ISSUE 11

February 2022

ABBOTSHOLME IN TOUCH

What a fantastic half term we have had; it has certainly been busy and eventful.

We started the term in January with the GCSE Mathematics candidates taking their exams. We eagerly await the results on Thursday 3 March. Our Agricultural Sciences students took their BTEC exams in that same week. The IGCSE Agricultural Science students who sat their exams in November achieved a fabulous set of results: 90% of students attained A* to C, 60% A* to B, 50% A* to A, with 20% of our students attained the highest grade of an A*. The examinations were the first sets of assessments conducted under full exam conditions since the lockdown in 2020, and it is commendable to see how well our students fared. It is a credit to everyone's resilience and dedication over the lockdown period. In weeks three and four, we had mock examinations for Years 11 and 13; the results of those are now out so that students can reflect, review, discuss and take the necessary next steps ahead of their final examinations in the Summer.

It has been an absolute pleasure to have conducted a "careers and next steps" meeting with every Year 11 pupil and Mr Shaw, our Head of Careers and Sixth Form. As always, I was highly impressed by the skill, humility, and sheer eloquence of our Abbotsholmians. In the meetings, every student demonstrated a positive outlook and made suggestions, and shared their unique experiences from their experiences across the school. I am so grateful to the pupils for espousing the ethos and values of the school and to the staff and parents who support them on their journey.

In the Prep school, Year 3 and 4 children had an exciting step back in time as they visited the Black Country Museum and Year 5 visited the Open Centre in Derby to learn about different faiths and culture.

On the sporting front, it has been fabulous to see our students competing against other schools at a high level. Highlights include Year 5 and Year 6 participating and coming second in a Staffordshire County Finals football tournament. Our equestrian talent, cricketers, and hockey players representing the county and national teams are featured in this newsletter, which, without further ado, I invite you to read.

This week we have had some stormy weather, and hopefully, there will be a period of calm after the storm for us all to recharge our batteries ahead of the Easter term, and we look forward to the joys of spring and the Abbotsholme lambing season after the break.

Best wishes to all

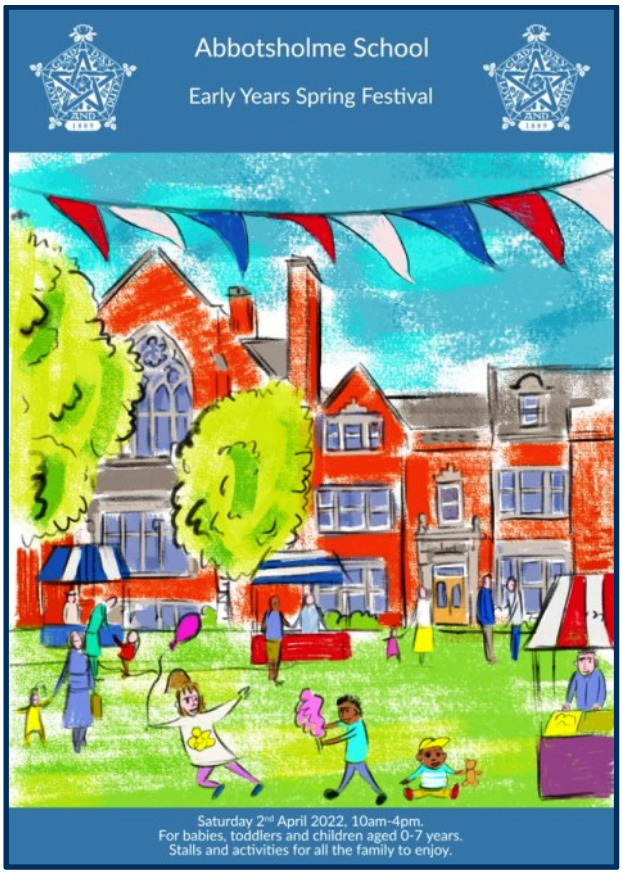
Glad day, love, and duty

SMF Ruscoe-Price
Headmaster

News

Nursery/Prep School

Early Years Spring Festival



If there is anyone who has a business that is aimed at younger children and would like to have a stall at the event whether this be for workshops or items to sell, please contact enquiries@abbotsholme.co.uk.
The event is free to the public, however, if you would like to attend please book tickets on Eventbrite.

