

# Abbey College Community Round Up - October 2023

## Headteacher's Welcome

A warm welcome to our first Community Roundup of the year. It's been a joy to welcome our new students and I am impressed by how well they have settled into the Abbey College Community. Our new Year 7 students are off to a great start with their Spirit points, and we have high hopes that they will become outstanding Abbey College ambassadors in years to come.

It has been a privilege to showcase our wonderful school at the Year 6 Open Evening, Ramsey Gatehouse Sixth Form opening evening, and meet the tutor events. The atmosphere at these open events was electric, and we received some incredible feedback. One guest said: *"We were blown away by the enthusiasm of the teaching staff, especially the new Year 7 pupils, who had only been there a few weeks."* A huge thanks to all the staff and students who made these events a success, giving everyone a taste of our truly amazing school.

I hope you enjoy reading about some of our achievements this term and would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy half-term break.

## Year 7s Shine in their First Term



Our remarkable Year 7 students have adapted to their new environment effortlessly. They have been rewarded with a 'Donut Friday' and a non-uniform day for successfully meeting the Spirit-Behaviour ratio challenge... Good work, Year 7s!

Miss Lane sends newsletters every two weeks via Edulink and you can access them [here](#). Please make sure to read them for important updates.

## GCSE and A Level Results

We are immensely proud of our students for their dedication and perseverance leading up to their outstanding GCSE and A Level results. Despite facing several years of disruption, exam conditions returned to near pre-Covid conditions. For many students, these exams marked their first formal assessments since the pandemic.

Strong results were secured across the whole curriculum, including GCSEs in Maths, English Literature, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, French, Art, and Physical Education. Vocational courses in Music and Business Studies also secured high grades, with an average grade of a Distinction.

In A Levels, strong results were achieved across different subject areas, including Maths, Further Maths, English Literature, Chemistry, and Biology; and vocational qualifications in IT and Engineering.

We want to express our appreciation to our excellent teaching and support staff, who consistently went the extra mile to help students achieve these excellent results.

## Rainbow Flag Award



Staff and students have received the Rainbow Flag award from [The Kite Trust](#). The award recognises the school's commitment to improving inclusion and diversity within our educational community.

This recognition underscores the school's commitment to raising the visibility of LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, plus other related identities) rights and combatting instances of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying. The Rainbow Flag Award is granted to schools that excel in six areas: skilled teacher, supportive governors and parents,

effective policies, inclusive curriculum, pastoral support and student voice. Staff at Abbey College proactively educate students about equality and diversity by implementing an inclusive curriculum and comprehensive PSHE (Personal, Social, Health, and Economic) programmes.

Students are empowered to express their perspectives and concerns and a significant aspect of the effort is its dedicated Pride Group, consisting of students who actively take part in curriculum planning to ensure it remains responsive to evolving needs. The group plays a crucial role in identifying and addressing any comments or behaviours that do not uphold inclusivity standards. Additionally, Abbey College has revised its school policies, and signposts to support spaces where students can seek advice.

## Sporting Round Up

### Rugby

We have had fixtures against Sawtry, St Peter's, St Ivo and Longsands, and our Year 8 team have shined, winning every game! Some of our Year 8 boys have also joined the Year 9 team and performed brilliantly. Keep up the good work!

### Football

On the football front, our Year 9 boys have secured a place in the County Cup second round after a convincing 4-0 victory in the first round. Meanwhile, our Year 10 boys are gearing up for the 2nd round of the National Cup, where they'll face Hinchbrook this Thursday.

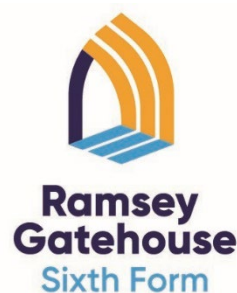
The girls' football teams have been flourishing, with the girls showing remarkable enthusiasm and teamwork. The under 16s team recently beat Kings School 6:1 - Go girls!

Next half term, we have a packed schedule with the district cross country championships, the start of district basketball competitions, and the Year 7 and 8 district rugby tournaments. What's more, there will be more cup games in football for the teams who have qualified. We will also host two inter-house competitions before Christmas, and new extracurricular activities (OOPs) will kick off after the half-term break... There's lots to look forward to!

