

# Abbey Hill Academy

## Spring term newsletter 2024



Volume 28



### Principal's Message

Welcome to the 2024 spring edition of the Abbey Hill Academy newsletter.

As is always the case, Abbey Hill Academy has been a busy place this term. The student work rate in lessons is always impressive, but we keep working with students to help them understand that hard work, effort, and the ability to learn from their mistakes are important strengths, and these qualities, rather than simply talent, are the things that make individuals improve. To do this, we always encourage students to try new things both in and out of school, but in a safe and supported way so they can develop.

We continue to work with our students on keeping themselves safe outside of school. It is an often-used quote from parents that they will not allow their child out to help keep them safe. Although this has some truth in it, many dangers children now face are based upon their use of internet devices such as smart phones and game stations. It is often difficult for adults to keep up with changes in technology, and young people are particularly good at keeping one step ahead of us! As a school, we understand this and have a dedicated page on our website under the parents' section that provides a great deal of help and support. We are also more than happy to work with you in person on developing skills and specific knowledge around online safety.

I would like to thank you all for your continued support in helping Abbey Hill Academy be a place 'where amazing children do amazing things'.

I hope you all have relaxing, and enjoyable, break and we all look forward to seeing the students return on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024.



## PE Update



In January, a mix of students from 5EP, 5MA and 5JA attended a 'Try a Sports Event'. They took part in a range of sports including boccia, dance, archery and yoga. They all performed brilliantly and had a great day! They loved the dance and archery in particular.



# Speech and Language Therapy

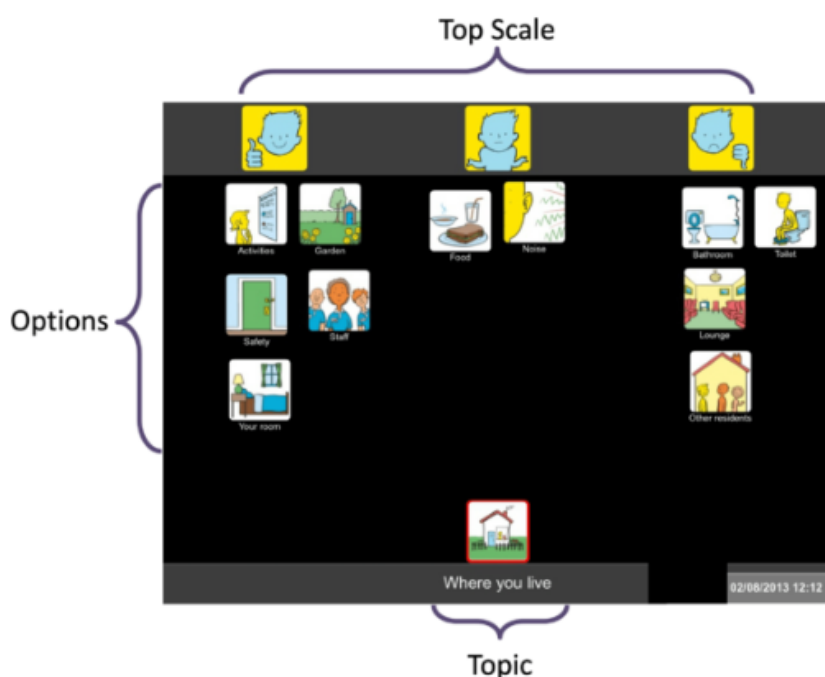
As a staff team we have been focussing on ways to listen to and capture our students' views this term. We have been practising using Talking Mats as a tool to do this. Talking Mats was developed at the University of Stirling, and helps students express opinions using pictures. Sometimes the pictures alone are enough to express opinions, and sometimes they start a really good conversation! It is easy to capture our students views by just taking a photo of the finished Mat.

Talking Mats are especially helpful tools when planning for transition points, such as a move of house, a new baby on the way, or the move to College/new education setting.

You can find out more about Talking Mats [here](#):

If you are interested in using Talking Mats at home and would like further information, please contact Kate Reader (Speech and Language Therapist) on 01642 677113.

Here is an example of a Talking Mat:







## 9AB



9AB had a fantastic morning on World Book Day. Some of the students enjoyed dressing up, but they all enjoyed doing activities. Samara and Abigail demonstrated their independence skills, by making jelly for the class to enjoy.



Samara was able to pour the warm jelly solution into the moulds prepared by Abigail. Chloe created a love potion and made it, then gave it to Logan to try.



Finally we had a group of students who decorated our classroom door. They decided what to do, then created the door independently. The students created The Mirror of Erised, which we have all been gazing in to.



