



Weekly Newsletter

HEADTEACHER UPDATE

A busy start to Term 4

We have started Term 4 in a similar way to how we ended Term 3 – extremely busy!

Last week we facilitated some **Emergency First Aid at Work Training** for staff. We now have several fully-trained first aiders who have the capability to cope with most medical emergencies. Unintentionally, this staff training coincided with a delivery to all our year 7s of basic resuscitation skills and a demonstrate in how to use a defibrillator machine – all incredibly important and potentially life-saving skills. See our ‘Spotlight’ article overleaf.

Last Wednesday we recognised national **World Thinking Day** with some of our students attending in their Guides uniform. Each February 22nd Girl Scouts and Girl Guides across 150 countries worldwide celebrate World Thinking Day. It’s a day of international friendship and a time to stand up for causes that could improve the lives of girls around the globe. Thank you to all the Girl Guides and Scouts for making the effort to wear your uniforms with pride.

On both Thursday and Friday, Mr Stucken led an intrepid team of students in a marathon session of tree-planting. 700 trees were donated to the school through the KCC Pocket Forests Scheme, and 20 students, ranging from year 8 through to 13, helped plant them around the school site – more on that later in this edition.



Also last Friday, we welcomed representatives from **The Fire Fighters’ Charity** and **Faversham Fire Brigade**. Not only did we have plenty of discussion about ways in which we can support them with fundraising, but students were also given the opportunity to climb in the fire engine cab, have demonstrations of the fire-fighting tools but also everyone had a go with the hose! This was great fun as you can tell from the many photos taken!



Finally, not forgetting that many of our students have also been involved in exams this week, from a GCSE Food Prep practical mock, to a Year 11 GCSE Drama rehearsal, plus several BTEC examined elements. Behaviour in exams has been exemplary. Well done to all students who’ve taken part.

6th Form Subject Breakfasts are being rolled out from this week which will give our Year 11s the opportunity to spend some time in different subjects to provide a flavour of what they can expect should they opt to take up that subject in Year 12. This week and next, year 11 students are invited to meet with Heads of learning to discuss their future subjects for their next steps. This will be a fantastic opportunity to gain a greater understanding into the careers associated with the subjects being studied but also to firm up on their choices for 6th form. If some students are still undecided, they can come and talk to Mrs Crouch, in the 6th form office. Sixth form interviews will be held this term. We are excited to support our students in their next steps.

On Friday some of our 6th form students received free electric toothbrushes from our mentoring partnership @vibeinkent and @swaleyouth. These toothbrushes were donated by Oral Health and have been a good opportunity to promote important dental healthcare. In recent weeks, some of our lower school mentors have also been lucky enough to receive one. We don’t just care about your academic achievements; we care about you!











We also held a **fundraising Cake Sale** on Monday which was organised by our 6th form team in aid of their Prom and The Fire Fighters’ Charity. On behalf of the 6th form leadership team, Mrs Crouch would like to thank everyone for their generosity and donations towards the bake sale. In the canteen the students took £209, with more taken on the card machine (we are awaiting the total from the fire service).

We had a few cakes left over which we placed in the staff room to encourage more donations! A proportion of the proceeds raised will go to the fire service and a proportion to the 6th form prom. There will be further fundraising activities happening over the next few months so watch this space!

Finally, our year 9 **Hospitality and Catering** students produced items for an afternoon tea. This mini project saw students work in teams and develop skills in sequencing, presentation and communication. The following image shows a small selection of what was produced across the two year 9 groups which included items from beach themed cupcakes through to scones, sandwiches, cookies and strawberry cream meringues.