If anyone has any items they would like to get rid of and donate to a 'Nearly New' stall then please contact enquiries@abbotsholme.co.uk.

Sleeping Beauty

The whole of Prep school went to the Derby Arena, just before the Christmas break and were treated to a fantastic performance of Sleeping Beauty. We even had our very own Mr Rowland who was the star of the show as well as two representatives from the Prep school who went on stage to assist in the final song. A big thank you to the APA who supported the children in helping to fund part of the trip.

Year 1 & 2 Celebrate Chinese New Year

The children have been investigating how Chinese New Year is celebrated, as well as learning about, and retelling the story of 'The River Race'. We have also had lots of fun trying some yummy Chinese food, learning to write numbers in Chinese and making our own Tigers!

Reception, Year 1 & 2 used their binoculars to spot different varieties of birds as part of the RSPBs Big birdwatch.

Year 3 & 4 took a trip to the **Black Country Living Museum** in line with their current topic, The Industrial Revolution. The pupils managed to see the first ever steam engine, some examples of 1900s households and completed a 1912 school lesson with a very strict teacher!

Year 5 visited the Open Centre in Derby where they saw 3 different places of worship, learnt about different religions and tried some traditional food from the Gurdwara! The children found the trip very interesting and insightful to learn about other people's culture.

Years 5 & 6 took part in a Staffordshire County finals football tournament at Stafford Town Football Club after successfully qualifying in the previous round. They played some excellent football and managed to come away in second place! Congratulations to all involved.

Sport

Abbotsholme Cricket Success

It feels very unusual to talk about Abbotsholme's cricket success in the middle of winter, but we cannot ignore the recent success of our talented cricketers.

They train under the watchful eye of Clive Jacobs and Sam Kelsall, most evenings after school and also on Saturday mornings.

Their hard work and commitment has started to be rewarded, as fourteen of our pupils have made it into county cricket age group squads. Some of these pupils have academy success too.

U18 Callum has been awarded a contract with the Derbyshire Cricket Academy as wicketkeeper and batsman. This prestigious achievement will allow Callum the opportunity to play in the second eleven for Derbyshire.

U15 Luke has joined Derbyshire on the mini academy as a batsman. With this, Luke could secure a pathway into the senior academy.

Staffordshire have named eight of their most talented cricketers from the county to join their Emerging Players Programme. The competition is fierce as there are many cricket clubs, squads and schools to choose from. However, Abbotsholme are delighted and proud to say that out of the eight places available, 3 have been taken by Abbotsholme's very own pupils U15 Joe H, U15 Joe T and U14 Niall M.

This is an incredible achievement for all of the successful cricketers, but also for Abbotsholme as a school.

All we need now is for the sun to shine, so we can watch these talented pupils perform on the cricket field.

It is with great pleasure and pride to announce that Hugh, one of our Sixth Form pupils, has recently received the exciting news that he has made it through the final stages of selection for the 2022 U18 England National Hockey Squad. Hugh is one of three goal keepers chosen for a place, making him one of the top three hockey goal keepers in England, which in itself is a marvellous achievement.

We wish him the very best of luck. We know that he will draw upon Abbotsholme's school values and that his talent, courage and resilience will stand him good stead during his England hockey journey.

Holocaust Memorial Day

Thursday 27 January marked Holocaust Memorial Day for 2022. This date is chosen as it marks the liberation of Auschwitz, the largest of the Nazi death camps. Holocaust memorial Day remembers all of the victims of genocide, those who died during the second world war and the many who have died since. In a virtual Chapel students reflected upon the theme for this year, 'One Day', that hopefully one day we can live in a world without genocide. I know that many of our school community placed a candle in their window at 8.00pm that evening, a symbol of remembrance and a shining light in the darkness.

