

OCTOBER
EDITION



ARENA
ACADEMY

OPTIMISM, AMBITION & ONENESS

Contents

1. Message from the Headteacher
2. Arena's Graffiti Mural
3. Mural continued
4. Mural continued
5. Personal Development—Health & Fitness
6. Peripatetic Music Lessons
7. Year 7 Residential to Condover Hall
8. Year 7 Residential to Condover Hall photos
9. Our Arena Boxing Club
10. Free Bus Travel for Parents this October half term
11. Ignite Your Creativity
12. Mental Health Ambassadors
13. Mental Health Awareness Day
14. Book of the Month: October 2025
15. Student Book of the Month: October 2025
16. September & October Sparx Maths Superstars!
17. Black History Month
18. Arena Library's Halloween Promotion
19. Year 7 Student Leaders

Message from the Headteacher

Dear Parents/Carers and Students of Our Arena,

Welcome to the latest edition of our newsletter. It is a bumper edition packed with lots of items featuring our amazing students.

This month's edition highlights two key events—World Mental Health Day and Black History Month.

Our student ambassadors took the lead with special assemblies and activities. We have a team of Mental Health Ambassadors and Mental Health First Aiders should any of our students be in need of support. Next month's bulletin will showcase the winners of our Black History Month Arts challenge - promoting the powerful message about the importance of diversity and inclusion in all aspects of society through music, drama, poetry and dance.

The Arts always feature within our newsletters. We have so many extremely talented students in art, music, drama and dance, so it is crucial that at Arena Academy we provide opportunities for these talents to flourish and grow.

In each newsletter we try to bring something new to your attention and this time it is boxing and peripatetic music lessons. For those not familiar with the term peripatetic it means that a specialist will come in to school and teach a small group of students how to play a particular instrument or be a vocal coach to develop their singing. Boxing is an excellent way to get fit and develop muscle strength. If you are interested in either opportunity please speak to Mr Rahman (boxing) or Ms McKenzie (music).

Finally, to our students (and parents whenever you visit school), as you walk past the Mural and Diversity Walls that our 'Spray Team' and talented artists have created, please take a moment to reflect on the message it contains. Benjamin Zephaniah's words are truly inspirational and outline the importance of community, family and friends, and that by uniting together there are no limits to what you can achieve, aim high and reach for the stars.

Congratulations and well done to all our students featured in this newsletter.

Mr Mann
Headteacher

COLLABORATION

Arena's Graffiti Mural

Our graffiti mural is now complete and we can now reveal the identity of our chosen local hero . . . Benjamin Zephaniah! Zephaniah (1958-2023) grew up in Handsworth, close to Arena Academy, and throughout his work and life has maintained a deep sense of belonging to this area, describing himself as 'a proud Brummie'. For example, he became patron of the Walsall Acorn Children's Hospice in 2021. Zephaniah was a writer, a poet, a musician and an activist and his lyrics, values and life story have inspired our graffiti mural.

The students in our 'Spray Team' learned a wealth of new skills about how to create a spray painted mural including: types of caps to use for different effects, how to use a doodle map, how to use a VR headset, chalking out designs at scale, using masking tape for sharp edges, creating blends and how to add detail with the spray paint and with posca pens. Each wall has been designed in response to research about Zephaniah and the school survey results which led us to the galaxy and jungle/animal features.

The galaxy themed wall is about being aspirational and reaching for the stars. The students working on this wall, Jack Li, Ekamjot S, Jackson W, Ethan D and Archie M, were inspired by a quote from Zephaniah about how 'borders are for no one' meaning how we are all equal and part of the same world no matter our differences. They have included Birmingham buildings in the skyline and a constellation of the bull as a symbol of Birmingham, like a guiding star and symbol of home.



COLLABORATION

The diversity wall is an explosion of colour, shape and form inspired by inclusivity and diversity. The students, Harli Mai H, Elizabeth G, Felicity W, Humera A, Isabella R and with a little help from Michael R, have included the title of one of Zephaniah's poems, 'Neighbours' and a quote from the poem, 'People need People'. These poems are about how important community and friendship are and how our humanity unites us all.



