

Welcome

Welcome to the first ASFC newsletter of academic year 2024/25. I hope that it gives you an insight into the busy life of the college and the great start that has been made to the academic year.

Our new students are now finding their way around college with confidence, A2s have moved into a new gear in relation to their studies and planning for their next steps and our adult students have started with a bang, already thinking about where their qualifications will take them next. Attendance, punctuality and engagement are excellent across all cohorts which is a great sign of a positive year ahead.

I am immensely proud of our 2024 leavers' achievements. The high grades they achieved will open doors to even the most competitive and prestigious university or employment opportunities. Students performed superbly across all qualification types including our first cohort of T Level graduates who achieved an 88% high grade rate! Our 2024 completers have gone on to some impressive destinations, showing what is achievable with hard work and dedication.

The year has started with a bang in other ways too. Our Speaker of the Month programme kicked off with a talk by Grace Payne, a Forensic Psychologist based in a women's prison. This visit was closely followed by ex-student and now actor, Isabelle Smith, who spoke about landing a leading role in Hollyoaks and the reality of being an actor. We are planning many more exciting guest speakers, both through our Speaker of the Month programme and through subjects. Additionally, students have signed up to a range of enrichment courses including sign language, Duke of Edinburgh, Life Drawing and a cooking course 'From Prep to Plate'. Trips and visits are taking students the length and breadth of the country (and beyond), including an Art residential to Blackpool, a Physics trip to CERN in Switzerland and a visit by our elite sport students to compete in the national colleges competition in Nottingham, to name just a few.

I am delighted to say that we are now one of the largest centres in the north of England for the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), with almost 300 students signing up. Our EPQ-ers recently attended an EPQ conference in college where they heard from university professors and others from the world of research. I look forward to seeing their final presentations in March.

Other notable events so far this academic year include our Be Ambitious Awards event and our first ever Student Leadership Conference. At our Be Ambitious Awards, 80 students were rewarded for outstanding achievements on their work experience or in the employer-set projects that they undertook in July. The event was attended by several local employers who commented that they were "in awe" of our students' professionalism and the standard of their work. Ninety students who have demonstrated excellent leadership qualities took part in our Leadership Conference at the Etihad Stadium. They heard from speakers Jonathan Reynolds, MP and Secretary of State, and entrepreneur (and The Apprentice runner-up) Kathryn Burn as well as taking part in group-work throughout the day. I already knew our students were super-talented, but finished the day marvelling at how bright these students' futures will be!

As we move into November, I hope all our students are settled and happy in college. The level and volume of work will continue to pick up but we do balance this with strong academic and pastoral support. However, if any students or parents have concerns about anything at all, please do not hesitate to get in touch. We're all here to help!

With all my best wishes to our students and their families, and a huge and genuine thanks to all those who support our work.

Lisa



ASHTON APPRECIATES!

Louise Arbuckle

Nominated by Rebecca Cullen

Louise Arbuckle truly is the light of our office. Her warm spirit brightens our workdays, even when she faces personal challenges at home. Despite these challenges, Louise consistently goes above and beyond in her work, demonstrating remarkable dedication and a strong work ethic. Her contributions are invaluable, and her ability to uplift those around her does not go unnoticed. We deeply appreciate all that she does and are grateful to have her as part of our team.



Chris Ashworth

Nominated by Cara Caso

Chris has been fantastic in supporting me with readapting various rooms, he is always available either via email or f2f, when I have needed advice on what I am ordering and especially putting it together. Refreshing the office space is something that has been on my radar since starting and he has taken that forward so we can finally have a fresher looking office. No request is too much, always supports when needed but this goes for all the team also. Whether its putting together flatpack, sorting us new keys, dealing with a disgruntled neighbour, or simply moving a box - we never have to ask twice. *Cara Caso*



Chris really is the glue that holds it all together. ASFC is full of people that live and breathe the place, which is why I like being here. He is a shining example of that attitude: he rises to the challenge every time, puts in hours way above and beyond his remit and he's always ready help anyone, anytime. Hail to the king. *Adam Tucker*

Dean Biggs

Nominated by Dave Morris

Twice over the past few months I've had to ask for first aiders to come deal with student medical emergencies in my lessons, and Dean has responded both times. He dealt with each student in a calm, reassuring manner, and has basically been an absolute star on both occasions!



Bernie Billington

Nominated by Rick Allanson

Bernie has not only given up her valuable retirement time to return and keep us all in check, but she has also provided the tutor base with fun, laughter and her experience and knowledge is very much appreciated by her colleagues.



Louise Brown

Nominated by Andrew Sztchlo

Louise is the backbone of our Learning Resources department. As her role is on the desk she has over the years formed fantastic relationships with students who come to her for all of the help you'd expect. Additionally she provides fantastic support to colleagues, especially over the last year when we had unavoidable staff absences, and even more so during the last month, when the department head had much start of year admin to get through. Louise stepped up and has taken on many inductions and continues to be a pillar of the service. She is a much loved and cherished member of the team, and we're thankful for her consistency, reliability, and inner strength.



Cara Caso

Nominated by the Reception Team

Cara is very supportive of her team. Cara has brought positivity and calmness to our working office. Cara brightens up the day and we look forward to coming to work, she is kind and treat's us to flowers and chocolates in the office just because....



Cara is exceptionally helpful, and recently organised an email communicating to all staff on 29.8.24 at 11.24am a quick link to many things using the correct method for booking of pre-register visitors/reserve visitor car park/booking refreshments/Log an estate job/book a meeting room and also details explaining what information reception need from a member of staff when a coach booking is made for trips.

Cara helped us in getting a new postage machine/new envelope folding machine/new visitor ID card machine/new carpets for our office/new radio walkie talkie and also arranged and set up a further medical room that was very much needed.

Our staff development morning at the Village Hotel at Ashton Moss was very beneficial to all of us, we gave some thoughts on situations that we experience and Cara gave positive ideas for going forward.

Marie Crompton

Nominated by the English Department

We would like to nominate our cleaner Marie Crompton for being an absolute star! She is totally brilliant and always cheers us up every morning - however early or miserable the weather is! Marie always makes us laugh and feel positive about our day. Many thanks for everything Marie, you are very much appreciated by me and the English Team.



Tracy Cross

Nominated by Joanne Kirkland

Tracy works so hard every day and is constantly running around to make sure everyone is gets their orders in record time. I just want to say that her energy and enthusiasm makes every bit of difference for me and other staff and students throughout each day. Tracy is dedicated, consistent, dependable, committed and optimistic. Her job isn't easy, but she makes it look effortless while helping others get through the day. Thank you for helping so many people including myself start their days off on the right foot (with strong coffee).



Pauline Fielden

Nominated by Joanne Kirkland

Pauline works so hard every day and is constantly running around to make sure everyone is gets their orders in record time. I just want to say that her energy and enthusiasm makes every bit of difference for me and other staff and students throughout each day. Pauline is dedicated, consistent, dependable, committed and optimistic. Her job isn't easy, but she makes it look effortless while helping others get through the day. Thank you for helping so many people including myself start their days off on the right foot (with strong coffee).



