



Ashton Sixth Form College

NEWSLETTER

CHRISTMAS EDITION





WELCOME

As we approach the end of the autumn term, I would like to say an enormous well done and thank you to everyone who has played a part in our college community and who has made this such a fantastic start to the academic year.

It is important that I commend students for their conduct and commitment this term as it has been one of the best starts to an academic year that I can remember. Our students are pleasant, polite and enormously respectful and supportive of each other. They have displayed the commitment and positivity that underpins success, participating in the wide range of enrichment, trips and visits, additional programmes and leadership opportunities that have been on offer to them. I would like to thank every one of them for the contribution they have made to the lovely atmosphere in college which bodes very well for the rest of the year.

So, what have they been up to? Well, there is no doubt that the autumn term packs-a-punch in terms of its duration, pace and the activities that take place. In addition to their studies, A2 students have been busy with UCAS applications or preparations for employment/apprenticeship applications. Over 200 of them have also signed up for the EPQ and are now well into their research which they will present as a research poster in a 'marketplace-style' environment in the spring term. As an EPQ supervisor myself, it is fantastic to see my own students' projects progress and I look forward to seeing what other EPQ-ers have been discovering through their research. Parents/carers will be invited into our final EPQ presentations too, as we feel it is important for you to see the quality of their work – prepare to be wowed!

Over 240 A1 students have signed up for the Realising Aspirations Programme, choosing from 13 strands, and over 800 students have participated in a wide variety of cross-college enrichment activities. There has been a music recital, dance show, sporting fixtures, theatre trips, visits from politicians such as Jonathan Reynolds and Edwina Currie, a Physics trip to CERN in Switzerland, over 150 speakers on a range of subjects and much, much more.

Before I sign off, I would just like to say to our wonderful staff who go above and beyond on a daily basis, to parents and carers who work alongside us to motivate and support our young people, and to all our partners (employers, placement providers) whose support we rely on for our success...THANK YOU ALL!

With my very best regards to you all, and a happy Christmas to those of you who celebrate it.

Lisa



Part of  **STAMFORD
PARK TRUST**



FOCUS ON: EQUALITY & DIVERSITY



99%

of staff at college strongly agree or agree that Equality and Diversity are embedded into the culture of college.

(Source: Staff Perception Survey 2024)

The inclusion of Equality and Diversity across our college has always been and remains an absolute priority. The various celebrations, occasions and opportunities we have as a college are something we are immensely proud of and are done in collaboration with staff, students and external organisations to keep our provision fresh and relevant.

As a college we have a long standing relationship with the LGBTQIA+ charity Stonewall and as a part of their College Champions program we continue to offer training and advice for both staff and students on a range of topics. Our ASFC Pride group are an active part of the enrichment provision we have as a college and have had a very busy year with events such as a trip to the People's History Museum for their Pride Inclusion exhibit, designing new poster displays around college to celebrate the successes of LGBTQIA+ people and taking part in a book review of various books and graphic novels offered in the Library so that more students can engage with what we have on offer. Our Learning Centre Manager and the college Equality and Diversity Coordinator were both interviewed by and featured in the Tameside Reporter last February regarding LGBT History Month and the outstanding provision for students in the Library. The ASFC Pride group also ran a fundraiser to mark the anniversary of the death Brianna Ghey and raised money for the group campaigning for change in her memory.

Across college we continued our commitment to maintaining a progressive approach to equality and diversity with all staff participating in training by the UK Feminista organisation aimed at educating students and ending sexism in schools/colleges. Following the training and a series of focus groups, we are delighted to say we have launched our ASFC Feminism society this academic year with great success. Alongside this,

we have made a commitment as a college to support the White Ribbon Organisation who are a group that campaign to end the violence against women from men. The ASFC Feminism society have already held a fund raiser for this charity as a part of White Ribbon Day and will continue to work with the charity and others throughout this year.

Being a White Ribbon Supporter Organisation now sits alongside our other commitments such as being a Disability Confident Employer and adopting the Halo Hair Code as another way we are working with students in preparing them for life in modern Britain. In addition to these commitments, events such as the fantastically popular Culture Day make life at Ashton Sixth Form College a terrific celebration of diversity in our college community.

This includes, but is not limited to, the celebration of female writers in English Language to mark International Women's Day and the exploration of texts in English Literature that challenge pejorative stereotypes based on gender, sexuality, or religion. In Philosophy, Ethics, and Religion, students consider different religious beliefs in the UK. Various guest speakers representing a range of diversities are featured in Dance, while pioneers from diverse backgrounds are celebrated throughout the year in Science, including Chien-Shiung Wu in Physics and Kathleen Lonsdale in Chemistry.

In Business and Economics, extensive displays highlight the roles of women and members of the Black community in industry. The Humanities department arranged for Holocaust survivor Lady Milena Grenfell-Baines to visit the college as a guest speaker. In Sport, students earned a coaching qualification from Boccia, a popular and recognised organisation supporting people with disabilities in sport. In Media, students studied Selma to deepen their understanding of the Civil Rights Movement.