The Zephaniah themed wall highlights the vibrant flora and fauna of Jamaica including the hibiscus flower and the national animal, the hummingbird. The students, Sonia Ma, Hollie T, Cole R, Thomas L, Oluwadunsin A and Harrison K, have also included a map of Handsworth where Zephaniah is from and added in some lines from his poetry. They chose the map because of how important the notions of home, community and belonging are to Zephaniah and how these link with our Arena family values.



COLLABORATION

During the final session, our street artist, Wingy Uk, created the portrait of Zephaniah whilst also sharing some tips and tricks with students from different year groups. This is the first portrait of Zephaniah that Wingy has created and we are honoured to have Zephaniah's presence with us everyday.

We hope you agree that the students have done a fantastic job in making our school more beautiful and vibrant and showing how Art, whether poetry, literature, music or visual, can provide a basis for human connection and understanding.



COLLABORATION

Personal Development—Health & Fitness



Students in year 9 had a great experience with Paige during personal development. Paige has visited Arena Academy multiple times to discuss health, fitness and nutrition with our students. Paige supports females outside of school with health, fitness and nutrition. Students found this session very informative and become shocked with how much sugar content is in their favourite foods and drinks. Thanks to Paige for coming in and helping students to make positive decisions about their health.

OPPORTUNITY



Peripatetic Music Lessons

Peripatetic music lessons are now well underway, with just under 100 of our students from Years 7 to 11 taking part in 1:1 keyboard, clarinet, drums, guitar, and voice sessions. It's fantastic to see so many of our students embracing the chance to develop their musical talents, confidence and pride in their progress both in and out of the classroom. If you're interested in getting involved, there is a waiting list but please let Miss McKenzie know.



OPPORTUNITY

Year 7

Residential to Condover Hall

In the final week of September, our Year 7 students collaborated with other CORE schools to take part in the opportunity of a life time; a residential visit to Condover Hall in Shrewsbury.

The students enjoyed a range of activities such as archery, assault courses, raft building, kayaking, wall climbing and much more!

“I enjoyed the trip. I had a lot of fun in the dorms and the food was nice. My favourite activity was rock climbing.” - Izzah 7GSK

See the next page for more photos!



OPPORTUNITY

Year 7 Residential to Condover Hall photos



OPPORTUNITY



Our Arena Boxing Club

Our Arena Boxing Club, hosted by Mr. Rahman, takes place every Tuesday after school in the Sports Hall. The students who have been attending these boxing sessions have thoroughly demonstrated resilience and determination in and outside of the classroom.

For students who are interested in joining, please visit Mr. Rahman to find out more.

OPPORTUNITY

Free Bus Travel for Parents this October half term

Please see the information below for details on how to claim free bus travel this half term.



FREE bus travel for parents this October half term

All day, unlimited travel from
27 October until 2 November

Parents, guardians and carers can enjoy unlimited free bus travel across the West Midlands during these dates.

How to claim

Applications are open from Monday 6 October until Wednesday 15 October. Just scan the QR code (or visit tfwm.org.uk/october) to apply!



Once applications close, we'll email you with instructions on how to redeem your free travel through your Swift account.

You're Bussing It  West Midlands Bus

OPPORTUNITY

Ignite Your Creativity

In the 'Ignite Your Creativity' workshop, delivered by the National Youth Theatre in partnership with Netflix, students took part in activities that encouraged them to think creatively and collaboratively. They explored a range of careers in the creative industry beyond acting, including writing, production and design, gaining a broader understanding of how stories come to life on screen. Students developed their own plot and then adapted it for the camera, learning how to shape their ideas using screen techniques such as shot framing and visual storytelling.



RESPECT

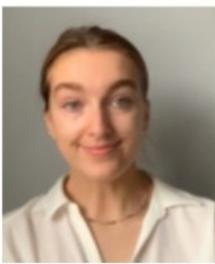
Mental Health Ambassadors

At Our Arena, we understand how important mental health is. Which is why we have recruited a team of student Mental Health Ambassadors to support the school on its journey to ensure that every one feels supported and heard.

For students who may not be willing to talk to one of our student Mental Health Ambassadors just yet, there is a Mental Health Support Box that can be found in the Arena Library. Students can place a Mental Health slip, detailing their concerns and how they would like to be supported, into the box to be reviewed by one of our staff Mental Health First Aiders.