Prior to the day Year 9 & Year 10 students spent Tuesday morning working with the Holocaust Memorial Centre in a virtual workshop. We were guided through a Zoom session by the education officer Debbie Moss prompting the students to consider who was responsible for the holocaust; not just the Nazis but also those who assisted them or stood by and did nothing. The session included an interview with Ruth Schwiening. As a Jewish German she escaped persecution by being sent to Britain on the Kindertransport, at the age of 3 years and 9 months, alone. Ruth told us her own story and that of her family. She shared her artwork which is inspired by her experiences and a tribute to all those who died. Ruth was especially impressed by the questions posed by our pupils which she said were some of the most thoughtful and provoking she has ever been asked. As a result, she is keen to work with Abbotsholme students again. You can share Ruth's incredible story in this video from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office - https://youtu.be/nT7Ui11d_KQ.

Outdoor Education

On the 8 & 9 February the Year 12 and Year 13 BTEC OEd students were all successful in completing their 16 hour Outdoor First Aid Course. This goes towards their final BTEC grade and also allows them to work in the outdoor industry.

Alongside the students some staff members also passed their course and updated their first aid knowledge. A special thanks goes to Allan Shaw the assessor for taking the time to run the course at the school.

Maisie Triumphs at Morris Equestrian Centre

https://www.jumpingaround.co.uk/.../maisie-allsop-hits...

Geography & Biology Field Trip

On Thursday 10 February Year 12 Geographers, Year 12 & Year 13 Biologists joined forces and travelled to Ainsdale sand dunes a SSSI on the north west coast.

“From our trip we were able to describe primary succession with reference to the changing abiotic factors. We can name abiotic factors and understand how to measure them. We worked in small groups to perform a point transect from the embryo dunes into the grey dunes. We swapped groups to carry out random sampling using quadrats in either a wet slack or on the semi fixed dune. The wet slack group found lots of frogs, unfortunately they weren’t the rare Nattajack toads that have

conservation breeding programmes on site. We identified plant species - using their Latin classification including domain kingdom genus & species. We then moved to the Formby red squirrel reserve to have lunch and discussed threats to ecosystems and habitats. We defined native and non-native species and observed the local in situ conservation strategies. Sadly, we didn't actually see any red squirrels! "- *Savannah*

"I thoroughly enjoyed the singing that happened on the mini bus, who knew that our students could sing for a full 90 miles, a particular highlight was a very rousing rendition of "County Road "- *Mrs Brown*

From this trip I learnt numerous things. For example, we learnt how to do quadrats as well as testing the pH of sand. I also learnt I was extremely scared of frogs as they are unpredictable. We had a great time and I feel confident answering exam questions on this topic – *Danuka*

Sixth Form

Mr Rob Rattray from Leeds Beckett University gave a lecture to all Sixth Form pupils regarding student life, finance, budgeting and fees. Mr Rattray who lectures in Politics and Sociology offered an open review of what support is on offer to pupils who want to attend university and also went through the average living expenditures to demonstrate to pupils how much a typical university student would spend on different items per month. He mentioned how much value universities award to completing an EPQ (Extended Project Qualification) and to quote his words how admission tutors react to an EPQ "wow, this pupil has done an EPQ". The talk went on to cover how maintenance loans are means tested and pupils do not have to pay the money back until they are earning over £27 295. It was discussed how the interest rates on student loans are linked to the Retail Price Index (RPI) and due to inflation being at higher than previous year's levels the interest on the student loans was higher than normal, however he did mention pupils stop repaying the loan after 30 years and it will not impact on anyone getting a mortgage or any other types of loans.

Year 13 pupils should be thinking about applying for their student finance in the coming weeks via the YouGov (https://www.gov.uk/apply-online-for-student-finance) website. For pupils considering working within the medical profession Mr Rattray mentioned that fully funded and supported courses are available in Wales, if the person were to work there for 2 years after their graduation and how important it is to develop and demonstrate the 6Cs (care, compassion, competence, communication, courage, commitment) when applying to medical courses. Finally, another top tip was to research the reading lists of university courses pupils are applying to so they can build some experiences of these titles into their personal statements and to research courses in-depth, read the different modules available and choose the course with the most interesting modules on offer as different institutions will teach different areas of study under the same course title.