Debates in Psychology address issues surrounding gender bias. The Art department's enrichment program includes an in-depth exploration of Equality and Diversity (E&D) topics to expand students' cultural knowledge and perspectives. Finally, Health and Social Care placements provide hands-on experience, allowing students to work with individuals from a range of backgrounds and preparing them for professional life after college.



ASHTON APPRECIATES



Rick Allanson

Nominated by Bernie Billington

Rick has shown such kindness and guidance to students who are still thinking about how to complete their UCAS applications, he has gone above and beyond with the time he has spent with students working through his lunch times and staying behind after college. He really has made a difference to the students at a time when their confidence may be low. He always has encouraging words and humour no matter how busy he is. Everyone needs someone like Rick in their life.



Daniel Arrowsmith

Nominated by Brenda Warnock

I'd like to nominate the Site Staff Team for always making themselves available for the Printroom's tiresome tasks. When College staff require us to produce vast quantities of booklets etc. in a fast turnaround, that would fall short if I didn't have site staff to call upon to deliver their boxes. So, from stocking up our room with all the boxes of white and coloured paper, through to delivering our finished products, staff help us to cross those i's and dot those t's. Thanks a million, Site Staff.



Dean Biggs

Nominated by Brenda Warnock

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Janette Chantrey

Nominated by Andrew Gilday

I would like to nominate The Printroom Team. I'm amazed by just how quickly they turn around our requests, and the way they go above and beyond in creating displays and bespoke requests.



Marie Chesney

Nominated by Laura Deane

I'd like to nominate Marie Chesney for all of her hard work behind the scenes in Art Foundation. She is ever-cheerful in the face of my confusion and has contributed massively to the success of the course.



Carol Darwin

Nominated by Angela McGibbon

I'd like to nominate Carol Darwin for putting up all the gorgeous Christmas decorations in our department, for her genuine Christmas cheer and commitment to the season. Superstar.



Erin Day

Nominated by Laura Deane

Erin has managed the Art Dept so well this year - giving everybody the freedom to run their courses, whilst keeping us all organised. She's fair, openly appreciative of us all, and has been especially supportive of me in running two courses. She is a brilliant Head of Department.



Sharron Galley

Nominated by Angela McGibbon

I'd like to nominate Sharron Galley for Ashton appreciates. Why ? Because she's a Top Notch colleague, she's warm, very funny (hilarious) incredibly good at her job and always brings joy to our office.



Kim Greeves

Nominated by Laura Deane

I'd like to nominate Kim Greeves for all of her kind and generous support - keeping me organised, helping me to work out College systems, looking after me when I had a breakdown on her, and only rolling her eyes at my chaos occasionally.



Deborah Hill

Nominated by Clare Rosie

Deborah is always so happy to help and provides the most useful information to help students and staff alike to find what they need to help them to succeed. Each time I have asked for support with finding information Deborah has shared valuable resources including various links for the person to find out more. Many thanks to Deborah for all of her hard work.



Michael Jackson

Nominated by Brenda Warnock

I'd like to nominate the Site Staff Team for always making themselves available for the Printroom's tiresome tasks. When College staff require us to produce vast quantities of booklets etc. in a fast turnaround, that would fall short if I didn't have site staff to call upon to deliver their boxes. So, from stocking up our room with all the boxes of white and coloured paper, through to delivering our finished products, staff help us to cross those i's and dot those t's. Thanks a million, Site Staff.



Ash Jones

Nominated by Laura Deane

I'd like to nominate Ash Jones for her calm and unwavering patience in the face of multiple ridiculous IT issues every day in the Art Dept



Natalie Jones

Nominated by Angela McGibbon

I'd like to nominate Natalie Jones for putting up all the gorgeous Christmas decorations in our department, for her genuine Christmas cheer and commitment to the season. Superstar.



Sydney Jones-Jackson

Nominated by Andrew Gilday

I would like to nominate Sydney for her commitment to T&L; For giving up her Friday lunchtimes through the term to provide Digital CPD & setting up the T&L Canvas for staff.



Jane Lingard

Nominated by Guy Marshall

I'd like to nominate Jane Lingard in my department. She has undertaken numerous hours of CPD and attended dozens of meetings to resolve difficulties with the T-Level Health course. Her determination to support the students and improve our specifications is truly admirable.



Clare McIntosh

Nominated by Guy Marshall

I'd like to nominate Clare McIntosh in my department. She has undertaken numerous hours of CPD and attended dozens of meetings to resolve difficulties with the T-Level Health course. Her determination to support the students and improve our specifications is truly admirable.



