



# RYE COLLEGE

## *End of Term 2 Newsletter*



December 2023

*Wishing all our families*



*A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year*

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Charity, music and festive fun

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A round up of Term 2 activities

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A warm welcome

## **SEASONS GREETINGS**

*by Mr Downes, Head Teacher*

As we fast approach the Christmas break, we look back on an interesting and eventful start to the academic year! We have experienced and, quite literally, weathered a number of disruptive incidents. Alongside many local families, we were challenged by the water outage during September, followed by disruption to the rail service as a result of landslides and strikes. Nonetheless, life at school continues to focus on the enriching and educational growth of our students.

We have been exceptionally grateful to the increasing number of families attending our face-to-face events. These events provide us with opportunities to strengthen the bonds that support all of our students growth: a strong relationship between school, student and family is essential to provide for success. We welcomed high numbers of families to the school for our Meet the Tutor, Success at Post 16 and Year 10 Progress Evening events. Not only are these events opportunities for families to meet colleagues from the school but also to meet a number of outside agencies we work with. In the New Year, we look forward to seeing Y11 families for the vital post PPE Progress Evening on Wednesday, 10th January.

In terms of staff, we say goodbye to Mr. Williams, who has secured a promoted post at Ark Alexandra. We wish him well in his new role. Meanwhile, we are delighted to welcome back Mrs. Biddle, who returns as our Marketing and Communications Officer in the New Year. During the term, we welcomed two new colleagues to the Student Hub, supporting students in their day-to-day life: Miss McSweeney (Student Support) and Ms. Overton (SEND Support).

All that remains for me is to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



# CHRISTMAS AND COMMUNITY SPIRIT

Term 2 is always a special one as our students come together to celebrate the festive season and show their kindness to our community via our annual Christmas Charity Appeal. Our students and families never disappoint with their generosity, filling countless boxes with essential items to help feed families in need through Rye Food Bank. Thank you to everyone who donated and to our Student Leaders for their brilliant work in coordinating the donations with Mentor Groups.



## Christmas Lunch

Christmas lunch is another much loved event in the Christmas calendar. Our canteen team did a wonderful job, as did our Student Leaders who helped to set up the tables, clear and reset between sittings and made sure everyone had a great time.



## SPORTING NEWS

Mr Gambrell has been making his mark as our new Head of PE since joining us in September.

Year 7 and 8 have enjoyed inter school basketball fixtures this term against Ark Alexandra and St Richards.

Term 3 sees a focus on hockey, badminton and football with fixtures in the planning along with seven-a-side football tournaments. Watch this space for dates. We're looking forward to lots of sport and enrichment activity in 2024.



### Table Tennis Success

We're super proud of our students Ryan, Joshua and Frankie for winning Young Ambassadors Awards from Table Tennis England! They have each clocked up over 100 hours of table tennis volunteering at Rye College and other club venues. Table Tennis England Area Manager (South East), Alan Lane, said: "All three of the pupils have demonstrated the wonderful value of volunteering and how that can help increase confidence in their day-to-day life. It was a pleasure seeing them so comfortable in dealing with the ceremony and all the attention!" Congratulations to you all!



### Extra Curricular Clubs

We're starting to widen our extra curricular club offering with an increasingly popular girls football club taking place on a Monday after school - all new members are very welcome to come for a taster. Check out the clubs timetable on our website for more details.





**WE ARE  
EMPLOYABLE**

# CAREERS SPOTLIGHT

Terms 1 and 2 have been very busy for careers, with several exciting events involving our partners My Future Starts Here, Thrive Careers, ASK Apprenticeships and local employers. In all CEIAG activities, our students brilliantly demonstrate our Rye values; particularly that of being employable.

## Journey to The Future Workshop

Year 7 took part in a 'Journey to the Future' workshop. Here they started thinking about their aspirations and achievements and what their dream jobs might be. They also had to work in teams to create a job for the year 2053, and then present their ideas to everyone.

