

broadsheet

Summer 2021



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Award Winning
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Abbey Gate College

REASONS TO BE GRATEFUL...



As I write my final Broadsheet article as Head at Abbey Gate College, I cannot help but be in a reflective mood. The title, 'reasons to be grateful' seemed the only direction appropriate, as we finally start to lift our heads from the gloom and anxiety of the previous 15 months.

The strength of our community has been a real blessing during this time and wellbeing for us all the main priority. I have been so heartened by the tenacity of our young people, their desire to return to a 'new normal' and get on with the rest of their lives – exactly the right focus and intention. Their sense of fun and adventure has been a source of real joy for me as well as them showing a commitment to do good for others.

A huge well done to our Young Enterprise team, Calma Candles for being voted the North West Company of the Year. A huge feat of achievement in probably one of the most difficult years of trading ever.

The normal hum of a summer term tends to reverberate around external examinations, this year however, has been different with the onset of Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) and the ensuing anxiety and extra work afforded by such a system on our older students and teaching staff. As we near the end of this exhaustive process, the promise of much needed 'fun' activities are just around the corner in the form of our annual activities' week. More so than ever this action-packed week is a chance to build on friendships, and to help re-align the importance of youngsters being allowed to feel carefree.

Lockdown has forced some introspection on the way we live our lives. It certainly has for me personally and hence the difficult and rather painful decision not only to leave Abbey Gate College, but to leave teaching, a place and profession that I love, after 33 very happy years to take early retirement at the end of this academic year. The reality of what we have faced made me realise that what I did want for my future was to spend less time at work and more time with my family and on passions and projects that have been pushed to the 'I will get to it later pile.'

It has been an honour and a privilege to lead Abbey Gate College as Head since September 2013. I have been fortunate enough to see the College grow in reputation and become a serious choice for families looking for a school which looks at each pupil as an individual, a school which allows pupils to 'grow' into the person they want to become and not who they think they should become. I have been delighted in helping to deliver the vision of building better resources across both sites, most notably, the building of the Pavilion, All Weather Pitch and new Infant block at Aldford.

The link to our partner schools in Eswatini has given me great joy and hope that our students understand the way we interact as human beings across different continents and to realise that we are not all that different. I am thrilled that the next trip is being planned for the summer of 2022. The re launch of our Alumni and our first celebratory formal dinner celebrating the first 40 years was amazing at Chester Town Hall, as it gave ex-students a chance to relive their time at Abbey Gate College and to show our current students just how proud they were of their school and to showcase the amazing professional lives they have gone on to forge for themselves.

My greatest wish has always been to form a Bursary fund at College. We have always helped families to send their children here but my desire to create a fund, solely for this purpose has been a real driver. To see this come to fruition is a real legacy that I am proud of. This initiative has a long way to go, yet already is enabling families to send their children here who would not be able to do so. If you feel able at all to contribute to this fund or know of anyone who may be able to, then please follow the link below: <https://www.abbeygatecollege.co.uk/support-us/>

Abbey Gate College will also have a very special place in my heart – I will miss the physical environment greatly, my colleagues who are truly the best people I have ever worked with and most of all the pupils. My sole purpose throughout the past 33 years has never wavered and that is to make a difference to the young people in my care – I hope I have been successful in some part at that.

My lockdown hope for the future is that we do not go back to how things used to be, but look at improvement, enlightenment and most of all compassion for each other.

I wish Craig (Jenkinson) the new Head from September, and his family much success and happiness in their new Abbey Gate College adventure together.

All that remains for me to say is **THANK YOU** for a wonderful eight years. Thank you to the staff across both sites at Saighton and Aldford; to the pupils who make every day special, to the Governors who give up their time so freely and bring so much expertise to the table and to you our parents for your loyal support and for understanding what makes us so special and so successful.

I want to leave you with the words of one of my favourite authors Maya Angelou- **People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.**

Wishing you all a wonderful summer. Thank you.

