

Al-Qalam

VOLUME 2 | ISSUE 1 | OCTOBER 2013 | DHUL HIJAH 1434

As-Salaamu' Aalaikum wa Rahmatullaahi wa Barakaatuh

I ask dua that you are all well and in the best of health and Eemaan. Alhamdulillah, as we move forward into 2013 I pray that the school is able to prosper and provide the best education for your children. May their education be beneficial to them in this world and the hereafter. Ameen.

Alhamdulillah, it gives me great pleasure to bring to you the AAGS newsletter. MashaAllaah students have contributed articles towards the newsletter to keep you up to date with the many activities that they have been involved in this autumn half term. Our Year 7 students have included some interesting articles on how they are settling into secondary school and articles from our prefects and murshidaat will keep you informed about their roles at AAGS.

Mrs R. Adam
Headteacher

GOOD DEEDS WE CAN DO FOR OUR PARENTS

- Performing daily Dua' for them
- Giving charity on their behalf
- Obeying them in everything good without hesitation
- Behaving respectfully towards them
- Maintaining attitude of thankfulness towards them
- Caring for them with mercy, with special regard for the mother
- Never utter a word of disrespect to parents or mock them
- Tell them how much you love them/show them love in some way every day
- Work hard in studies
- If parents pass away recite Quran for them, give charity on their behalf, make dua for them and ask Allaah to forgive their sins

Dua to pray for our parents

رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيْتَنِي صَغِيرًا

My Lord, have mercy upon them as they brought me up [when I was] small.

As-Salaamu' Aalaikum wa Rahmatullaahi wa Barakaatuh

Alhamdulillah, it has been a great start to the new school year and it is refreshing to be back after the lengthy Ramadhan break! It gives me great pleasure to welcome our new Year 7 pupils to the school and pray that they benefit from their education at AAGS.

InshaAllaah this half term will prove to be very beneficial as everyone works hard at working towards the goals they have set themselves during Ramadhaan. Pupils have already been striving to create a better spiritual atmosphere at AAGS, particularly the Murshidaat from Year 11 who have organised very interesting themes for this half term. Extracts from their halaqas have been included in this newsletter which I hope you will find beneficial.

May Allaah accept the efforts of our parents, teachers and students. Ameen.

Apa Karima
Islamic Co-ordinator

EXTRACT FROM STUDENT HALAQA

Friendship is important in Islam. Friends play a very important part in our everyday lives. A good friend is one who accepts your shortcomings, but at the same time guides and supports you. A good friend is one who accepts your faults but corrects them where possible. A good friend is one who will love and forgive you for the sake of Allah.

Sometimes we forget that it's not about how popular a person is or how rich someone is or anything like that, what we need to remember as Muslims is that when choosing our friends we should question their piety, honesty and most importantly their relationship with Allah.

Hadith: The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "The example of a good companion and a bad companion is like that of the seller of musk, and the one who blows the blacksmith's bellows. So as for the seller of musk then either he will grant you some, or you buy some from him, or at least you enjoy a pleasant smell from him. As for the one who blows the blacksmith's bellows then either he will burn your clothes or you will get an offensive smell from him."

'Good company in Islam' written by Murshidah: Fahmida Yasmin & Fahima Islam 11B

**'Respecting and obeying your parents by Murshidah
Nimra Iqbal and Fabiha Begum - Year 11A**

FIRST BUKHARI GRADUATION AT AAGS

Alhamdulillah, it is only by the grace of Allah that last month, on September 7th, AAGS had its first Bukhari Graduation Ceremony. As one of the graduates, I would like to share my experience of the Aalimah course here at AAGS.