Gail McPhillips

Nominated by Cara Caso & Rob Murray-Green

Gail does a fabulous role in making sure the Main Reception area is kept clean, tidy and presentable. In the morning, Gail has the kettle ready, stocks extra items to make sure we don't run out through the day and is always warm and welcoming, with a smile ready for us. *(Cara Caso)*

The science department would like to nominate the cleaners in our building. Gail is very cheerful, kind and a terrific member of staff who is often left with a lot of chaos from the aftermath of science lessons (and science teachers) and we really appreciate the time and effort Gail always puts in to support us. *(Rob Murray-Green)*



Dan Pratt

Nominated by Andrew Gilday

I would like to nominate The Printroom Team I'm amazed by just how quickly they turn around our requests, and the way they go above and beyond in creating displays and bespoke requests.

Susan Upton

Nominated by The Science Department

The science department would like to nominate the cleaners in our building. Sue is very cheerful, kind and a terrific member of staff who is often left with a lot of chaos from the aftermath of science lessons (and science teachers) and we really appreciate the time and effort Sue always puts in to support us.





Zhelyo Vasilev

Nominated by Andrew Gilday

I would like to nominate Zhelyo For being a great boss and friend for two and half years - and giving me the chance to really develop.



Brenda Warnock

Nominated by Andrew Gilday

I would like to nominate The Printroom Team. I'm amazed by just how quickly they turn around our requests, and the way they go above and beyond in creating displays and bespoke requests.



Helen Wilcox

Nominated by Peter Lawrence

I would like to nominate Helen Wilcox. She recently spent a couple of days covering our Business lessons when we were let down by supply staff. It made my, and the rest of the team's, life so much easier knowing we had a responsible member of staff looking after the students. Despite this being completely out of her remit Helen gladly stepped into the breach, and we couldn't be more grateful.



Emma Williams

Nominated by Brenda Warnock

I'd like to nominate the Site Staff Team for always making themselves available for the Printroom's tiresome tasks. When College staff require us to produce vast quantities of booklets etc. in a fast turnaround, that would fall short if I didn't have site staff to call upon to deliver their boxes. So, from stocking up our room with all the boxes of white and coloured paper, through to delivering our finished products, staff help us to cross those i's and dot those t's. Thanks a million, Site Staff.



Kate Worthington

Nominated by Donna Wright

I would like to nominate Kate Worthington for Ashton Appreciates. This last year in the MIS department has probably been the toughest year the department has faced. Throughout it all Kate has been amazing. She lost all the team she originally knew and has not only had to contend with working with a new team but also a team that do not know any of the processes or systems. Kate's ability to adapt to new circumstances and take on new challenges with a positive outlook is an amazing quality to have.



STUDENTS TERM DATES 2025-2026

Autumn Term 2025

(Welcome days for new students 2nd or 3rd September)

Thursday & Friday	21 & 22 August 2025	Enrolment - New Students
Thursday	04 September 2025	Teaching Begins
Friday	17 October 2025	First Half Term Ends
Half-Term (2weeks)	20 October – 24 October 2025 27 October – 31 October 2025	HALF TERM HOLIDAY
Monday	03 November 2025	Second Half Term Begins
Friday	19 December 2025	Term Ends

Spring Term 2026

Tuesday	06 January 2026	Term Begins
Friday	13 February 2026	First Half Term Ends
Monday - Friday	16 February – 20 February 2026	HALF TERM HOLIDAY
Monday	23 February 2026	Second Half Term Begins
Friday	27 March 2026	Term Ends

Summer Term 2026

Monday	13 April 2026	Term Begins
<i>Monday</i>	<i>4 May 2026</i>	<i>MAY BANK HOLIDAY</i>
Friday	22 May 2026	First Half Term Ends
Monday - Friday	25 May – 29 May 2026	HALF TERM HOLIDAY (Bank Holiday 25th)
Monday	01 June 2026	Second Half Term Begins
Friday	03 July 2026	Term Ends



SPEAKER OF THE MONTH

November

We were delighted to welcome two speakers of the month into college this November – Leigh Doughty and Dr Charlotte Armitage.

Leigh Doughty is a professional referee, who started refereeing in 2006, qualifying through the Blackpool Referees Association before becoming an England Football League (EFL) referee in 2019.

Leigh explored his career journey with students on our Sports courses, reflecting on how he had played football from a young age and always knew he wanted to work in the sport.

Later in the month, Criminology and Psychology students welcomed Dr Charlotte, psychologist and psychotherapist, specialising in the Film & TV Industry. Dr Charlotte spoke about her fascinating career journey with students, through university to securing jobs on popular TV shows such as Big Brother and Celebs Go Dating.

Both Leigh and Dr. Charlotte provided valuable advice and insights, inspiring students as they consider their own career paths. Students also had the opportunity to ask questions, gaining practical tips to help them achieve their goals.

A huge thank you to Leigh Doughty and Dr. Charlotte Armitage for taking the time to engage with and inspire our students!