Ash Jones

Nominated by Andrew Sztchlo

Not only is Ash an incredibly friendly face but he also has provided exceptional IT support to the Learning Resources department, taking on many of our IT queries and getting to grips with our complicated Heritage library management system. The amount of queries could irritate many, but Ash is always extremely friendly and happy to help out, including working on lengthier issues that may require more than a 20 minute check. With Ash's help we've been able to get to grips with Heritage much more so



than ever before and evolve the service to meet the current day needs of our staff and students. Even aside from this exceptional help, Ash wondered over the other day to check in on the team's welfare, probably after seeing the department head stomp moodily down the corridors! The awareness, genuine care, and affection Ash has for us is only doubled in return – we're very thankful to have someone so kind and conscientious on our side!

Dane Jones

Nominated by Sam Shepley

Dane not only supports all of our students, despite the course they are on, he also goes above and beyond to help the students gain confidence. He has been helping recently with a student who is struggling, accessing clothes and football boots/ trainers and even a haircut! Dane has been working with the tutors to assist with retention and is always there for enrolment too. We appreciate him and want to send a genuine thanks.



Sheridan Lewis

Nominated by Tamzin Sinclair-Sivins

A massive thank you Sheridan for stepping in and helping out! You have actually more than helped out, not only in a very challenging time for the department, but also over a period that has been a very challenging time for you. Your support, help, experience and input are always massively appreciated, and I wanted to take some time to give you the recognition you deserve, say thank you and show appreciation.



Dan McDermott

Nominated by Mark Bates

Dan has gone above and beyond to support one of our new students, who has faced significant challenges transitioning to Ashton Sixth Form. Dan's positive and compassionate interactions with the student, as well as his professionalism in a recent parent meeting, clearly demonstrated his commitment to the student's well-being. His approach has made a real difference in helping the student feel supported and valued during a tough time ensuring he is enrolled on the right subject.



Lee Morris

Nominated by Ash Jones

Lee tackles all the often unseen, mind-bogglingly complex tasks and issues that can arise on a network the size of the Trust. He works tirelessly to make sure that all systems are functional and secure, often sacrificing his own time to fix issues and ensure everything is functional again for the next day.

He manages to keep a jovial attitude and always takes the time to explain anything complex and break it down into plain and simple terms, even when the queue of helpdesk queries and networking issues seems like it will never end.



Sophie Sparke

Nominated by Louise Arbuckle

Sophie has offered her help with all sorts of tasks during enrolment. She has taken calls, offered help with checking the inbox, asking if there is anything she can do, knowing it would help during one of our busiest times. Nothing is a problem for her, and she has been readily available to help with anything and I feel she is a real team player, and I would like to tell her that it is very much appreciated.



Reuben Uppal

Nominated by Sam Shepley

Reuben not only supports all of our students, despite the course they are on, he also goes above and beyond to help the students gain confidence. He has been helping recently with a student who is struggling, accessing clothes and football boots/ trainers and even a haircut! Reuben has been working with the tutors to assist with retention and is always there for enrolment too. We appreciate him and want to send a genuine thanks.



Sue Upton

Nominated by Rebecca Andrews and Gregoire Jones

Sue is new to the role and already goes above and beyond. She always ensures my room is spic and span and helps the department in areas where there is no cleaner, which is very much appreciated by students and staff. *Rebecca Andrews*

Sue does an excellent job with ensuring our staff showers are spotless. *Gregoire Jones*



Emma Williams

Nominated by Rebecca Andrews

Emma is so efficient and well organised, any request I have for various politics events and issues in my classroom are always dealt with swiftly. I know I can always rely on my request be processed.



Kate Worthington

Nominated by Louise Arbuckle

Kate and the MIS team has had a terrible year, as part of the team that lost our colleague Paul. We have all felt Paul's loss, but especially that team will have felt it a lot more, and Kate has always remained so helpful, even though she has been swamped with requests for help. She always has a smile on her face and is so calm and is always available to offer her help, or even if she can't help, she is always polite and calm, and I want to let her know that all of her support has been appreciated.



OUTSTANDING LONG SERVICE

Chris Ashworth

A massive thank you to Chris Ashworth our Estates Manager as he reaches the milestone of 20 years dedicated service to Ashton Sixth Form College. Chris first joined us in October 2004 as a temporary Assistant Site Officer and it soon became clear he had a wealth of skills and practical experience in a range of trades that included plumbing and decoration, so we quickly made him a permanent employee. In 2010 he was promoted to Assistant Estates Manager and since 2016 he has been the man in charge of Estates and in 2023 he was awarded the British Empire Medal at Buckingham Palace for his services to Further Education. There is nothing that Chris doesn't know about the buildings and site at Ashton Sixth Form College, he is an absolutely key person in the day to day running of our site and our plans for the future. Thank you so much for your tremendous work ethic and outstanding service over the past 20 years Chris.





RESULTS 2024

Ashton Sixth Form College Celebrates Outstanding Results for the Class of 2024

Ashton Sixth Form College is thrilled to announce the exceptional achievements of its students on this year's Results Day. This year's cohort has set new records and maintained the college's reputation for academic excellence across all qualification types.

Collectively, the Class of 2024 earned an astounding 986 A*, A, Distinction, and Distinction* grades. This year's results are a testament to the dedication and hard work of both students and staff, with a record-breaking performance across various courses and qualifications.

38 of their courses achieved a perfect 100% pass rate, highlighting the consistent excellence across the curriculum. A Level students excelled, with an impressive 98% pass rate, with half of all grades awarded at A*-B and three-quarters at A*-C, underscoring the high academic standards maintained at Ashton Sixth Form College.

Ashton Sixth Form College which prides itself on its prestigious XL Academy for high achievers has received an amazing number of confirmed offers to Oxford and Cambridge Universities, making them the college with the highest number of offers in Tameside. Diya Mistry is one student who has received her place at St Catherine's college at Oxford to study biology, she comments "The support I received from teachers, pushing me to do summer schools and online courses gave me such a good insight into life at Oxford and Cambridge, this led me to put in an application and I think this preparation was a lot of the reason I got my offer! I will really miss my teachers and my time at Ashton."

A Level student, Noah Cooke who was part of the XL Academy and studied Maths, Physics, Computer Science, Further Maths and Extended Project Qualification and gained an incredible 4 A*s and an

A. Noah will now progress to Durham University to study Physics. "I'm really happy with my results, you put so much effort in and it's really nerve wracking waiting to see if you've done as well as you hoped. Ashton has really helped me to achieve these results, I'm not sure I could have gone to a better college. The support has been so good and the people are amazing!"