Mrs T Pollard - Headmistress

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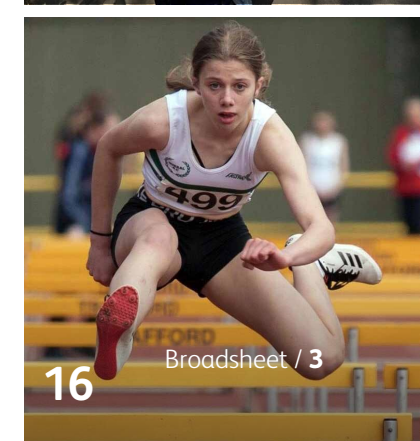
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CALMA CANDLES

ABBEY GATE COLLEGE STUDENTS CROWNED 'NORTH WEST COMPANY OF THE YEAR.'

Talented Lower Sixth students have successfully beaten the competition in both the County and Regional Young Enterprise Finals.

'Calma' developed and created a brand of high-quality candles that are both ethical and sustainable, with the focus on using the power of aromatherapy to improve mental wellbeing. The idea of Calma began in lockdown when the country was spending more time at home than ever before; mental health became a key component of product development.

"Being stuck at home gave everyone a chance to really reflect on their well-being. Many of us felt lonely, isolated and stressed. Our aim is to help people create the right atmosphere in their homes so they can feel their best, despite everything else going on."

The Calma Team

Our Business was set up in October 2020 and consists of 12 sixth form students, all taking on different business roles.

We sat down for our first board meeting and began brainstorming ideas for a product. We wanted to create a product that was not only sustainable but also to help people's mental health, especially during the pandemic.

We decided that scented candles were the way forward, and each of our candles would have a different scent that was proven to have a different mental health benefit. Our finance director, Marta, is Spanish and she told us that the Spanish word for 'calm' was 'Calma' and this is how our brand name came about.

We started with the original 5 candles; Tranquillity, Illuminate, Stargazer,

Serenity and Rejuvenate. We then came out with a spring themed, Mother's Day range of three new candles; Lily of the Valley, Spring Meadow and Rose Blush. In April, we competed in the Cheshire and Warrington Finals. We created a company report, presentation video and had an interview with a panel of judges. We were thrilled when we found out that we had won the Company of the Year Award.

As a result, we represented the region at the North West Finals in May, where we were delighted to discover that we had won the Innovation and Company of the Year Award.

We are so grateful for Mr Bailey (the business teacher) and Sarah Chalenor from Barclays who have worked with us and helped us throughout the year.

Our original range will be available to buy at the Senior School.



Thank You from:



Ffion Schofield
Managing Director



Red Morgan
Assistant MD



Amy Clayton
Marketing Director



Maddie Sant
Sales Director



James Frost
Digital Director



Emily Holroyd
Company Secretary



Christy Morris-Barnes
Sustainability Director



Alice Bailey
Sustainability Director



Tristan Weetch
HR director



Ben Foster
Operations director



Marta Gómez-Castellets
Finance Director



Oscar Jackson
Assistant FD

We are thrilled to be named the winners of the North West Regional Young Enterprise Competition. It's been an exciting journey through which we have learned so much. Creating a product we are all passionate about has been very rewarding. I can proudly say each and every member of the team have developed into more confident individuals. Thank you to the North West YE for a lovely presentation evening, we all enjoyed ourselves.

Ffion Scholfield
Managing Director, Calma

Mission Statement

To create a high quality candle that is both ethical and sustainable. We want to raise awareness for mental health and enhance the importance of mental well-being. Both ethical and sustainable.

We want to raise awareness for mental health and enhance the importance of mental wellbeing.



www.calmacandlesye.com



Calma Candles



@calmacandles_



@calmacandles_



@calmacandles_

A FOND FAREWELL TO TRACY



After 33 years in education, the majority being in Senior Leadership roles, our Headteacher Mrs Tracy Pollard, has decided to hang up her chalk and board-duster (if you are too young to remember these then please ask an older relative!) and plans to use her time to embrace other

opportunities both personally and professionally.

She joined as Head of the College in September 2013 and has led the College with tenacity and skill over the last 8 years.

We have been enormously appreciative of her unfaltering and decisive leadership and her determination, pride and resilience, along with a keen focus on the wellbeing of our pupils at all times, has meant that she has led from the front throughout this time and especially during the pandemic, often foregoing her weekend and holidays to put the College and its community first.

