



March 2021

ABBOTSHOLME IN TOUCH



Welcome to this edition of the Abbotsholme "in touch" newsletter.

It has been a concise and busy half term. We started the month with the return to face to face learning and enjoying our 140-acre site, albeit with some restrictions. This newsletter gives a taster of how the pupils and staff have engaged wholeheartedly with Abbotsholme life and some information about the forthcoming term.

On Wednesday, pupils will all receive their formal written reports. Please enjoy reading them and discussing them, reflecting, and acting upon the sound advice of subject teachers and tutors.

Next week should also see the publication of the finer detail on Teacher Assessed Grades from Ofqual. All of us have been working at a pace to ensure students in Year 11 and Year 13 receive robust and fair results to progress onto the next stage of their lives. Ensuring that no student is disadvantaged is our main priority in this process. Year 11 and Year 13 students will have received their assessment calendar, which forecasts when the classroom assessments will be.

Please be reassured that we are following the guidelines and will do our utmost to present our pupils in the most positive light.

I want to remind us all to be both smart in mind and appearance in the summer term as we start to enjoy the warmer weather and as restrictions are lifted. Please ensure that students are in the agreed attire as per our uniform guidelines.

Pupils and staff will continue twice weekly COVID home testing over the Easter break. If your child or a staff member tests positive, please let the school know by emailing sally.marren@abbotsholme.co.uk and follow the contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.

I thank and praise the whole Abbotsholme community for your remarkable efforts. It has been so very challenging and at times seriously daunting for our whole school community, but we have found solutions to challenges, supported one another and now look forward to a busy Summer term ahead. I urge you to find time to relax and to look forward to the joyful months ahead.

Mr SMF Ruscoe-Price

News

Nursery

The pupils of Butterflies and Caterpillars enjoyed their visit to the Farm, this week visiting some of the ewes and their newborn lambs. Once the children had visited the farm, they enjoyed exploring and looking for signs of Spring. This included being able to identify a number of spring flowers which, are starting to come into bud. After this, the children enjoyed their garden activity by helping to prepare the flower beds, getting them ready to plant some seeds whilst discovering a number of different mini beasts.



Prep school have been fortunate enough to have had some live educational talks hosted by EncounterEdu and the NFU on a range of topics for Farm week. These have included talks on lambing, farm robotics, chickens and vet schooling. All classes have then had the opportunity to visit our farm and speak to Farmer Rob about our school lambs. The children learnt some amazing facts and were able to ask lots of interesting questions, whilst being able to tend to and even hold some of our newest lambs.



Prep School

Years 1 & 2 enjoyed Farm Week, especially watching a live programme asking the question, "which came first, the chicken or the egg?" They were so excited to see a chick hatch live on air!



Some of our Year 2 children on World Book Day.
Can you guess which book character they are dressed up as?



Senior School National Day of Reflection

The 23 March was the first anniversary of the UK lockdown. To mark this, the charity organisation Marie Curie organised a National Day of Reflection to encourage all of us to reflect on our collective loss, support those who've been bereaved, and hope for a brighter future. At Abbotsholme we very much wanted to mark this day and show our support and respect for all those who have been affected by this pandemic.

At 12 o'clock, as a whole school, we observed a minute's silence to remember those who have been lost, to give thanks for their lives, and to acknowledge the inexpressible suffering some have experienced. The Lower School students also tied yellow ribbons to a tree at the front of school as a visual reminder of our reflection.

The last year has taken a huge toll on all and the anniversary of the first lockdown was an opportunity to reflect on the year and for us to acknowledge everybody who has been affected.



Both colonies of Abbotsholme bees have survived the winter so far. It was great to see them collecting pollen from the winter heather in Bemrose Court yesterday. They are looking forward to some nice sunny weather and a good honey crop later in the year.



During lockdown, Charlie in Year 7, did an incredibly selfless thing.

Charlie has a friend called Ashton, who is suffering with osteosarcoma and so, to help support his friend, Charlie decided that he would start a fundraiser and on 14 February, he shaved all his hair off. In doing this he raised over £1000. But more than that, Charlie showed real support for his friend and exemplified characteristics of a true Abbotsholmian.

We are all very proud of you Charlie.



English

Success in the Rotary writing competition



We are delighted to tell you that three of our students earned prizes in this year's Rotary writing competition for young people. This year the theme was 'My Happiest Day'.