Alexandra, Mother of Sadie Jones who achieved an amazing A*AA and is progressing to The University of Manchester to study Architecture in September was understandably very proud "Both of our children have done exceptionally well at Ashton Sixth Form. It is such a fabulous college with wonderful teachers"

BTEC results this year are truly outstanding, setting new records for the college. An incredible 98% of students on full-time vocational courses achieved at least a 'Merit,' with an unprecedented 85% securing at least one Distinction. Of the 310 students who took smaller-sized BTEC courses alongside their A Levels, 71% were rewarded with a top grade of Distinction or Distinction*, further demonstrating the exceptional performance of its students. Technical course students also achieved remarkable results, with over 80% earning the highest grades of A* and A.

Evie Hurst achieved an amazing triple Distinction* in Sports Coaching and Development and will now progress onto University Campus of Football Business. "I'm so happy with my results and I can't thank the college enough for their help and support in preparing me for my next steps."

The college's inaugural T Level cohorts in Education and Health had a fantastic start, boasting a 100% pass rate with 88% achieving Distinction or Merit, setting a high standard for future students.

Tahira studied a T Level in Health, which included a placement at Tameside and Glossop Intergrated Care NHS Foundation Trust, supporting the Adult Nursing Team. Tahira achieved a Distinction.

One in four completers at Ashton Sixth Form College leave with more than the three A Level equivalents that are typical across England and Wales. This reflects the enthusiasm of their students in pursuing additional qualifications such as Core Maths, Further Maths, and the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), highlighting their ambition and commitment to academic excellence.

Moreover, the achievements of the first-year students in Core Maths are equally impressive. Of the 73 students who took this additional qualification, 65% achieved A*-B grades, showcasing their capability and paving the way for continued success in their A Levels next year.

Centre Principal, Lisa Richards said "What a fantastic set of achievements for the class of 2024. Our students have excelled themselves across all qualifications types with high grade achievement at its highest since the return to

examinations post-pandemic. I am very proud of all our students and am so delighted that their hard work and focus has been justly rewarded.

Our leavers have been a superb cohort, participating in a wide range of enrichment and leadership activities over the past two years. Their experiences along with the prestigious qualifications they have now achieved, will enable them to progress with confidence to their chosen next steps, be that university, apprenticeship or employment.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the wonderful teaching and support staff at ASFC for their high standards, professionalism, care and dedication. They play a significant part in the success of our students. Thank you also to parents and carers for working in partnership with us – your son/daughter could not achieve these outcomes without you!

Back to the most important people though. Class of 2024 – thank you for your vibrancy, commitment and contribution to ASFC. Well done on your significant achievements and all the very best in your future life and career".

Class of 2024 T Level students achieve 100% pass rate

Education & Early Years and Health T Level students are the first cohort to complete the two year courses at Ashton Sixth Form College.

The cohort have worked hard both in the classroom and further, as all of them have completed over 700 hours of work placements over the two years. The students have completed these placements in a variety of settings, including nurseries, primary schools, pharmacies and working on the wards at Tameside Hospital.

Completing their work placements have allowed the students to gain hands-on experience and skills, which they can carry with them throughout their next steps post college.

Kathryn Axon, one of our Education & Early Years students said:

"Studying Education Early Years T Level has built my confidence and resilience and has prepared me for my future because I have gained experience in the sector and know what to expect."

Many of the T Level students are now heading off to university following results day, including Health student Tahira Khan who is going to The University of Manchester to study Children's Nursing.

Following their hard work and dedication to their studies over the past two years, the 2024 T Level cohort have achieved a 100% pass rate across both courses, with 88% achieving either a Distinction or Merit grade.

The college and Education & Health department are incredibly proud of the students' impressive results and wish them the best of luck in their next chapter!



XL ACADEMY

Oxford Scholars Launch

As a result of the continued success of our XL Academy Programme and increased number of students progressing to Oxbridge universities, we are launching our new Oxbridge Scholars Programme.

Congratulations to Matthew Perris, our new Oxbridge Scholars Co-ordinator, and Andrew Gilday, Helen Norton and Sarah Brown for their new roles as Oxbridge Scholar mentors.

All Oxbridge Scholar staff have a rich educational background and collectively will support our very best students and prepare them in every way for the rigorous application and interview process at Oxbridge. This will include a tailored reading programme and subsequent tutorials, mirroring the system at Oxbridge, and also a deep immersion in the social and cultural aspects of Oxbridge.

Dr Damian Windle, Head of The XL Academy said: "The Oxbridge Scholars Program takes our Oxbridge provision to a whole new level and demonstrates the first class support and guidance we have here at The XL Academy at Ashton Sixth Form College. Through having specific experts in subjects such as Computer Science, Chemistry, Politics and Geography we aim to offer even more bespoke support to our Oxbridge applicants in areas such as entrance exams and interview preparation, as well as giving our 1st years students a regular experience of what an Oxford or Cambridge tutorial is actually like. I am really excited about this next evolution in The XL Academy provision and can't wait to see how our applicants get on."

The Oxbridge Scholars team will join Dr Damian Windle and the fellow XL tutors, in supporting our highest achieving throughout their time at Ashton Sixth Form College and preparing them for their next steps.

Ashton Sixth Form College Celebrates Outstanding Oxbridge Success for the Class of 2024

Ashton Sixth Form College is proud to announce that all eight of this year's Oxbridge hopefuls have successfully secured their places at the prestigious universities of Oxford and Cambridge. This incredible achievement reaffirms Ashton Sixth Form College's position as a leading institution for academic excellence in Tameside.

Centre Principal Lisa Richards expressed her delight at the students' accomplishments, stating, "I am thrilled that all eight of this year's Oxbridge hopefuls secured their places following the publication of results. Our Oxbridge cohort have worked incredibly hard to push themselves to the highest

levels academically, fully engaging with XL Academy activities. As such, they are ready for this exciting next stage of their educational careers – we wish them our very best!"

The success of the Oxbridge cohort is a testament to the robust support provided by the college's XL Academy, a programme dedicated to nurturing high-achieving students. The Academy offers tailored guidance on making competitive Oxbridge applications, from entrance exams to interviews, ensuring that students are fully prepared for the challenges ahead.



Ashton Sixth Form College's XL Academy is a well-established programme, with over 12 years' experience in producing excellent outcomes for the college's highest performing students. The programme ensures students can meet and surpass the demanding entry requirements of Oxbridge, Russell Group Universities and premium degree apprenticeships.

In keeping with the College's long-standing history in the borough, The XL Academy was established in 2011 with the aim of giving high achieving students a space to express themselves, share their thoughts and discuss their ambitions openly. With 100 students in the very first cohort, the programme is now enrolling over 500 students consistently, a testament to the specialist expertise of staff at the college.

Students Katy, Frank, and Arlo, who are among this year's successful Oxbridge candidates, shared their experiences and gratitude for the support they received from Ashton Sixth Form College:

Katy, who will be studying Medicine at the University of Oxford, said, "Opening UCAS on results day to read 'University of Oxford has confirmed your place to study Medicine' was incredible. The extensive support and mentoring from ASFC, including challenging mock interviews and personal statement feedback through the XL Academy, were key to my success. I am very grateful and cannot wait to begin my medical journey at Oxford."