I would be lying if I said that back in 2005, when I first entered AAGS, I knew what I was entering into as an Aalimah student. Nobody in my family had become an Aalimah before so this was unfamiliar territory for me, something I am sure many AAGS students who read this, will be able to relate to. In all my years at AAGS, that first year was by far the most challenging. I remember failing my mid-year exams- which was not surprising as I had put little effort into them- and felt disappointed in myself. I performed well in my other classes, with enthusiasm and promise, whilst in Aalimah lessons I wasn't nearly as driven and I lacked self-confidence. It took me time to recognise that if I wanted my Aalimah studies to be positive, I had to work harder, and take each day as it came. With time, my confidence levels rose, as did my understanding. In the second and third years, the foundations we had laid gradually came to fruition and we began to harness the knowledge we had learned and built upon it. We saw how each year became a building block for the following one and it was in this way that year by year we progressed.

One of the toughest challenges each of us experienced was learning how to prioritise. In the latter stages of the course, many of us were balancing home life and school life with Aalimah studies. Most of us completed our GCSEs and A-Levels alongside the final years, and for some of us the last year was completed with our first year of university. It was a vital lesson for us all and it highlights how with the right mind-set, we can attain success in education.

On a final note, I would like to emphasise that none of us graduates expected to be where we are today. If we had not worked as hard, or had made different choices, our lives may have panned out very differently. Moving forward requires a gradual submission, and this took time and patience.

If I could give one piece of advice to AAGS students today, it would be to not expect, as a student, to achieve everything instantaneously. It took our class eight years to grow as Aalimah students, in knowledge and in character. To become an Aalimah is a daily undertaking that continues long after you complete the course and you realise quickly, as we have, how blessed that short time is. Whatever path you take here at AAGS, be it Aalimah studies, Islamic studies or Hifz, be assured that whilst it isn't an easy road, it is the most worthwhile one you shall ever tread.

Tayabbah Iqbal – Aalimah Graduate 2013

The Role of the Murshidaat Team at AAGS

In our day to day lives at AAGS, many of us have roles we must fulfil, such as our teachers, the Prefects and School Council Representatives. The Murshidaat Team in our school also play a significant role in helping AAGS operate.

The literal meaning of the word Murshidah in Arabic is to guide. The Murshidaat have been appointed to advise and direct the girls of AAGS to become the best Muslimaah they can be.

The Murshidaat are also known as Tarbiya Mentors. Once a week, each year group will sit in a Tarbiya circle (halaqa) with their mentor and discuss how to be better Muslims and good role models for 15 minutes. Tarbiya Circles give us a spiritual boost to help us get through the week.

The main aim of the Murshidaat team at AAGS is for fellow students to be able to relate to them as Tarbiya Circles primarily are student to student discussions. They are here to mentor and nurture the young Muslimaah so that when they leave school, they can remember the Deen in their hearts and be aware of how to act in society as they have been taught to conduct themselves in the best way possible. Not only do the Murshidaat help others become better Muslims, but they are also developing their own character through the Murshidah training.

The Messenger of Allah said: "Whoever follows a path in pursuit of knowledge, Allah will make easy for him the path to Paradise."

Tahera Ali Yr 11A Head Murshidah & Fahmida Yasmin Yr 11B Murshidah

Diaries from the Year 7s

AAGS is a big change in my life. Being the eldest in primary school made me feel independent, whereas now, I am the youngest in a whole different school. Doing homework everyday has surely improved my learning and kept me busy at home. Marching from class to class has finally sunk into my system, though sometimes I am completely clueless. Being in a calm environment and an islamic atmosphere makes me feel very relaxed. It feels weird not seeing my mum as much, as she used to work in my primary school. I feel independent, mature and disciplined as my parents hoped me to be. InshaAllaah, I pray that I am successful in my duty as a student at AAGS. Ameen.

Mariya Ahmed - Year 7A

Dear Diary, Wednesday, 4th September 2013, the first day of secondary school. Where do I start? Waking up at 6.00 am was tough. I ate a cheese bagel for breakfast, ironed my uniform and prepared my bag. How much more work will I have to do? School hasn't even started. It was 7.00 am the time I had to leave to go to school. I gave my goodbyes and left.

I was looking forward to my lessons and the homework that we had to complete.

Well I have to do my homework now got to go.

