

Newsletter

Autumn 2 2018



Avalon School
Learning for Life

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Hello everyone,

I would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to you all:

Thank you to all our parents and carers for your support; your shared expertise that helps us to enable you young person to make the best progress

Thank you to all our staff who are passionate and highly committed to seeing all our young people become as independent, self-assured and successful as they can be

Thank you most of all to our pupils who never fail to inspire and of whom we are all so proud.

I feel privileged to have been head teacher here for the last nine years and it is the people of our school community who have made this so special.

I am delighted that we have now reached our total for the hydrotherapy pool and that the build will start next year. It will be a magnificent tribute to the efforts of so many people and in particular to the lives of two special students in whose name we began the fund raising. We just need now to fund raise for the fixtures and fittings! I look forward to seeing you all at the grand opening!

In recognition of our pupils' achievements I have initiated some awards this term; which will be made termly into the future. The students we are celebrating this time are below.



Communication Cup



Perseverance Star



Avalon Ambassador



Kindness Cup



Independence Star



Avalon Ambassador

Congratulations to them all!

I am delighted that Laura Searle is the new Head Teacher and I know, together with you all, she will take the school from strength to strength and I look forward to hearing all about it.

Best wishes for a very happy Christmas,

Alison Murkin
Head Teacher

Wells Cathedral Christmas Service for Special Schools

On 27th November, 6th Form and 4Hut braved the wind and rain to represent Avalon in the annual Special Schools Christmas Service at Wells Cathedral. Avalon began the service with a performance of 'Tell me a story, shining star'. Avalon staff were very proud of the students for successfully performing a 2-part song so confidently. It was lovely that parents and governors come along to support us.



'It was good. I liked all the children singing. It made me feel happy'.

'I really enjoyed it'.

'I felt really confident about singing to others and I even joined in with the songs the others schools were doing'.

'They all looked like they enjoyed participating in the service. It was great to get them altogether and take part in this experience'.

Hydrotherapy Pool Appeal – Build Target Smashed!

Christmas has come early with the news that the Friends of Avalon PTA fundraising group have smashed their £1.1m fundraising target and will see the Hydrotherapy Pool they need take shape in the New Year. So remarkable has been the pupils' fundraising that news reached Hong Kong, where a charity was so impressed it pledged a large donation. Together with a generous grant from St James's Place Foundation in Cirencester, this has placed the much-needed pool in sight. "Thank you so much!" is the message from Avalon's pupils and teachers, who are grateful for the unstinting support shown by the local community since the campaign was launched.

The Friends of Avalon PTA charity will continue to fundraise for vital equipment needed for the pool to be operational. This includes hoist tracks and lift hoists, bench seating, lighting, lockers, privacy screens and blinds. The initial costs for these are estimated at around £120,000.

Details of **how you can help** can be found on the appeal page on our website:
www.avalonschool.net

Travelling Light Theatre Company

On Wednesday 19th December four members of the Bristol-based theatre company, Travelling Light, worked with groups across the school to deliver drama and music workshops on the theme of Middle Eastern legends. Workshops were personalised to the strengths and needs of each group, with some producing musical pieces, others dramatized versions of stories about genies, and others movement pieces based on the themes of entrapment and freedom. The photos below show what fun we had and the amazing interactions that took place throughout the day. Thank you Travelling Light!



Update from Friends of Avalon PTA / Parents Group

The newly created PTA Facebook page has reached 2132 people with 70 likes. Avalon Parent group has been a huge success with up to 15 parent / carers attending regularly. We've had visits from the Somerset Parent Carer forum with a parents' Q & A session and the Short Breaks team who have been able to arrange for Avalon school to become a pick up point for some of their future outings. In the New Year we will be running Preparation for Adulthood session and Parent/Carer well-being sessions. We laugh, advise and support each other and the kettle is always on.

The next parents meeting in 2019 will be Monday 14th January 9-11am, followed directly after by the PTA meeting

Parking Issues outside of Avalon & Brookside

We are experiencing increased parking problems outside of the schools with people parking their cars on the yellow zig zag lines and blocking gate sight lines. This is obstructing other traffic and pedestrians, which is extremely dangerous and putting people's lives at risk. Please allow enough time to park safely and legally to protect yourself and the safety of others. The PCSO and parking controllers are carrying out regular patrols.

The parking restrictions in place outside both schools are:

**NO STOPPING ON ENTRANCE MARKINGS
Monday to Friday 8-10am and 2-4pm**



Christmas Fair & Celebration

On Monday 17th December we held a Christmas Fair open to friends, family and the local community. There was a wide selection of gift ideas on offer, including handmade jewellery, personalised festive plates, decorative lights and other Avalon enterprise gifts. A big thank you to all who supported the fair, including the donation of raffle prizes and homemade cakes. The total amount raised at the event was £627.21. Pupils have chosen to donate the profit from this to the Yemen refugee fund.

Friends of Avalon
Hydrotherapy Appeal

Raise FREE funds as you shop for your
Christmas Gifts

www.giveasyoulive.com/join/friends-of-avalon-pta

Simply visit the above link and raise FREE funds for us every time you shop online via Give as you Live!

Raise FREE funds through Give as you Live at over 4,000 top online stores



Sen.seational Pop Up Gift Shop – Taunton



The shop opened 13th Nov staffed by students from several special schools selling a range of arts and crafts, including artwork & prints, mugs, plants, bird feeders, pot pourri, bath bombs, jams & chutneys and Christmas cards and decorations. Total sales £4876, Avalon sales £2160. The profits will be finalised in the New Year and will be split equally between the Hydrotherapy Pool appeal, WaterAid and back to the individual classes to put towards a class activity of their choice.

Key Dates this term

INSET Day – School closed to pupils	Friday 21 st December 2018
Christmas Holidays	Monday 24 th December 2018 – Fri 4 th January 2019
Return to school for pupils	Monday 7 th January 2019
INSET Day – School closed to pupils	Friday 15 th February
February Half Term	Monday 18 th – Friday 22 nd February 2019
Return to School for pupils	Monday 25 th February 2019
INSET Day – School closed to pupils	Thursday 4 th April 2019
INSET Day – School closed to pupils	Friday 5 th April 2019
Easter Holidays	Monday 8 th April – Monday 22 nd April 2019