

Aylestone
School

PROSPECTUS

Achieving Excellence Together



Welcome

I am proud to be Head Teacher of our federation of schools (Aylestone School, Broadlands and Withington Primary Schools). Aylestone is a thriving, collaborative and caring school with high aspirations for all students. Parents who choose Aylestone have entrusted us with one of the most important and rewarding jobs in the world – that of the welfare and progress of their child. We take this responsibility very seriously. We pride ourselves on being able to offer something different in the city. We are a smaller school, but big enough to offer the breadth of choice and opportunities that other schools do. We know **all** our children and have a school ethos based on mutual respect. Put simply, we are a happy, caring school, small enough to know each student, but also big enough to offer extensive choice and opportunities.

When making the decision about a secondary school for your child, visit us and talk to our current students, read Ofsted reports and tour the school in the working day. We would be delighted to show you round our school and answer your questions. You can then take the opportunity to verify for yourself the success of our core belief that children are treated

as individuals, with personalised targets and support, and a real voice in their own education. Our federation of schools is committed to providing excellence in education. Our aim is for children to leave for the next stage of their education with the confidence and aptitude to make their own valuable contribution to their community, for staff to recognise their own contribution to this development of children and parents to genuinely be able to support their son or daughter's education. We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to develop a love of life-long learning and through a strong sense of team and community we can achieve excellence together.

We are immensely proud of all of our students and their achievements through their time with us. We place a strong emphasis on the holistic development of each child as a valued individual. We provide a positive, challenging and exciting learning environment in which children flourish. We pride ourselves on relationships in the school. Children & staff are welcoming & friendly. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum and are immensely proud of successes in many areas. Our extra-curricular offer is wide and varied and many students are involved in charitable work and community projects both within school and the wider community.

I look forward to meeting you all soon

Simon Robertson
Executive Head Teacher

Achieving Excellence Together

Aylestone School is federated with two of our feeder primary schools, Broadlands and Withington. All three schools are led by one Executive Headteacher. Many of our staff work across the three schools therefore building strong relationships with parents and children from an early age. This experience puts Aylestone in a strong position with regards to transition for children from any of the primary schools.

We have learnt a lot as a secondary school through being federated with two primary schools. We have analysed lots of data that shows that when students come to Aylestone in Year 7 they do not experience 'the dip' in academic performance that can happen when they join a new school.

We attribute this to a number of factors, but mainly we know what new Year 7 students are capable of and don't cover old ground with content already covered in primary school. We hit the ground running with challenging engaging lessons, building on their successes at primary school, challenging the students in a caring and supportive way.

We work hard with our family of primary schools to host events that allow us to meet your children and so when they join Aylestone they see familiar faces and we know more about them. We'd hope that the majority of children that are considering Aylestone have visited us before.

Our location also allows us to have strong links with all of the further education providers within Hereford

allowing us to liaise closely with them to ensure our students secure the appropriate provision for the next stage of their education, and our team of careers advisors are on hand to guide and support students onwards the next stage of their education.



"Leaders have high aspirations for all pupils. They want pupils to leave school as confident, calm and caring people who have achieved well"
OFSTED, December 21





Curriculum

Our students have access to a 21st Century curriculum that fits their needs throughout their time at Aylestone. The curriculum is broad and balanced, adapted where needed and relevant to the world in which our students will work. There is a wide range of qualifications on offer at Aylestone that support students' progress towards their future aspirations through further studying e.g. studying A levels, BTECs or apprenticeships. For many we have invested in staffing to run our courses with small groups sizes. Our belief is that you get the biggest rewards when students are happy and engaged in their learning and we work hard to deliver this. We aim to "achieve excellence together" so we are committed to assisting each student through hard work, commitment and self-discipline to achieve the highest standards of work of which they are capable. To this end we help each student to develop a lively enquiring mind, the confidence to question, and the ability to debate rationally, alongside ensuring each student acquires the essential knowledge of each subject.

As part of our Key Stage 3 curriculum, along with the traditional subjects, our students study a subject through the Humanities curriculum called Empowerment. Here they develop life skills to support their health and wellbeing, their future careers as well

as learning life skills such as first aid. Our students also follow statutory relationships and sex education courses.

Whilst students are in Year 9 we conduct a Curriculum Consultation with the year group. A wide variety of GCSE subjects are presented and students indicate which subjects they would prefer to study at Key Stage 4.

We then create a bespoke curriculum offer. This allows us to design a KS4 curriculum each year based on the needs and aspirations of every child in that year group so that they receive challenging, stimulating, worthwhile and enjoyable experiences.