Frank, who achieved AAA in his A-levels, along with an A in EPQ and an A in French, expressed his excitement about studying History and Politics at Oxford: "The support with mock interviews and the unique opportunities offered through the enrichments at ASFC, such as the BSL introductory course, were invaluable. I am looking forward to studying at Oxford later this year."

Arlo, who will be studying Maths at St John's College, Cambridge, highlighted the importance of the XL programme: "The XL programme at Ashton helped me succeed in many ways, from running mock interviews to providing personal statement advice. The maths department at Ashton has been invaluable in supporting my entrance exam preparations."

Dr Damian Windle, who heads up the XL Academy added "Applying and gaining a place at Oxford or Cambridge is no mean feat with a sustained level of effort and ability to cope with pressure needed at every stage of the journey: through writing a personal statement, completing entrance exams, enduring numerous interviews and finally gaining the

actual A-level grades to get in. Therefore, this year's Oxbridge cohort has done remarkably well and these results not only showcases the individual brilliance of each student but also the excellence of the wider team around them in family, peers and staff at the college who have supported them along the way.

This stunning news regarding our Oxbridge 2024 cohort also comes at a significant time for The XL Academy as we launch our Oxbridge Scholars program for 2024/25. This has seen significant investment in the support that we give our Oxbridge applicants ranging from extra small group tutorials to a substantial increase in Oxbridge visits and shadowing in the hope that the college has even greater success in securing more places at Oxford and Cambridge universities and cementing our place as the number one college in the area for high achievement."

Ashton Sixth Form College's commitment to academic excellence is further exemplified by the broad range of universities and courses its students will be attending this year. Beyond Oxbridge, graduates are progressing to universities across the country, studying a wide array of subjects, as well as entering into excellent job and apprenticeship opportunities.

"Outside of Oxbridge, our completers are progressing to universities across the country to study an incredibly wide range of subjects, with over 600 students getting their first choice of university as well as taking up some excellent jobs and apprenticeship opportunities," added Lisa Richards. "It is great to see all of our leavers following their dreams and pursuing their passions. They have a bright future ahead of them!"

The outstanding achievements of the Class of 2024 have set new records and maintained the college's reputation for academic excellence across all qualification types underpinning Ashton Sixth Form College's role in shaping the future of its students, providing them with the skills, knowledge, and opportunities needed to succeed at the highest levels.

The logo for The XL Academy features the word "THE" in a small, white, sans-serif font to the left of a large, stylized white "XL". Below the "XL" is the word "ACADEMY" in a white, sans-serif font. The entire logo is set against a dark blue background with a faint, large-scale watermark of the letters "ASFC" in a lighter blue color.

BE AMBITIOUS

Another successful 'Be Ambitious' Week at Ashton Sixth Form College

Following a successful launch in 2023, our flagship 'Be Ambitious' Week at Ashton Sixth Form College returned for another year. The Be Ambitious programme has been developed to give students employability experiences and opportunities to develop their soft skills, which will aid them in the world of work. The week is part of an exceptional offer of extended activities offered to students outside of the classroom to help them to stand out when moving on to their next step.

The week, which was sponsored by Stamford Products Ltd, Project Opal Ltd and Carpenter Ltd, consisted of three strands with students opting to take part in one – either an employer-led project; completing a work placement or participating in a range of employability and career focussed workshops. Over 800 students participated in the week and benefited from the opportunities and experiences that were organised for them.

The employer-led projects were launched at the start of the week by Centre Principal, Lisa Richards alongside keynote speaker and successful college alumni, Richard Bradley, Senior IT Director at Kellanova. Richard discussed his own career journey since college and the significance of capitalising on the wide range of opportunities and experiences that the college offers.

The college secured partnerships with high profile companies including BBC News, Balfour Beatty and National Rail, who set the students real-time briefs and projects for the students to work on throughout the week ready to present back to the companies. The students were mentored by organisations who gave them their professional advice and expertise to help them to succeed on their projects. There was an increase in students this year participating in the employer-led projects meaning more students had access to those meaningful work experiences with major employers.

In addition to the employer-led projects, a huge 470 students secured themselves a work placement. Completing a work placement allowed the students to gain first-hand experience in a professional setting, whilst building on their transferable skills. The college secured work placements for students at lots of high profile organisations, including,

Manchester United FC, Tameside Magistrates Court, Tameside Council and many more.

As part of the busy week, the college also offered a number of employability and career focussed workshops. Students attended exciting and interesting talks from organisations such as Project Charisma, who explored confidence in the work-place and public speaking with students, and Diamond Wellbeing Hypnotherapy who shared coping mechanisms and wellbeing tips with students.

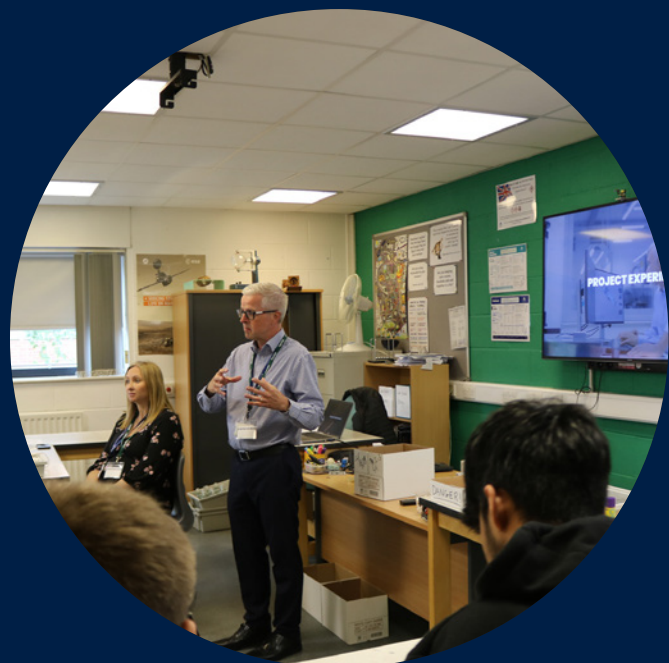
The standard of work produced by students throughout the week has been highly praised by employers. Andrew McLaren, from Tameside Council commented: "What a great college, teachers and of course the fantastic students. I was genuinely agog at the knowledge and hard work from all students. I'm really proud that ASFC is in my ward - it's a real jewel!"

Shannon Couling from Reuben's Retreat was extremely impressed with our students: "The students were all really engaged in the project and invested their time into researching about the charity and the work we do. Some of the students were nervous to present but they all came incredibly prepared and overcame any fears they had about presenting."

It is clear students enjoyed the week and found it very useful with developing their employability skills. One student mentioned that Be Ambitious week allowed them to "gain the skills of time management and independence, making me more confident in presenting my work." Another students noted they have "developed communication skills, admin skills, a good work ethics and punctuality skills."