Dhiyaa Ahmed - Year 7A

Dear Diary,

Wednesday, 4th September 2013, Will it ever end?

Today was the day school started. Secondary school! I can't say I was too overjoyed. I mean who would be if they had to wake up at 5.15 in the morning to get ready for school? It wasn't all bad news though; I love my school uniform. I was super excited to get my planner and start Aalimah class. My Dad dropped me to school by car. It took 40-50 minutes to get to AAGS without traffic; I had the opportunity to sleep in the car as we made our way to school.

When I finally arrived at school I began to feel nervous. I had already made friends with a few other Year 7 girls who I had met during our induction day at Hargreaves Centre. During Aalimah lessons I met Apa Roshan and Apa Farida. I couldn't help wondering who the Head Teacher was. Fortunately, at assembly I finally met her and she made a very important speech. After that we had our form time. I must admit, I was sure happy that Ms Fatima was our form tutor!

At lunch time we had to do wudhu for salaah, which reminds me, we need a longer lunch break! It felt great having everyone praying together! I was a bit disappointed that we didn't get our books today, but we did get our lockers!

At home time (which seemed so far away), I saw my Dad waiting for me and I couldn't wait to tell him everything that had happened on my first day. Well anyway, today was totally different from primary school and I have already started getting homework! So like I said before 'Will it ever end?'

Got to stop writing now, Mum is nagging me to sleep early or I'll be late for school!

P.S – Today was a truly unforgettable day!

Niha Khanom – Year 7B

Dear Diary, Today was my first day at secondary school. I was absolutely nervous about secondary school. My mind had stopped thinking, my body had no movement, but my emotions kept changing from scared to excited and nervous to ready.

When I got to school, that's when it occurred to me that from Year 6 to Year 7 is not an easy move. Students greeted me and I thought to myself this will be me in 2 or 3 years.

Most of our classes were like introduction lessons about class rules and getting to know the teacher and other people in the class.

School felt like it was going on for hours, but finally at 4:05 pm we were out of school. We had finished with a huge amount of weight off my shoulders. My mind began thinking again, my body had movement, but my emotions were still changing.

Jamila Kasoma - Year 7A

Year 9 - Trip to the Imperial War Museum



Year 9 A/B went on a trip to the Imperial War Museum since we were studying the theme of war in Art. We were able to take photographs so that we could use the images and collect information about war. We had to draw four items to use in the lessons ahead. We had fun in the Horrible Histories section where there were loads of interactive tasks, for example, taking a picture of ourselves, putting items on the picture as a disguise and then sending it to our email address as a memory. In the Horrible History section we were also given a worksheet on which we had to collect stamps. The trip was enjoyed by all students and helped give us a better understanding of the theme of war in Art.

Zaynah Attan - Year 9C

On 17th September Years 9A & 9B went on an exciting Art trip to the Imperial War Museum. The main idea was to look at valuable items at the museum. We had an extremely fun time taking photos of items in the museum. There was a video playing in one room which gave us some information about the wartime. What I found the most fun was the interactive room where we had to stamp our worksheets that were given to us. There were some interesting games to play, which we enjoyed a lot. After lunch we went to a big room at the top of the museum, which had a lot of items including medals, swords, guns and jackets. Some of these items were given up by people who were in the war, so they could share their experience with others. Overall we enjoyed the trip very much.

Medina Adam – Year 9B

Head Girl, Prefects and Murshidaat- The Role Models



I hope that you are all in the best state of health and Imaan, Insha'Allah. I sincerely pray that you've all had a great September here at AAGS, and are ready to take on the rest of the year in the same stride.

Since this is my first ever piece for the Al-Qalam Newsletter, I would like to start off by introducing myself. My name is Amina Sheik; I am currently a Year 11 student in my 5th year of Aalimah. Alhamdulillah I have been elected as Head Girl this year. I've been an AAGS student for almost 5 years now and I have to admit, despite the endless exams, early starts and long days, this school is and always has been my second home. We are a family at AAGS - teachers, apas, students, volunteers, cleaners and the admin staff make up the whole school.

