

Weekly Family Update - 04.11.22

Please read, share and encourage others to do the same. For those of you who prefer the more *traditional letter*, a pdf version of this Update will also be sent to families.

Foreword

One week to go before our Year 11s begin their first set of Trial Examinations. I have been speaking with our Year 11s who have on-the-whole, been revising for these assessments throughout the half term, which is encouraging. There are still a few that need that extra push and I would ask that families support us with this by asking their child about the revision they are undertaking and what grades they hope to receive during these Trials.

An important message to any Year 11s reading this Bulletin, or any parents of students in Year 11: Trial Examinations are all about identifying areas for improvement. Perfection in every area of study is extremely unlikely at this stage and no one should expect to achieve as highly as they will in the summer. Adopt a growth mindset position where any deficiencies in performance are identified as opportunities for improvement and do not spend the next weeks brooding and worrying about the papers to come. It is important you understand the function of these examinations as a single element in a broad GCSE preparation process that still has a long way to go. Do your best in the exams and embrace the learning opportunities that emerge from failure. Now is certainly not the time to allow stress and worry to undermine the learning experience and the enjoyment of School.

A reminder that we have a strict Uniform Policy and trainers of any type are not permitted unless there is a medical need. If families require support in purchasing footwear for school, please contact our Welfare Team who can support families with this. Contact: welfare@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk

Just prior to the half term break, we advertised a Parent Forum Meeting for which we receive lots of apologies owing to the short notice. For that reason, we have set a date of the 10th November. Please see the relevant section below for details of how to join in.

Finally, we really value the good communication we have with parents and carers and this includes addressing your concerns. It is very important to us that lines of communication with the parent body are working effectively.

I am concerned to see that a small minority of parents have taken to social media to raise concerns about staff not responding to emails. We have a clear communications policy (please see the end of this Update). As you will see, there is an expectation that staff will respond to you in a timely manner. May I request that, if you email a member of staff and don't receive a response within the timeframe stated within the policy, please use the Parent Forum Guarantee and I will follow this up.

Please note that any complaint received by the school is always responded to initially with an acknowledgement and then in full according to our policy. If you have not received an acknowledgment, please re-check the email address you have used and resend it or call us. Using social media to raise concerns or frustrations is not an appropriate way to communicate.

The Parent Forum Guarantee gives all parents the right to speak directly to me, the Headteacher, within 24 hours, if you feel your question has not been answered by those you have already contacted.

You can use your Parent Forum Guarantee by calling 01487 812352 or emailing office@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk with 'Parent Forum Guarantee' in the subject header. You will be contacted initially to arrange a convenient time for your call and then I will personally call you by the end of the next working/school day. If you would like a follow up meeting, this can occur within 72 hours after the initial phone call.

I hope this will go some way to making the communication process even simpler and more convenient for you all and would like to say a huge thank you again to our Parent Forum for their support and challenge.

Have a nice weekend.

Andy Christoforou, Headteacher



PARENT FORUM GUARANTEE

After following these stages, if you feel your query has not been answered you should complete our Parent Forum Guarantee.

This gives all parents the right to talk with our Headteacher within **24 HOURS** and a further meeting, if needed, within the following **72 HOURS**

Call 01487 812352 or email office@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk stating 'Parent Guarantee Forum'

Please read on for essential updates.

Parent Forum



The next Parent Forum next meeting – **Tuesday 1st November 4:30pm**, where they will be discussing:

- Homework update Edulink
- Duke of Edinburgh (D of E) update
- Fundraising

If you would like to attend, please email: parentforum@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk

Cheryl Greyson - Chair of Parent Forum

Attendance - Week 8

- **Congratulations:** to Year 7 – the year group with the fewest number of students absent in the last week of term.
- **Reminder:** The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. Communication from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence.

Ethos updates

Homework

We have been really pleased with the vast majority of students who are completing and submitting all homework tasks on time. Please remember that all homework is set on Teams for students and we have a room available at break and lunchtime for any student who have difficulty in accessing work at home. If your child needs any support with homework then they should speak to their class teacher or form tutor.

Curriculum updates - PE focus

Each week, I intend to highlight what is available on our website to support students' learning.

This week, I will focus on PE and the link to all resources is here:

www.abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk/pe

There are three main resources available on our website for every subject taught. Click each heading below to find out more, or go to our main web page [here](#).

1. [PE Learning Journey](#) - an overview of what is taught from year 7 through to year 13. If you click on the image once, it will open. Click on it again, it will enlarge.
2. [Curriculum overviews and plans for each year group](#) - these show in detail what is taught and assessed by year groups in detail.
3. [Knowledge Organisers](#) - these are useful tools when it comes to learning and recalling information. They are a great resource to see at a glance what facts need to be retained, and are particularly useful prior to an assessment or exam.

Abbey College Curriculum Aims

 Inclusive	The curriculum provides a clear programme of understanding to a range of diverse cultures and religions.
 Challenging	To have a challenging and aspirational curriculum that provides opportunities to ensure no learner is left behind.
 Cultural Capital	All learners will receive a wide and fulfilling educational experience.

Teaching and Learning Update

Thank you for your continued support in our drive to make homework a positive feature of the academic life at Abbey College; we know that it will take time for this to become fully embedded, but we are already seeing a positive impact in students' retention skills and recall of knowledge in lessons, which we know will help them as they progress at the school.