## Ramsey Gatehouse Sixth Form

Year 12 and 13 students have settled well into life at Ramsey Gatehouse Sixth Form and are enjoying the newly refurbished Study6 area for their studies.

During this half-term, we have had the pleasure of hosting several guest speakers for both year groups. Year 13 had the opportunity to meet with the University of Cambridge's EPID DEBEAT research team who invited them to participate in a study on eating habits. Subsequently, Year 12 received a virtual lecture from Alan Hirzel, the CEO of Abcam, and attended a presentation by AIM apprenticeships.



Additionally, we warmly welcomed Year 11 students to experience a day in the life of a Sixth Former ahead of our open evening yesterday. We look forward to their transition to Year 12 in September.

At the other end of their journey, Year 13 are actively working on their future applications, whether it's for university or apprenticeships. Before the early applicant deadline last Monday, we submitted four Oxbridge and two Medicine applications and wish those students the best of luck. We are enormously proud of Zack who, after completing summer work experience, has already been offered an electrician's apprenticeship to commence after his exams next summer.

We now have our very own Facebook page! Please visit and give us a 'like' to stay updated with all the exciting happenings at [Ramsey Gatehouse Sixth form](#).

## Art and Textiles



We want to express our thanks for the incredible support of the Creative Arts department. We have an exciting school year ahead, packed with fun and engaging projects for students of all ages.

The textiles department is rapidly growing and expanding, and we are reaching out to our community for any donations of any unwanted fabric or textiles-related items. This includes curtains, net curtains, old clothes, bedding, wool, felt, thread, ribbons, string, buttons, beads and any embellishments. Donations can be dropped off at the Creative Arts department or left at Reception. Your contributions are greatly appreciated!

The aim is to provide a well-rounded education that nurtures creativity, critical thinking, and cultural appreciation. Our students have been working on various textile projects... Here is an overview of what each year has been exploring:

- In Year 7, our students have been delving into the fascinating world of Aboriginal art and hand sewing. This unit aims to introduce them to the rich cultural heritage of Australia's Indigenous peoples, while also enhancing their textile skills. Students have learned about the significance of symbols and storytelling within these artworks, all while mastering the traditional techniques used in their creations. Through hands-on activities, they have had the opportunity to create their own unique pieces inspired by Aboriginal art.

- Our Year 8 students have been introduced to soft sculpture and hand sewing. This unit focuses on expanding their understanding of different art forms and materials. Soft sculpture involves creating three-dimensional artworks using fabric, stuffing, and other soft materials.
- In Year 9, students have started their investigation into the theme of Growth and Decay. This unit aims to develop and deepen their understanding of textile processes. Through research, experimentation, and artistic expression, they will create artworks that reflect their observations and interpretations.
- Our Year 10 students are currently focusing on the theme Under the Sea. This unit provides an opportunity for them to explore marine life and environmental issues related to the ocean. They will then use their knowledge to create artworks that convey the beauty and fragility of the underwater world.

We firmly believe that these art projects serve not only to enrich our students' artistic skills but also to foster cultural understanding, critical thinking, and environmental awareness.

If you have any questions or would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you in advance,

Creative Arts department.

## Governor Update

Governors extend a warm welcome to all new staff, students and their families at Abbey College. We hope that you thoroughly enjoy your time and experience here.

Early in the term, governors held their annual planning meeting where they agreed on small changes to the structure and formed a new Joint Scrutiny Group (JSG). This group will collaborate with the other committees to oversee, challenge and evaluate the school's standards in terms of educational and financial performance in comparison to national benchmarks.



Governors met with Senior Leaders to review the school priorities for the year. Fruitful discussions took place, resulting in the agreement on these priorities, which will be implemented during the coming year.

Our gratitude goes to Madeleine Jackson and Lisa Williamson for conducting well-being and safeguarding visits so early in the term. Further visits to review certain subject areas are planned for after the half-term break with the JSG.