“pupils enjoy coming to school and know that their teachers want them to do well”

OFSTED December 2021



Some of the KS4 courses currently available in the curriculum consultation are:

- Mathematics
- English Language
- English Literature
- Combined Science
- French
- German
- Art and Design
- D&T: Food Technology
- D&T: Resistant Materials
- Music
- History
- Geography
- Computer Science
- Business Studies
- Sport
- Biology
- Physics
- Chemistry
- Psychology
- Religious studies
- Drama



High Quality Teaching

Learning and teaching are our highest priority; we are committed to providing students with the best learning experience. At Aylestone quality learning takes place in our classrooms because teachers know the students well. Teachers work hard to ensure that they have an excellent knowledge of students' strengths and areas for development, but, crucially, they also make sure they know how students "tick"; what motivates them, in order to get the best possible responses from them. With their expert subject knowledge, they then deliver engaging, well-planned and resourced lessons.

Faculty leaders have mapped the essential knowledge required for students to be successful and to make progress in each subject right through Key Stage 3 and 4 with an understanding of what is required in preparation for study and training after Aylestone.

Students are taught using a wide range of techniques and resources to engage and support them. Our teaching staff take an active and imaginative approach to teaching and learning, sharing good practice in order to promote student progress. Working with their teachers, students are given opportunities to gain the essential knowledge required, build skills to make use of that knowledge to enable them to become active and independent learners.

Our school website provides you with lots of other information that you will find useful. This includes:

- Examination results
- Links to OFSTED reports
- Times of the school day
- Uniform
- School policies

On-going assessment assists students to achieve their full academic potential, enabling them to learn from constructive feedback. Students are required to improve work as the learning is progressing and after assessment to ensure they meet their potential. Students and parents can keep track of progress through regular reports and reviews.

Teaching staff and pastoral staff regularly discuss the students' needs and progress, and this means that any barriers to learning that a student might have are quickly addressed. Teachers and leaders meet to discuss progress at Progress Meetings where additional support is agreed where necessary to ensure that students catch up lost or weak learning. Parents evenings allows parents and students to meet with teachers of subjects studied to discuss targets, progress and strategies for improvement. Teaching staff record strategies that work with individual and groups of students and these are shared so that all staff can support students in their learning. We believe that it's important to support the child "in the round", taking into account all the issues that they are faced with in their personal and educational life as young adults. We have a dedicated team of Student Support Team Workers who then help students with interventions if they are needed and are available to talk to at those times when a student might feel they are not coping.

The teaching team is exactly that – a team; and this is evident in the way teachers support each other in developing their teaching skills, sharing best practice in and out of the classroom. This is developed further by working with other schools. At Aylestone we firmly believe that everyone is a learner and that learning is life-long.



“ The personal, social and health education curriculum is well-planned and sequenced. As a result, pupil’s personal development is well catered for ”

OFSTED December 2021

“ Pupils feel well-supported in lessons and many access a range of clubs and activities, which helps develop their skills and interests ”

OFSTED December 2021

Enrichment

One of the many strengths of our school is the opportunity for students to take part in a wide variety of enrichment activities. There are regular house activity days for every student with a wide range of special events. Students are encouraged to take part in outdoor activities; opportunities within the Arts are excellent; sports teams enjoy success both locally and at county level; there are programmes for Gifted and Talented students and many exciting trips and activities linked to specific subject areas. The Duke of Edinburgh award Scheme is thriving at Aylestone and offers leadership and self-improvement in an exciting setting. We are a wholly inclusive and fully comprehensive school and we would not want it any other way!

In essence, Aylestone is a school that offers students of all abilities and interests the opportunity to be the best they can be. Our school vision statement **Achieving Excellence Together** encapsulates our intention to do the very best for every one of our students. We provide many, varied opportunities throughout a student's time at Aylestone and we offer a huge range of unusual, interesting and challenging enrichment activities. For example, we welcome into school visiting speakers and specialists from the fields of media, law, business, sport and academia to inspire students. This gives them the opportunity to identify and develop skills for future study and the work place. We also provide careers guidance with access to careers advisors, and a bespoke annual careers fair.

Students are invited to take an active part in shaping the way the school operates. We have a thriving student voice, which includes a student council, and the prefect body.

Aylestone has a rich and flourishing artistic and cultural life. Heads of Houses work together to produce excellent productions each year, and there are also performance opportunities in our school productions and musical evenings. We also run the popular PGL Trip for KS3 students, a 4 night trip to the South Coast where students take part in a variety of outdoor and adventurous activities. In addition to the PGL Trip, we also run the Battlefields Trip to Belgium, a truly moving experience for our students.

On admission to the school, all students are allocated to one of four Houses. Those being Mortimer, Clare, Delacy and Coningsby. Your child will be given a small coloured badge which will be pinned to the left lapel of their Blazer.

