

George Abbot Bulletin



Headteacher's Message

21 June 2024

As I write, the formal GCSE and A Level exam season is almost at an end. GCSEs have concluded with the last 2 exams having taken place on Wednesday of this week. A Levels are almost over, too - 2 exams today and then just one left on Monday afternoon. The annual external exam spell somewhat drives the rhythm of school and is on a mammoth scale here at George Abbot. 33 external invigilators are deployed, 2 halls and 2 gyms are utilised for two months and 13 classrooms support as venues for access arrangements or exam cohorts where technology is required. Year 7s vacate their playground to minimise noise in the vicinity and I pray for minimal wet breaks. Organising all of that is quite a feat and I want to thank Mrs Gibbons, Mrs Mainee and Mr O'Sullivan and our army of invigilators for making it all happen so seamlessly for our students. You are all so very much appreciated.

Year 10 and Year 12 are now half way through their exams - keeping the halls and gyms bedecked with exam desks and getting the mocks done next works, both logistically and academically. The mock exams conclude on Monday 1 July and I urge both of those year groups to keep working - steady and ongoing revision is a strategy that is absolutely necessary and as they enter their final exam year must continue throughout.

Around the serious exam business, other year groups are entering one of the best times of the school year. This week, the first group of Year 7s have been to visit Strawberry Hill, one of Britain's finest Georgian Gothic houses; the day was a perfect weather one. We hosted the GAbbot Sprints, with 6 local secondary schools joining us. I am actually quite competitive, which for some reason surprises some people (!) and am therefore, delighted to say that Year 7 boys and girls, Year 9 boys and girls, Year 10 boys and girls all won and Year 8 boys and girls came third. I was exceedingly proud of them all. Seeing them hurtling round the track with utter focus and determination on their faces was a complete joy. The DoE Silver Expedition is underway on Exmoor with all teams making excellent progress.

Next week, we welcome our new staff on Monday for their induction day, a team of Interns who will experience the world of education for three weeks, our Year 11s for their Year 12 Induction Day on Tuesday as well as the Year 8 Parent Subject meeting early school closure on 25 June. Our Year 11 have their Prom on Wednesday evening - it is set to be a glamorous affair much anticipated by staff and students annually. On Thursday our Year 12s meet some of the George Abbot alumni who return to talk about their university and early career experiences and share their learning and top tips for success. Friday brings our whole school INSET day, interspersed by our Year 13 leavers' assembly at 10.30am and their Prom on Friday evening. This year, they are appropriating The Harbour Hotel - probably not the best choice for any parents seeking a quiet Friday drink on this occasion.

All of that is followed by the big Phantom of the Opera week - performances on 2/3/4/5 July. Tickets are on general release as of Monday. PLEASE come along and see the extraordinary achievements of our students - student orchestra, student cast, student backstage and lighting crews. It remains an annual marvel that cannot be missed! Prizegiving takes place for Years 7-10 on Wednesday 3 July - a moment to celebrate those students whose progress and academic excellence have been exceptional this year. That week also hosts our Year 6 Induction Days; the school remains very oversubscribed, not least as siblings have priority in our admissions arrangements. Thank you to all those of you with little ones joining us next year for trusting us with your emerging teenagers.

....still leaving a long list of events before the end of term:

- PE visit to St Mary's University
- A Wimbledon visit for some lucky tennis players
- Our inaugural Science Festival for Year 8
- The return of the preloved clothes sale
- The Year 12 visit to Portsmouth University
- The Visual Arts Exhibition
- Sports Day
- Our German Exchange friends visiting our school
- DoE Gold expedition
- A cricket trip to Worcester, taking in a T20 Blast
- House Week including bowling and colour runs and much more...
- GAbbot Fest
- Sports Awards



George Abbot is proud of our focus on your child as a person as well as on your child's academic development; on your child's wellbeing, cultural development and enjoyment as well as their academic achievements. We know how important school days truly are.

Kate Carriett
Headteacher

[Return to home page](#)

GabbotFest is back!

Our yearly school festival, where we come together to celebrate our community and raise money for local and national charities and for school environment improvements is happening on Friday 12 July. The festival is made up of village fete style stalls, live music, games, food and drinks. We are running a cashless festival where WisePay contributions are exchanged for tokens (50p a token), which will be a different colour to previous events, and will be issued to students on the morning of the Festival during tutor time. Please note the deadline for buying tokens is Tuesday 9 July in order to give us time to organise the tokens ready for handing out. If you have any WisePay queries, please email finance@georgeabbot.surrey.sch.uk. Please note, any unspent tokens will not be refunded as the money is being donated to charity.