Mrs Williams from Bangor University presented to all Sixth Form pupils and pupils in Year 10 & Year 11 on Wednesday 16 February.

They were given a series of tasks to try and analyse how they may approach revision and what the best strategies may be for that particular subject and learning style.

Valentines Formal

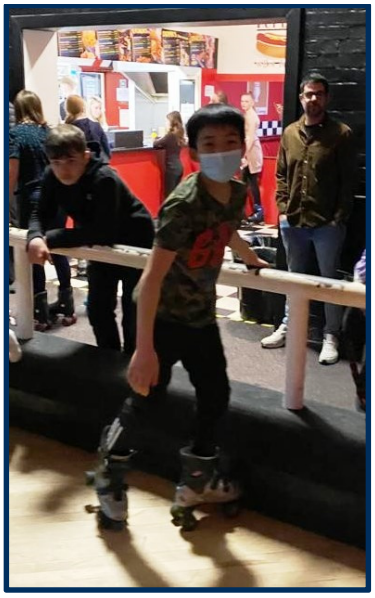
Boarding

The start of term has been a busy one in boarding, with a variety of trips and activities taking place in spite of the terrible British weather.

As is tradition around Lunar New Year, we visited Wing Wah restaurant for a Chinese feast. The ice cream and candy floss machines were particularly popular. We enjoyed a Big Boarders' Day Out to Sheffield, where we visited the National Videogame museum and tackled the Ninja Warrior course. We have also had trips to a local trampoline park and a roller disco and, of course, lots of shopping.

The boarders are looking forward to brighter warmer nights soon, so we can take full advantage of the great facilities we have on site. We've already had a couple of requests to open the swimming pool!

NEO·GEO
SYSTEM
MVS
MULTI VIDEO SYSTEM
SNK



Abbotsholme Parents Association

Parents Café

Just a reminder that the Parents Café is held in the Dining Room from 4.00pm on each Friday. Don't sit in the car park please come in and join us for a cuppa and cake. It's always great to meet new parents. Please pop in and say 'Hello'.

Second Hand Uniform

The APA will be pleased to receive donations of second hand (new style/blue) uniform. Please leave at Reception marked APA.

OA's
Headmasters of Abbotsholme

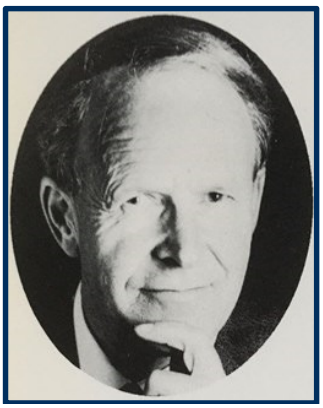
In this article I would like to talk about the legacies of Abbotsholme's long-term headmasters.

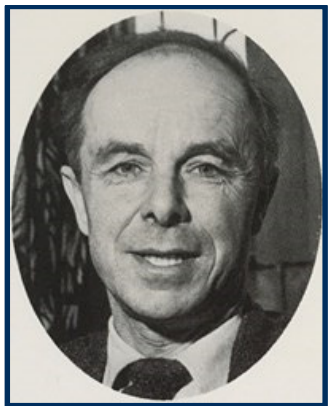
Throughout the school's history, we have had Heads that stay for a long time and those that stay for a short time. All of the Heads have changed things and imprinted their personalities on the school. Often this influence is shown by new or different uses for buildings.