Mortimer – Yellow
Clare – Green
Delacy – Red
Coningsby – Blue

House competitions are held throughout the year in all subjects. We host many sporting House competitions culminating in the Sports Day in the Summer Term. We also have our very popular Christmas Pantomime, which is a wonderful event that students can get involved in either as a participant or as a spectator in the final week before Christmas.

Aylestone has much to offer in the sporting field, with a huge diversity of enrichment opportunities led by our own PE staff as well as external coaches. We are proud of the achievements of our students who represent their house, their school, their local clubs, and their county in a range of different sports. The clubs on offer include basketball, dodgeball, tennis and table tennis, alongside the more traditional offer of rugby, football, netball, hockey, cricket, and athletics.

“Pupils receive high-quality careers advice to help them make wise and ambitious decision about their future”

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Support

The relationships between teachers, students and parents are fundamental to helping students be happy and enjoy school. We work in partnership with students and their families and to support this engagement we offer an online attendance, achievement and behaviour tracking system which allows you to monitor your child's performance at school (in real time) from home, workplace or mobile.

Working together, we support students to enjoy their time at Aylestone – to work hard, make good progress and leave us as responsible, well-qualified, mature young people; ready to make a valuable contribution to society. We believe that if students are to prosper academically, they must feel happy and secure. Students will join a tutor group in Year 7 and will generally remain with the same peer group until the end of Year 11. The pastoral care of each year group is overseen by an Achievement Coordinator who has the experience to help students settle into their new school.

Our expectations of our students in terms of their achievement and behaviour are very high. We expect all members of the school community to uphold the values of respect, hard work, self-confidence, responsibility, fairness, honesty and courage. Our community is inclusive and diverse and we take pride in celebrating this diversity at every opportunity.

This is what we provide for students; in return we expect our students to come to school on time, in the correct uniform, with an open mind, ready to learn and to do their best.

We want all young people to bring to Aylestone a positive attitude, a willingness to contribute, a respect for others and a determination to give of their best. We expect all students to behave well, to work hard to develop their talents to the full and to pursue the highest levels of achievement. It is also here that effective teamwork is often built. We demand high standards of work from students to encourage them to develop a good

work ethos. Staff create a nurturing environment both within the classroom and around school where excellence is expected from all students in all areas of life. We are dedicated to learning and development; we offer a curriculum and a range of activities to help all students learn about how they work best, both as individuals and with others.

At Aylestone we have a vibrant Lumos group for our gifted and talented students. This recognises that gifted and talented students are a diverse group with a varied range of attainments and skills, and that this may not simply be the ability to succeed in tests and examinations. Being gifted and talented is not a one-off fixed state; students may develop outstanding qualities at any point during their time at Aylestone and may demonstrate leadership qualities, high level practical skills or a capacity for creative thought. We offer varied opportunities for students to demonstrate their enormous individuality and talents.

We recognise that during their time at secondary school, most students at some point will require additional services that cannot be offered in the mainstream classroom. Students may have medical, learning, behavioural, motivational or emotional needs and these services may be required on a short or long-term basis.

Our Student Services provision at Aylestone aims to meet the needs of all students in an inclusive and supportive manner which supports the teaching and learning of all of our students in the mainstream setting.

The type of supportive provision we can offer includes:

breakfast club at the start of the day, session 6 help until 4.15 for homework support, school nurses appointments at drop in clinic as well as emotional literacy interventions with our ELSA staff. The Enrichment Room is at the heart of this provision and provides an alternative learning space for those few students who cannot access their learning within the mainstream classroom on a short-term basis.

At times, students may have an issue that may affect their joining in lessons or activities. For many they just need some immediate short-term support. Other students have issues that take longer to resolve and we work closely with a range of outside agencies from CAMHS, CLD and Phoenix to young carers to make sure our students are happy, safe and thriving at school.

If your child has learning needs these will be met by the adaptations to teaching provided by class teachers or by additional support from our team in small group targeted interventions or by in-class support to enable them to access learning effectively.

In all instances, the close communication and co-operation between school, parents and students is key to making things work so that all of our students can achieve their potential. If you have any issue, large or small, please be assured we will work with you to help.

“ Pupils feel safe at school. They appreciate that staff look after them well. The site is calm during social times ”

OFSTED December 2021



Transition

The transition to high school can cause a little trepidation as children join us in Year 7, but here at Aylestone we have vast experience at making this process a smooth and enjoyable one. We work hard to ensure that our new students are comfortable and prepared for this big step.

Being federated with two primary schools has allowed us to develop an excellent transition programme and we continue to have very strong links with our traditional feeder schools, in addition to other primary schools within our local community. Our pastoral care of all our students starts even before they have joined the school and so, throughout the year, many events are held at Aylestone which really help our future students get a positive feel for the school and its surroundings. We run activities that target all age groups in the primary schools.

Many of these are sports in one form or another, culminating in our flagship event, the Aylestone School Games; a full day of activities in which we regularly welcome over 300 students.