After Easter the class will start to look forward to Year 10 and choosing their options. We will also try to go out on a couple of trips, one of which will hopefully involve going on a train.





## CHUF supports super heroes only!

CHUF supports the children and families who receive treatment by the Children's Heart Unit based at Freeman Hospital and the many other hospitals providing care for cardiac patients throughout the North East. They raise vital funds for large and small pieces of equipment, facilities, aftercare, salaries and research.



CHUF's charitable activities go far beyond that of providing medical equipment and personnel; the charity provides holistic care to children and their families by providing services and facilities that allow heart children to develop their skills and mature as any healthy child normally would. CHUF supports pioneering research and services that contributes to heart heroes' ability to achieve their full potential.

Angel-Jade Williams was our Abbey Hill heart hero. We miss her and 11VB wanted to do something special in her memory. The team organised a very special memory walk and a run to raise money to support Angel's chosen charity; a charity that supported her and her family through the very toughest of times.



Our amazing Abbey Hill community pulled out all the stops and managed to raise £1486 for CHUF. 11VB visited the charity headquarters in Gateshead to meet the important people who supported Angel and to hand over the cheque. This money will fund crafts and toys in the Freeman play suite for a whole year. Thank you to everyone who contributed.

'You all raised an amazing amount for CHUF. Thank you for doing this in Angel's honour. She would be so, so proud and the money will help so many children at the heart unit.'

Ceri Williams.



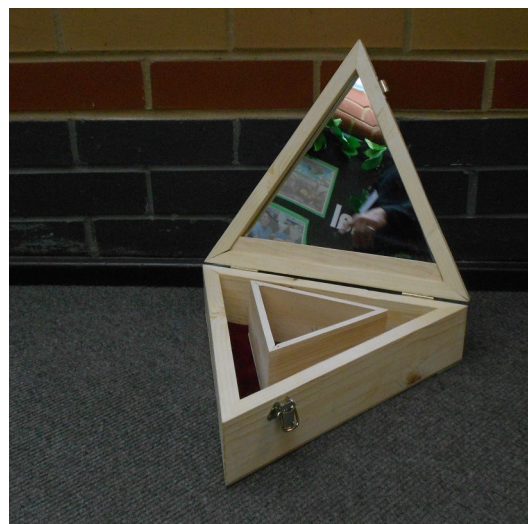
Angel-Jade Forever 15.



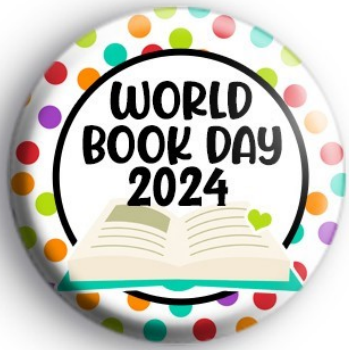
## Key Stage 4 Design Technology



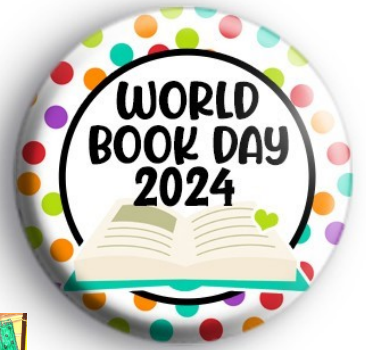
In KS4, pupils worked so well on their entry level qualifications in Product Design. They designed and modelled a product of their choice using CAD (computer aided design) to produce virtual models and then used a range of tools and equipment to make their product in the workshop.







# World Book Day at Abbey Hill!



It was a magical reading celebration on Wednesday 6th March to celebrate World Book Day in Abbey Hill. The school and college were all involved in exciting activities to promote the importance and love of reading, with fun and prizes galore!

Students were in tutor groups for the morning and created, as pictured above, some FANTASTIC pieces of work. Classroom doors were decorated, Harry Potter extracts were read and activities were filled in as each tutor group gained house points in the hope of being house Champions!

Everyone had a fantastic morning, with fancy dress, photo opportunities and lots of fun. Gryffindor came out victorious and enjoyed a movie afternoon treat to celebrate. We already can't wait for our next reading event in school!







## 5KO's Sensory Sessions in the Woodlands

This term, the students in 5KO have been enjoying exploring our enchanting woodlands area! It's been a delightful journey for them to dive into the magic of nature's transition from Winter to Spring.