Notices

Week commencing 24 June = Week B
Week commencing 1 July = Week A

Whole School

- ⇒ **Prizegiving—Wednesday 3 July**
We will be holding Prizegiving assemblies on Wednesday 3 July and parents/carers of students who have been nominated for a prize are free to attend. Invites will be sent next week.
- ⇒ **Early closure for Year 8 Parent Subject Meetings—Tuesday 25 June**
Please be reminded that school will be closing at 1.35pm on Tuesday 25 June for us to conduct the Year 8 Parent/Teacher consultation meetings.
- ⇒ **Bus passes for September 2024**
Surrey County Council bus passes for next academic year can be collected from Reception at break times from Monday 10 June.
- ⇒ **Film viewing: Everybody's Talking about Jamie**
As part of LGBTQ+ Month, on Wednesday 26 June, we are offering for students in Year 8-12 the chance to watch Everybody's Talking about Jamie from 3:15pm-5:30pm. Drinks and snacks welcomed!

Year 11

- ⇒ **Year 11 Prom 2024**
Prom is on Wednesday 26 June at Pine Ridge Golf Club, Frimley from 7pm - 10pm. Dress Code: Formal. Snack buffet provided. Students should make their own way to the venue and aim to arrive from 7pm onwards. Parents/carers will have a designated area outside the venue where they are welcome to watch students arrive and take photos until approx 8pm, after which we request that the area be cleared. Please arrange onward transport for your child promptly at or before 10pm.

Only Year 11 students and George Abbot staff will be allowed inside the venue. Year 11 Prom is strictly alcohol free, and students that appear intoxicated will be denied entry. Prom is a ticketed event, on sale only through WisePay. All right of admission are reserved.
- ⇒ **Year 11 Revision Guides and Uniform**
Please help us with our sustainability vision by donating any no-longer-needed GCSE revision guides and school uniform - just drop them into reception and we will do the rest!

Year 11

⇒ **Activate Learning (Guildford College, Merrist Wood, Farnham College) Orientation Days (a reminder)**

All applicants who have been offered a place have been invited to attend an Orientation Day. Our Orientation Days are tailored to provide our future students with essential insights into campus life, the academic programme, and the opportunities that will be available at Activate Learning.

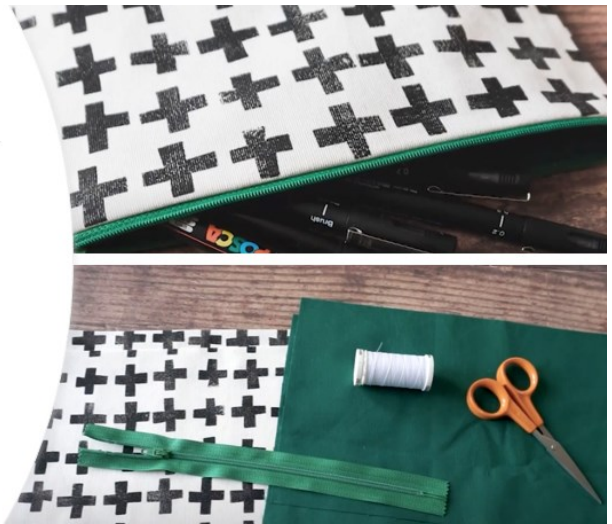
Please encourage your students to book a place if they haven't done so already. Places can be booked by following the link: [Orientation Day - Activate Learning](#)

Year 9

TEXTILES CLUB : SUMMER TERM YR9

- Fabric Construction Workshop
 - Calling all budding designers, GCSE Textile students to be & makers!
 - Miss Masson will be running an afterschool workshop for yr9 students who wish to turn their Block Print into a small bag.
 - Students will be introduced to:
 - Using the sewing machines
 - 3D Fabric Construction
 - Finishing techniques.
 - Session 1 : Wed 26th June
 - Session 2: Wed 3rd July
 - Afterschool - 3.30pm - 4.30 pm
- Attendance must be for both sessions.

Sign up on the SMHW link.



Year 8

⇒ **Reminder: Colour Run**

The Year 8 team are organising a colour run festival for Tuesday 9 July during period 4 on the school field. Students will have the opportunity to make core memories with their peers at school as part of an activities week at the end of the school year. For more information, please see the email sent 18 June. Deadline for payment is Monday 24 June.

Focus on: Bronze DofE complete!

A big well done to all 21 teams of Year 9 students who successfully completed the Bronze DofE Assessment expedition in Wiltshire! They had some ideal weather, but had to tackle lots of overgrown footpaths, fields of cows and some pretty severe hayfever! Several members of the public stopped staff on checkpoints to comment on the positive encounters they had with George Abbot students while out walking. The DofE Award would not be possible without the support of staff, DofE volunteers and parents so thanks to all who made this expedition happen.