ASHTON NEWS

FORMER MP EDWINA CURRIE VISITS ASHTON SIXTH FORM COLLEGE



Ashton Sixth Form College recently welcomed former Conservative MP Edwina Currie, who shared her insights and experiences in the world of politics with Politics students. Currie spoke passionately about her time in Parliament, the challenges she faced, and the lessons she learned, especially as one of the few women in the political sphere during her career.

Currie began by reflecting on her entry into politics in the early 1980s, when there were only 23 female MPs, and Margaret Thatcher was the sole woman in a position of high authority. Described as “outrageous and outspoken,” Currie rose to prominence for her willingness to speak her mind and push for change. She became an MP during a tumultuous period, marked by the miners’ strikes, a pivotal issue that underscored her early years in Parliament. Representing South Derbyshire, a constituency where miners didn’t strike, Currie highlighted the importance of engaging with those holding opposing views to reach mutual understanding and solutions.

She emphasised to students that politics should be rooted in service, focusing on helping constituents rather than prioritising personal career advancement. After her tenure in government, Currie worked with the BBC and authored several books, which

she said opened new avenues of influence and personal growth. Currie encouraged students to find opportunities even in difficult circumstances, advising them not to dwell on setbacks but to seek out unexpected possibilities, which, in her words, “might be better than what you were doing.”

Currie also discussed her experience hosting a Ukrainian family in her home for two years, a move inspired by her strong interests in housing issues and the Grenfell tragedy. She spoke passionately about the media’s portrayal of women in politics, a topic she considers critical for improving female representation and support in government.

As she recounted working alongside Margaret Thatcher, Currie also shared her greatest achievements in public health. Her efforts led to the UK’s first breast cancer screening programme and an innovative AIDS campaign focused on education, prevention, and destigmatisation. These initiatives reflected her commitment to NHS improvement and preventative healthcare, ensuring that public funds reached those most in need.

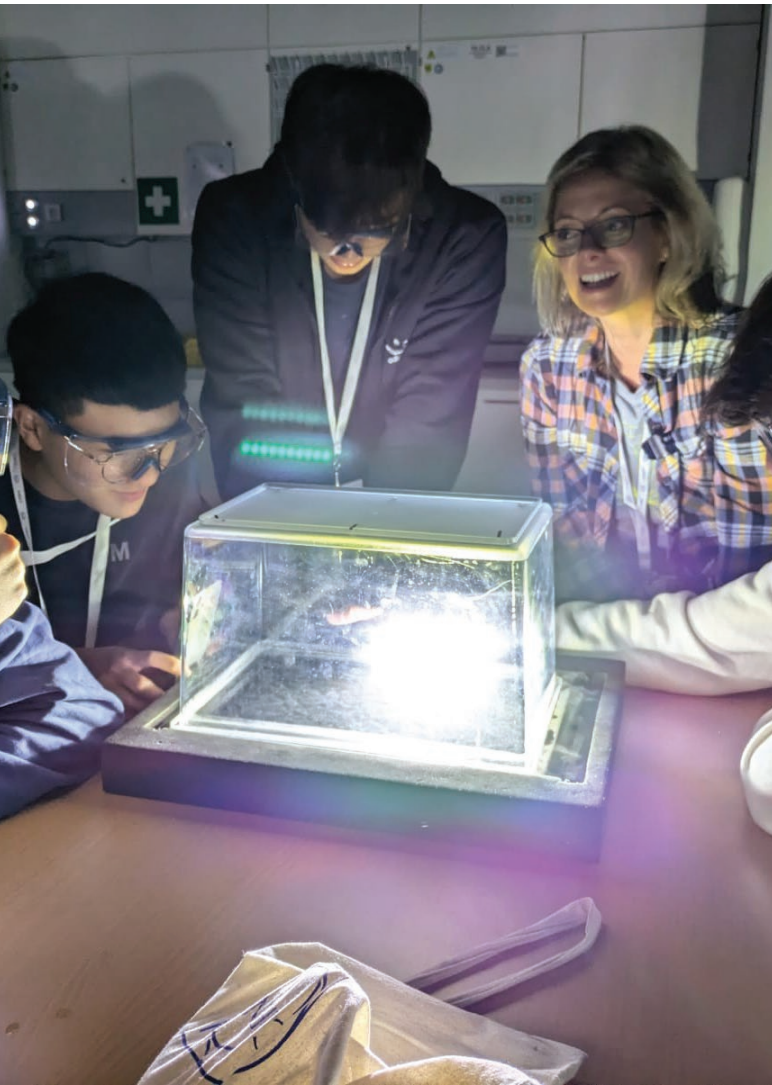
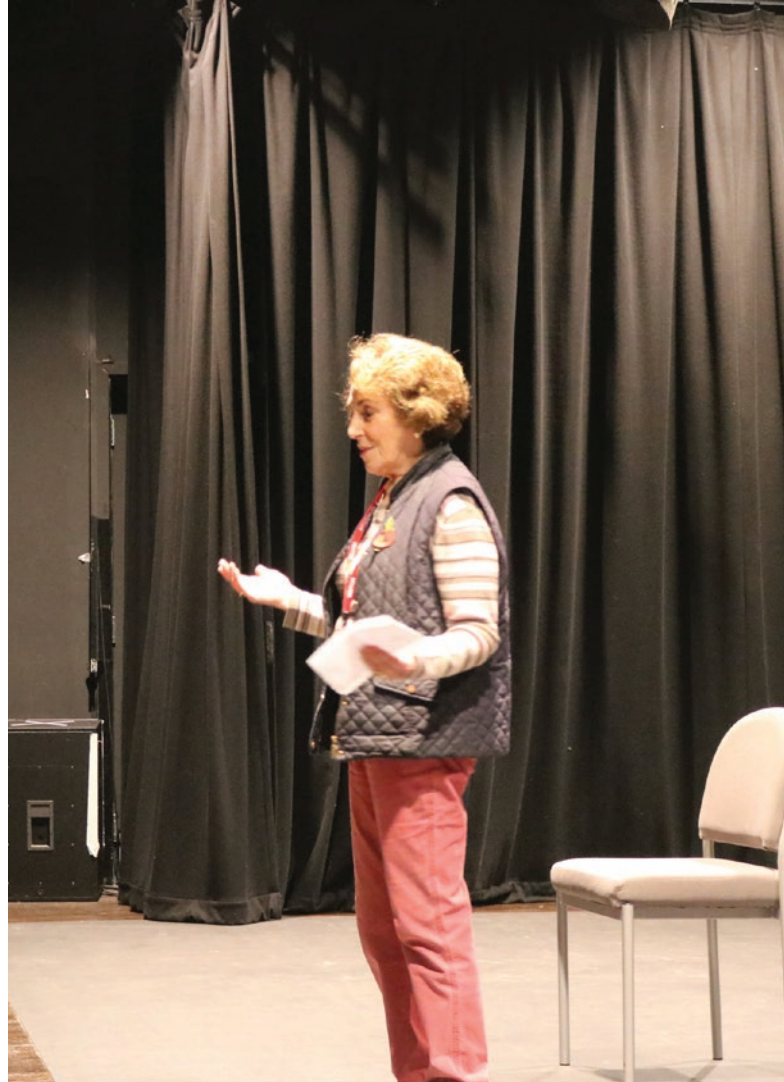
Throughout her career, Currie has also been a steadfast advocate for LGBTQ+ rights, working

