

Al-Qalam



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Assalaamu Alaykum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakaatuh

Alhamdulillah we have successfully reached the end of the Spring Term 2014. This has been a very productive term which included the school undergoing a successful Ofsted Inspection. Further information about the outcomes of the inspection can be found on the school website under the Ofsted section.

Previous newsletters can also be found on the school website, I hope you enjoy reading these as it will keep you up to date with the many educational and extra curricular activities our students have been involved with over this year.

As we enter the summer term I would like to request that you continue to support the school and remember our students in your duas especially those who will be taking their GCSE examinations this year.

Mrs Adam
Headteacher

Assalaamu Alaykum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakaatuh

Alhamdulillah, we have successfully reached the end of a very productive spring term.

By the grace of Allaah, students have performed really well in their Aalimah, Islamic and Hifz Studies mid-year exams. AAGS had an impressive overall student pass rate of 91%. MashaAllaah to all students who have put in a great deal of effort into their studies. May Allah (swt) enhance and grant you beneficial knowledge, ameen.

MashaAllaah to Maimoonah Wadiwala in 1st Year Aalimah Studies for achieving the highest marks of 98% (A*) in the school. May Allah make the knowledge a source of light for her and others in this world and the next, Ameen.

As you are aware, we had an OFSTED inspection for which the Aalimah, Islamic Studies and Hifz curriculum as well as assessment that were recognised as Outstanding. Jazakumullaahu khayran to all our staff, students and parents for your continuous support.

On a final note, I would like to wish Year 11 students all the best for their upcoming GCSE exams. Stay focused, revise well and keep making duaa. InshaAllaah you will be successful.

Narrated Ibn Abbas: The Prophet (peace be upon him) embraced me and said, "O Allah! Teach him (the knowledge of) the Book (Qur'an)." Sahih Al-Bukhari

Apa Roshan Master
Head of Aalimah, Islamic & Hifz Studies

My Experience of Umrah

إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوْ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا وَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيمٌ

“Indeed, as-Safa and al-Marwah are among the symbols of Allah. So whoever makes Hajj to the House or performs Umrah – there is no blame upon him for walking between them. And whoever volunteers good – then indeed, Allah is appreciative and Knowing.”
(Surah Baqarah Ayah 158)

On February 2014, I departed for the most blessed journey of my life. When my parents told me we were going to perform Umrah, my heart was filled with joy, as I have never been there before and I had heard many recounts from others.

For the first few days we spent our time in Madina. I remember praying my Salah in the blessed Masjid Nabawi; my heart still races as I remember the beautiful Adhaan, which filled the streets of Madina with the hustle of the servants of Allah running for salaah.

After a few days we set off to Makkah in order to perform the Umrah. It was a long 5-hour drive in the Arab heat. Once we arrived in Makkah, we did not have time to waste. We dropped our bags at the hotel and made our way to go and complete the sacred acts. When we were performing Tawaaf I was continuously asking Allah to grant me the strength to complete my Hifz and keep it firm in my heart and memory.

Shortly after we prayed two rakats salaah behind Maqaam Ibrahim, we raced to perform the long walk between the mountains of Safa and Marwa. After this was completed, all we had to do was trim our hair and our Umrah was complete. The boys went to the barbers and my mum, my sisters and I went back to the hotel.

And complete the Hajj and 'umrah for Allah. (Surah Baqarah Ayah 192)

وَأَتِمُّوا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ

In both Madina and Makkah we went on the Ziyaarah, which was a tour of all the sacred places. We visited Mount Uhud, Masjid Quba, Cave Thawr and the mountain of Rahma. All these places were filled with so much blessing as all of these places were visited by Rasulullah (saw) himself. For me, this was a very momentous experience.

We spent the last few days praying behind the Sheikh in Masjid al Haram. The thing I found most inspirational was that after every Salah, we would pray a Janazah Salaah. It made no difference as to who the persons were or what background they were from; everyone just stood up in unity and all prayed for the deceased. This I thought was the most beautiful thing ever, as no one judged anyone for anything. Umrah made me realize how we all stand in front of one Allah in the same clothes, regardless of our age, race or wealth. I pray Allah accepts our Umrah and grants us the opportunity to visit His house again, ameen.