Focus on: Celebrating Running talent

We are delighted to report that that one of our students, Imogen F, has won double GOLD at this year's Surrey School Championships in the Inter-girls 1500m steeplechase AND Inter-girls 1500m flat. Her qualifying times mean she has been selected to represent George Abbot and Team Surrey at this summer's prestigious English Schools Track and Field Championships. Congratulations and good luck Imogen, we are so proud of you!



Online safety resources

Click the images below for more information:

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to have an informed conversation about online safety with their children. Should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many areas where we believe trust is key. It should be viewed as a prompt to start a conversation with your child about online safety.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about SOCIAL MEDIA & MENTAL HEALTH

An estimated one-third of children have a social media account, so it's important that trusted adults know what content young people are consuming, what they're posting and the interactions they're having. On social media, it can be easy to go down 'rabbit holes' that aren't beneficial to our wellbeing. As platforms grapple with managing such, legal but harmful content, lives are being impacted. It's sometimes to tragic effect. We might be daunted by the scale of the tech giants and their content which so entrals young people, but we can still help children to be aware of their mental wellness, recognising when something isn't OK, and knowing what to do about content that upsets them.

- 1. UNDERSTAND THE ALGORITHM**
Algorithms rank content by user interest: someone who regularly interacts with sports news, say, will see the latest results at the top of their feed. Likewise, if user browses content that shows cows, their feed will be predominantly about farm life. It will be recommended to them in future. Someone who's had a bad day and had a post which reflects their mood will find similar content being suggested to them when they open the app.
- 2. AVOID THE MAIN FEEDS**
Avoiding the default feeds on social media platforms is the most important step. Users can opt to only scroll through the content of people they follow, use restricted modes, or highlight posts that they don't want to see more of. Explore the platform settings to see how you can take control of what your child's phone shows them when they open the app.
- 3. DISCUSS WHAT THEY'VE SEEN**
Chatting about what your child's seen online keeps you aware of the content they're interacting with. Don't assume that platforms are screening out inappropriate material, or even that your child would recognise content as harmful. Discuss what they've seen, what posts they like and what concerns they have. It's a safe space to talk or to seek support.
- 4. LEARN HOW TO HIDE CONTENT**
If your child stumbles across inappropriate content on social media, there's the option to hide that post or scroll on an alternative feed. If you prefer any similar material not to be suggested to you, you can also block it. Block blocks that content, so it won't be shown to you. It's a good idea to start talking control of what your child sees.
- 5. SET DAILY LIMITS**
Phones and most apps can tell you how much they're being used. Spending too long scrolling through a child misses out on other activities that are important for their wellbeing. You could set some family rules to help everyone balance their device use, such as screen time limits and tech-free zones. Encourage your child in creating this agreement, makes them more likely to stick to it.
- 6. MONITOR THEIR ACTIVITY**
Keeping a discreet eye on how your child is using social media can help ensure they're not entering potentially dangerous situations. As they grow up, of course, children need space to develop their independence, but you can still occasionally ask to see what they're posting. It's important about your own social media use and try not to be too judgemental about your child's.
- 7. TURN OFF PUSH NOTIFICATIONS**
Even for adults, it's tempting to check email or messages as soon as the alert sound pings. Push notifications encourage people to open their apps and spend time on their device, turning them off will help your child to practise mindful use of tech. Most of us have other things that we need to focus on as a priority – and those notifications will still be there later, when we have more time.
- 8. USE DEVICES TOGETHER**
Giving children internet-enabled devices and complete freedom can be a recipe for disaster. If you can't resist in exposure to hugely engaging content, you could consider creating a particular area of home a designated space to use games, tablets etc. – making it much easier to monitor what content your child is viewing and (if necessary) steer them away from any potentially harmful posts.
- 9. ENCOURAGE OTHER ACTIVITIES**
Mental health professionals often highlight the importance of exercise, a balanced diet and restful sleep for our mental wellbeing. Spending hours on social media can cause us to sacrifice and put down these other things. Encourage something that doesn't involve a screen, like reading or a hobby.
- 10. TALK ABOUT PEER PRESSURE**
Most platforms default children's accounts to private, so what you can see is what you're accepted as friends can see. This reduces the risk of bullying or unkind comments, but – just like online life – the digital world can still make children feel as if they need to act or look a certain way to fit in, and to be seen by others. Talk to your child about peer pressure, and how to be any concerns so you can provide the support they need.