to change discriminatory laws and promoting equal rights—a principle she explained transcends discussions about specific demographics, focusing instead on universal human rights.

Currie's talk left Ashton Sixth Form Politics students inspired, highlighting the importance of resilience, empathy, and advocacy in a political career and beyond. Her candid reflections on resilience, public service, and standing up for one's beliefs resonated deeply, inspiring students to think critically about their own potential impact in society. Many students commented on the value of hearing about real-world applications of politics, particularly the importance of compassion and integrity in public service.

By sharing her personal journey and hard-earned lessons, Currie empowered the students to believe that, regardless of obstacles, they too have the ability to make meaningful contributions in their own communities. The session not only broadened their understanding of British politics but also encouraged them to view politics as a path for creating positive change.

Huge thank you to Edwina for coming in and sharing such valuable experiences with our students.



PHYSICS STUDENTS TAKE A TRIP TO SWITZERLAND!

Students studying A Level Physics recently took a trip to Switzerland to visit the European Organisation for Nuclear Research - CERN.

At CERN, students and staff had a tour around the cryogenics test facility with a Physicist from the CMS detector, took part in a lab workshop to build cloud chamber and observe particle tracks, as well as having a look around the exhibitions!

Whilst in Geneva, they also explored the city's Christmas markets and the History of Science Museum.



ASHTON SIXTH FORM COLLEGE WELCOMES GOVERNMENT POLICY ADVISORS & SMALLSHAW- HURST CHILDREN'S COMMUNITY FOR PIVOTAL POVERTY CONSULTATION

Ashton Sixth Form College, part of Stamford Park Trust, is honoured to host a landmark meeting with Alasdair De Costa and Frances McCellan, two Senior Policy Advisors in the Child Poverty Taskforce and Smallshaw-Hurst Children's Community (SSH CC).

This session offers Senior Policy Advisors, Alasdair De Costa and Frances McCellan, the opportunity to hear first-hand accounts of how poverty and the cost-of-living crisis impact families and the young people of Tameside daily. Insights gained from these conversations will contribute to the UK Government's strategic policies on poverty reduction, helping to shape a more equitable future for all.

Smallshaw-Hurst Children's Community (SSH CC) is a collaborative initiative based in Tameside, Greater Manchester, dedicated to empowering children, young people, and families in the Smallshaw-Hurst area. Established in 2016, SSH CC addresses the challenges faced by this community, where 31% of children live in income-deprived households—14% above the national average—and life expectancy is notably lower than the national average. SSH CC, in partnership with Save the Children UK (SCUK) and the UK Government's Child Poverty Taskforce, is proud to facilitate this session as part of a series of 19 consultations across England. These consultations aim

to inform the UK Child Poverty Strategy, which will be unveiled in Spring 2025.

