

# Abbey Hill School & Technology College Newsletter

## Summer 2007

Simply the BEST!



The Specialist Schools Trust is the national body that awarded Abbey Hill, Technology College status in 1999. An excellent Ofsted inspection report in 2005 stated "Abbey Hill is a good school with outstanding features" The Specialist School Trust has now designated Abbey Hill, HPSS status. HPSS stands for "Higher Performing Specialist School" and with it, comes an invitation for us to take on a further specialist role in addition to our Technology College status. We will have to decide what we would like to choose and then submit a plan showing how we will spend the £60,000 per annum that comes with this new specialism. In the near future I shall be inviting you to a meeting of parents, & governors and other interested parties such as the Local Authority, in order that I can consult with you and gain your views about the options for choice. At the meeting I will give a full explanation of this invitation.

Should you be unable to attend I will send the documents to you and you may send your views in to school. In the meantime relax & enjoy the fact that your child attends a higher performing specialist school.

Mike Vening

### Abbey Hill wins **GOLD!**

Abbey Hill School has just been awarded the Gold standard in the **ARTSMARK**



At the end of June 2007 we were officially awarded the Gold standard awarded by the Arts Council England. This was a great achievement to get the Gold standard at the first attempt! Well done to everyone involved.

Artsmark is a national award scheme managed by **Arts Council England** that recognises schools with a high level of provision in the arts. The award scheme is open to all schools in

England - primary, secondary, special schools and pupil referral units, both maintained and independent.

Artsmark provides a benchmark for arts provision which encourages schools to consider the opportunities they offer in art, dance, drama and music. The application form for Artsmark acts as an auditing tool, through which schools may gain an overall picture of their arts education provision.

### Abbey Hill **Fire**



Some quick reactions and thinking helped staff overcome a fire at Abbey Hill on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> May at about 7.50am. The gym and swimming baths were in

the final stages of having a new roof laid when a fire took hold in one of the ventilation fans. The fire and rescue service were very quick in attending the fire and soon stopped further damage. There is some damage to the electrics and fans but otherwise the roof is OK. This could of course been much worse. There were no students in the building at the time.

### Sheraton students in top five in the **North East**

On Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> May a group of Sheraton students went to a conference held at St James Park Newcastle's stadium this was organised by the Youth Parliament of the United Kingdom.



This conference was about the impact of climate change on the youth of today. It was organised by young people for young

people and to gain their views on what politicians should be doing about climate change in our region. Each group were given various tasks. Our students came in the top 5 of all the groups in dealing with the issues related to climate change. In the picture you can see James Stoker making a short speech in front of hundreds of people, which he did very well.

## Mary Baxter retires



Mary has been at Abbey Hill since the school was formed in 1987. Mary has contributed immensely to every aspect of life at Abbey Hill. Mary's knowledge of French was instrumental in introducing modern foreign languages to Abbey Hill. She was the

coordinator of the European links we have built up through the Comenius project. She was also instrumental in achieving the International School Award. Mary's contribution to Abbey Hill has been considerable over the years. She will be missed by many students and staff.

## The Queen visits 7RM!



Students in 7RM were asked to organise a special day, so that they could then write a report about the day. They decided to invite "The Queen" to a party that they had planned and organised. "The Queen" arrived at 2.pm and stayed for over an hour. Many were convinced that this was the Queen but in fact it was a very credible regal performance by Becky's grandmother.

## Abbey Hill Hosts Durham University Science PGCE Placements.



Clare Todd and Steve Atkinson completed their PGCE Secondary Science course by spending a six week

placement with us. Their time involved teaching science at both the main site and at the post 16 Sheraton College building.

## Abbey Hill Sheraton work experience



**Vicky Ferguson and Rachel Carberry**

Vicky and Rachel attended Tesco Extra on Durham Lane and were assigned to the Dairy section where they assisted with replenishing the fridges and keeping stock tidy. They also directed customers around the store and had a general insight into the daily running of the department including Internet ordering. Tesco were very pleased with both Vicky and Rachel and have offered them further placements should they want to go back! They were also each given a small gift from Tesco as a thank you for their hard work.

## Abbey Hill students make mosaics



On June the 4<sup>th</sup> a group of our students went to St Johns church on Durham Road to make mosaics. We worked with a local artist called Claude Frere Smith. We first had to roughen up some planters so the cement would stick to it, and then drew a few designs onto the planter. After doing that we had to break up some ceramic tiles and stick them on. We hope to complete them in a few weeks and put them on show.

Don Wilson

## Becky is a winner!

The TDA (Training and Development Agency for Schools) Award for Outstanding New Teacher of the year



Becky Jenkins has won the regional award (North East & Cumbria) for Outstanding New Teacher of the year. She will now be entered into the National New Teacher Award. Well done Becky.

Becky went up at 10am for a seminar about team building. At 12pm Bernie, Brenda and Sarah brought 8 students from 9BJ up where we had a buffet lunch and then went into the theatre area for the awards. A film crew filmed the event and the awards ceremony was hosted by Wendy Gibson.

When Becky won she had to go on stage and give a brief speech where she thanked her tutor group and school staff. Afterwards Becky had photos taken.

## Sustainability Days

On the 28<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> June 07 the whole school took part in Sustainability Days. These days were aimed at highlighting the need to look after resources and to re-cycle waste. Technology college sustainability days are designed to raise the whole school awareness on sustainability and how we can as a school contribute. Sustainability will feature in future plans for the development of our Technology departments.



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Special thanks to Broom House Farm in Witton Gilbert for providing produce for BBQ.

## They have got the Picture!



Eight students were entered for an entry level qualification in photography. They have all worked really hard on a 10 hour examination under the topic of David Hockney and they also completed lots of course work – reflection in mono and portraiture based on the work of Any Warhol. The work can be seen in the IT2 room and also in the main reception. Moderator from the OCR exam board came to mark them and said that the work was to GCSE level. Well done to all.

## Abbey Hill achieves Healthy Schools award (Gold)



This was an event that included lots of schools from the Stockton borough who came to collect their healthy school award. The day was split into workshops which included drumming, arts and crafts, basic first aid, mad science, face painting and a fire engine plus many other activities. In the afternoon we all sat in the main hall which was beautifully presented and welcomed the major and mayoress of Stockton. They presented each school with their awards. There was also a main award for school of the year which I was disappointed to see it wasn't our school. Perhaps we could try for that for 2008?? Hope so!!!!