

Weekly Family Update - 24.03.23



Please read, share and encourage others to do the same.

Foreword

It's been great to have a full undisrupted week.

Our Year 10s were brimming with confidence and full of stories to share following their work experience week as part of their wider personal development programme. One pupil told me how he was commended for up-selling cuts of meat to customers in a butcher shop, literally *carving* himself out an apprenticeship. Another young lady was very quick to explain that she had definitely decided on a different career for the future. Both examples are equally valuable learning experiences, and the feedback from employers was indeed very positive, they are a credit to our community!

During the recent Parent Survey, a few comments were left by families with regards to the online Parents Evenings and the desire to have more opportunities to visit School, meet staff and get additional information on how their child is doing within particular subjects. Therefore, below is a reminder of what is available and how families can get in touch with us if they have questions about their child's progress.

In-Person Events: there are several calendared events throughout the year, and these are usually highlighted at the bottom of this update. For example, Careers Fair, Options Evening, Meet the Mentor, Open Evenings, Prize Giving, etc.

Get information on how your child is doing: Families at any time can request an individual meeting with either the Raising Standards Leader for any year group or the Form Tutor if you have a general query. Alternatively, if you have a subject concern or question, you can email the subject teacher directly. Please use the [Contact Us](#) form on our website and colleagues will get back to you within 2 working days. If, however, you have a specific concern about Absence, SEND support, Finance etc, please also use the Contact Us form and we will direct your email to the right place. The Communication Flowchart at the bottom of this Weekly Update is a handy way to find out who is best placed for you to communicate with. It is also available on our website here:

<https://www.abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk/contact-us/htcu>

Online Parents Evening appointments: there were a few parental comments left on the survey with regard to the shortness of these meetings, and not being able to get an appointment with a specific teacher. There are several positives to virtual Parents Evenings: the timed nature of online meetings reduces any pressure associated with over-running appointments; working from home enables parent-teachers to be present without booking alternative childcare; flexibility or being anywhere to have the consultation (work or home), logistics such as parking and driving to school, to name but a few. We know that in-person Parent evenings also regularly overran.

Both virtual and online Parents evenings have similar issues with regards to not always being able to meet every teacher as there are only so many appointments within the set time. The most important piece of advice I can give families with regard to booking Parents Evening appointments, is to choose your top five teachers to speak with using the student Progress Check reports as a guide. For example, if you have a concern over the Spirit Grade or predicted academic grade a child receives from a teacher, then target these colleagues for an appointment.

If all appointments are booked, by all means, contact these staff for an update individually or email the Raising Standards Leader if you want an overview for more than one subject. In other words, if you cannot get to see all the staff you need to speak with on that particular Parents Evening, please speak to us to arrange your own personalised appointment for your child to get a fuller picture.

Finally, I would like to thank our parents and students for their patience in managing the disruption that has been caused by ongoing industrial action in schools. It is a difficult time for many involved in public sector employment and I know that staff here who have answered the call to strike have not taken the decision to do so lightly. I do not enjoy planning for days when we must restrict access to students due to low staffing numbers, and I fear that this may be an ongoing context that has yet to run its course, but I am grateful for the understanding shown by those negatively impacted and I hope that the situation can be resolved as quickly as possible. Our priority remains the futures of our students and we continue to strive to provide the best quality education we can regardless of contextual problems.

I wish you all a very enjoyable weekend.

Andy Christoforou, Headteacher

Please read on for essential updates.

Celebration of Spirit - Rewards



Flash Reward

On Tuesday, 80 students across the school were invited to our 'Flash Reward' where they enjoyed an afternoon of pizza. The students were nominated by their form tutors for 'enjoying working with a wide range of people' an important part of intuition, one of our three school virtues.

Abbey in the news!

If you haven't heard about our wonderful student band, this is definitely worth a read.

<https://www.huntspost.co.uk/news/23406465.abbey-college-students-become-artists-release-album/>

Tell us about something brilliant

If you would like to nominate someone for an Abbey College Spirit Award for any out of school success stories, then please follow this [link](#) or email the Office office@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk.

Headteacher Commendations

The following students have been awarded with Headteacher's commendations this week for going above and beyond, either within a subject, outside the classroom or beyond School.