Locally, such consultations will include focus groups with local schoolchildren, Parent Champions, senior leaders from Great Academy Ashton and Ashton Sixth Form College, and representatives from key organisations such as Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council, Debt Justice Manchester, and Jigsaw Housing. The collaborative effort underscores the importance of community-driven solutions in tackling systemic challenges.

Julie Wilson, Executive Lead at SSH CC, highlighted the significance of listening to lived experiences:

“For policies to succeed, decision-makers must engage directly with those impacted. At SSH CC, we aim to help children and families break the cycle of poverty and achieve their full potential. Having the opportunity to host two Senior Policy Advisors in the Child Poverty Taskforce is incredibly important for Smallshaw-Hurst Children's Community and Tameside. It allows us to share the lived experiences of children and families in our community directly with policymakers. Our key message is clear: effective policies must empower families to thrive, not just survive, by addressing the root causes of

poverty, improving access to support, and ensuring children have the best opportunities to reach their full potential.”

Ashton Sixth Form College’s involvement underscores Stamford Park Trust’s unwavering commitment to excellence, ambition for all, and supporting the young people of Tameside, particularly those facing challenges linked to poverty. By fostering strong partnerships with organisations like Smallshaw-Hurst and championing community initiatives, the Trust aims to influence policy changes that address systemic barriers, create equitable opportunities, and empower young people to overcome adversity and achieve their full potential.

Anton McGrath, CEO of Stamford Park Trust and Chair of Smallshaw-Hurst Children’s Community, added:

“Today’s meeting is an important step in finding the right policy solutions to support children and families who find themselves living in poverty. It is essential that decision makers and policy writers hear directly from those affected by current policy, so the reasons why families and children are held back from reaching their potential can be identified and used to design more supportive measures in future.”

STUDENTS GET INVOLVED IN LAUNCH OF GREATER MANCHESTER APPRENTICESHIP & CAREERS SERVICE!

Recently, current Ashton Sixth Form College students returned to their former high school, Rayner Stephens to trial the newly launched Greater Manchester Apprenticeship & Careers Service (GMACS).

GMACS is a service aimed at young people in Greater Manchester and provides advice, guidance and opportunities for their next steps after education.

Our students – Blessing, Zach and Ellie – had a fantastic morning learning more about GMACS and taking part in filming a promotional video for GMCA.

A huge thank you to Rayner Stephens for hosting this exciting day and to GMCA for including Ashton students in this important initiative! We can’t wait to see the final video and the impact it will make to fellow young people in Greater Manchester.





PERFORMING ARTS WORKSHOPS

Before the half term break, our Music Performance, Music Technology and Dance students worked with Global Grooves, a professional community company based in the North West who specialise in Carnival.

The students thoroughly enjoyed the creative workshop, exploring music and movement. Freya and Emma from Global Grooves, provided a range of creative activities to enable learners to experience the Carnival culture and original. Our students were enthusiastic to embrace this opportunity to develop a range of skills and collaborate with professional and community artists.

A1 and A2 Dance students have also enjoyed a workshop with former student, Molly France this week! Molly achieved A* in Dance at Ashton and returned to work with our Dance students to share her experiences and talent. The students enjoyed the Vogue workshop which will help them with their studies and research for the Street Dance Unit.

Thank you to Gobal Grooves and Molly for working with our students!



ASHTON SIXTH FORM COLLEGE CHRISTMAS PANTRY

For Students & Staff

Donate what you can - take what you need

Happy Christmas

PRINCIPAL'S RECOGNITION LUNCH

This week, our Centre Principal Lisa Richards held the termly recognition lunch to celebrate students who have stood out so far this term to curriculum and support staff! A huge congratulations to all nominated students. The following students received nominations:

- Hatoon Maki
- Sam Walsh
- Max Patterson
- Millie Shaw
- Neha Ahmad
- Mohammed Waziri
- Maggie Rogers
- Callum Hirst
- Oliver Chadwick
- Rames Echendou
- Olivia Read
- Grace Marland
- Charlotte Ivens
- Olivia Harvey
- Jeevan Jolly
- Sam Rowbottom
- Mata Diallo
- Rabas Shibir
- Blessing Mdongo
- Grace Rumney
- Brendle Yak
- Megan Powell
- Isabelle Cadman
- Elva Mills
- Liam Peddie
- Mateo Huxley Fradkin
- Emily Taylor
- Mia Johnson
- Erin Lord
- Jess Senior
- Lola Brown
- Maja Giergielewicz
- Daniel Buckley
- Maisie Roberts
- Jake Roberts
- Andrew Dunning
- Wren Weaver
- Elena Vitello
- Caitilin Clayton
- Oliver Bradley-Harling
- Lou Thorp-Downes
- Alexandros Kyriakou
- Chloe Wilde
- Eshaak Akram Sattar
- Maurice Utchay
- Armaan Hussain
- Archie McLaren
- Hina Bibi Ahmed
- Robin Blintliff
- Millie Grindley
- Ella Hulme
- Jessica Bridge
- Keano Wassell
- Gracie Plant
- Louise Bailey
- Benis Masengo
- Ibraheem Fajobi
- Finlay Holt
- Joe Simensky
- Leo Chadwick
- Rhys Johnston
- Zach Hardy
- Wisdom Osabuohien
- Oliver Hutchfield
- Joe Harper
- Megan Neeson-Taylor
- Shriya Patel
- Rory Hand
- Cal Elphick
- Daniel Smith
- Anna Waugh Joinson
- Maisie Knott
- Joseph Cain