Hannah Hussain - Hifz Studies – Year 9A



THREE FAITH FORUM

The second workshop with the 3FF was to be hosted at our school. We were anxious to make sure everything went to plan. We had prepared different kinds of foods from different backgrounds and cultures for our guests to enjoy as a treat upon arrival. We set out the prayer hall in a manner so we could sit together without anyone feeling left out. We were excited to see our friends again and when we took them to the prayer hall, it was like we had never been apart! We served the food, had a little in-school picnic, which gave us the chance to catch up on all the stories since last time. Like the previous workshop, we started the day with an ice breaker. After that, the girls were intrigued by our fascinating building, so we felt we had to give them a school tour of our impressive building. I think they really liked the school.

We were then split into groups and had an intergroup competition, where we had to identify and guess the names of the different logos. This led on to our next assignment- badge designing! This was great fun, because we learnt different things about different people. The badges turned out to be pretty funky indeed. We broke off for lunch and ate together. Then, we had our Salaah . This was probably the most fascinating thing they had seen, because they lined up and sat, watching us pray, captivated by our actions. After we finished our Salaah, a round of applause descended from the watching crowd. We were shocked by their response, because this was no different to us; we pray 5 times a day, every day- it was just part of our lifestyle.

After that turn out of events, we moved on to our next activity- a team building activity. We had to build a chair out of newspaper that a human being could sit on without it collapsing! We all thought that this was going to be impossible. But in the end it wasn't; there were so many different outcomes that actually worked! There was also a henna workshop, where we had girls from our own school painting the hands of everyone else. Almost every girl and teacher from St Ursula's had mendhi done. They were very charmed by how it worked. After this, we distributed ice-lollies as a sweet treat which gave us more time to catch up with the girls. Sadly the day was drawing to an end and the girls had to leave. But it wasn't the last time we were going to see them. We gave our hugs, said our goodbyes and then sat back, absorbed and reflected on the events of the day.

I think this 3FF project is a great project, for I can truly say that I have learnt many different and new things, but I also have earned more than one friend; Hannah, Zoe, Tamera, Anna, Rose and Lisa (to name a few) will always be remembered as amazing girls who were part of our lives. I think this project is a wonderful experience for all of us, as we meet new people and see aspects of life through different perspectives. We all look forward to meeting the girls and can't wait to see them at the next meet up!

By Maha Al-Haddad, Homaira Patel & Ruqaiya Alam – Year 9A

WORD SEARCH

V	X	R	E	Y	A	R	P	A	J	W	W	Y	S	Z
E	G	M	X	W	V	S	A	C	R	E	D	U	J	J
J	D	X	B	I	R	B	Y	Y	Y	P	S	Y	Q	N
S	Y	N	A	G	O	G	U	E	U	E	H	T	H	Z
P	T	A	L	H	G	K	F	M	J	Y	R	I	M	S
A	E	R	C	C	D	M	M	Q	H	A	N	N	S	B
P	F	U	W	R	F	A	R	A	Q	U	R	A	I	I
A	W	Q	R	U	D	S	E	V	O	L	M	I	A	B
N	P	D	X	H	E	J	B	Y	B	J	S	T	D	L
W	F	P	D	C	M	I	Y	N	K	T	D	S	U	E
C	B	Y	I	K	M	D	E	O	F	O	O	I	J	E
E	V	N	V	B	A	R	C	M	G	L	J	R	W	N
V	U	Z	A	T	H	O	A	R	I	D	I	H	A	F
V	I	I	D	A	U	T	E	A	Q	H	T	C	G	H
A	L	L	A	H	M	T	P	H	U	V	Y	I	R	P

FAITH WORDS

ALLAH
BIBLE
CHRISTIANITY
CHURCH
DAVID
GOD
HARMONY
JESUS
JUDAISM
LOVE
MASJID
MUHAMMED
PEACE
PRAYER
QURAN
SACRED
SYNAGOGUE
TORAH

Sacrifices at Uhud

The Battle of Uhud is the second major battle to take place after the Battle of Badr. It took place on the 15 Shawwal in the third year of Hijrah.

