



Alde Valley Academy

Aspire and Achieve. Lead with Kindness. Stronger Together.

NEWSLETTER - 16TH JANUARY 2026

PREPARING FOR LOCKDOWN DRILL - REASSURANCE FOR PARENTS/CARERS

Recent national news, along with reports of a lockdown at a nearby secondary school, may have caused understandable concern for families. We would like to reassure you by explaining our approach to lockdown drills and addressing some recent rumours directly.

Lockdown drills form part of standard school safety planning across the UK. Like fire drills, they are precautionary measures designed to ensure that staff and students know how to respond in the very unlikely event of an emergency. Serious incidents involving violence in UK schools are extremely rare; however, schools have a responsibility to plan carefully and be prepared for all possibilities. While we have not conducted a lockdown drill to date, we intend to carry one out in the near future as part of our ongoing commitment to safety and preparedness.

This week we investigated graffiti found in school, which led to rumours about someone bringing a weapon onto site. We want to be absolutely clear that this has been fully investigated and confirmed as a distasteful prank. There was no credible threat to students or staff. While the prank itself was not dangerous, we recognise that the rumours caused worry for some students, and this has been addressed in school.

The safety of our students and staff remains our highest priority. Any concerns raised are taken seriously, investigated promptly, and managed proportionately in line with safeguarding guidance. If a lockdown drill takes place, students will be guided calmly by staff, and families would be informed quickly if there were ever a real incident.

We are always mindful that news stories and rumours can raise questions for young people. Staff are available should any students wish to talk, and we encourage calm, reassuring conversations at home. Thank you for your continued support in helping us keep our school a safe and positive place for all.

Mr Hetherington
Headteacher

YEAR 9 PARENT EVENINGS

29th January 2026

Year 9 Parents Evening (4pm-7.30pm)

12th February 2026

Year 9 Options Evening (5pm-6pm)

Please accept our apologies for the error regarding the start time of the Year 9 Options Evening, which was previously reported as beginning later than scheduled. The evening starts at 5pm with a presentation from Mr Hetherington, followed by the opportunity to speak with Heads of Department about the subjects we offer.

We will write to Year 9 parents/carers nearer the time to confirm arrangements of the Year 9 Options process.

PE NEWS

Our cross-country runners showed fantastic determination this week, bravely competing in challenging rain and muddy conditions at Woodbridge School in the Suffolk round. All students are to be congratulated for their resilience and commitment, representing the school superbly despite the weather.

A special well done goes to Connie (Year 7), who achieved an excellent 9th place, securing qualification for the regional round – a tremendous achievement.

THIS WEEK'S FIXTURES

Looking ahead, we have a busy and exciting week of PE fixtures, with students competing across a range of sports and age groups:

- Monday 19 January – Year 11 Football at Hadleigh High School (11:30am- approx. 5pm)
- Tuesday 20 January – Year 8 Football at St Albans (1pm - approx. 4:30pm)
- Tuesday 20 January – Year 7/8 Girls' Football at Hartismere (4:15pm–7pm)
- Thursday 22 January – Year 7 Football vs Ipswich Academy at AVA (2:30pm–4pm)
- Friday 23 January – Cross Country for Years 7–11 at St Felix (9:30am–3pm)

CLUBS

Finally, we are pleased to confirm that PE clubs are now back up and running, offering students further opportunities to stay active, develop skills, and enjoy sport as part of school life.



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Spring Term - After School Clubs Timetable

All Clubs will run from 3-4pm - Any student that needs a bus home can register when they arrive at the club

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Football Club - Girls and Boys Years 7, 8 & 9	Netball Club (from 27th Jan) All Years	Cross Country All Years	Badminton Club All Years	GCSE Intervention Years 10 & 11
Trampolining Club Years 10 & 11	Sports Hall Athletics Years 7 & 8	Trampolining Club Years 7, 8 & 9		
Swimming Club All Years		Table Tennis All Years		



YEAR 7 TAKES PART IN THE “HOP TO SUFFOLK” CAMPAIGN

Year 7 students have been given an exciting opportunity to take part in the Hop to Suffolk campaign, led by Sizewell C. As part of the initiative, a hare sculpture has been placed at Wild Aldhurst — and our Year 7 cohort has been invited to help choose its name!

To make this a fun and inclusive experience, we are running an inter-form competition. Each form group will view an image of the hare and learn more about the Hop to Suffolk campaign before discussing and voting on a suitable name. Students are being encouraged to think creatively, while keeping their suggestions sensible and appropriate.

Over the next two weeks, form credits will be tracked, and the three forms with the highest number of credits will have their chosen names shortlisted as finalists. These three names will be announced in assembly, followed by a whole-school vote to decide the winning name.

This process gives students a real taste of democratic decision-making — and a chance to leave their mark on a local community project. We look forward to sharing the final name soon!



UPDATE TO LATE BUS SERVICE

We would like to make parents and carers aware of a temporary change to the Border Bus Late Bus service due to local road closures.

As a result of the closure of Mill Road and Rendham Road, which will be in place until 2 February, the Late Bus is unfortunately unable to drop students off on Brook Farm Road during this period. Instead, the Late Bus will stop at the junction with the B1121, which will be the nearest available drop-off point.

We would like to reassure families that this restriction applies only to the Late Bus service. The normal timetabled buses at 3:10pm are not affected in the same way, and one of these services will continue to serve Brook Farm Road, as it is able to turn right onto the A12.

We appreciate your understanding while these temporary road closures are in place and thank you for your continued support.