My main responsibility as Head Girl is to act as a representative and a role model for the rest of the school. I also lead the other prefects in performing their duties and try my best in taking care of the school. I act as a mediator between teachers and students and help out at events. But most importantly I am here for you. I am here for any problems you are experiencing, any suggestions you have about the school or even for a nice, friendly chat. It's important to have someone you can talk, ask questions to and have your voice heard - think of me as that person.

Amina Sheik-Head Girl - Year 11 B

Prefects

Prefects at AAGS are made up of reliable, mature and hardworking students from both Year 10 and Year 11. The role of a school prefect is assisting teachers, supervising the lunch corridors and queues, completing the salaah registers and supporting the other pupils. Prefects are here to help and listen to you.

Ayesha Natha Deputy Head Girl Year 11B

Murshidaat

The Murshidaat (also known as Tarbiyah mentors) act as role models for the rest of the school; provide us with the best of advice and pass on the knowledge they have learnt through their five years of Aalimah or Islamic studies. They are our guides and are here to benefit us with their rewarding lessons on the stories, mannerisms and Akhlaaq of Islam.

When Tarbiyah circles were first introduced at AAGS, I absolutely loved it as I had a truly inspirational tarbiyah mentor. From then on I made the intention to become a Murshidah.

Tahera Ali- Head Murshidah - Year 11A

LUNCH TIME ICT SUPPORT

The ICT suite will be available to all students on Mondays and Thursdays during lunch time. Students will have an opportunity to carry out research, homework, use different software and facilities will be available to print off their work. ICT support and advice will also be available during this time.

Ms Makki – Head of ICT/Teacher

THE DEFINITE NOUNS

This poem has been compiled by 1st Year Aalimah students to help recall the types of nouns of Arabic Grammar.

May Allaah enhance our knowledge and make us successful in our education.

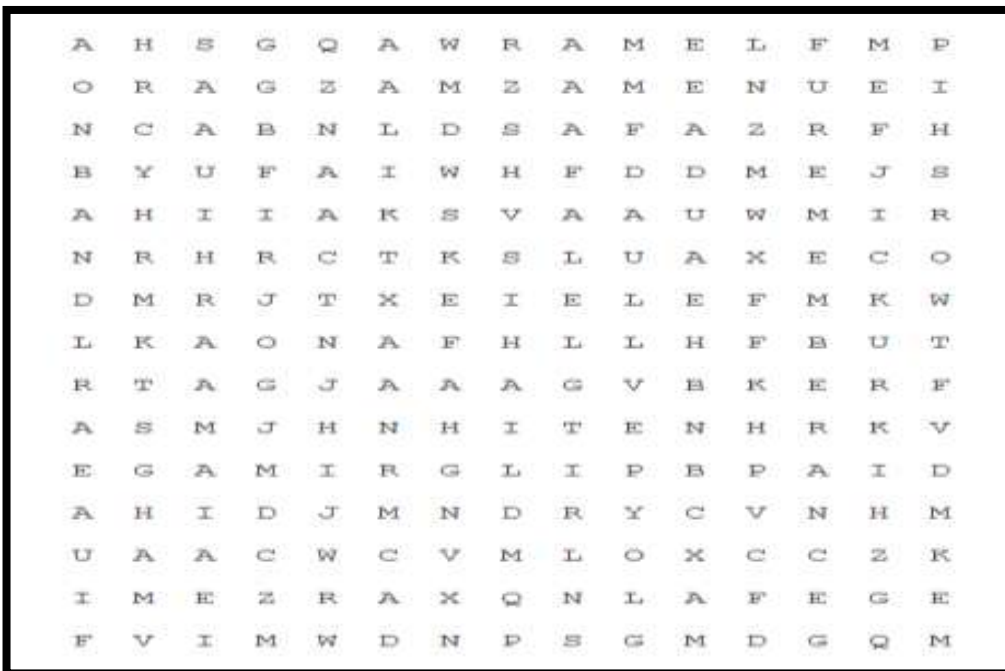
England, Ireland, Yusuf, James
These are nouns of specific names,
This and that, he and she
These are two different pronouns to me,
Al qalamu, Al baytu, Al baabu, Al waladu
These are definite articles for me and you,
O! Teacher, o! Teacher I want to scream and shout
I'm so sorry for calling out,
Which, what, who and when
These are links for now and then,
The pen's lid, the book's cover,
This is possession for you to discover!