Our Arena Mental Health First Aiders:

			
Miss Campbell-Williams Inclusion Manger	Ms Westwood Attendance Officer	Miss Fellows Librarian	Dr Savage Head of MFL

RESPECT

Mental Health Awareness Day

Friday 10th October marked Mental Health Awareness Day, a moment to pause, reflect, and remind ourselves that wellbeing isn't a luxury, it's a necessity. Staff and student wellbeing is extremely important to everyone at Arena Academy.

We made sure that this day was a reminder for all to:

- Take a moment for themselves
- Connect with a friend, even briefly. Sometimes a simple **“how are you really doing?”** can mean the world.
- Reflect on what helps you reset. Whether it's a walk, a quiet cup of tea during break or at home, a moment of gratitude, or just breathing.

Students are able to reach out to Mental Health First Aiders when in need of support during difficult times. At Arena Academy, we encourage students to embed kindness and respect to everything that they do.



RESPECT

Book of the Month: October 2025

The Wrong Shoes

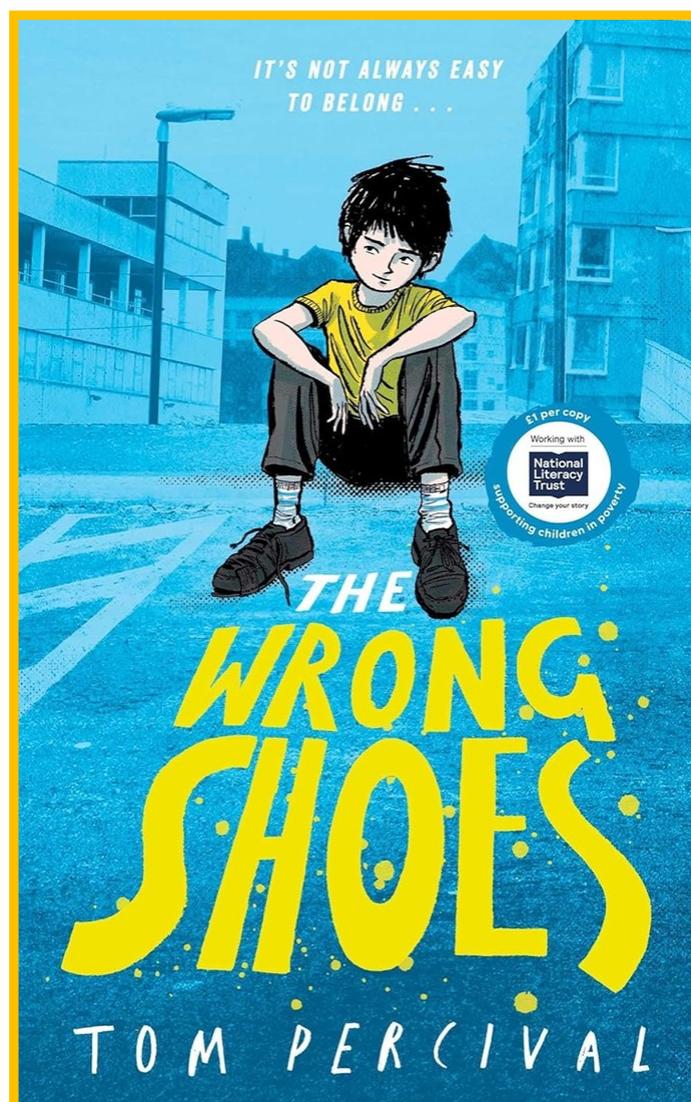
by Tom Percival

Will and his dad don't have much. Will's shoes are leaking and they're definitely not the cool shoes to wear. Chris Tucker and his gang frequently bully Will on the way to school.

When Will has an argument with his best friend, he finds himself on a downward spiral. Too proud to ask for help from his mum, and with his dad out of work, due to injury, and in debt, Will has a choice. Make a bit of ready cash by working with Chris, but feel guilty forever, or do the right thing?