Rachel Smirke, Director of Curriculum and Progression said: "I was nervous going into our second year of Be Ambitious Week as I didn't think we could top last year. However, it has been even bigger and better than last year with even more students engaged in activity. The gold standard is always to have students with an employer in the workplace for a full week and nearly 50% of students managed this. On top of that, the majority of remaining students were engaged with employers via a live project brief. I am so proud of all the students and the feedback we have received from the employers who worked with students. It has been a week of superb achievements, confidence and skill building as well as forming new contacts in the working world. We will continue to build on this for next year."



A huge well done to all students for fully immersing themselves in the opportunities and experiences they've come across throughout Be Ambitious Week! Also thank you to all employers for working with our students. We look forward to another successful Be Ambitious Week in 2025!

Be Ambitious

Be Ambitious Awards 2024

Towards the end of the 2023-24 academic year, A1 students participated in our flagship Be Ambitious programme. Following a successful launch in 2023, Be Ambitious Week this year, with 1270 students taking part in employer-led projects, work placements and workshops.

All students worked extremely hard throughout the week, which was sponsored by Stamford Products Ltd, Project Opal and Carpenter, and the standard of work they delivered was highly commended by employers. To celebrate their hard work and participation, our Careers and Employability Team hosted an awards event.

Numerous students received nominations by employers and members of staff that supported Be Ambitious week.

Students were nominated for various reasons, including their skills in teamwork, organisation, creative, sustainability and motivation. Alex Noble, Realising Aspirations Co-ordinator said:

"This year, so many students were nominated by staff and employers for their hard work and contributions during Be Ambitious Week 2024. We received some fantastic feedback about students on placement and employer-led projects, making it really difficult to choose Award Winners. A huge well done to all students."

A huge well done to all nominees and award winners! As a college, we are extremely proud of the way our students presented themselves during Be Ambitious week - they represented the college phenomenally!



Parents/Carers

Many thanks to all of the parents and carers who responded and filled in the survey, we really appreciate you taking the time to do this. Here are the results, we are delighted to say the responses were overwhelmingly positive.

Q1. My son/daughter is well taught at ASFC
96% strongly agree or agree

Q2. My son/daughter has access to good support systems at ASFC that enable them to make good progress and develop
94% strongly agree or agree

Q3. I receive valuable information from the college about my son's/daughter's development
88% strongly agree or agree

Q4. My son/daughter is making good progress in their course(s)
90% strongly agree or agree

Q5. The information I can view on my Cedar Parent Account is useful and informative
88% strongly agree or agree

Q6. I can easily contact my son's/daughter's Senior Tutor if I have any concerns
90% strongly agree or agree

Q7. Any concerns I have raised with the college have been dealt with effectively
92% strongly agree or agree

Q8. My son/daughter has had access to a good range of additional activities during their time at ASFC (trips, visits, enrichment, employability opportunities, visiting speakers)
90% strongly agree or agree

Q9. My son/daughter is being well-prepared for their next steps in education or employment
90% strongly agree or agree

Q10. The college has high expectations for students
97% strongly agree or agree

Q11. The college is a safe environment
99% strongly agree or agree

Q12. My son/daughter is happy at ASFC
94% strongly agree or agree

Q13. I would recommend ASFC to another parent
95% strongly agree or agree

Survey 2023-24

Thank you for the overwhelmingly positive comments about the college and staff. We are so proud of the work we do and the impact it has on young people.

The college and my daughter's tutors and teachers have been exceptionally supportive.

The teaching and pastoral support is second to none.

Excellent staff who care about the students.

I think the trips to universities, abroad and the educational trips are excellent.

Teaching and learning are amazing, additional opportunities both academic and enriching are outstanding.

We see the care, concern and encouragement offered to the students and really value the attitude and ethos of the college, which makes it a positive environment.

SEN department are fantastic. All the staff seem helpful and knowledgeable.

My son has had the best experience here, as a parent I can't ask for more. Thank you to all your amazing, hard-working and outstanding staff.

There were some individual comments or concerns and we have read and discussed all of them. If parents and carers want to discuss any individual issues please feel free to pick those up with your son or daughter's Senior Tutor. The main themes that came out as requiring feedback were communication, access and navigation of CEDAR and information about next steps. There is some feedback about all of these themes on the following page, thank you.

Give parents more involvement and guidance. I can't support my child if I don't know how they are doing, what opportunities are available to them and what is expected of them.

More inside seating areas for both lunch and break times.

Communicate with parents more about all the support available.

PARENTS/CARERS SURVEY JUNE 2024 FEEDBACK

Thank you so much to all of the parents and carers who completed our survey. The responses were overwhelmingly positive with 11 out of 13 questions showing over 90% satisfaction, with some as high as 99%. There were a tremendous number of positive comments and as you can see from the previous pages, the quotes give a flavour of what was passed onto to us. There were some issues raised and the main themes were regarding communication and social space for students. We are trying hard to plan for improving the social space once the building work has finished and we are also looking at ways to communicate the information you want. We often speak about Sixth Form education being the bridge between school and University or higher-level apprenticeships. We will always communicate with students in the first instance and then involve parents and carers where that is beneficial or

as is necessary. Parents and carers can contact college if they have any questions or concerns, all students have a dedicated Senior Tutor and they can be your first port of call. Students have a weekly tutorial where key information and dates are shared and reminders given about all essential dates and events. There will be lots of information given out about next steps, progression to University and apprenticeships. We have parents and carers evenings and you will also receive information about Formal Assessment grades throughout the year and get a written report once a year. Please follow our social media channels and access the website where you will get lots of information about upcoming events, opportunities, trips and visits.

The instructions and guide for our student records system, CEDAR, are outlined below. Parents and carers can use this to access information about attendance, assessments, timetables and lessons. The college website also has key dates, term dates and other information that you may find useful. If you cannot access CEDAR please ring college and ask for the MIS department and they will help you. The Principal is sending out regular information and updates via email to students,

ASHTON EXPLORE

We're one week into the launch of Ashton Explore activities, and wow, do we have an array of courses and clubs on offer. Popular choice, Politics Debate Club, came back with a bang and students have been busy deliberating over topics such as: cancel culture and freedom of speech, the legalisation of drugs, and the death penalty. Additionally, many students have taken to enriching their lives here at ASFC by undertaking opportunities like First Aid Training and a Beginners Course in British Sign Language, a fantastic way to gain new skills and stand out to both employers and universities.

While many courses might benefit students in an academic sense, most are established to give students a space to be themselves and experience joy in their hobbies with new friends. On the other hand, there are courses such as Student Survival Cooking and MoodMaster that will work to build students' confidence and competence when faced with life outside of ASFC. This new cooking class aims to equip students with basic cooking skills, while simultaneously teaching them how to cook on a budget, whereas MoodMaster delivers sessions focussing on understanding your emotions, stress and worry, eating well and problem solving. Whatever your interests, there is something for everyone with Ashton Explore.