In the intermediate age group, Sophie in Year 7 was given a special commendation in a group with a lot of entrants. She wrote a very accomplished fantasy story in which she wrote of the awesomeness of nature and was transported to a special world thanks to a found golden locket.

In the senior age group, Rosy in Year 9 won third place with a vivid account of a family day at a theme park. Sofia, also in Year 9, won second place with a very moving tale of visiting her mother in The Ukraine, which showed the importance of the 'little' things in life, which we should never take for granted. Three years ago, Sofia moved to England and began learning English: what an accomplishment to now be winning this accolade!

Well done to all of our entrants. It was a joy to be able to lose ourselves in writing about such positive things.

PSHE

Drugs awareness presentations



On Thursday 11 March the school welcomed Bob Tait into school to present drugs awareness educational talks to pupils in Years 7, 8, 10 and Sixth Form. Pupils covered all different aspects of an ever changing and dynamic issue, listening carefully to

what was being said and having the opportunity to ask lots of questions. This is Bob's ninth year of visiting the school and we thank him for his time and expertise.

Outdoor Education

Students have been thrilled to get involved in their Outdoor Education lessons once again now face to face learning has resumed. We have enjoyed exploring the woods for the first signs of Spring with the Prep-School Carousel and developing teamwork with Year 7 in the Senior-School Carousel.



The Outdoor Education team have been busy resetting the climbing wall ready for everyone to enjoy. Here, Vinchy has worked hard to improve her skills during our weekly evening sessions offered to the Boarding community. We look forward to welcoming students back inside to try the new routes.



IDEALS Challenge

The final IDEALS challenge has showcased our budding nature presenters!

The challenge was

Documentary

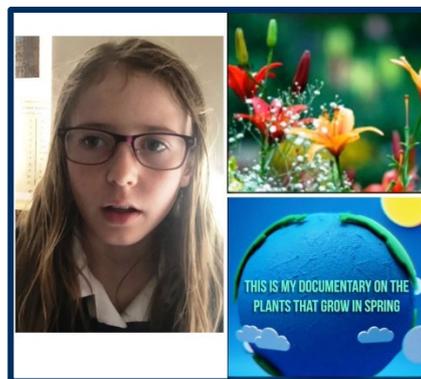
The Abbotsholme Documentary challenge ~ time to get out into the garden and produce a nature documentary. Choose a subject (for example, flowers or birds or other animals) it's your chance to be David Attenborough!

The winners in Prep School are

- 1st place - Adam**
- 2nd place - Henry**
- 3rd place - Eleanor**

The winners in the Senior School are

- 1st place - Billie**
- 2nd place - Sophie**
- 3rd place - Malisha**



Palmer with 125 house points and Wainwright has 75 house points from this challenge.

Palmer are the winners!

Lambing

This half term has seen the farm welcome around 100 new lambs into the world, although lambing took a very different format this year it has been successful nevertheless. As the days are getting longer and the weather better it will be lovely to see the lambs out in the field enjoying the spring grass.



Gold D of E News



Abbotsholme
School

Congratulations to Charlotte and Ailsa who have successfully completed their Gold D of E Award.



They have already received their brooches and it is hoped that later in the year they will be able to travel to Buckingham Palace to receive their certificates.



Round Square

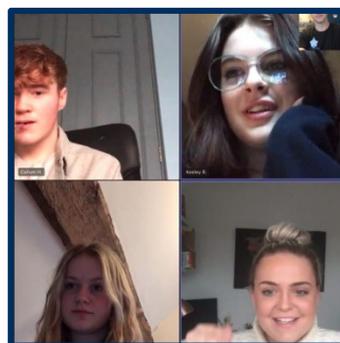
This month we begin a collaboration with another Round Square School in Germany. The pupils at Gut Warnberg School have been looking for native English speakers with whom to practice their English in preparation for a summer exam. Three of our Year 11 pupils, Evi, Emily and Caitlin volunteered to help.



We have met three times now and our group is growing, with Milly joining us this week. The group are able to work in breakout rooms and talk about environmental issues, life goals and general chat about their own lives and experiences. This has been an excellent opportunity to meet new people and make new friends within the Round Square family.

Performing Arts

In February, Year 12 BTEC Performing Arts class met with guest speaker and professional performer, Alex Mellor. The students learnt about the industry first hand and were able to ask all of the burning questions they had, about being a professional musical theatre performer. The students had a fantastic time as the lid was lifted on what Alex describes as 'the most exciting profession in the world.'



