



Parent's Forum Update

15/07/2021

Dear Parents,

Thank you so much for your contributions via the survey for our final Parent's Forum meeting of the academic year. We had over 90 questions, comments and suggestions! Your feedback is really appreciated and all of it is used! Some points warranted a personal response so you may have received an email or a call from the school, some we were able to cover in the meeting, and the rest have been covered by the teaching team and senior leaders in a very comprehensive Q&A document, available on the website [here](#). We were also able to put together a list of key themes for meetings in the Autumn term. The first theme was noted by a number of parents, and this is 'supporting children without an official diagnosis'. This relates to children who might have suspected dyslexia, autism, ADHD, and any other issues but do not yet have an official medical diagnosis.

Last Meeting – Supporting Less Able Students

Mr Deighton (Head of English) joined us and explained the Wave system which is used to support students to make as much progress as possible. Children might move up or down this gauge. We talked about how the right children are selected for support and intervention. The teachers have MESH meetings which covers Maths, English, Science and Humanities to review student data. They talk about the children individually and share ideas about how to support them e.g., if a particular child is really motivated by a particular way of working in their Science lessons, the English teacher might try the same approach. Children can be re-tested to see if there is any improvement. We had a really interesting discussion about children who might slip to the bottom set and perform well and whether they are then encouraged to aspire to the next set, or indeed can move up again. We were told that Heads of Department regularly review the sets to make sure students are in the right groups, but we did set an action for them to review these sets, to ensure that no children are sitting in the wrong band or that they are not receiving enough challenge. It was interesting to learn that even in the bottom sets, the minimum expectation is a Grade 4 GCSE (that's a C grade in old money!), and that Abbey College achieves in the top 5% nationally for the 'average' performing child. Reports are now out (on the SIMS Parent App), so if you do feel your child needs pushing, Mr Christoforou invited parents to challenge the school, by contacting the class teacher.

Last Meeting – Raising Aspirations

Mrs Warne (Assistant Headteacher) told us all about the new vision for the school to raise aspirations. There is the award-winning Careers Department, the Combined Cadet Force which supports leadership skills and confidence, the STEM curriculum for Key Stage 3, and a 'Stepping Up' programme for Year 10 to show readiness and aspiration for the final year. The options for the Year 8s this year match the EBacc curriculum with a language, at least two sciences and a humanity subject. This is a challenging curriculum which the school usually offers to the most able students only.

We learnt about some very exciting developments happening in the new term which Mrs Warne is going to come back and tell us more about. Children will have the chance to become 'scholars' in specialist subjects e.g., sports scholars. This is such a big and exciting project that we may open this up as a separate launch / Q&A session as I'm sure you will be wanting to know a lot more.

We also asked about aspirations for children in New Horizons (a space within the school for children with emotional, medical and behavioural needs). It was good to hear that any students on an alternative curriculum will have equal access to the same opportunities on the new scholars programme.

Facebook

We now have a Facebook Group! Follow us to keep up to date with everything that is going on in Parent's Forum.

www.facebook.com/groups/abbeycollegeparentsforum

School Uniform

Please donate your outgrown school uniform, PE kits, football boots, etc, to us! We will be selling Abbey College Preloved on our Facebook site initially and hopefully at Ramsey Indoor Market soon. All clean donations of reusable school kit can be bagged up and left at reception. If you can't donate during school hours, please get in touch and we can arrange an alternative drop off point. All funds raised will be used for projects for the children.

Fundraising Quiz

Please join us for our first fundraising event on July 19th which is a family online quiz. We have about 10 teams, but we'd love some more.

We are hoping to make a dent in our fundraising target of £800 for lunchtime sports equipment and some beautiful garden spaces with benches for the children to eat their lunch and chill out. We have THREE AMAZING PRIZES, kindly donated by our local community! A voucher from Johnson's of Old Hurst, a family archery taster session and a box of Hotel Chocolat chocolates. You can pay via ParentPay and it's so easy.

On behalf of Parent's Forum, we would like to wish you a fantastic summer break. It's not quite the summer any of us had planned, but whether you're staying in the UK or venturing abroad, stay safe and healthy and we'll see you in September.

As always, if you would like to get involved in Parent's Forum or fundraising, please email parentforum@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk.

Yours faithfully

Cheryl Greyson

Chair – Parent's Forum