DUKE OF EDINBURGH

Here at Ashton, students have the incredible opportunity to achieve their Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award. Whether they have already achieved their Bronze or Silver Awards or not, anyone can take on this challenge and be rewarded with new friendships, new skills, and a new-found self-confidence. Students must commit to volunteering within their community, developing a new skill, undertaking a physical activity, embarking on a team expedition and completing a solo residential of their choice. We recently held our Information Presentation Evening which had an amazing turn out. I'm excited to see what our 2024-2026 cohort go on to achieve with their award.

STUDENT COUNCIL UPDATE

So far this term, the council have been getting an early start at planning culture day. We've been discussing jobs and lots of new events and activities that will take place. We have also run through ideas from each council member on things they want to improve and change. You can look forward to lots more events and fun activities in the future!

Freddie Ives, Student Council President

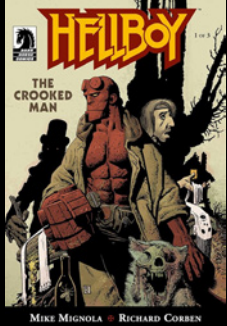


MEET THE TEAM

 <p>Philip Yang Marketing and Events Officer</p> <p>I am currently studying Accounting, Business and Media Studies. I want to be on the council as I am a passionate advocate for the young voice and to watch my actions have a positive impact on college life overall. I train in contemporary dance and also Artistic Roller Skate competitively. In the future, I hope to go into cultural event and festival management and supporting young people in accessing the creative arts.</p>	 <p>Darlington Uhumona - Roberts Mental Health and Wellbeing Ambassador</p> <p>My name is Darlington Uhumona-Roberts and I study Applied Science, IT and Spanish. In my spare time, I stay active by doing sports which include Football, Rugby and more. I also enjoy playing instruments like the drums and piano and enjoy reading books. I am part of the Enrichment and Employability team on the Student Council. I chose this role because I want to create more opportunities for the students at Ashton sixth from college. As a council member, I will ensure all students are giving the maximum amount of opportunities possible to improve their skills that will help them in the future.</p>	 <p>Taseen Tabrez Enrichment Officer</p> <p>My name is Taseen and I'm currently studying 3D Design, Business, and Applied Science. I hope to become an Architect in the future being able to help and house the less fortunate while also creating unique and complex designs. I joined the student council with a clear goal in mind: to make the short two years we have in college both worthwhile and memorable. I believe that our time here should be filled with opportunities, growth, and unforgettable experiences. As part of the student council, I'm committed to working hard to ensure that every student feels supported and engaged. Together, let's make our college years the best they can be.</p>	 <p>Favour Otoror Tutor Representative Officer</p> <p>Hi my name is Favour and I am currently doing a level 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care. My future plans is to become a Midwife. I wanted to be part of the council because I wanted to make an impact in the school as well as the community and find out ways of how I could then improve things to make others feel more comfortable within their environment.</p>
 <p>Freddie Ives President</p> <p>Currently studying: Media, film and English Language.</p> <p>Reason for joining council: Really wanted to make a difference in the college and to hopefully be a good role model for people.</p> <p>Future plans: I plan to go to University and get my degree. After that I will apply for the Degree-holder detective entry program.</p> <p>Hobbies: I do karate every week and enjoy going to the gym lots. I also enjoy watching all sorts of films and TV</p>	 <p>Sumaya Riaz Equality and Diversity Officer</p> <p>Hello, wonderful people. It's Sumaya here, a dedicated student who is currently delving into the wonders of Biology, Chemistry and Maths. As an Equality and Diversity member, I passionately advocate for inclusivity, drawing strength from my ethnic minority background. I enjoy playing cricket, unleashing my inner Picasso with a paintbrush and spending time with my beloved cat, Simba. Inspired by Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream, I believe in a world where everyone has a fair shot - whether it's on the cricket pitch or in the game of life. Don't forget, I'm always here to help!</p>	 <p>Khadeejah Rafiq Equality and Diversity Officer</p> <p>Hi my name is Khadeejah. I take Biology, Chemistry, and Maths. My role on the student council is in equality and diversity, and my aim is to ensure our college is representative and as inclusive as can be. If you have any worries or ideas on how to help, please come to me and share them.</p>	 <p>Anish Lad Mental Health and Wellbeing Ambassador</p> <p>My name is Anish Lad and I study Maths, Computer Science and Business. In my spare time, I stay active by playing badminton and cricket. I also enjoy traveling and reading young thriller fiction books. I am the Mental Health / Wellbeing Ambassador on the student council. I chose this role because I recognize that students often need guidance and support when dealing with college life and seeking improvements within the college. As a council member, I am a point of contact for students to share their suggestions and concerns, ensuring their voices are heard and valued. Looking ahead, I plan to continue supporting my peers on the council and other students who may have concerns or suggestions. My goal is to help make our college a more inclusive and supportive environment for everyone. Please feel free to speak with me if you have any questions or ideas!</p>
 <p>Yana Macrrii Vice President</p> <p>My name is Yana and I'm currently studying Sociology, Politics and Criminology. I chose to be a member of the student council because I wanted to improve the college experience and offer students a better chance to represent themselves because I think that this is important for every single individual. After college I plan to go to university and study law then continue with postgraduate studies to become a crown prosecutor. My hobbies are crocheting, cooking, playing badminton and reading.</p>	 <p>Nabeela Begum Vice President</p> <p>Hi, my name is Nabeela and I study Psychology, English Literature and Sociology. I love drawing, painting, reading, playing piano, hiking and badminton. I also love cats because they're the cutest things ever. My role on the student council is enrichment and employability. This means you guys are free to come speak to me about any extracurricular activities - such as trips or after school enrichments that you'd like to put in place or take part in - and I'll do my best to voice your opinions and ideas and make them heard. If you have any questions or recommendations, I'm always open to any suggestions so feel free to email me whenever :)</p>	 <p>Mohin Patel Enrichment Officer</p> <p>Hi, my name is Mo. I'm currently studying Chemistry, Maths and Further Maths. My hobbies are learning piano, making movies, acting, athletics and being a film nerd. The reason I joined the council is because I want students to enjoy college and take part in new things alongside their studies. I also want to provide people with more opportunities so if you have any questions about enrichment or employability, please come and ask me!</p>	 <p>Suhabia Anjum Marketing & Events Officer</p> <p>I'm currently studying A level Law, Criminology and Psychology. My future plan is to study Law (LLB Hons) in university then become a Barrister. I joined the student council to use it as an opportunity to gain skills such as leadership, communication, teamwork, organisation and public speaking which is relevant to my future plans because it can help shape skills, perspectives that will help grow networks and links.</p>
 <p>Julita Joshy Co-Vice President</p> <p>Hi, my name is Julita, I am currently studying Biology, Chemistry and Sociology. I enjoy doing art and trying out new desserts! I wanted to be a part of the Student Council as it is an amazing opportunity and privilege to make a significant contribution to the college community</p>	 <p>Brogan Freeman Equality and Diversity Officer</p> <p>Hi, I'm Brogan Freeman and I'm one of the Equality and Diversity student representatives for this year. I'm really excited to be part of the student council at ASFC and can't wait to get stuck in! My main motivation for being on the council is to give back to students and contribute to maintaining a safe college environment in which every student feels represented and heard. My plans for the future are to travel and become a Dentist.</p>	 <p>Minal Mahmood Teaching and Learning Officer</p> <p>Hi I'm Minal, I'm studying Chemistry, Maths and Biology A levels and I'd like to study something science related at university in the future. My role on the council is teaching and learning and I hope to help improve student's learning experiences whilst they study at college. Feel free to find me if you have any ideas for your subjects.</p>	 <p>Neima Ferreira Dos Reis Tutor Representative Officer</p> <p>My name is Neima Ferreira dos Reis, I am currently studying Physics and I'd like to study Spanish. In the future I would like to be a Paediatric Nurse. I joined the student council because I wanted to help others ensure their issues/ideas reached the college and help Change College for the better.</p>
			 <p>Kiera Kennedy Teaching and Learning Officer</p> <p>I'm studying History, Law & Politics. My future plans are to go into law - I would love to be a barrister. I wanted to be part of the student council because I wanted to bridge the gap between students and teacher to ensure student experience is as comfortable and positive as possible!</p>