Under her guidance the College has gone from strength-to-strength and in the letter from the Governor's to parents, they particularly wanted to recognise the following, from the long list of her achievements in her time with us:

- two excellent ISI Inspection outcomes
- making Abbey Gate College truly a place where all students can #BeSomeone
- overseeing major investments in our estate including delivery of the new I&JS building, new kitchens, a vastly improved sports pavilion – anyone who saw and went inside the previous one will know that this is a gross understatement! And amazing all-weather pitch
- delivering massive ICT improvements across both sites leading to state-of-the-art facilities in all classrooms and the ability to embrace remote learning
- improvements across the board in academic performance with consistent table-topping outcomes in terms of our 'Value Added' score
- opening up our facilities for wider community benefit and delivering additional revenue streams
- embracing the importance of charitable work through all that Abbey Gate College does

Everyone associated with the College wishes her a long, happy and healthy future and we look forward to hearing about 'life beyond AGC' when we meet again.

On behalf of AGC Staff



Before she leaves us, we've asked Mrs Pollard a few questions on her teaching career and fond memories of Abbey Gate College.

What is your fondest memory of Abbey Gate College?

The thing which always gives me the most pleasure and will always stay with me is watching the pupils at play or working outdoors. We have such beautiful facilities and surroundings at both sites, that I genuinely get pleasure watching our youngsters busying themselves outdoors. When it is free play, it is so interesting to watch how the different age groups react – some tearing around chasing, others chatting, watching the world go by. The chance for children to be children and interacting with others in such beautiful surroundings is an image which will stay with me for ever.

Why did you choose to become a teacher and what subject did you train to teach?

Sport was my salvation at school and with personal success in that I represented my County in Netball, Hockey and Badminton I soon started coaching younger pupils certain skills whilst still at school. Aided and abetted by my own PE teacher, Pat Oldfield, it became something that from the age of 11 I wanted to do. I also always had a passion for reading and English Literature as a subject, so a joint degree in PE and English became the goal very early on. I went to I.M Marsh College of PE to do my degree – the same place Mr Carter went (but he was there a lot later than I was, as I am much older than him!!)

What is the funniest thing to happen to you during your time at AGC?

There are too many to pick one out specifically but being called mum in a classroom is always amusing – usually to the mortification of the pupil. I am also always amazed at the plethora of cake which Abbey Gate College seems to thrive on (I am not even a fan of cake!) and certainly the battle for the best cake at Aldford was very amusing – especially Mrs Hickey's reaction perhaps to not winning! She will know what I mean.

Finding myself supporting the equestrian team at some events will definitely go down as one of the oddest things I have done here – especially as I have realised that I am terrified of horses! I did have the maddest idea of photographing a horse to advertise our team stepping out of the front door at College – I was persuaded that perhaps it was not the best idea I have ever had. I still think it would have been rather fun.

Who have you been most inspired by during your career?

My first PE teacher whilst at school, Pat Oldfield. Also, Steve Patriarca, a Head at a school I taught at in Manchester for 13 years (he mentored me and pushed me on in my career). In general, all the people I have worked for and with over the past 33 years – all those who simply wanted what was best for the children in our care. As a Head I have had the privilege to meet some hugely inspiring people and have always tried to learn and take the good I see from them to use to do the best I can elsewhere.

What is the biggest change you have seen at AGC during your time here?

I think I would have to mention a couple of things – firstly the improvement in the facilities – not just the new builds, the Pavilion, the All-Weather Pitch and the Infant Block but also the improvement in technology and the fabric of the buildings. When I first arrived as Head, we could not communicate with the staff at the Infant and Junior School at Aldford from Saighton, so in a short space of time the digital technology infrastructure has changed for the better massively. Secondly, it must be the improvement in examination results. Results do not define a person, but good results certainly help by giving pupils choice what to do and where to go next.

Thirdly, it is the reputation of the College in the wider community, our name is known further afield, and we are known for being a very good school, this makes me very proud.

If you had not chosen to be a teacher, what would you have chosen and why?

Seriously this was never an option. Every career's meeting and advice I was given whilst at school was politely declined as I knew from the age of 11 that I wanted to teach.

What will you miss the most about AGC?

Everything! The surroundings, the views from my office, the quiet when everyone has gone home, the hustle and bustle when everyone is in, the staff, the pupils, absolutely everything!

WE ARE WISHING FAREWELL TO A NUMBER OF TEACHERS AND SUPPORT STAFF THIS TERM.