BE AMBITIOUS EMPLOYER NETWORKING EVENT 2024

Be Ambitious

Following two successful years of the Be Ambitious programme, our Careers and Employability team are excited to roll out the programme for a third year to our first year students.

To kick off Be Ambitious Week 2025, the team held an employer networking event. Employers from various organisations and companies, both local and national, attended the event to learn more about how they can support our students throughout Be Ambitious Week.

During Be Ambitious Week, students can either participate in a work placement, attend employability workshops or take part in an employer-led project, where industry experts set real-time briefs for students to work on and present back their findings at the end of the week.

The flagship programme ensures students have access to meaningful employer encounters and gain work experience, helping them develop key employability skills and prepare them for the world of work.

The employer networking event was a fantastic opportunity to strengthen partnerships with organisations and employers, who play a vital role in the running of Be Ambitious Week.

Attendees heard from the Careers and Employability team at Ashton, as well as Dean Kleban from Tameside Council who shared an insight into the local support available for businesses and young people. Councillor Andrew McLaren also explored his thoughts on supporting young talent within the Tameside borough, endorsing the College on our

work for providing meaningful opportunities for students. In addition, Gillian Finch from Carpenter Ltd. spoke about her experience of getting involved in Be Ambitious Week last year and how rewarding and important it is to mentor and work with the students of Ashton Sixth Form College.

Current students, Aoife and Maisie also shared valuable insights from a student's perspective, emphasising how Be Ambitious Week has impacted their learning journey, and the skills they have acquired through the programme.

Rachel Smirke, Director of Curriculum and Progression said:

"The Employer Networking event is an opportunity to invite in local organisations that have either worked with us in the past or would like to in the future. It was fantastic to hear how our students have added value to organisations and how much employers value the experience of working with our talented students. The aim is always to ensure that we support our students to develop essential skills for the workforce but the cherry on the top is hearing just how mutually beneficial the experience is. We look forward to another successful year and are excited to see the outcomes of this year's projects."

The team at Ashton are looking forward to another successful year of Be Ambitious in 2025 and are excited to continue working with organisations to create enriching experiences for our students.

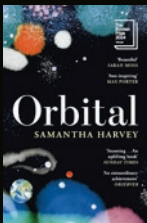
BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

Andrew Sztehlo, Learning Resources Manager, gives us some book recommendations. All of these books are available from the college library, so stop by and borrow one of these fantastic books!



Friday *Ed Brubaker and Marcos Martin*

This three volume graphic novel series, a “Post-YA” masterpiece, is a perfect read for Christmas. Friday Fitzhugh has spent her childhood solving occult crimes with her best friend Lancelot Jones, but always in the shadow of his extraordinary genius. Now she’s grown up and gone to college, starting a new life of her own. But when she comes back to her hometown for Christmas, determined to address the new gulf of silence between her and Lancelot, something very strange starts happening... Friday will finally have to stand on her own to save the day in what can only be described as the Christmas vacation from Hell! A perfect read for anyone who grew up reading Nancy Drew or Enid Blyton, but with a 1980s American supernatural horror twist.



Orbital *Samatha Harvey*

Orbital is the recent winner of the Booker Prize 2024, and my, does it deserve the accolade. A team of astronauts in the International Space Station are working to collect scientific data, but also to observe planet Earth. But even in Space, they can’t escape the gravitational pull of home. One of the astronauts learns of the death of his mother, and with this incident the astronauts start to think of the fragility of human life, the ecosystem, and the inextricable link between the two. Whilst it may sound like science fiction, I wouldn’t classify this book as such – more literary fiction that just happens to be about astronauts! Either way, this is a book full of heart and empathy. Highly recommended, especially if you’ve liked the recent work of Claire Keegan.