The Performing Arts Department were also delighted to welcome 'Hamilton' star, Ellena Vincent, to Abbotsholme's virtual classroom.

Our students had the chance to learn routines to some of the biggest songs from the musical and had an amazing time making the most of the opportunity.

Careers

Why you need to do research

- Over 50,000 courses – difficult to choose
- To make the most out of the unique university experience
- More likely to keep interest and enjoy your course
- More likely to succeed and get a job you love
- It could be a life changing decision



Mrs Williams from Bangor University presented to the Lower Sixth pupils in relation to how to choose a university course and an institution on Wednesday 18 March. Mrs Williams explained her own experience of going to university and how she

chose her course. She firstly stated why it is so important to choose a course that you are interested and passionate in as you are going to be studying this topic in greater detail for the next three or more years. It is important to think about the following elements when choosing a university course and institution:

1. How will you be assessed? Do you perform best in coursework or exams?
2. What topics are covered within that particular degree – optional modules? All courses are different
3. What part of that course really enthuses you?
4. Flexibility in the course? Single honours? Joint Honours? Splitting the course?
5. Major or minor courses? 1/3 in the minor 2/3 in the major subject
6. BA (Bachelor of Arts) or BSC (Bachelor of Science), hinting at the content of the qualification
7. Stand of teaching – TEF Gold award?
8. Location - Distance from home? Too near? Too far away?
9. Countryside VS City location? Campus or split site university?
10. Size of university? Number of pupils on the course?
11. Accommodation – student halls? Single occupancy? En-suite facilities?
12. Entry requirements, grades or UCAS points?
13. Academic facilities?
14. Contact time, lectures VS independent study?
15. Opportunities for work experience? Studying abroad?
16. Student support? Money advisors? Housing officers? Counsellors? Tutors to help with work?
17. Sport? Clubs? Societies?
18. Financial incentives? Scholarships? Bursaries?

Prioritise the factors most important to you

Consider:

- Location
- Size
- Type of university – campus or split-site
- Reputation
- Student support
- Accommodation
- Living costs as a student
- Unconditional offers/Additional Incentives
- Social life
- Sports facilities

The graphic also features a collage of six small images showing students in various settings: a student in a red graduation cap, a student in a white lab coat, a student in a blue graduation cap, a student in a white lab coat, a student in a white lab coat, and a student in a white lab coat.

STAFFORDSHIRE BANGOR UNIVERSITY
Staffordshire

It is also important to check the university which you are interested in by checking the “The Uni Guide” website to get an independent overview of that institution and course. It was also discussed how the university league tables should be used but along with a wealth of other sources of information.

It is the aim for all Year 12 pupils to utilise the Unifrog and UCAS Hub websites to find a course they are passionate about and to have a first draft of their personal statement completed by the end of this academic year.

Marketing



New Virtual Visitor Experience

During the course of the pandemic, visits to Abbotsholme by prospective families have been taking place via video calls and have been extremely well received. Building on this we have just launched a brand new virtual visitor experience for prospective families to learn even more about Abbotsholme from the comfort of their homes.

This new platform can be viewed by visiting:

<https://app.virtual-schoolsexperience.com/abbotsholme/staffordshire/the-abbotsholme-experience>

Open Week

Our next open week is taking place between the 26 - 30 April. Visits will either be in person or via video call depending on government guidance.

Should you have any friends or family that are considering us as a school for their children then please ask them to contact the Admissions team by calling 01889 590217 or emailing enquiries@abbotsholme.co.uk and we would be delighted to arrange a visit.

Pro@ctive

We would like to draw your attention to our brand new summer activity programme, with 50% off the published non-residential weekly rate for Abbotsholme pupils. Please see attached flyer for more information.

OA News

Every Abbotsholmian student knows that they will eventually leave school and venture out into the wider world. If you have been a student at school for two years or more and are leaving from Years 11, 12 or 13, you will be offered a lifetime membership of the Old Abbotsholmians Club (the OAs). At the start of the summer term, a contact form will be sent to all students in these year groups and if you wish to join the club, please fill it out and return it to either Mr Shaw (for Years 12 & 13), Mr Ritchie (for Year 11) or Georgina Embleton at the club email address of memberships@abbotsholmians.co.uk. It would be great if it can be returned before departing school for the last time and ideally at the summer half term holiday. Our membership administrator will then contact you and arrange for you to join the club. Lifetime membership offers many advantages, for instance, we have a business directory for Abbotsholmians to advertise their companies and sometimes offer discounts to other Abbotsholmians.