We would like to wish you all good luck for the future and many thanks for your loyalty and commitment to the College.

Charlie House

Head of Drama

Sarah Parker

Teacher of Geography

Fiona Kay

Head of Psychology

Anthony Bowen- Lewis

Teacher of Music

Jade Williams

Teacher of Business Studies

Rebecca Upton

HR & Compliance Manager

Alex Chatterton Sparks

I&J teacher

Clare Barratt

Teaching Assistant

Emily Thompson

Teaching Assistant

Lauren Kearney

Teacher of History and English

Chris Spreyer

Teaching Assistant

Kim Williams

Teacher of English

Janey Roberts

Teacher of Design Technology

Zara Boyd

Attendance Officer/Receptionist

Jane Thomas

Digital Marketing Manager

CELEBRATING SCIENCE

Year 5 enjoyed lots of different activities for British Science Week, including a fun and informative Space Day. Part of the day included researching, designing and making rockets...and then flying them! A fantastic day of hands-on learning and there are a few budding astronauts and engineers who are honing their skills for the future.



MAYANS TOPIC

Year 3 have been learning about the Ancient Maya Civilisation in their history lessons and designed their own Mayan mask. The children looked at lots of original designs which were mainly based on animals and then designed their own. They made the mask out of paper mache and used paints to bring their colourful designs to life.



TRANSPORT TOPIC

Foundation children looked at various forms of transport for their Topic this term. They worked in small groups and experienced using paper mache and then decorated their balloons by painting shapes.

VIRTUAL TEA PARTY



Year 4 took part in The Guide Dogs for the Blind Virtual Tea Party in support of their fundraising campaign.



HOUSE TREATS ACTIVITIES

Talbot House had a fun activity afternoon for their house treat, including pond dipping, roasting marshmallows around a campfire, planting seeds, den building, playground art and playing on the bikes and trikes. Their house captain's excellent choice of activities for achieving the most house points.



SENIOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES



CHESTER ZOO HEDGEHOG WATCH



Hedgehogs are one of the UK's most-loved species, but populations are declining at a rapid rate. They face a number of threats including changes in the way we manage built-up areas, increased traffic on our roads and intensive farming practices. Gardens, parks and other green spaces can provide great habitats for hedgehogs. This means we all have the opportunity to offer hedgehogs a helping hand, (Chester Zoo website).

Chester Zoo were looking for volunteers to help them with a hedgehog survey in the local area. Abbey Gate College just fell into the catchment survey area, so we enrolled and were lucky enough to be selected for the first round of camera provision. Unfortunately, although we must surely have hedgehogs on our school site, non were captured on camera. Instead, we did capture hares, rabbits, badgers, foxes, cats, a variety of birds and squirrels. It was exciting to see what secrets the camera held when reviewing the footage.

Since participating in the survey, the PSHEE Focus Group have now been inspired to set up a wildlife club beginning next academic year. If any pupil would like to be involved in running the club or participating as a member, please contact Mrs. Sanders.

DIVERSITY DAY



Teachers focused on elements of diversity during lessons for Diversity Day; pupils also enjoyed a themed lunch and class presentations for maths.



WORLD BOOK DAY COSTUME



Year 7's fantastic mix of World Book Day costumes



ART GALLERY

A selection of artwork from our young artists, plus pottery photos.



HAYDEN COLLINS OFFERED PLACE IN THE CAST OF NEW MUSICAL, NIGHTSHADE

We are immensely proud of GCSE Drama and Music pupil, Hayden Collins who has been selected to take part in this year's British Youth Music Theatre production and workshops.

Thousands of young people across the UK have auditioned for this year's company and Hayden is one of the lucky few who has been offered a place in the cast of new musical, Nightshade. He will rehearse the production in August, culminating in professional performances in Plymouth or the Theatre Royal.

BYMT is a renowned company whose alumni include Ed Sheeran and Sam Smith, and we are incredibly excited for Hayden to have this experience. We wish him every success with the project and in September look forward to hearing about his time with the company.