Student Name	Reason for nomination
Callum F	DrFrost Champion of the Week!
Elisha Jane W	DrFrost Champion of the Week!
Ram M	DrFrost Champion of the Week!
Isabelle G	DrFrost Champion of the Week!
Euan C	DrFrost Champion of the Week!
Henri C	Outstanding effort on the Grafham Water trip.
Noah R	Outstanding effort on the Grafham Water Trip.
Nathan H	Improvement to your attendance this half term.
Izzy H	Outstanding progress being made on your UNIT 2 folder! Well done!
Abigail T	Outstanding progress being made on your UNIT 2 folder! Well done!
Chloe S	Outstanding progress being made on your UNIT 2 folder! Well done!
Olivia S	Showing excellent tenacity and determination to succeed in revising the more complicated parts of the subject.



Parent Forum Update

The next Parent Forum meeting – **Thursday 30th March 5:00pm**, where they will be discussing:

- *Sport Fixture Arrangements*
- *Passport to the Prom*
- *Student Feedback Form*
- *Fundraising and Finance*

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

Cheryl Greyson - Chair of Parent Forum

High Expectations and Safety

Attendance - Week 26

- **Congratulations:** Most improved Year Group- Year 9 with an 0.42% increase in their attendance last week. If you want to know your son's/daughter's attendance target for Thorpe Park, please email attendance@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk
- **Reminder:** Please be mindful that occasional days off school due to minor illnesses, such as a cough or sore throat, soon accumulate.

Safety

Sexuality and sexual orientation

Talking to your child about relationships can be tricky. There are lots of places to go for advice, this guide includes advice on how to talk to your child about sexuality and sexual orientation.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/sex-relationships/sexuality-sexual-orientation/>

If you do have any questions or need any help or advise, you can also contact the Welfare Dept who are happy to support, email via welfare@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk

Wider personal development

Careers Programme

To find out more about the curriculum we have in place for Careers, see this link <https://www.abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk/students/careers-guidance>

Information about subjects

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.

Options Update

All Year 8 students have now submitted their option preferences and will be informed of their option allocations in the week commencing the 27/03/23. All subjects are looking forward to welcoming their new students in September. To find out more about your child's curriculum and the learning journey their new subjects will take them on please visit our [websites curriculum pages](#).

What your child is learning?

Here at Abbey College we offer a wide range of subjects. Our website holds key information to support students in their learning. Please see <https://www.abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk/students/curriculum> and select the curriculum you would like to know more about.

Assessment: How your child is doing?

- **Year 11 students** are receiving their marks back and significant numbers are talking about the gains they have made in Maths and Science. There will be some changes to PAR groups for the next three weeks based on the Maths and Science data.
- **Year 11 feedback forms:** the closing date for these is 24/03/23. The forms are being collected by tutors on Wednesday 29/03/23 so students still have the opportunity to complete the forms in lessons on Monday and Tuesday. The students will get the forms back on Friday 31/03/23 in their results envelope. There is a space on the form for a parent signature, please sign to say that you have seen the form and are part of the supporting our students to succeed process.

- The **Year 11 grades** will be released on Friday 31.03.23 in assembly and also published to parents that day. The final GCSE grades are always very similar to the Trial 2 results because great care is taken with the marking and moderation of the papers. The grade boundaries this year are going to be less generous than in 2022 and this has been taken into account. To improve on the Trial 2 grades, students need to address the Close the Gap topics and information on their purple feedback form.
- **Year 13 papers** are currently being marked and moderated and reports are due on 28/04/23.
- All students in **Years 7, 8, 9 and 10** will be completing the PASS Survey in the two weeks after Easter. The survey measures student feelings about self and school and is used by Raising Standard Leaders and the Welfare Team to monitor wellbeing.
- **EduLink** is our main communication platform. If you are having connection issues with EduLink please contact help@CMAT.support. For other issues please contact the office@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk. We are currently looking at parental usage and will be contacting all parents who are yet to log onto EduLink to offer support.

Parent Diary Dates 2022-23

Date	Activity/Event
Tuesday 28 th March	Year 9 STEM Day
Friday 31 st March	Last day of the Spring Term
Monday 3 rd April to Friday 14 th April	Easter Holidays
Monday 17 th April	INSET Day – staff only in school
Tuesday 18 th April	Summer Term begins - students return 8:30am
Monday 1 st May	Early May Bank Holiday – school closed
Monday 8 th May	Bank Holiday for the Coronation of King Charles III – school closed
Monday 29 th May to Friday 2 nd June	Half Term - school closed
Monday 5 th June	Staff and students return 8:30am

Communicating with us and how to raise concerns

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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