Our focus in lessons this half term is the way in which we use questioning in class to develop higher order thinking. NACE, the National Association for Able Children in Education cite questioning as one of the key ways to ensure students are challenged to develop their thinking in lessons. Their blog is

here: <https://www.nace.co.uk/blogpost/1761881/334589/5-key-strategies-for-stretch-and-challenge>

We are also planning further opportunities for you to visit Abbey College in the coming months to see what learning is like here. We will send out details as soon as we have them.

Assessment

- **Year 7 and 8 assessments** are underway this week and next week. Details of the assessments should be on Teams. If you have questions about the assessments, then contact Mrs Lane for Year 7 and Ms Beel for Year 8. Reports will be available on Edulink at the end of November.
- **Year 11 Trial Exams** start in the week beginning 14.11.21. Students have a paper copy of their timetables and revision lists and details of assessments should be on Teams. If you have questions about the Year 11 Trials, please contact Mrs Glen.
- **Year 13 Trial Exams** start in the week beginning 28.11.21. Revision lists and details of assessments should start to appear on Teams shortly. If you have questions about the Year 13 Trials, please contact Mrs Moore.

Headteacher Commendations



The following students have been awarded with Headteacher's commendations this week for going above and beyond in an area of school life. They will receive ten spirit points and a special postcard home.

If you would like to nominate someone for an Abbey College Spirit Award then please follow this [link](#).

Parent Diary Dates 2022-23

Remembrance Day Service

On Friday the 11th November, the College will partake in its annual outdoor Remembrance Day Service.

As you may know, the service is one we are immensely proud of at the College, led by our students for the whole school community it provides the perfect opportunity for the school to come together to commemorate the sacrifices and bravery of our service personnel, both past and present.

Student	Nominated for
Jasmin Jr	Enthusiastic and professional leadership of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award stand for the Year 6 Open Evening.
Chloe Y	Excellent support for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award stand.
Jacob K	Wonderful impromptu support for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award stand during the Year 6 Open Evening.
Carson G	Professional logistical support for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award stand during the Year 6 Open Evening, and effective management of his other commitments.
Ella B	Assisting Learning support during open evening
Codee H	Assisting Learning support during open evening
Scarlett A	For a fantastic speech at Open Evening and assisting Learning support
Axel T	For an amazing contribution to the open evening
Phoebe B.	Confidently leading a Science practical for year 6 during open evening.
Lottie B	Confidently leading a Science practical for year 6 during open evening.
Phoebe B.	Confidently leading a Science practical for year 6 during open evening.
Zoe P.	A fantastic speech at open evening
Lewis T	A fantastic speech at open evening
Simone S	A fantastic speech at open evening

If parents or carers would like to attend, please arrive by 10:30am and sign in at Reception after which, please congregate with the school outside by the front field and **RSVP by email to: office@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk** so we know who to expect.

Date	Activity/Event
Friday 11 th November	School Remembrance Day Service
Monday 14 th November	HPV Vaccinations Year 8
Friday 18 th November	Children in Need Day
Tuesday 29 th November	Year 8 STEM Day
Wednesday 30 th November	HPV Vaccinations Year 9
Thursday 1 st December	Year 8 Virtual Parents' Evening 4:30-7:30pm
Thursday 8 th December	Year 7 Virtual Parents' Evening 4:30-7:30pm
Wednesday 21 st December	Last day of term
Wednesday 21 st December to Tuesday 3 rd January 2023	Christmas Holidays – school closed
Wednesday 4 th January	INSET Day 3 – staff only in school
Thursday 5 th January	Students return 8:30am

Cambs County Council webpages on support with the cost of living

As winter approaches, more people will feel the impact of inflation and increasing fuel bills. [County Council's webpages on support with the cost of living](#) provide information on accessing grants and debt advice, support on getting all the money you're entitled to and more information about the government's recent support measures. The page also contains a link for the Council's [Household Support Fund](#). This fund, which has wide eligibility criteria, provides direct financial support and a gateway to more personalised offers which are intended to provide longer-term help. It is easy to apply to the fund, details and a link to the application form are on the webpage. There is also a telephone application route for pensioners through our partners Age UK Cambridge & Peterborough on 01223 221929

Consultation on Travel in the Greater Cambridge Area

The Greater Cambridge Partnership and CCC have launched their Making Connections consultation. You can have your say on proposals for faster, cheaper, more reliable bus services and safer cycling through the introduction of a Sustainable Travel Zone:

- From as early as mid-2023, they're proposing to transform the bus network through more services to more locations, with cheaper fares at £1/£2 per journey.
- Alongside the bus network, they're proposing more investment in new sustainable travel schemes, such as better walking and cycling links.
- From 2027/28, they plan to introduce a Sustainable Travel Zone in the form of a road user charge on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council as the Highway Authority. Vehicles would pay to drive in the Zone at certain times.
- There would be discounts, exemptions and reimbursements for some, including those on low incomes and blue badge holders.

Shaped by extensive consultations, they're seeking input to this step-by-step plan for better, cleaner, safer transport. You can complete our survey online or contact the GCP by post, phone, email or social media from today (Monday 17th October) to midday Friday 23rd December. Find out more about the ways to respond online: www.greatercambridge.org.uk/mc-2022.

You can hear more about the proposals at a series of drop-in events across the region. There are also online events. All events are listed here: www.greatercambridge.org.uk/mc-2022.

Kind regards,

Transport Strategy Team

Transport Strategy & Funding

Cambridgeshire County Council

Email: transport.plan@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Communicating with us

- To help you reach the right person if you have a query or concern, we have updated our "contact us" webpage and have included a simplified flowchart to show the most efficient way to communicate with us.

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- [Click here](#) to access this Communication Flowchart on our website.
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