LIBRARY 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!



Hellboy: The Crooked Man by Mike Mignola and Richard Corben

With spooky season upon us, and with a film adaptation of this masterpiece in cinemas, it feels only right to recommend the best horror comic I've come across – and take it from someone who wrote a dissertation on the title character, it IS a masterpiece! It's the late 1950s and Hellboy, the Beast of the Apocalypse, superhero, and paranormal investigator all rolled into one, is wandering in the backwoods of Appalachia where he meets the damned Tom Ferrell, who has just returned home after many years away to finally confront the man he sold his soul to when he became a witch: The Crooked Man, a demonic entity who collects souls for the Devil in exchange for copper coins. What follows is a terrifying nightmare as Hellboy and Tom fight off his forces, but will they survive to see dawn? It's a perfect blend of weird American backwoods / mountain folklore and 80s demonic horror. Think Sam Raimi's first Evil Dead film. You won't soon forget the Crooked Man, truly one of the most terrifying villains of any horror story, chillingly realised by the masterful drawings of Richard Corben.



Blindsight by Peter Watts

I'd like to recommend this to anyone who enjoys the cosmic horror of H.P. Lovecraft or the cinematic universe of the Alien films. Sometime in the future, the stars arrange into a grid like pattern and then flash, all around the world. Someone out in space has just taken a 360 degree photograph of the Earth. And now a signal is coming from the depths of space – not sent to Earth, but communicating with some other unknown intelligence. Earth sends the Theseus, a ship filled with five scientists, to make first contact. But this isn't your normal crew – four of them have been modified by science to such a degree you'd struggle to see them as human, and the fifth, the leader of the team, cannot even be thought of as human. He's a vampire, brought back from extinction with the voodoo of recombinant genetics and the blood of sociopaths. What they will meet in the darkness of space will determine the fate of our world... can we trust a team that may be more alien the thing they've been sent to find?



The Lottery and Other Stories by Shirley Jackson

Some of you might be familiar with Shirley Jackson's masterful gothic horror novels, *The Haunting of Hill House* and *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, but if you haven't checked out her stunning short stories you absolutely should – and this volume is the definitive collection of them. Her title story, "the Lottery", is one of Jackson's masterpieces, with an ending you will never see coming that is still as shocking 70 years later as when it was first published. The creeping unease of lives squandered and the bloody glee of lives lost is chillingly captured in these tales of wasted potential and casual cruelty by a master of the short story. Shirley Jackson's chilling tales have the power to unsettle and terrify unlike any other.



STUDENTS TERM DATES 2024-2025

Autumn Term 2024		Teaching Starts 05/09 (Welcome Day 3rd or 4 th September)
Thursday & Friday	22 & 23 August 2024	Enrolment New Students
Thursday	5 September 2024	Term Begins – Teaching Begins
Friday	18 October 2024	First Half Term Ends
Half-Term (2weeks)	21 October – 25 October 2024 28 October – 01 November 2024	HALF TERM HOLIDAY (2 weeks)
Monday	4 November 2024	Second Half Term Begins
Friday	20 December 2024	Term Ends
Spring Term 2025		
Tuesday	7 January 2025	Term Begins
Friday	14 February 2025	First Half Term Ends
Monday - Friday	17 February – 21 February 2025	HALF TERM HOLIDAY
Monday	24 February 2025	Second Half Term Begins
Friday	4 April 2025	Term Ends
Summer Term 2025		(1 st Year Students last day following Be Ambitious Week)
Tuesday	22 April 2025	Term Begins (Monday 21st Bank Holiday)
Monday	5 May 2025	MAY BANK HOLIDAY
Friday	23 May 2025	First Half Term Ends
Monday - Friday	26 May – 30 May 2025	HALF TERM HOLIDAY <i>inc Bank Holiday</i>
Monday	2 June 2025	Second Half Term Begins
Friday	4 July 2025	Term Ends (following 'Be Ambitious Week')

HIGHER & ADULT EDUCATION

Did you know that we have a higher and adult education centre at the college that offers part time courses to adult students who wish to return to learn?

You can apply now for our courses, some starting January and some September.

We offer regular **Drop In** opportunities 5-6pm every Wednesday or Thursday in term time where you can come and meet a member of the team and get a taster of study as an adult student.

You can speak to a member of the team on 0161 6668215, check our website, call and see us at one of our Drop Ins or come along to an open event.



It's never too late to learn!

Scan the QR code to find out more or visit the application link below.



Application link: <https://www.asfc.ac.uk/adult-and-higher-education/courses/adult-education/>

STUDY:

- GCSE English
- GCSE Maths
- GCSE Biology
- Access to Higher Education Diploma for Health Professions. A one year part time course to prepare you for university.
- Certificate or Diploma in Supporting Teaching and Learning. Train to be a teaching assistant or learning support in schools or colleges.
- Diploma for Early Years Practitioners for working with young children.
- Foundation Degree in Education
- BA (Hons) in Education
- PGCE Primary with QTS (teacher training)
- PGCE or Certificate in Education for Post 16 teaching with placements available at the college and bursaries for some subjects.



Our Alumni



PROSPER NDAKIZE

Prosper successfully completed the Access to Higher Education Diploma in Health which has taken him to the University of Salford to study Mental Health Nursing.

LEE PARRY

Lee trained to become a primary school teacher with us. His PGCE Primary with QTS has taken Lee into a full time teaching role in a primary school in Greater Manchester.



LAUREN WILLIAMS

Lauren completed a GCSE Biology course alongside the Access to Higher Education programme which was just what she needed to get into midwifery training. She is now at the University of Manchester.

THOMAS CURTIS

Tom completed his PGCE at the college, training to teach in post 16 education. His teaching practice was in our outstanding maths department. After graduation, Tom secured a teaching post in a sixth form college.