Ayesha Muhsina Siddiqa Yr 7B, Niha Khanom
Yr 7B & Ishrat Tahira Rahman Yr 7B

DIARY DATES – AUTUMN 2013

- 21st October – Year 7 Pastoral Session
- 22nd October – Students return – Autumn second half
- 29th October – Trip - Regents Park Masjid – Year 7 - RE
- 8th November – Open Evening
- 22nd November- Ex-Year 11 Certificate Evening
- 24th November – Trip Synagogue - Year 8 - RE
- 6th December- Careers Evening Yr 10/11
- 19th December - Last Day Autumn Term
- 20th December- Parents Information Day

Hajj Wordsearch Razeenah Ramtally - Year 8A



WORDS

ALLAH
HAJJ
MARWA
SAFA
EID
MADINAH
ZAMZAM
HAJJ
WORSHIP
KABAH
ZHIKR
REMEMBRANCE
MUZDALIFAH
IHRAAM
PILGRIMAGE
WORSHIP
BLESSINGS

HADEETH

*The best of supplications are those on the
Day of Arafah
(Tirmidhi)*

MY DAY AT HARGREAVES ACTIVITY CENTRE

My mind was flooded with questions: what will the day be like? Will my classmates like me? As I entered the main hall I sat down quietly trying to hide my fear and nerves. Luckily, all the girls started talking to each other which helped me relax.

We ran through the freshly cut green grass excitedly to take part in activities. The go-kart activity was the best part of the day after which we played a game of football and enjoyed climbing effortlessly on the climbing wall. We looked forward to having our lunch and prepare for the other activities of the day. Spending the afternoon jumping on a trampoline was so much fun that I did not want to go home at all. When I saw my dad I pretended not to notice him so I would not have to go home!

My experience at Hargreaves was amazing as I met new people and had lots of fun. I eagerly looked forward to my first day at secondary school.

Mariya Ahmed - Year 7A

MY DAY AT HARGREAVES

On Monday, 2nd September 2013 I woke up feeling very anxious and nervous and the butterflies in my stomach weren't helping! I was going to Hargreaves to meet my new teachers and classmates and have fun at the same time. Although the nerves got to me I was still really eager to meet other pupils who were going to be with me for the next five years at Azhar Academy.

As I entered the gates and had a glimpse at all the exciting and wonderful activities that I was going to take part in, my thoughts about the trip completely changed. At first I was really apprehensive and worried and now I could not wait to start!

The first activity was a great start to the day as we had to work in groups and go to different teachers to find out information about them. The teachers were very friendly and this activity was also helpful as I worked with my classmates and was able to get to know them better.

My favourite activity of the day was the trampoline activity where every pupil got a chance to jump and have a lot of fun! The great part about it was that everyone was cheering for each other and encouraging them to do their best. This made me feel more comfortable as I saw how friendly and helpful all the staff and pupils were.

My day at Hargreaves was a brilliant start to my new year at Azhar Academy and a great opportunity for me to meet new people who will be with me for the next five years.

Fahmida Islam – Year 7 A

DHUL HIJJAH

Dhul Hijjah is the last month of the Islamic calendar. Literally, it means "hajj." Obviously, this name of the month indicates that the great annual worship of "hajj" is performed in this month, which gives it a special significance. Some specific merits and rules relevant to this month are mentioned below:

First Ten Days - The first ten days of Dhul Hijjah are among the most magnificent days in the Islamic calendar. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said, "One fast during these days is equal to the fasting of one complete year, and the worship of one night during this period is equal to the worship in the "Lailatul-Qadr". (Tirmidhi)

Every Muslim should avail of this wonderful opportunity by performing during this period as much *Iba'dah* (acts of worship) to Allah as he or she can.