Meet Our Expert
Sheela Sirwan-Amin is executive headteacher of a specialist primary school, as an emotional therapy co-ordinator, works with school leaders to focus on the SEND, mental health and wellbeing agenda, a passionate advocate for vulnerable learners. She is a Fellow of the Chartered College of Teaching and the author of The Book of Wonders, a book that supports children with SEND.

National Online Safety
WakeUpWednesday

www.nationalonlinesafety.com @natonlinesafety /NationalOnlineSafety #natonlinesafety

Writers of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 30.11.2022

At the National College, our Multi-agency wellbeing guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Can Learn from the OFCOM MEDIA REPORT 2024

Each year, Ofcom – the UK's regulatory body for communications – produces an overview of children and parents' media experiences over the course of the previous year. At the time of writing, the latest of these reports, 'Children and parents: media use and attitudes 2024' has just been published, and we've plucked out some of its most thought-provoking findings regarding online safety.

ONLINE LIVES

- 99% of 8-17s had regular access to the internet
- 65% of 13-17s prefer short videos to films and TV
- 34% experienced harassment or bullying online
- 11-18s felt more confident communicating online (71% than in person (53%))
- 87% of 8-17s felt pressure to be popular on social media

SCREEN TIME

By children's age group, the percentage of parents who felt less able to manage their child's screentime were...

Age Group	Percentage
3-4	34%
5-7	32%
8-11	37%
12-15	46%
16-17	49%

POPULAR PLATFORMS

Most used by children...

Platform	Under-12s	Over-12s
YouTube	89%	88%
WhatsApp	37%	82%
TikTok	35%	78%
Snapchat	27%	73%
Instagram	22%	69%

ONLINE GAMING

- 68% of children played video games online
- 74% played with someone they know
- 32% played with strangers

PARENTAL CONCERNS

The things that most commonly worry parents and carers about their child being online include...

Concern	Percentage
seeing age-inappropriate content	77%
being harassed or bullied	70%
seeing self-harm content	68%
having their data gathered by companies	62%
being influenced by extreme views	59%
having their reputation damaged	55%
being pressured to spend money	51%

ONLINE SAFETY IN SCHOOLS

- 93% of 8-17s had at least one lesson about online safety
- 93% of children are aware of at least one thing they can do to stay safe online
- 91% of children found these lessons useful
- 78% of 8-17s were aware of age restrictions for apps
- 40% admitted to faking their age to bypass these limits

DEVICES MOST USED TO GO ONLINE

Age Group	Tablets	Smartphones
3-4s	67%	77%
5-7s	77%	73%
8-10s	73%	95%
11-15s	95%	97%
15-17s	97%	97%

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: nationalcollege.com/guides/media-use-and-attitudes-report-2024

WakeupWednesday The National College

www.nationalcollege.com @wake_up_weds /www.thenationalcollege @wakeupwednesday @wake.up.weds

Writers of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 01.03.2024

[Return to home page](#)

Pre-loved clothes sale - Friday 5 July

Looking for something new for your wardrobe? We are looking forward to welcoming you to our pre-loved clothes sale on Friday 5 July in Elmslie Gyms. Open to the wider school community from 4.00pm-5.00pm. Cash and card purchases welcome. See you there!



Careers

Careers opportunities: <https://www.georgeabbot.surrey.sch.uk/careers-opportunities/>

Apprenticeship opportunities: <https://www.georgeabbot.surrey.sch.uk/apprenticeship-opportunities/>

Work Experience opportunities: <https://www.georgeabbot.surrey.sch.uk/work-experience/>



Phoenix Youth Productions are offering GA a special £10 ticket promotion for the Friday evening and Saturday Matinee performances. To book, use this link:

<https://www.atgtickets.com/shows/pyp-presents-beauty-and-the-beast/rhoda-mcgaw-theatre-woking/calendar/?cr=BBOFFER>

BARRACUDAS
ACTIVITY DAY CAMPS

The UK's favourite summer holiday activity camp!!

SCHOOL HOLIDAY CHILDCARE

EXCLUSIVE PARENT DISCOUNT!
£20 OFF WEEK. £4 OFF DAY!

USE CODE: HSCP24

- 4½ to 14 year olds!
- 80+ Activities!
- Choice each session!
- Specialist Courses!
- Flexible bookings!

[barracudas.co.uk](https://www.barracudas.co.uk)
01480 467 567

SCAN ME!

OFFSD REGISTERED

Trustpilot

George Abbot School, Woodruff Avenue, Guildford, GU1 1XX
01483 888000 - www.georgeabbot.surrey.sch.uk