We are pleased to welcome Adam Watkins as a new Parent Governor to the Governing Body and look forward to working with him. There will be another Parent Governor vacancy after Christmas. If you're interested, please consider the role and feel free to reach out to [katie.dodsley@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk](mailto:katie.dodsley@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk) if you'd like to speak with a current governor for more information about the position.

## Parent's Forum

In our inaugural meeting for 2023-24, we welcomed several new parents who joined the group. We engaged in discussions about various topics, including the changes to the Sixth Form, the new School library, the successful transition of Year 7 students, and our school's promotional efforts. During the meeting, parents had the opportunity to raise questions and challenge staff, which led to identifying some actions for the school to address.

The pre-loved uniform sales have been a tremendous success, allowing us to donate an additional £500 to the development of the well-being garden and £250 to the English department to enhance the new library's stock. We encourage you to keep sending your donations of outgrown uniforms to reception.

We would like to give a huge thanks to Cheryl Greyson, who has served as the first Chair of the Parent's Forum, playing a key role in leading the group and establishing the Preloved uniform shop. Cheryl will step down as a governor in December, and we appreciate her hard work and dedication.

## IT October Half Term Update

Over the October half term, Meridian Trust's IT Team who are responsible for Abbey College's IT system will be merging multiple systems together. This effort will mean that students only have to use a single username and password to for computer access, email and Teams.

Student logins will now end in @abbey.college. For example, if they previously used '23jbloggs' for logging into their computer and '23jbloggs@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk' for email and Teams, they will move to the new username format '23jbloggs@abbey.college'. Students already received their new usernames via email.

Passwords will remain the same as it currently is for emails and Teams.

They cannot use a shortened version of the username to log in. The full address must be typed in.

Usernames will be changed at 4pm on Friday 20th October and students will be able to use the new username shortly after, though some systems may take some time to pick up the change (Edulink etc).

If students need help at any point during half term, please email [it@meridiantrust.co.uk](mailto:it@meridiantrust.co.uk) or call the IT helpline on 0300 666 0300.

Meridian Trust IT keep a public knowledge base for all our staff and students located at <https://www.meridiantrust.co.uk/key-information/knowledgebase/>

## Uniform Reminder

### Full length, plain black trousers

- Leggings, skinny cut trousers and denim of any type are not permitted
- Buttons and zips only for fastening, not for decoration
- Belts must be discreet.
- Must be worn with black socks

### Knee length tartan skirt

- Must be worn with opaque tights
- Must not be rolled at the waist

**Smart, black, leather shoes**

- Trainers, boots, canvas shoes and 'dolly style' slip on shoes are not acceptable
- High heels must not be worn

**Jewellery**

- No visible bangles, bracelets or necklaces.
- One small plain ring per hand
- No facial piercings (eyebrows, tongue, lip or chin) except a small discreet nose stud.
- One small stud or hoop in each ear under ½ cm in size
- Ear stretchers are not permitted

**Make-Up**

- Make-up must be discreet.
- No nail varnish – coloured or clear
- No acrylic nails
- False eyelashes must not be worn



## Social Media

We have a new Instagram page! Find it here: [https://www.instagram.com/abbeycollege\\_ramsey/](https://www.instagram.com/abbeycollege_ramsey/)

Please follow us for news stories and to see what your child is getting up to at school.

A reminder of the new [Ramsey Gatehouse Sixth Form Facebook](#) page:

We'd love to hear about any amazing achievements or activities outside of school. If you have any stories of student success beyond the classroom, please share them with us by sending an email to the office ([office@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk](mailto:office@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk)).

## Dates for the diary

- Monday 23rd to Friday 27th October 2023 - Half Term, School Closed
- Monday 30th October 2023 - INSET Day - Staff only
- Tuesday 31st October 2023 - Students return to school (week B)
- Thursday 2nd November 2023 - Year 13 Virtual Parent's Evening
- Friday 10th November 2023 - Year 13 University and Apprenticeship Event at University of Northampton
- Thursday 7th December 2023 - Year 8 Virtual Parent's Evening
- Wednesday 22nd November 2023 - Year 10 Next Steps Event in School
- Monday 27th November - Year 12/13 parliament Trip
- Wednesday 6th December - Year 7 Guess the Professional Event in School
- Wednesday 20th December 2023 - Last Day of Term