Reflecting the current reality for a lot of children today, this book has hard-hitting issues at its heart – but despite the storyline, there is hope too. Will is an artist, finding refuge in Art classes, with an upcoming art competition that might make a difference.

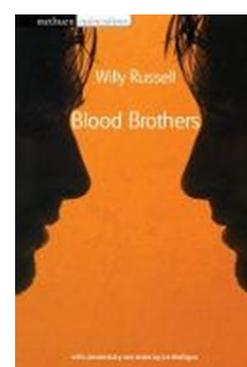
Moving and gritty, it is a fantastic read, with artwork created by the author – the black and white illustrations are gritty and atmospheric.



If you liked this book, you might also enjoy...



The King of Nothing by Nathanael Lessore



Blood Brothers by Willy Russell

RESPECT

Student Book of the Month: October 2025

Gay Club! by Simon James Green

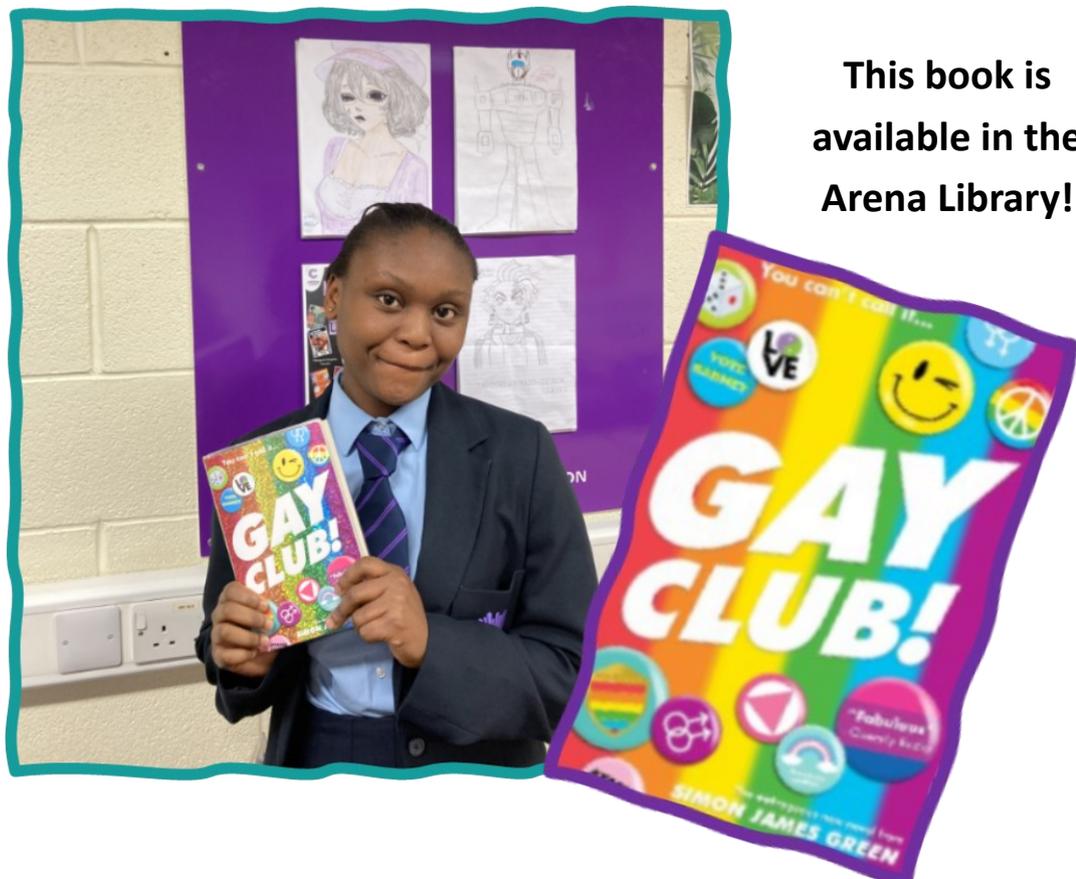
This book was chosen by Diana from 11RSI

Barney's a shoo-in for LGBTQ+ Society President at the school club's next election. But when the vote is opened up to the whole student body, who will win? A riotously funny look at - and heartfelt celebration of - queer students everywhere organizing to make a difference.