The Messenger ﷺ had made preparations for battle so he, along with the Muslims, set off with 1000 soldiers, but a large group of the army, consisting of 300 men, defected and returned to Madinah which meant that the Muslims were left with only 700 soldiers. Nonetheless, the Muslims placed their trust in Allah and were prepared to go on ahead.

At first it seemed as though the Muslims were no match against the 3000 Makkans but due to the sincere prayers of the Prophet ﷺ and Muslims, and with the help of Allah, the Muslims had slowly began to gain the upper hand.

The Prophet ﷺ had appointed a companion named Abdullah ibn Jubair رضي الله عنه and 50 archers to remain on a small hill near Uhud to keep the disbelievers at bay and watch the army from the rear in case of an ambush. The Messenger ﷺ had told them that no matter what was going on during the battle, they were not to move from their positions, whether the Muslims seemed to be winning or losing.

The battle was unfolding in favour of the Muslims, and the Makkans had begun to give up and flee the battle field but then the tides began to turn.

The archers had been ordered to stay in their positions but as the battle unfolded before them they had absolutely no doubt that victory was already in the hands of the Muslims. They abandoned their positions to run down the hill and began collecting the spoils of war left behind by the fleeing Makkans. Their leader Abdullah ibn Jubair رضي الله عنه implored them not to disobey the command of the Messenger ﷺ but to no avail. Out of 50, only 10 archers remained at their

posts and Khalid ibn Walid, a polytheist at the time, noticed this. Seizing the opportunity, he and a group of Makkans scaled the mountain and attacked the Muslims from behind, resulting in chaos and confusion.

Throughout this time, the Messenger ﷺ and many companions fought courageously, with many of them being severely injured. All the companions showed compassion towards the Messenger ﷺ, sacrificing themselves in order to ensure that no harm reached the Messenger ﷺ. The Makkans worked very hard to try and harm the Messenger ﷺ, but Talha رضي الله عنه acted as a shield and even lifted the Prophet ﷺ on to his back, Sa'ad ibn Abi Waqqas رضي الله عنه shot arrow after arrow to defend the Messenger ﷺ, Abu Ubaydah ibn Jarrah رضي الله عنه lost his front teeth removing links embedded in the Prophet ﷺ cheek and Abu Dujanah رضي الله عنه lost his life protecting and shielding the Messenger ﷺ. The companions flanked the Messenger ﷺ on all sides in order to protect him from the onslaught of attacks.

Musab ibn Umayr رضي الله عنه, a person beloved to both the Muhajir and Ansaar, was martyred on this day and at the time of his burial, the material used to cover him was too short; if his head was covered, his feet would show and if his feet were covered then his head would show. The Prophet ﷺ ordered that his face be covered and grass be used to cover his feet. Such was the end of the once "richest youth of Makkah". Many others were shrouded together in one cloth and buried together.

Many Muslims lost loved ones on this day, but upon hearing that the Messenger ﷺ was safe and well, all of their troubles and worries washed away. May Allah have mercy upon the companions of the Messenger ﷺ and accept all their sacrifices. Ameen

Islamic Studies Department

GCSE PE AT AAGS – 2013–2014

GCSE PE is a great subject at AAGS. This is the first year that we have been introduced to GCSE PE. As well as it being so educational, I have lots of fun and it keeps me fit. It also provides us an understanding of how to live a healthy and active lifestyle, enabling us to know how to keep physically fit and make informed choices about our own physical development. For PE, we do three activities; table tennis, pilates and circuit training. There are a lot of rules to learn but it is really easy and fun to participate in. GCSE PE takes much hard work, determination and skills. We have almost come to the end of the course and I can truly say that I feel as if my fitness has improved immensely.

Ruweyda Gacal – Year 10B

Multi-cultural Week

The entire week commencing February 10th was spent in retaining multi-culturalism as well as accumulating charity for the Azhar masjid.

Food stalls

Thursday lunch time was spent in experimenting and tasting different traditional foods at our food stalls.

Fashion show

Thursday was when everyone reached deep into their roots and sponsored each other to speak nothing but their mother tongue and adorn themselves in their national dress for a whole day, teachers included!

Thursday was also the day of the long awaited fashion show. Our hearts were bursting when we gained our Miss Azhar 2014! Representing Somalia, Ayan Dhudi did us all proud, dressed in African splendour! Congratulations to Ayan, the worthy winner.