The Warriors *Sol Yurick*

Not only the basis for the classic 1979 action thriller but also the new concept album/musical by Eisa Davis and Lin-Manuel Miranda (of Hamilton fame), The Warriors novel is a beast all of its own. The story follows a street gang, the Coney Island Dominators, as they have been called to the Bronx alongside thousands of other gang members, by Ismael Rivera, leader of the Delancey Thrones, who has decided to call a truce between gangs in the wake of rising police brutality. When the meeting descends into violence and the Dominators are wrongly accused for it, the boys face a 50 mile trek to get back home alive with every gang in New York out for their blood. What follows is a terrifying and shocking story as the Dominators must kill their way to survive the night. First published in 1965, the book evokes the writings of Hubert Selby Jr. (Last Train to Brooklyn, Requiem for a Dream) and Bret Easton Ellis (American Psycho).



Hercule Poirot's Christmas *Agatha Christie*

Recommended by
Louise Brown

Hercule Poirot's Christmas was written in 1938 during the golden years of Agatha Christie. This book is about a wealthy family, headed by the tyrannical father Simeon Lee who has demanded all his children and their wives return to the family home for Christmas. Before Christmas is out Simeon is found with his throat cut in a supposedly locked room. The presence of Pilar Estravados, the offspring of the only daughter of Simeon is an addition to the many twists and turns of this story, which is written in true Agatha Christie style with red herrings galore and an ending that will take a reader by surprise. This book begins a few days before Christmas and gets the reader into the spirit of Christmas.

HIGHER & ADULT EDUCATION

WE'RE EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE NEW ADULT COURSES AT ASHTON SIXTH FORM COLLEGE'S HIGHER & ADULT EDUCATION CENTRE

Level 1 Award in Preparing to Work in Schools

- Introductory course for those considering a career in schools.
- Perfect for career changers or those exploring opportunities in education.
- Runs Monday mornings, 9:30 am–11:30 am, for 8–10 weeks.

Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Specific Learning Difficulties

- Focuses on dyslexia, ADHD, and other learning difficulties.
- Suitable for anyone in education, healthcare, or social care or those with a genuine interest in the subject.
- Runs Wednesday afternoons, 12:30 pm–2:30 pm, for 12–16 weeks.

Level 3 Certificate in Supporting Teaching and Learning

- For those working or volunteering in classroom settings.
- Provides a Level 3 qualification for career advancement.
- Runs Wednesday evenings, 6:00 pm–8:30 pm, for 6 months.

For more information, contact us on 0161 6668215 or email us at AdultEd@asfc.ac.uk

GUEST SPEAKER OF THE MONTH

Anthony Benedict from the Ambition Community Trust

Anthony delivered an inspiring session on trauma-informed practice and relational inclusion to our teacher trainees. His presentation was both insightful and impactful, providing valuable knowledge that will greatly support our trainees in their teaching journey.



HEALTHY LIVING FAIR



Our Access to Health Science and PGCE Post-16 (teacher training) students participated in the Healthy Living Fair this month. The PGCE students honed their feedback skills, while the Access students collaborated in groups to create themed stalls and present their work to the PGCE students. Each stall focused on various aspects of healthy living and well-being.



RESOURCES

For those who require support from external agencies or out of college hours, the following support is available:

- Your GP
- kooth.com - free online counselling service 12-10pm weekdays and 6-10pm weekends
- Off the Record Young Peoples Counselling, Clarendon Square, Hyde - drop in Wednesday 3-6pm (just drop in for a chat) or phone 0161 355 3553 (self referral)
- The Hive, Katherine St, Ashton-under-Lyne, 0161 330 9223 - drop in 4-8pm every Wednesday
- Anthony Seddon Fund, 12 George Street, Ashton-under-Lyne - 0161376 4439 or Thursday 4-7pm drop-in, including refreshments
- 42nd Street, Manchester - 0161 228 1888 (can self refer)
- CALM - Campaign Against Living Miserably for males experiencing mental health issues
- Freephone 0800 585 858, www.thecalmzone.net
- Themix.org.uk - chat/text support and helpline number on website
- Brook (confidential sexual health advice/treatment) - Manchester branch, 81 Lever St, Manchester, M1 1FL, 0161 237 3001

If you are in a crisis, feeling suicidal, experiencing any distressful/uncomfortable thoughts and feelings, try and confide in a friend or relative or seek help from any of the below crisis services. Most are freephone:

- In an emergency the hospital is your first port for help - present yourself at the A&E Dept anytime or contact Tameside Hospital on 0161 922 6000 for telephone advice and support
- Telephone advice and support for people who are having a mental health crisis and/or feel suicidal is available:
- Samaritans - freephone 116 123, email jo@samaritans.org, 24 hours everyday
- Papyrus - papyrus-uk.org
- HOPEline UK - 0800 068 41 41 for support

If you're worried about being lonely this term there are tips, advice and support available



YOUR GUIDE TO CEDAR



Cedar for parents is an online portal allowing you to become more involved in your child's performance in a way that suits you. It allows you to be engaged in their learning and performance at all times, and helps you to provide the support and motivation that may be needed.

BURSARY & FREE COLLEGE MEALS

The college bursary could provide you with financial support during your time at Ashton Sixth Form College. To check if you are eligible and to download the bursary information pack, please visit www.asfc.ac.uk/bursary