YEAR 7'S ENJOYING AN OUTDOOR PHOTOGRAPHY LESSON



FUNDRAISING

STUDENTS RAISE MONEY TO FUND BUILDING MATERIALS FOR SCHOOL IN ESWATINI

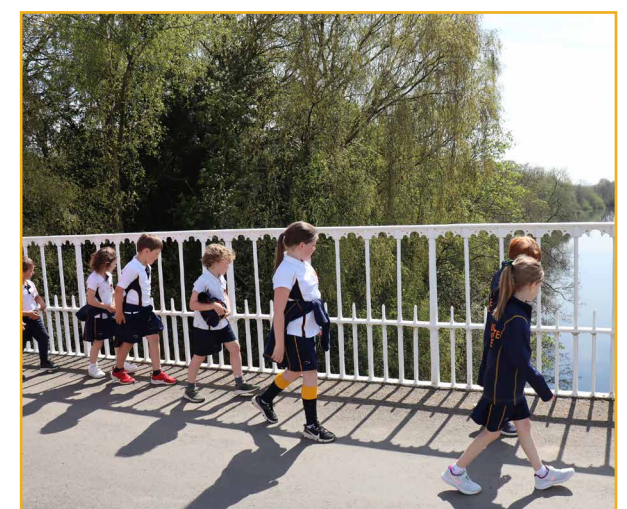
Abbey Gate College has a long-running partnership with Mlindzini community in Eswatini (formerly Swaziland). Mlindzini is in a remote, mountainous, area of the South-Western part of Eswatini, and we have been working with Mlindzini High School and its two feeder primary schools, Mbita Primary and Mlindzini Primary, since 2013. Our initial project was in conjunction with SwazAid and the Rotary Club, fundraising money to help improve the road into the mountains. Since then, we have run two very successful student expeditions, in 2016 and 2018, with Abbey Gate College students visiting the community and helping to build new kitchen blocks at Mlindzini High School and Mbita Primary School. Our students spent time getting to know pupils and staff at the schools, and were also able to travel more widely in Eswatini, experiencing safari and getting involved in conservation work at the game parks.

The planned expedition in 2020 was, unfortunately, not able to go ahead, due to the pandemic. However, the student team had already managed to fundraise a large sum of money, and this was still donated to the community. This has allowed the planned building project for 2020, a new library and office at Mlindzini Primary School, to go ahead, and there was money left over to support the other schools as well. Mlindzini High School has used the donation to buy building materials for a new agricultural laboratory. We are so pleased that we have been able to help the schools with these projects and we are looking forward to visiting the community again soon. Students in Years 10, 11 and Lower Sixth are currently signing up for the next expedition in July 2022.



SPONSORED WALK

Infant and Junior children enjoyed a lovely sunny sponsored walk around the beautiful countryside that surrounds the school, raising over £400 for The Young Carers Service, Crossroads Together.



SPORTS NEWS



YEAR 9 PUPIL MIA WALKER RANKED FIRST IN THE NORTH WEST FOR HURDLES

We are very proud of Year 9 pupil Mia Walker who is currently ranked 4th best in the UK for the 300 metres with a time of 42.16 and a personal best of 42.00, placing Mia 2nd best in the north west for the 300m.

Mia is also ranked number 3 in the UK for the 75 metre hurdles with a time of 12.19 and a personal best of 11.95, which ranks her No 1 in the North West! Mia training weekly training programme is as follows:

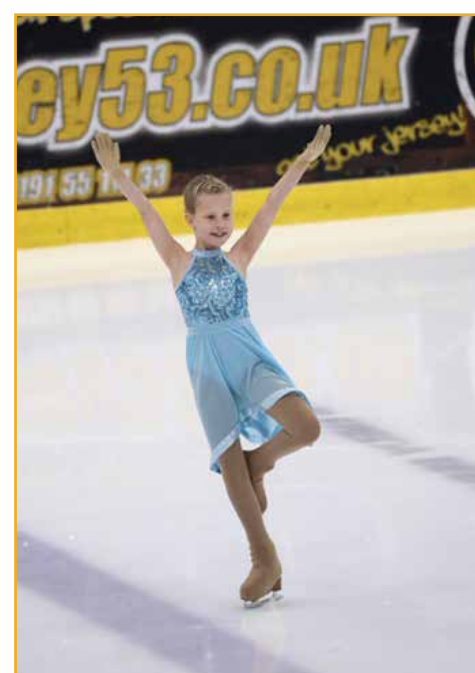
MON	TUE	WED	THUR
Strength and core 40 minutes session	Track 400/800m session for 1 hour	Track session for 1 hour 30 minutes short hurdles and long hurdles	Long Hurdles for the 1st hour then 800m for the 2nd hour
FRI	SAT	SUN	
Rest Day	Competition or hurdles/block starts 1 hour	10k easy run with endurance squad	