Nasheed Gala

Thursday was a packed day which also hosted our Nasheed Gala, introducing nasheeds of all kinds and languages with the Azhar choir being the special guests.

French-Bangladeshi play

Friday presented a French-Bangladeshi comedy. Adding humour to a fun yet stressful week, the play was a great way to bid farewell to our multicultural week, before it left us and re-appear a year later. Azhar Academy is proud to announce that we raised well over £2000. All of us helped raise that money for the masjid. InshaAllah a bigger reward is awaiting all those who participated and did their bit for the Ummah. May Allah lead us to a greater happiness in Jannah.



AAGS SCIENCE WEEK 2014



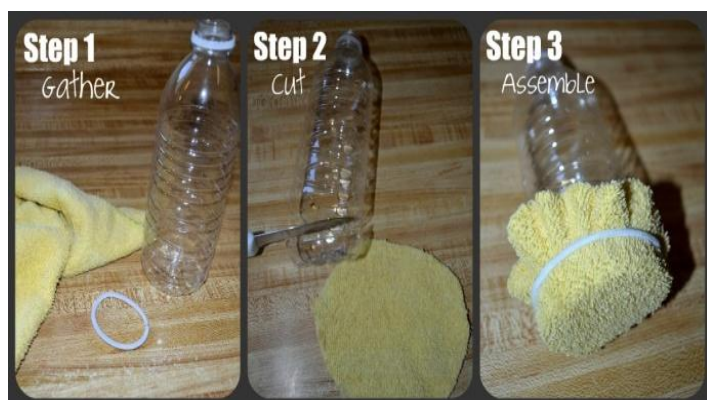
Alhamdulillah this term the science department at AAGS took part in National Science week 2014. We had a variety of events from the 17th - 21st March 2014. We did a drop down science based starter in all subjects, food sales promoting healthy eating, science quizzes and competitions. The main highlight of the week was the science exhibition hosted by AAGS students. KS3 students designed, conducted and presented their own science projects. Two projects per class were chosen to participate in the science fair. Students enjoyed presenting their work to the whole school and they had a chance to visit the science fair throughout the day. Year 10 students were also given the opportunity to conduct science workshops for KS3 students. They also presented an assembly covering the variety of science careers that students can go onto pursue.

As part of science week, year 10 students were given the privilege of organising a science related lesson for year KS3 students. My group decided (after a long discussion), to carry out interesting science experiments such as the quick sand demonstration, followed by a bath bomb experiment and lastly a lava experiment. Our group was allocated a class from year 7 and year 9. Our experiments were successful for both the classes. The KS3 students and the year 10 really enjoyed this opportunity they were given. I would like to carry out similar activities for future science week.

Ayan Dhudi Year - Year 10B

Student feedback:

- ✓ I learnt about different science professions
- ✓ I learnt that Tesco value nappies are better at absorbing water than Huggies.
- ✓ I enjoyed the food sales
- ✓ I found out how helium changes your voice
- ✓ I liked watching different experiments



A few weeks ago Azhar Academy held science week. The year 10 students very thoughtfully led science workshops in which we tried out some experiments. The year 10 students demonstrated some interesting experiments. We made bubble snakes with a plastic bottle, cloth and a rubber band. The bottle was open from one side and we tied a cloth around it with a rubber band. We dipped it into a bubble solution and blew some very large and colourful bubbles. The class enjoyed this very much.

Zaynah Attan – Year 9C

Science exhibition winners

1st place: Maimoonah and Fatima

2nd place: Maha and Azra

3rd place: Khayraat and Sahra

**Best science professional dress-up:
Nimra Iqbal**

**Whole school science quiz winner:
Muhini Choudhury**

FUN TRIPS AT AAGS

YEAR 7 CITIZENSHIP TRIP TO STRATFORD SHOPPING CENTRE

During this term the year seven students were fortunate enough to get an opportunity to go to Stratford shopping centre for the purpose of an educational trip for Citizenship. We were required to conduct a survey with members of the public to find out their views and opinions on the town centre.