STARS OF THE WEEK

w/c 20 th Feb	 Discovery	Izzy Johnson Y7 59 House Points	 Endeavour	Isabella Halsey Y8 55 House Points	 Pioneer	Oscar Cheeseman Y7 71 House Points	 Voyager	Olivia Irving Y8 Maddie Sharpe Y7 54 House Points
w/c 27 th Feb	 Discovery	Kiril Burdeniuk Y7 35 House Points	 Endeavour	Michael Wilson Y7 25 House Points	 Pioneer	Fred Sewell Y8 30 House Points	 Voyager	Daisy Page Y8 28 House Points

STAGGERED DISMISSAL TIMES for w/c 6th March 2023

Day	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri	3.20pm	3.15pm	3.10pm	3.25pm	3.30pm	3.30pm	3.30pm
Thursday only	2.20pm	2.15pm	2.10pm	2.25pm	2.30pm	2.30pm	2.30pm

Spotlight on...First Aid Training

Last week, several members of staff took part in an official three-day First Aid Training at Work course, with many others renewing their certificates. We place high importance on having sufficient numbers of fully-trained first aiders in school to protect the health and safety of our hundreds of students and staff.

During the same week, every year 7 student received basic life-saving and first aid skills during form time on Monday and Thursday.

This included some basic CPR – cardiopulmonary resuscitation – on how to resuscitate a patient using rescue breaths and chest compression, and a demonstration in how to use a defibrillator.

Students were given an opportunity to practice for themselves. All were incredibly shocked at how hard a chest has to be compressed and for how long!



Upcoming Key Dates

- Y11 Food Exam
- Y11 Food Exam
- 6th Form Subject Breakfast
- Y11 Food Exam
- 6th Form Subject Breakfast
- Y11 GCSE Media Exam
- Y11 GCSE Media Exam
- GCSE Drama Trip, Marlowe Theatre
- KS5 Apprenticeship Fair
- BRITISH SCIENCE WEEK
- Day of Industrial Action #3
- Day of Industrial Action #4
- Student Big Leadership Day
- Swale Youth Forum Day
- Sleeping Beauty, Marlowe Trip
- Duke of Edinburgh Training Day (Y9/10)
- Year 8 Choices Workshops
- Year 8 Choices Workshops
- KS5 Economics Booster Day, London
- Rewards Assemblies
- Year 1 Practical Dance Exam
- SCHOOL CLOSED – THAT TRAINING DAY
- Easter Holidays
- Term 5 begins
- Year 8 Consultation Evening
- Y11 GCSE MFL Speaking Exam
- Y11 GCSE MFL Speaking Exam
- Year 7 Consultation Evening

- Monday 6th March
- Tuesday 7th March
- Tuesday 7th March
- Wednesday 8th March
- Wednesday 8th March
- Thursday 9 March
- Friday 10th March
- Friday 10th March
- Friday 10th March
- w/c Monday 13th March
- Wednesday 15th March
- Thursday 16th March
- Tuesday 21st March
- Wednesday 22nd March
- Thursday 23rd March
- Saturday 25th March
- Monday 27th March
- Tuesday 28th March
- Tuesday 28th March
- Wednesday 29th March
- Thursday 30th March
- Friday 31st March
- 1st April – 16th April
- Monday 17th April
- Wednesday 26th April
- Tuesday 9th May
- Wednesday 10th May
- Wednesday 17th May

Attendance update – per house

 Discovery	 Endeavour	 Pioneer	 Voyager
87.1%	85.6%	86.4%	87.0%

ATTENDANCE REMINDER:

Just a reminder that below 90% is **Persistent Absence** that will be followed up by the school. We have been really pleased to hear from parents recently about attendance issues and looking for assistance in how we can help.

Medical appointments should ideally be made after 9.30am so that students can get their morning mark or, alternatively, late afternoon after 2pm for afternoon marks. We appreciate this can be difficult but if medical appointments can be made outside of school time, please do try for later afternoons, weekends or in school holidays.

An exciting afternoon with the local Fire Fighters!

Louise Furneaux from The Fire Fighters' Charity came into school last Friday along with Wayne Burney, from Faversham Fire Station to talk to the school council and 6th form leadership team about the charity and to engage students in ideas for fundraising as this charity is where all our fundraising is going to this year. Students were able to ask questions about the charity and the fire service, gaining an understanding of where their money goes and how it is used to benefit the firefighters and their families. They also learned a lot about the work the fire service does and were surprised to hear that they deal with more car accident scenes than house fires these days, due to more smoke detectors in homes!

