, And boy do their eyes bulge.

I feel the pride inside myself, When I see each child play, I think it is what school is about, And I am not afraid to say.

It has simply brought identity back, With a very effective rule, Each and every one who attends, Truly belongs to this school.

There is a house that cares for every student here, And a house badge for each and all, No matter of your skills and talents, Or whether you’re big or small.

A House System that brings with it, A way to get involved, Whether it’s sport or tests or lesson based comps, Or a Maths problem to be solved.

I check the house points every day, I fear I may be obsessed, My competitive side has been unleashed, I have become a Martineau pest.

So to sum up, I will end and say, Being a House Head is a blast, For the Students, as much as for myself I truly hope it will last.

HEAD OF MARTINEAU HOUSE
PARTNERSHIPS UPDATE

International News

November was a busy month for international events. The school hosted its visit as part of our European Union funded Erasmus+ project ‘Everyone is Special’. Schools from Hungary, Spain, Holland, Malta and Turkey joined with us to learn and empathise about disability sport. As well as a civic reception by the Lord Mayor of Birmingham, the party also learnt table cricket, wheelchair basketball, disability cricket and football. Venues included Aston Villa FC and Warwickshire Country Cricket Club.

At the same time as the Erasmus visit, we also hosted five students and the Principal from our Pakistan partner school ‘Pakistan Scouts Cadet College’. The students joined nine of our High Prior Attainment students in Year 11 on a day trip to Welbeck Defence Sixth Form College.

Mr Mackintosh and Mr Hutchinson travelled to Barcelona on a two day planning meeting for another Erasmus+ project entitled ‘A song for Europe’. This will involve visits by staff and students to Germany, Spain and Turkey in due course.

We also hosted a planning meeting for a third schools project through Erasmus+ called ‘Inclusion through Farming’. This project will enable visits to Germany, Spain, France and the French Caribbean. Exciting times!

Finally Mrs Bowden and Mrs Sayed have spent a week with our French partner school in Paris learning best practice from them about integrating students with French as an additional language. This school is a specialist vocational school for teaching Health and Social Care and Child Care.

Sea Cadets

Sea Cadets is going from strength to strength. Highlights this term have been learning to ski and snowboard at the Tamworth Snow Dome, with two cadets going on to take part in the ‘Graduate programme’ where they will gain an ASDAN qualification and learn all about the wide variety of jobs available in the snow sport industry. This has been run in conjunction with the charity Snow Camp and supported by a Ulysses Trust grant.

One cadet has completed her basic Mechanical Engineering Qualification over a weekend camp. She has also collected money for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal at a home game at Birmingham City FC, including escorting the players onto the pitch. Weekly
indoor rock climbing at Red Point is also taking place. During half term TS Stirling had a very successful Royal Naval Inspection. This happens every two years and judges how well a unit is performing. Cadets from Tile Cross Academy were well represented!

Cadets also led the schools Remembrance assembly run in conjunction with an Army presentation team. A wreath was hung below the Roll of Honour in Central Hall during the two minutes silence after which year 7 students planted crosses and crescents in our own Garden of Remembrance.

Arconic STEM Centre
Work on this $50 000 facility is nearly complete. A 3D printer and scanner have been delivered along with 28 new laptops. Lego and Meccano robots have been purchased for our primary and secondary STEM clubs and sophisticate CNC Router is about to be delivered.

Mr Mackintosh
Head of Development and Partnerships

DIVERSITY AT TILE CROSS
At Tile Cross Academy, we continue to welcome new students and so far this year, students from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Romania, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Somalia, Norway, Italy, Spain, Lithuania, Switzerland and Egypt have joined our school community. There are over 39 different languages spoken by students and parents!

Mrs Reid
The EAL and Admissions Team

CHRISTMAS EXCHANGE
This is the 10th year of this project!

Some of us have changed schools and cities during this time but have continued with the project in our new schools.

In the beginning, the project was a celebration of Christmas; it has grown to incorporate Eid, Diwali, Hanukkah and simply holiday greetings and good wishes to our European partner schools at this time of year. Some partners have been there from the beginning, whilst every year, new members and schools have joined. It is a very simple idea yet over the years, dozens of students and teachers have enjoyed and have benefited from sharing their good wishes at this time of year.

We have been awarded several Quality Labels and European Quality Labels for our efforts. We have also created some awesome displays!

Mrs Kelly
Head of MFL Faculty

Photos from the Christmas Exchange project
THE NURTURE GARDEN
The Nurture Garden has got off to a great start! We have cleaned and tidied the area and have now dug over the rockery ready for planting. The students have painted stones that will brighten up the garden too. The monkey scarecrow looks good, ready to do his work! We are really looking forward to the Spring Term, when we can watch the garden bloom and spend some quality time with students as they develop their horticultural skills.

Ms. Herring

YEAR 8 SWIMMING
The Year 8 girls have been swimming throughout the Autumn Term in their PE lessons. They have been a credit to the school with the swimming instructors complimenting them on how brilliant they have been. More girls have swum each week than ever before and their progress has been incredible! Many complete non-swimmers from Week 1 have worked their way up through the groups to being able to swim widths on either their front, back or both. The top group, who have their lessons in the big pool and venture into the deep end, consists of over half of all the girls. The majority of the girls have finished swimming having gained at least one certificate. Many congratulations to them all! After Christmas it will be over to the Year 8 boys who will get the opportunity to swim.

Mr Austin
Head of P.E. Faculty

POET LAUREATE VISIT
On our recent Topic Day in November, we were fortunate to have the Birmingham Poet Laureate with us all day. Matt Windle worked with the Year 9s, inspiring them to write poetry on the theme of ‘hopes and dreams.’ Matt really enjoyed the day and was impressed by the enthusiasm and positive behaviour of our pupils. He was so impressed that he is hoping to return to work with the Year 11s in the near future, to support them with their preparation for the upcoming GCSEs.

Matt’s visit has added to a focus on creative writing in our school this term. We had a great response to National Poetry Day, which was based on the theme of ‘freedom’. We visited Shard End Library to participate in a creative workshop. Pupils wrote their own poems, with contributions of favourite poems from staff, and we produced our own Tile Cross anthology. There are some very talented pupils in our school, and we hope to have more of their work showcased next term.

Ms Mawby
Literacy Co-ordinator

Painting stones for the garden and the garden in snow!
Happy New Year
from all the staff and students
at Tile Cross Academy!

### DIARY DATES

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