JESSICA POWELL

Jessica completed both the level 2 Certificate and level 3 Diploma for Supporting Teaching and Learning. This enabled Jessica to have a career change, moving from working in the civil service to now helping children learn in her role as a teaching assistant in a school.

OCTOBER SPEAKER OF THE MONTH

Grace Payne

We were thrilled to welcome Grace Payne, our first Speaker of the Month, who captivated students with her insightful talk about her academic journey and professional experiences. Currently a Forensic Psychologist at Styal Prison, Grace shared her path from her undergraduate studies through to her master's degree to her securing her current role.

Criminology and Psychology students particularly found hearing Grace's talk very fascinating and inspiring!



Isabelle Smith

This week we welcomed our second Speaker of the Month for October, Isabelle Smith, in to college.

Isabelle was a student here at Ashton from 2018 - 2020, where she studied Drama, Photography and History A Levels and has since achieved a degree in Drama from The Arden School of Theatre. As well as achieving her degree, Isabelle has also starred in Coronation Street, Maternal on ITV and is currently playing Frankie Osbourne in Hollyoaks.

Isabelle spoke to students from both Ashton Sixth Form College and Fairfield High School for Girls, our fellow Stamford Park Trust school where Isabelle also attended, about her journey from education to securing her role in Hollyoaks and everything in between.

Students found Isabelle's talk inspiring and fascinating as they learnt about the world of drama, acting and soaps. Thank you Isabelle for working with our students!



LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE 2024

Last week, we successfully hosted our first Student Leadership Conference, bringing together enthusiastic nominated students who demonstrate leadership qualities in college.

The event focused on students working with like-minded peers to enhance their leadership skills. Students actively engaged with our high-profile keynote speakers, Jonathan Reynolds MP, Secretary of State for Business and Trade, and Kathryn Burn, Entrepreneur who appeared in BBC's The Apprentice. Jonathan Reynolds MP spoke about his journey from youth to a member of parliament and his experience with being a leader, whereas Kathryn Burn explored her journey with starting a business. They asked thoughtful questions and participated in discussions.

Students also participated in a number of workshops; leadership qualities workshop led by our Vice Principal, Sheridan Lewis, as well as workshops with academics Veronica Vienne and Ruth Brooks from the University of Huddersfield, who covered the topics of leadership and sport and leadership skills.

Event organiser, Rachel Smirke, Director of Curriculum and Progression, said:

"The Student Leadership Conference 2024 was an

absolute success with those students invited fully immersed in the day. Speakers brought to life the skills needed to be a successful leader and inspired students to follow their dreams in the future. It was a proud day seeing students engage with keynote speakers confidently and ask mature questions. The students represented the college well and we know that one day they will inspire others in successful careers!"

Our Centre Principal, Lisa Richards also commented:

"We have wanted to run a Student Leadership Conference for some time and what a fantastic day it was, from start to finish! The event started and ended with high profile guest speakers whose personal leadership journeys inspired our students to take their own next steps with confidence and ambition. Students were professional, articulate and participatory in all activities and represented themselves and the college superbly. I am so pleased that Ashton Sixth Form College is playing a part in preparing our future leaders."

The Student Leadership Conference 2024 not only enriched the students' educational experience but also reinforced the college's mission to empower the next generation of leaders. We plan to make the leadership conference an annual event as such a success this year!



PEMBROKE SCHOLARS 2024

Pembroke Scholars launched in 2024 aiming to challenge pupils to think beyond the curriculum, raise academic resilience and curiosity and demystify Oxbridge preconceptions.

35 Ashton students joined Pembroke Scholars. Students on the programme participate in a variety of academic activities including essay writing workshops, the Dr Claus Essay Competition, Twilight Talks with Oxford academics and visits to Pembroke College, Oxford.

Elena, who participated on the programme stated: "Throughout my time at Pembroke Scholars, I thoroughly enjoyed each activity, from the challenging Dr Claus essay to the wonderful visit to Pembroke College. My favourite activity of the year was definitely the visit to Pembroke College, during the University of Oxford's open day. After an Admissions Talk presented by Dr Claus, Morgan handed out all of our certificates, the certificates

were all so beautifully designed, and finally, we were directed into Pembroke's dining hall, where we all ate lunch collectively. I may have gone into a lot of depth about the final activity of Pembroke Scholars, however, all of the activities throughout 2024 were all amazing. Overall, I would like to give a very big thank you to Morgan Lewis, Dr Peter Claus and Alex Noble for granting me with this opportunity and I would definitely recommend this program to all Year 12s who want to get to know more about the University of Oxford."

"Access programmes like Pembroke Scholars are a fantastic way for students to meet new people and really engage with subjects they are passionate about, outside of the curriculum. Pembroke Scholars has close links with OxNet – not only does the course academically stretch students, but all the opportunities provided really do help students to be critical thinkers, independent learners and build confidence." *Alex, Realising Aspirations Coordinator.*



EPQ CONFERENCE 2024

At Ashton Sixth Form College, A2 students have the opportunity to take the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). The EPQ is an additional qualification that allows students to develop a topic or area they are interested in.

For a second year running, students were invited to the "being an effective researcher" EPQ Learner Conference. The conference provided a brilliant opportunity for EPQ students to embrace a wide range of research related topics.

With the aspect of 'Why Research' with Professor Kevin Orr from the University of Huddersfield,

'Academic Writing and Developing a Research Questions' with Katrina Lueddeke from the University of Southampton, 'Academic Integrity and AI' with Dr Joe Stanley and Emily Sharp from the University of Leeds, with additional research inputs from members of the college EPQ Supervisor team.

Rachel Allen, EPQ Co-ordinator explained that the conference enable the EPQ students to further their research knowledge and understanding from such a wealth of experience provided by our guest speakers and our EPQ staff members, Dr Damian Windle, Lisa Richards, and Jo Fletcher Saxon.



ASHTON SIXTH FORM PANTRY

For Students & Staff

Donate what you can - take what you need

RESOURCES

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

If you're worried about making ends meet this winter, you might be entitled to a bursary

Your GP

kooth.com - Free Online counselling service 12-10pm weekdays and 6pm-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 Wed

Anthony Seddon Fund, 12 George Street, Ashton under Lyne - 0161 376 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 585858, 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 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 and 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, 24hours everyday

Papyrus - Papyrus-uk.org

HOPEline UK - 0800 068 41 41 for support

If you're worried about being lonely this term, there's tips, advice and support available, Visit <https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/feeling-lonely/>



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're eligible and to download the bursary information pack please visit

www.asfc.ac.uk/bursary

Application forms for September start are available from May of that year.

£100 prize draw for early accepted applicants

YOUR GUIDE TO CEDAR

For more information, scan here

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 provide the support and motivation that may be needed.



If you have a story for our newsletter, any queries or would like to order a print copy, please contact us at newsletter@staffasfc.onmicrosoft.com