YEAR 7 EMMA SHIMALI PREPARES FOR THE RETURN OF COMPETITIVE ICE SKATING

Year 7 pupil Emma Shimali competes at both Figure Skating and Solo Ice Dance and in 2020 she gained the required score to compete in the qualifier for the 2020 British Championships. Due to the pandemic, the Championships were cancelled, but now as things start to open up again Emma has returned to a full training schedule and is able to train on the ice 6 days per week.

Emma is currently the British champion for Solo Ice Dance for her age group, with a personal best score of 25.24 for figure skating, which was gained in 2018 when she came 3rd in her level at the Coventry Open Championships. She had an extremely successful solo ice dance season in 2019, taking podium places in each of her competitions before winning her age group at the British championships later that year. In her most recent figure skating event in February 2020, she placed 5th, gaining the required score to compete in the qualifier for the 2020 British championships.

Emma skates for 1-2 hours on weekday training days, also skating for 2 hours on both days at the weekend. Flexibility, strength and fitness are all needed to excel at her sport, so Emma trains with a flexibility coach twice a week, in addition to further off-ice training (via zoom) for jump and spin techniques. Her current aim is to qualify for the British Championships in both disciplines.



YEAR 8 PUPIL ELLIE STAMMERS SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS

Year 8 pupil Ellie Stammers continues to shine in a wide range of sporting activities. As a Deeside Ramblers Hockey club member Ellie plays for Under 13 and 14 squads weekly, alongside attending academy training sessions for Tensworth North West Hockey club. Selected for Cheshire West and Chester U13 performance squad for both the 2019/20 and 2020/21 season it is fantastic to see Ellie's hockey talent recognised. Ellie will be part of the U13 Tensworth squad for the regional finals in July 2021.

Ellie is also an avid netball player, playing for the U13 Boughton Belles Development squad and competing in weekly matches as part of the Warrington Netball League. She also trains regularly at Hoole Tennis Club based in Mickle Trafford.



YEAR 8 PUPIL EMMA NEVETT NOMINATED FOR TRIALS WITH TENSWORTH HOCKEY CLUB

Year 8 pupil Emma Nevett has recently been asked to train with the Chester Hockey Adults team. In December, Emma took part in a West Cheshire & Wirral Hockey Development Centre and was selected to participate in the West Cheshire & Wirral Hockey Academy, resulting in her being nominated for trials at Liverpool College with Tensworth Hockey Club; the team comprises of the best players in the Northwest.

Emma is also a keen runner, representing Abbey Gate College in the 'all schools' Chester and District cross-country competition, qualifying to represent Cheshire at the national cross-country finals. Emma represented Abbey Gate College at the Independent Schools North West regional qualifiers in Ormskirk for her year and those in the year above. Emma continues to train during her free time and competes in Duathlon's in the North West.

SPORTS NEWS

SCHOOLS' FOOTBALL WEEK

Schools' football week is an opportunity to embrace schools' football and the wellbeing benefits it provides to pupils and players.

The main focus for Schools' Football Week 2021 was to provide an opportunity for children to get outside, have fun and enjoy being able to play sport with their school friends, competitively or otherwise.

Year 8 and Year 10 enjoyed 5 a side football games and the Year 7 boys took part in skill tests, the challenge included one bounce keepy ups and shooting from range.



NATIONAL SCHOOLS' FOOTBALL SKILLS COMPETITION WINNERS:



Harry Shepherd
(Year 7)



Harry Fountain
(Year 8)



Sam Evans
(Year 9)



Zac Younis
(Year 10)



Recently Year 8 pupil Ben Cutler attended football trials at the local Helsby 4G for the Chester FC Academy. He impressed in the trials and was invited to take part in further games against Rochdale and TNS. Chester were sufficiently impressed to offer him a schoolboy contract to the end of 2022 season.