We've witnessed the trees and plants putting on a dazzling display of changing colours, adorned with vibrant new flowers. And amidst all the excitement, we've made sure to take moments to pause and savour the calmness of birdsong and the gentle rustle of leaves dancing in the breeze. It's been a wonderful adventure of sensory exploration.







## 5KO's Sensory Sessions in the Woodlands

In the woodlands, our students have gathered around the campfire, delighting in the timeless tradition of roasting marshmallows and savouring the aroma and taste of warming hot chocolate.

But amidst the cosy campfire gatherings, we've also seized the opportunity to enrich our topic work. With our theme based around 'Allotments,' the woodlands have provided the perfect backdrop for hands-on exploration. From investigating flowers and leaves to experiencing the intricate textures of bark, our students have been fully immersed in a dynamic learning environment that has ended with a smile from everyone!





## 6KP Titanic Disaster Investigation



In English this term, 6KP investigated the causes of the sinking of the Titanic. During their studies, they took part in a debate and performed role-plays so they could imagine what it would be like to be a first, second and third class passenger on the doomed voyage. Students also discussed the inequalities in society at the time and what that meant for the fate of each class of passenger as this famous disaster unfolded.

6KP also produced newspaper reports and learned how to gather facts using the 5 Ws: Who, What, When, Where and Why. The students enjoyed performing their plays and producing reports to explain their findings..

Next term the class will be studying the famous novel 'Oliver Twist' which will provide further opportunities for drama and debate.







## Online Safety spring term update

Digital Literacy is an individual's ability to find, evaluate, and communicate information using typing or digital media platforms.

From Year 7, students in the formal curriculum access online content to research images that communicate their ideas and supports their work. Year 8 students are continuing to use their school email accounts to access learning resources and share work with staff. This term Year 9 students have focused upon digital literacy themes in Computing and PHSE. considering a range of strategies that they can apply to keep safe in online environments. A significant theme will be how young people can use apps safely whilst being aware of the risks of overuse of gaming and mobile phones.

The 11-16 digital literacy curriculum is crucial in accreditation achieved in Year 11. This half term students have successfully completed the Functional Skills ICT exam.

Watch out for updates about the [360 Safe online safety](#) benchmark which Abbey Hill is working towards.

### Supporting online safety at home

In an ever changing digital world it can be valuable to be informed about emerging developments. Please refer to the recently updated parent e-safety advice on the [school website](#)

National College provides a wealth of user guides, online courses and support to deepen understanding around ways in which young people can engage in the online world safely. To create an account click [here](#)

Alternatively point the camera on your smartphone at this QR code





## Abbey Hill at North Shore

Five of our year 9 students visited Peat Rigg outdoors centre for 3 days of exciting activities. They all had an awesome time experiencing the great outdoors and pushing their own personal boundaries with dare-devil activities such as abseiling, zip lining, and canoeing! They all came back feeling exhausted but super proud with a mass of lovely memories made with their friends! A special thank you to all the staff who attended the trip and kept them all safe, well fed and happy!



## Year 7 Castle Visit

Students in 7LT have been studying medieval times in humanities, focusing on castles and their defences. The groups visited Durham castle for a private tour.



These experience can be powerful motivators for our students to continue to learn and explore new topics. Thank you to parent/carers for supporting the trip, a great time was had by all.





## Abbey Hill at North Shore



### World Book Day

What a fabulous day we had celebrating World Book Day 'Harry Potter style'! The staff and students enjoyed dressing as their favourite characters, listening to extracts from the stories, watching parts of the films, designing and making as well as working in their house teams for prizes! A special well done to Oscar in year 7 and Alfie in year 9 who won special prizes for their amazing work! A huge congratulations to 7LT who won 'the best decorated door' and to Lynsey who won 'best dressed staff member'.







## Abbey Hill at North Shore

Liz Million, author and illustrator.

Students were inspired to pick up their pens and get creative with author and illustrator Liz Million. Liz shared the highs and lows of getting to where she is now and gave our students some great tips on how to achieve wonderful fictional characters using step by step shapes. Students were enthused and excited by Liz's workshop.







## Careers and enterprise

Top Dogs enterprises have continued to run their school tuck shop offering students the chance to develop their independence and money skills.

Asher Giants have successfully hosted the memorable Christmas disco. This half term they have launched the Walker tuck shop. Students have learned about profit margins and the importance of stock taking.



VB Enterprises have developed their business skills by generating a number of stalls and raffles.

Thank you for your continued support with our Enterprise activities. Enterprise enriches our students learning experiences and empowers our young people to develop their confidence, problem solving abilities and raises ambition to help them succeed.



# Snapshots of spring term