Lots of ideas and plans were discussed, including how students will be able to help the charity celebrate their 80th anniversary.

After the meeting, students had their photos taken with the firefighters and the pump in the school playground. They presented a cheque to the charity of over £1300 for money raised so far by students through a sponsored walk, cake sales, a raffle, and a silent auction. This was followed by students being invited to see the truck up close and have a go at knocking down a cone with the fire hose!

A second meeting then took place exclusively with the 6th form leadership team to plan a series of mutually beneficial fundraising events/ideas to help raise money for the charity whilst also raising money for their end of year prom. Louise was able to advise the students of what works well, things they need to consider (e.g. licenses and insurance), and students left with a clear idea of how they can successfully raise money and awareness for the charity. To start, the 6th form leadership team put on a bake sale in the canteen at lunchtime on Monday and there has been an opportunity for all students to donate money to the charity bucket that they provided us with.

Watch this space as we ramp up the fundraising activities across the rest of the school year!



Tree planting on The Abbey School site as part of KCC 'Plan Tree'

Twenty, students, ranging from year 8 through to 13, helped Mr Stucken plant 700 trees around The Abbey School site on Thursday 23rd and Friday 24th February. The trees were donated to the school through the KCC Pocket Forests Scheme (part of 'Plan Tree', which is a component of the UK's plan to reach 'Carbon Net-Zero' by 2050). In addition to the 540 trees as part of this scheme, Mr Stucken also received hundreds of trees from The Woodland Trust, who offer trees to schools as part of their commitment to conservation, bio-diversity and reduction in greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere, which cause climate change.

All the students who participated (some for one day, some for both days) needed no convincing of the importance of the work they undertook in the cold and sometimes damp conditions of a late February day. Though wearing mud on their clothes and faces, they did not mind as there was great satisfaction from the team work and the occasional discovery of Victorian crockery or clay pipe fragments. Every spade-full brought earthworms out but these were carefully placed back within the sod from which they came.

In addition to the 20 students from key stages 3, 4 and 5, we welcomed volunteers from KCC and the general public. There were 8 adult volunteers who worked alongside the students, Mr Stucken and Mark Loos, the representative from the Medway Swale Partnership. The volunteers included one parent volunteer, Mr M Keating.

The trees have been planted along the A2 from the Brogdale to the Ashford Roads, and on top of 'the bund'. These locations were chosen in consultation with James Clow (who oversees the Plan Tree Project for KCC) and The Abbey Premises Department, and the locations have partially been informed by the willingness of the school to provide shelter and natural backdrops for our neighbours in the residential areas that are adjacent to the A2.

The students who participated were Year 8 students, Alfie, Matilda, Charlotte, Ruby, Year 9 students, Dean, Madison, Katie-Jane, Emily, Lila, Year 11 students, Keira, Jamie-Erin, James, Johnny, Euan, and 6th formers Ethan, Keane, Sonny, Kieron, Jasmin and Henry.

The ages of those participating varied from 11 to 70! Tree species planted included Hawthorn, Sesile Oak, Rowan, Hazel, Field Maple, and Hornbeam. Mr Stucken is pleased to report that the trees planted in 2021 and 2022 have had a good survival rate and, although last year's drought was punishing, the survival rate even of these saplings appears to have been as high as 80%! Since 2021, 1500 trees have been planted on The Abbey School site by students and volunteers



Kent Plan Tree strategy - Trees are vital to life on earth. As the biggest plants on the planet, they:

- give us oxygen
- store carbon
- stabilise and nourish soil
- cleanse and cool the air
- provide shelter and shade
- protect us from flooding
- give life and shelter to wildlife
- provide food, timber and medicine.

There are also numerous community benefits to planting trees. Tree planting events help residents take pride in their neighbourhood and become more engaged and connect with nature. Trees and woodland provide proven mental health benefits and encourage us to live more active lives.

**OUR FABULOUS 'ARTISTS OF THE MONTH'
FOR FEBRUARY:**



Isabella Chandler, Y11



Morgan Anderson, Y11



Maisie Smith, Y8



Freddie Cleaver, Y8