Ben was invited down over the Easter period to sign in the Chester FC boardroom and also played his first match on the Deva Stadium pitch. Having performed consistently well in midfield for the College football team until lockdown we hope he will prosper with the extra training available and games against Premier League academies in the north-west of England over the next year.

Ben will continue to represent the school, and as we return to competitive school football in September will be part of a strong Year 9 college football team.



JOSEPH HARRISON RECEIVES AIRBUS ACADEMY PLAYER OF THE YEAR

We would like to congratulate Joseph Harrison a Year 8 pupil at the college on his football achievements recently. At present he is captain of Under 13's Airbus Football Academy Squad having played for them since the age of 7 mainly as a central defender. He trains 3 nights a week on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and plays a game on Sunday.

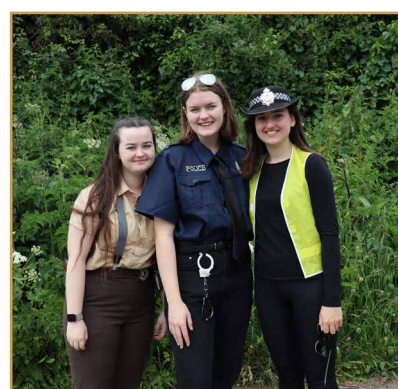
Airbus Academy play in the North Wales Premier Academy League playing against Premier league academies including Everton, Liverpool and Man City. The highlight of Joseph's career so far was the winning North of England Football festival in 2018 and becoming Academy player of the year in 2019.

Well done Joseph and we hope the return to football will see you flourish in the college's school football team.

FAREWELL UPPER SIXTH



Upper Sixth enjoyed their last day at the College with pizza and ice cream! We wish them all the best with their future plans and hope the cooking lessons they took part in have helped prepare them for university life!



HENRY SMITH AWARDED ORGAN SCHOLARSHIP AT ROYAL HOLLOWAY UNIVERSITY LONDON

Deputy Head Boy, Henry Smith has been awarded the Organ Scholarship at Royal Holloway University London when he begins the undergraduate BA course in Music this September.

Henry follows in the footsteps of Old Saightonian from 9 years ago, James Kealey who was also Organ scholar there. Henry is completing his 3 years at the Junior Royal Northern College of Music where he has studied Tuba under Leslie Neish and Organ under Simon Mercer.

At University Henry's main study will be organ and his second study will be jazz piano which he has developed to a high standard at the JRNCM. He is hoping that the draw to London will bring opportunities to play jazz in venues in London. Henry has been a member of the Choir at St Oswald's Church Malpas for many years where he has gained valuable experience playing the organ assisting the Director of Music, his father, Stewart Smith.

Neamh's DofE Gold Expedition

Last summer, I completed my DofE gold expedition; however, I decided to travel the Lake District in a non traditional way. I had the opportunity to carry it out on horseback with five other girls I didn't know. We had two leaders, Emma and Jonny, who was the ride support. I had two different horses, one for the practice trek in July called Pepper and then Sidney in August for the assessment. It was a challenge to ride an inexperienced horse who hadn't done DofE before.

As typical in England, we had very varied weather all in one day. In the morning, we were riding through lakes in 30 degree sunshine; then, in the afternoon, we were on the top of the mountain in thunderstorms and hail. One of the most challenging parts of this expedition was the end of each day, not only having to look after ourselves, but we were also responsible for looking after our horses.

It was so rewarding to complete My DofE in such a unique but testing way, and I am very proud to have completed it even during Covid.



CAREER STORIES FROM PAST PUPILS

During my time at Abbey Gate, I particularly loved getting involved in speech, drama and musical performances and I think that these early experiences of standing up in front of play and concert audiences, or cathedral and church congregations and speaking and singing were incredibly valuable when I embarked on my radio career. I've spent nearly 20 years speaking into microphones as a radio newsreader, presenter and more recently a voice artist and podcaster.

Generally, radio listeners really want to hear a real person, not a performance and the less nervous you are, the more authentic you can be. Of course there's a certain craft – which I've honed over many years – to reading news bulletins (which I've done on stations including the BBC World Service and BBC 5 Live), but it's always important to resist being too robotic and to infer some empathy for the subjects of sometimes harrowing stories. It's a fine line to tread, but confidence in your abilities is at the root of it and I really believe the many performance experiences I had at Abbey Gate gave me a great foundation for this work.