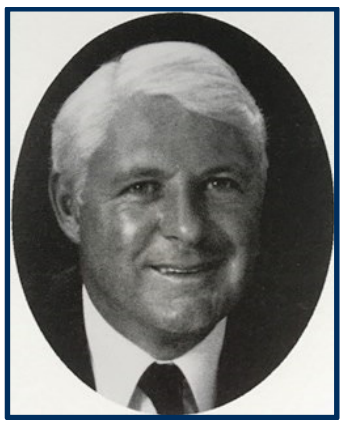
On the board hung on the stairs outside the chapel is a list of Headmasters of Abbotsholme School. In terms of length of time in the role, the longest in situ is our founder Cecil Reddie, who served the school for 38 years and is buried on the top of toboggan hill. Colin Sharp comes next; he was headmaster for 20 years. David Snell and Steve Fairclough served for 14 years. Darrell Farrant was in the role for 13 years. Robin Hodgkin comes next with 12 years' service as Head. Some of their histories are better known than others. Cecil Reddie and Colin Sharp are relatively well known and commemorated in many places in the school.

David Snell is remembered by the Snell building, which serves as a gathering space, exam hall, and in previous times was used as a gym and a theatre (before the sports hall and theatre were built). Where the climbing wall now is was the old boy's changing rooms. The wall in the Snell building that faces towards the farm covers a stage where we would perform our dramatic performances 35 years ago. The main use of the space as an exam hall has been the only consistent use of the building during its long history. How many pupils over the years have sat in the Snell building and shaped their future lives by the success or otherwise in their public exams? It always makes me smile when I walk past or do any activities in it as I took and passed both my O & A levels in that building and still to this day nervous teenagers lurk outside in early summer before entering to take their exams and shape their futures.

I would like to focus on recounting the histories of Robin Hodgkin, David Snell and Darrell Farrant over the next few newsletters. They were all influential in shaping the school as it moved forward into the twentieth century.

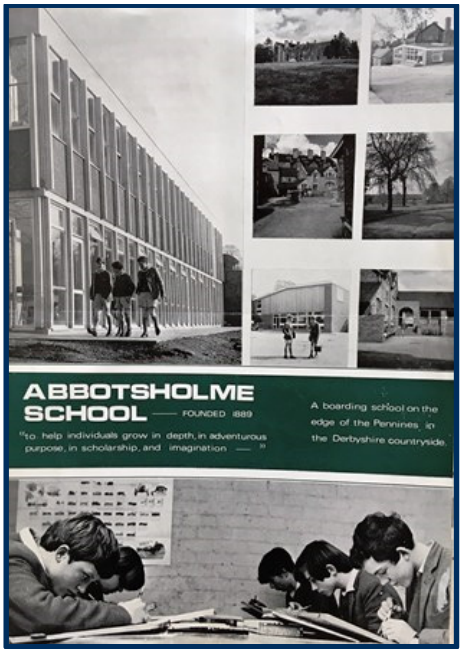


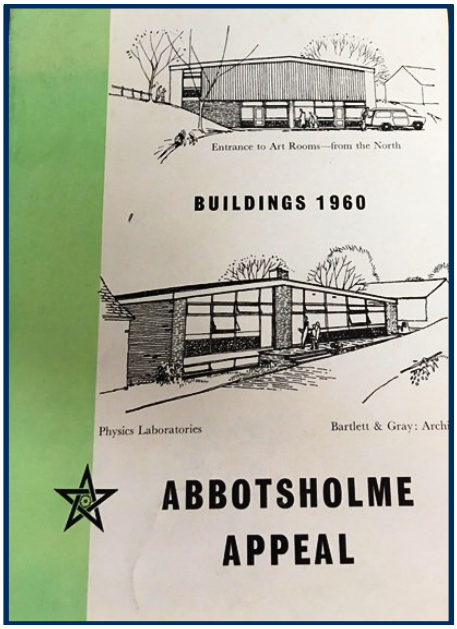




Robin Hodgkin came to the school in 1955. He was a young headmaster and brought his family to

live at the school. He was a keen and expert climber and did much to embellish the outward bound nature of the education provided by Abbotsholme school. His legacy is seen in many of the buildings that are used as classrooms. Under his direction, the Oakholme classroom, the Physics labs, the headmaster's house which is known as Weaversholme, the swimming pool and a new art room were built.





In fact, Robin Hodgkin could be said to have shaped us into the modern school by adding enormously to the classroom provision. There are OAs alive today who remember him with great affection.