Our Open Evening is held at the start of the Autumn Term in October and is followed by an Open Week, where families can take a tour of the school and visit lessons to see the work of our students and teachers.

Once a family has selected Aylestone as their secondary school of choice, a senior member of staff visits every student in their primary setting and will explain what to expect at Aylestone and address any anxieties. We speak to the child's teacher to gain all relevant information prior to the September start. There is also a Y6 transition day and evening in the summer term for all our prospective

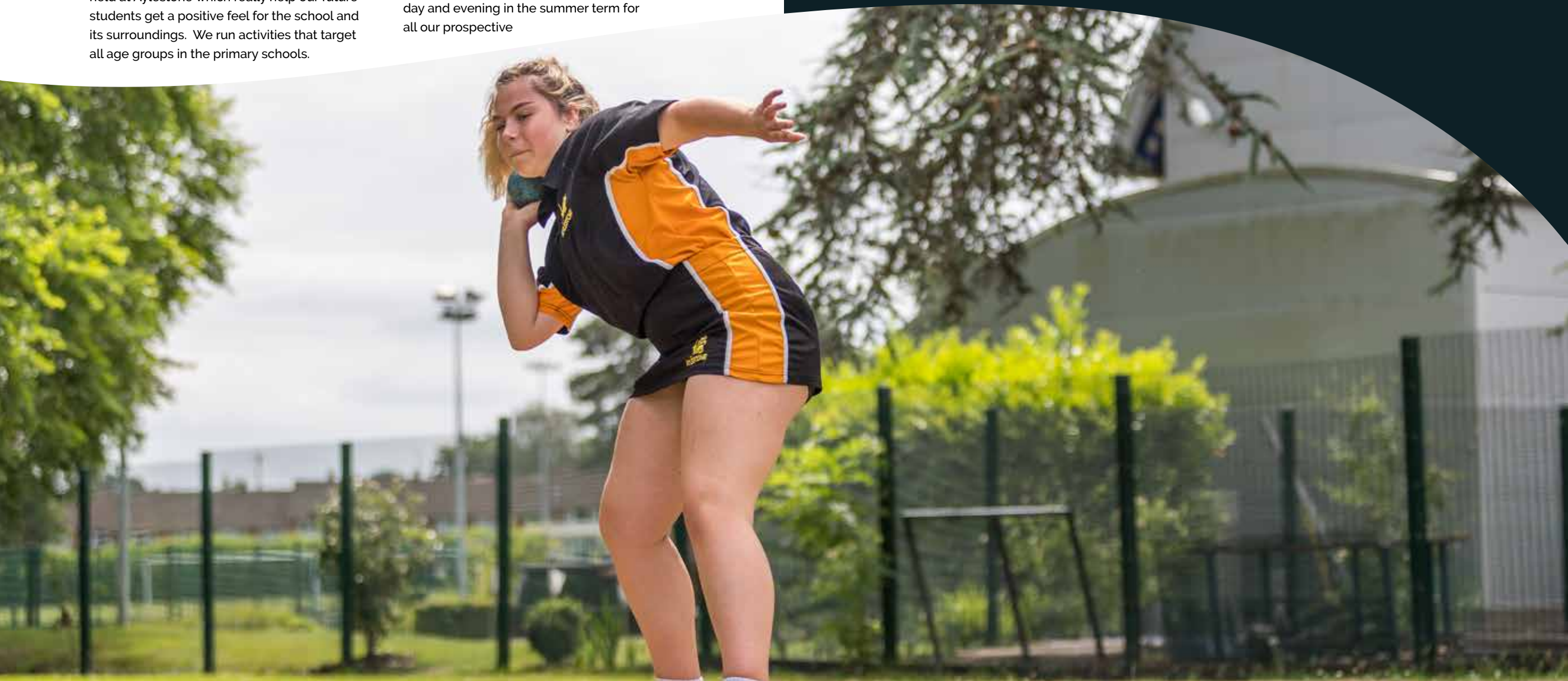
students. During the evening, parents attend and meet with their child's future Form Tutor and Achievement Coordinator, in addition to other members of staff who will have a significant input into their child's development.

To complete our extensive transition process here at Aylestone School, we offer a Summer School during the holidays. This is an additional opportunity for future students to feel secure and happy in their new environment when they arrive in September.

We are committed to doing all we can to support your child's move to Aylestone School so that, while with us, they feel happy and safe and are able to achieve their best, both in the classroom and beyond.

“Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding”

OFSTED December 2021





Aylestone School

Broadlands House, Broadlands Lane, Hereford HR1 1HY

Tel: 01432 357371 | Fax: 01432 263925 | Email: admin@aylestone.hereford.sch.uk

www.aylestone.hereford.sch.uk