I also spent some time working as a presenter on the serious music station BBC Radio 3, introducing classical music and talking about its history and composers. Given the station's extremely discerning audience, Radio 3 can be a daunting platform for a new presenter, but again my involvement in so many performances at Abbey Gate, including travelling Europe with the school Chapel Choir, gave me a foundation and a confidence in this area that I found invaluable.

Victoria Meakin - Leaver 1993

The events of the previous year have meant that I have been incredibly fortunate to spend more time at home than at any point since I left Abbey Gate and Chester for Durham University in September 2013. This time spent working from the same table that I used to study for my GCSEs and A-Levels has allowed for moments of reflection about my journey towards working in Ministerial Strategy for the Department of International Trade.

I look fondly upon my amateur sporting endeavours, yet it was my time working on the Young Enterprise Scheme and as Head Boy which have impacted me most. The lessons I learnt from the brilliant Headmistress, Lynne Horner and Head of Sixth, Marc Cavallini have stayed with me and I will always be thankful for their support.

Their teachings in the importance of public service and engaging effectively with those around me have carried me through studying Politics, and actively working in student politics. The success of my election to the sabbatical position of Junior Common Room President of Van Mildert College was built upon the solid foundations put in place at Abbey Gate.



To bring this story back to the present day, as I await my train back to London, I hope to be back in the Old Admiralty Building (DIT HQ, just off Horse Guards) soon. For a student who dreamed of being part of the machinery of government from his first lessons in Politics under Mr Lincoln and Mrs Houghton, those lessons have been far more important than he could have ever realised.

Simon Povey - Leaver 2013

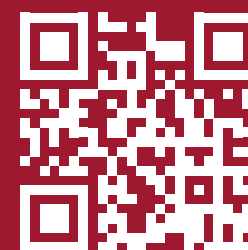
ALEX SCHWARZ'S SUCCESSFUL CAREER IN RUGBY UNION

Former Abbey Gate College student Alex Schwarz has played an integral part in the development and success of rugby in North Wales. In his final year at the Abbey Gate College Alex represented Wales Under 18s, gaining caps against Japan, France and Scotland. After his final year he moved to Italy to play for Italian team Rugby Colorno; Alex says, **"It was a great experience and we were able to gain promotion in my season there. During my time there I also had the chance to train with Aironi (now named Zebre), a professional team in the Guinness Pro14."**

Upon his return to Wales, Alex signed for Rygbi Gogledd Cymru (RGC), starting in Division One and gaining promotion into the Welsh Championship, **"In our first season in the Premiership (2016/17) we finished 4th, which put us through to the semi final of the league playoffs. In that season we also won the Welsh National Cup. Beating Pontypridd to lift the trophy at the Principality Stadium in Cardiff."**

In 2018 Alex signed a professional contract with Cornish Pirates in the English Greene King Championship. In 2021, before the Championship season started, he went on a short term loan to Wasps in the English Premiership, gaining one cap against Leicester Tigers.

Speaking of his time at Abbey Gate College Alex says, **"I will be forever grateful to AGC and its staff for supporting me throughout my time there. Particularly in my final year of A levels when I had to travel back and forth to Cardiff three days a week to train. I loved my time at the College and I was delighted to return to see the new sports facilities a couple of years ago."**



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Your child can be the best they can be at Abbey Gate College. Come and visit us and find out how.

We hold a number of events throughout the year, where you can take a tour of our stunning buildings, grounds and facilities. Meet and chat to our current pupils and our passionate and well qualified teaching staff.

INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOL OPEN DAY

25 September 2021

11am - 2pm



Booking essential, please scan the QR code or visit our website to book your place. Places are limited.

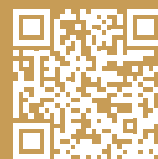


Discover what makes Abbey Gate College so special and how we bring out the best in each child according to individual potential.

SENIOR SCHOOL OPEN DAY

25 September 2021

9:30am - 12:30pm



Booking essential, please scan the QR code or visit our website to book your place. Places are limited.



Come and see what makes Abbey Gate College so unique and how we will inspire a love of learning in your child.



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Abbey Gate College, Saughton Grange, Chester CH3 6EN

T: 01244 332 077 admin@abbeygatecollege.co.uk

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