Here is Diana's insightful review:

After I read this book, I learned that it is okay to be exactly who you are – loud, quiet, masculine, feminine or anything in between! Seeing others live freely helps you embrace your own identity. Supportive community gay clubs are often a second home to many, especially those rejected by family for being who they are.

This book teaches us that a chosen family is as powerful as a biological one.



This book is
available in the
Arena Library!

EXCELLENCE



Maths Homework Sparx XP superstars

HALF TERM 1

WELL DONE TO OUR
HALF TERM 1
MATHS HOMEWORK
LEADERS

ULTIMATE SUPERSTAR: Latifa Parker

Highest points score in whole school!

Latifa	P	Year 7
Swastika	R	Year 7
Isabella	B	Year 7
Alvin	M	Year 7
Reece	V	Year 7

Georgia	G	Year 8
Kyra	R	Year 8
Liam	D	Year 8
Nasrin	G	Year 8
Yaashvi	W	Year 8

Naeb	T	Year 9
Draon	R	Year 9
Cameron	H	Year 9
Serenity	F	Year 9
Tyrese	S	Year 9

Amrit	U	Year 10
Madison	G	Year 10
Salman	A	Year 10
Adana	S	Year 10
Mahlet	D	Year 10

Hamse	E	Year 11
Abigail	C	Year 11
Ryan	M	Year 11
Dylan	G	Year 11
Tobenna	O	Year 11

September & October Sparx Maths Superstars!

Well done to the named students who have worked hard to earn their places as Sparx Maths Superstars!



Maths Homework Sparx XP superstars

OCT 2025

WELL DONE TO OUR
OCTOBER
MATHS HOMEWORK
LEADERS

ULTIMATE SUPERSTAR: LATIFA P

Highest points score in whole school!

Latifa	P	Year 7
Swastika	R	Year 7
Isabella	B	Year 7
Mia	P	Year 7
Reece	V	Year 7

Georgia	G	Year 8
Nasrin	G	Year 8
Faadil	J	Year 8
Daniela	M	Year 8
Charlotte	A	Year 8

Darius	C	Year 9
Naeb	T	Year 9
Serenity	F	Year 9
Draon	R	Year 9
Avneet	J	Year 9

Adana	S	Year 10
Salman	A	Year 10
Madison	G	Year 10
Amrit	U	Year 10
Poppy	M	Year 10

Tobenna	O	Year 11
Zayaan	H	Year 11
Bharmit	B	Year 11
Deanna	M	Year 11
Arnia	R	Year 11

EXCELLENCE



Black History Month



Black History Month is celebrated every October in the UK. During this month, our Arena Performing Arts Ambassadors lead assemblies to share, celebrate and understand the impact of black heritage and culture.



Black History Month challenge

To celebrate Black History Month, the Performing Arts department invites every student to take part in the Black History Month Performing Arts challenge! To enter, students must create a short piece of work inspired by Black history, culture, or achievement in music, drama or dance. Students can submit a 1-minute video to Miss. McKenzie, Miss Alam or Mrs Abraham for their entry or perform live in front of the Performing Arts department. They can choose to perform either a song, monologue or dance either individually or in groups.

The deadline is Friday 24th October 2025... get entering!

EXCELLENCE



Arena Library's Halloween Promotion

During the final week of the October term, students who borrowed a Horror book from the Arena Library were gifted a Halloween treat!

Miss. Fellows and her team of Library Ambassadors decorated the library to get into the spirit of Halloween. Skeletons, bats, ghosts and spiders could be found everywhere! Students watched Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets during Thursday Film Club and also loaned books from Stephenie Meyer's Twilight series to Derek Landy's Skulduggery Pleasant. It was a spooky readathon for all to enjoy.



EXCELLENCE

Year 7 Student Leaders

Congratulations to our newly appointed Student Leaders of Year 7! These students have been chosen because they have continuously demonstrated our CORE values; **Collaboration**, **Opportunity**, **Respect** and **Excellence**, since joining Arena Academy in September 2025.

Well done to the following students:

Megan D 7ASA

Grace H 7DZS

Camron H 7GSK

Max D 7SDA

Rui C 7SDA

Thomas S 7CME