We were paired up and given 10 questionnaires each to complete. Miss Iqbal informed us that we may be ignored as people are busy and to always remain polite and calm. By following her carefully planned rules, the trip was a success and our class managed to collect a variety of results. Initially, many students were shy to approach random members of the public and speak to them. However after encouragement from the teachers and practise, our confidence grew and by the end of the trip, we were interviewing people individually.

In the following Citizenship lesson, we wrote a lengthy report on our findings, and how we could improve our local town centre. Most of us concluded that the most liked thing about the town centre is the range of the shops and the most disliked thing was graffiti and litter.

It was an enjoyable trip and all of the year seven students hope to go on many successful trips in the future.

Khadija Ali – Year 7B

St. Paul's Visit

On Tuesday, 4th March, Year 8B went on an educational trip to the St. Pauls Cathedral to enhance our knowledge on Christianity. We were eager to learn more about this religion and got off the train excited. Though we knew a lot about churches, it was fun to see everything with our own eyes. We explored the building and found out many interesting facts and lessons. While talking to the priests and helpers, we noticed there were a lot of similarities and differences in our faith. It was a beneficial trip that we learned a lot from and overall enjoyed.

By Rahima Uddin – Year 8B

GCSE MATHEMATICS CONFERENCE

Year 11 students attended a Maths Conference trip on the 6th and 7th of March, where professional lecturers had come together to give us some very useful Mathematics exam tips and revision materials. As well as being an educational trip, it was also entertaining at the same time.

The trip helped me a lot, as we revised over many topics, including some topics that I was struggling at, and gave me many exam tips which I will Insha'Allah be using in my GCSE's

Overall, the trip was very useful and worth attending.

Halima Begum Year 11B

WUDHU DUA

O those who believe, when you rise for Salah, wash your faces and your hands up to your elbows, and make Masah of your heads and (wash) your feet up to the ankles.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ
وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى
الكَعْبَيْنِ ط

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

BBC SCHOOL REPORT- the reporters have successfully completed their report after hard work and motivation. Weeks of planning, preparing and filming have now come together and the report is published on BBC website and our school website.

ENGLISH WORKSHOPS- Speaker Abbie Palache came to Azhar Academy Girl's school to lead workshops on creative writing and storytelling with the whole of year 8 on the 2nd of April 2014. This took place in the main prayer hall.

AZHAR'S CREATIVE WRITERS BOOK- We have joined Scholastic publishers and set up an account for yr7 and yr 8 to write short stories and poems, which will later be published in a book for students to purchase and own. This will give them an opportunity to focus on their creative writing skills and also have their work published!

SPELLING CHALLENGE- Year 7s will be taking part in a spelling challenge/competition with Ms Hafesji. A winner will be announced and presented a certificate during school assembly.

FOYLES COMPETITION- year 8s will be writing poetry and the most creative poems will be selected by English department and entered for the July 2014 FOYLES poetry competition. If chosen by FOYLES, the students' work will then be published in an anthology.

Ms F Begum – Head of English



BBC SCHOOL REPORT

Throughout the whole experience, the team, found themselves jumping from one sticky situation to another due to the lack of team members. However, we managed to produce a report through hard work and motivation.

After being assigned our roles, we collaborated in writing the script. The team members were writing their own parts and casually correcting each other's grammatical errors. Our team consists of Rameen, Aliyah, Zaynah, Hannah, Anisa, Rahima and I.

We managed to complete the interviews successfully in 30 minutes and it was then the anchors announced they were ready to start filming. It took us hours, but we persevered and the determination was always there; we wanted our report to end! We continued our quest to finalise the filming as soon as possible. Our topic was the changes in the education system.

The editing took a very long time and my weekend was taken over with just amending! Monday, 24th March was another day of filming, another interview and this time with Ms Kazi. Luckily, it only took us 15 minutes and it was a fantastic footage. Sunday was taken over by a series of emails with Nasim Ahmed, asking for information and his opinion on the future post-18 education. After the information was gathered, it went into the 'work in progress' video. Our report is now published on the BBC website and our school website for all to view.

We want to thank our teachers, Ms Kazi and Apa Tamima for taking part in the video and school report production. We also want to thank Ms Begum who mentored and supervised us through the process and Mrs Adam (our head teacher) who supported us and encouraged us to take part; it truly has been a great experience.

Zainab Haque – Year 9B