We have an annual award for a Year 13 leaver who goes onto higher education in science, The Anthony Price Award, which is handed out at Summer Gathering. In normal times we arrange social events and current plans are for a clay pigeon shoot and London dinner once we are allowed. If a student leaves from a year below Year 11 and still wishes to join the club when they are 18, then please contact the membership administrator at the email given above.

The OA club also offers a travel award. The closing date for entries for this year's award is 31 March 2021. Despite the success of the vaccination programme, overseas travel may be difficult to arrange and the club understand this and will work with the recipient to find a way for them to travel. The award is open to OA ex-students between the ages of 18-25 and can be applied for annually so there will be more opportunities to apply in later years. International adventures may be postponed for now but we all hope to be travelling again soon as we recover from the pandemic.

The following account is from Georgina Embleton (OA 1980-1985) a travel award recipient. "In the spring term of 1984, my Upper Sixth year, two friends announced that they were going to apply to get the travel award, and asked if I would like to accompany them. The plan was to travel to Venice to witness the Biennale Festival which is held every two years. Amazingly, we won the award and set off during the summer holidays. We went by train from London to Milan, in those days there was no direct train link as the Channel Tunnel hadn't been built and was ten years away from taking passengers, so we took a train to Dover, ferry to Calais, train to Paris, experienced huge confusion on the metro before boarding our train to Italy. In Milan, we missed our connection and had to bunk down on the platform. In late August in Italy it is really warm at night so we curled up on a handy bench and caught the first train at 5.00am to Venice. We arrived and found a lovely cheap hotel just at

the back of the central station. We got incredibly lost over the next few days, Venice is a watery maze and many places look like many other places. However, we mastered the vaporettos (water buses) and reached (eventually) all of our destinations. St. Mark's Square, the Accademia Galleries, the Peggy Guggenheim museum and even one day on the beach as Venice has an island in the lagoon that is a huge sandbank. On the Lido, we nearly got knocked down by the traffic as cars are allowed on the Lido and we had become used to not looking out for motor traffic over the previous week. One magical occasion, whilst wandering through alleys made of golden coloured sandstone, we entered at random a small church on a quiet square and above the altar was a beautiful painting by Titian of the Assumption of the Virgin. We had no idea it was there, it was a chance encounter and summed up Venice for me, a place where unexpected magical things happen in winding confusing streets.



The Biennale Venezia Festival is held every two years and encompasses film, art exhibitions and musical events, kicked off in a spectacular fashion by a water parade down the Grand Canal of many small boats dressed in golden medieval livery. It is a sight I will never forget. All too soon we had to take our train home. A magical journey taken thirty plus years ago, one day I will go back to Venice and try to retrace my steps. I have no doubt I will get wonderfully lost, again!



Abbotsholme Parents' Association

The APA Officers and Committee members send all families safe and joyful Easter wishes.

We also wish to thank all of you who have kindly donated old uniform back. We have been overwhelmed with your generosity and hope to have this safely sorted and sent on to the school we support in Uganda soon.

Still actively trying to support in a socially responsible and sustainable way, we would like to reach out again with a new request for next term. If you have any unwanted games that would be suitable for our Prep School children, please would you kindly drop them into reception during the first 2 weeks of the Summer Term? Suitable games include Uno, Snakes & Ladders, Top Trumps, Cluedo, Playing Cards, Draughts, Jenga, Connect 4, Table Top Curling, Chess, Think words, Skipbo, Qwirkle etc. Larger outdoor toys and/or any suggestions such as Balance Bikes, Football Nets, Quick Cricket Sets, Giant Jenga... would also be welcomed with photos in the first instance to please be sent by email to richard.brindley@abbotsholme.co.uk
Many thanks.

Finally, we remind you that on joining the school, your family automatically joins the Abbotsholme Parents' Association. We aim to bring parents, staff and children together with various social and fundraising events through the year and in the hope of a positive return to school for all staff and pupils, next term the APA looks forward to working with school to plan some safe and fun social gatherings of our parent community. To this end, we invite any parent wishing to join the APA Committee to please contact us via Julie Noon on the main school telephone number or email: julie.noon@abbotsholme.co.uk

Glad Day, Love & Duty

Your APA