The 9th day of Dhul Hijjah - The 9th day of Dhul Hijjah is called 'Yumul -Arafah' (The Day of 'Arafah). This is the date when the *Hujjaj* (Haji pilgrims, plural of Haajj) assemble on the plain of 'Arafat, six miles away from Makkah al-Mukarramah, where they perform the most essential part of the prescribed duties of *hajj*, namely, the 'Wuqoof of Arafat' (the stay in 'Arafat).

The Fast of Yumul 'Arafah -For those not performing *hajj*, it is *mustahabb* (desirable) to fast on this day according to their own calendar. It sometimes occurs that 9th Dhul Hijjah falls on different days in different countries according to the sighting of the moon. In such cases, Muslims of each country should observe 'Yumul -Arafah' according to the lunar dates of their own country.

The fast of 'Yumul -Arafah' has been emphasised by the Holy Prophet ﷺ as a *mustahabb* (desirable) act. According to a *hadith*, the fast of this day becomes a cause, hopefully so, of forgiveness for sins committed in one year.

Takbir-ut-tashriq -Beginning from the *Fajr* of the 9th Dhul Hijjah up to the 'Asr prayer of the 13th, it is obligatory on each Muslim to recite the *Takbir* of *Tashriq* after every *fard* prayer in the following words.

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ،
اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ ، وَاللَّهُ أَحْمَدُ

Transliteration: ALLAAHU AKBAR, ALLAAHU AKBAR, ALLAAHU AKBAR ,
LAA ILAA HA ILLALLAAH.
ALLAAHU AKBAR, ALLAHU AKBAR WA LILLAAIL HAMD

Allah is Great, Allah is Great, Allah is Great. There is no diety except
Allah and Allah is Great. Allah is Great and all praises belong to him
alone.

According to authentic Islamic sources, it is obligatory on each Muslim, to recite this *Takbir* after every *fard salaah*. For women also, it is commendable though not obligatory. Whether you are performing *salaah* with *Jama'ah* (collectively) or on your own (individually) makes no difference. You must recite the *Takbir*. However, male Muslims should recite it in a loud voice, while females should recite it in a low voice.

The days of Tashriq - The days of Tashriq are the 11th, 12th and 13th of Dhu'l-Hijjah. There are several verses and ahaadeeth which speak of their virtue:

The Prophet ﷺ said: "The days of Tashriq are the days of eating, drinking and remembering Allaah." (Saheeh Muslim).

The following acts are *sunnah* on the day of *Eid ul- Adha*:

1. To wake up early in the morning
2. To clean one's teeth with a *miswak* or brush
3. To take a bath
4. To put on one's best available clothes
5. To use perfume
6. Not to eat before the *Eid* prayer
7. To recite the *Takbir* of *Tashriq* in a loud voice while going to the *Eid* prayer for men

(Extracts from Mufti Taqi Uthmani's article 'Islamic Months')



AZHAR ACADEMY GIRLS SCHOOL OPEN EVENING 2013

AAGS invites pupils and parents wishing to enrol their children in Year 7 in September 2014 to attend this event. On the day, you will be able to:

- View the school buildings
- View our facilities and resources
- Meet and talk to our teaching staff
- Learn more about our curriculum (including the Islamic Studies and Aalimah Course curricula)
- Obtain sample entrance test papers for Yr 7 applicants (The entrance exams will be held in January/February 2014)

FRIDAY, 8TH NOVEMBER 2013

Ladies' Session
5pm - 7pm

Mens' Session
8pm - 9pm

A PRESENTATION WILL BE DELIVERED BY OUR HEAD TEACHER AND AALIMAH/ISLAMIC STUDIES CO-ORDINATOR IMMEDIATELY AT 5PM. PLEASE ARRIVE EARLY.

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For more details or to download application forms, please visit our website at

www.aags.org.uk