## Rye Retreat Workshop

Year 10 and 11 students interested in hair and beauty took part in a workshop with The Rye Retreat. Students heard a presentation about the industry, and employment stories from the staff. They had the opportunity to take part in some practical activities, whilst asking more questions about work, as they learnt how to do hand and arm massages, and to curl hair using straighteners. The salon manager Felicity also spoke of a fantastic opportunity to attend some after school workshop sessions at The Rye Retreat, and the possibility of work experience or apprenticeships for the students who impress the most.



## A Day in the Life

Year 8 experienced a 'day in the life', where they got to guess the job of an architect, a travel agent, an accountant, an engineer, a museum curator and a sports business manager. Students asked excellent questions to find out about salaries, qualifications, training and opportunities. They used labour market information to think about jobs they would do if they had nine lives, to understand how the world of work keeps changing.



## Year 11 Next Steps Preparation

Year 11 are making good progress with their college applications. Many students have already had their 1:1 guidance meetings with Thrive Careers. Students also participated in an assessment centre style workshop with ASK Apprenticeships, whilst learning about different levels of apprenticeships, what was on offer and how to find them. Students are now preparing for their mock job interviews with employers in January.

## Term 3 CEIAG Focus

Next term, we will have a whole school focus on National Careers Week.



## Positive Destinations Workshop

Year 11 students attended a Positive Destinations workshop with YES (Youth Employability Service). This aimed to further their knowledge of post-16 options and local industries, develop their employability skills and confidence, and focus on the importance of attendance, English and Maths.



If you work for a local business, who could support a KS3 careers fair by having a stall on **Wednesday 6th March**, please let the school office know and Mrs Starkey will be in contact with you.

We are particularly interested in businesses focusing on the arts, communication, animal care, childcare and sport as these are areas that we usually find it difficult to recruit support.

If you are able to contribute to our careers programme in any way, please contact our careers lead, Mrs. Starkey via [office@ryecollege.co.uk](mailto:office@ryecollege.co.uk).



# MEET OUR NEW TEAM MEMBERS

*We are delighted to introduce you to members of our team who have recently joined Rye College and are settled into college life with us. A belated welcome to you all!*

## Curriculum Team



Mr. Diamond  
Teacher of Maths



Mr. Gambrell  
Head of PE



Mrs. Moore  
Teacher of English



Mrs. Phipps  
Teacher of RE



Mrs. Ranasinghe  
Teacher of Science



Mr. Stevens  
Teacher of History

## Associate Team



Ms. Tilney  
Senior Science  
Technician



Ms. I Brooker-O'Shea  
Science Technician



Miss Burgess  
Examinations & Data  
Officer

## Student Hub Support Team



Miss McSweeney  
Pastoral Support  
Assistant



Ms. Overton  
HLTA SEND, SEMH

# DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES IN TERM 3



Date	Activity
02/01/24	School Inset Day
03/01/24	Students Return to Term 3 Week A
10/01/24	Year 11 Progress Evening
18/01/24	Year 8 HPV Vaccination Programme
01/02/24	Rye College Spring Concert
07/02/24	Year 8 Progress Evening
08/02/24	Last Day of Term 3 (School Inset Day 09/02/24)



# RYE COLLEGE STUDENT VOICE

We're delighted to include a new feature in this term's newsletter - a place for expression and reflection of our students' thoughts, ideas, opinions, and values that they share around our school, the wider community and current affairs.

**This term, Isabel in Year 10 is sharing her review of attending a recent Rye Wurlitzer Academy Christmas Concert.**

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Hidden under the stage in the main hall of Rye College, the Wurlitzer is an incredible piece of machinery with a rich history spanning from 1925, when along with several other organs, it was imported from America. It was only the second Wurlitzer to ever be installed in the UK. During this period and up until the 1980s, Wurlitzers made regular radio broadcasts via the BBC, becoming stars themselves alongside their organists. Many survive today installed in private homes, town halls, concert halls and ballrooms, in fact our organ was originally located in The Palace Cinema Tottenham. Sold to Rye College in 1957 and put under the care of 'Friends of Rye Wurlitzer', the organ has been used to put on amazing shows ever since, so why not go see a piece of history in our own town?



As I headed into the Wurlitzer concert, I wasn't sure what to expect. The evening started with light refreshments (apple juice an obvious sellout) and a rush to get tickets for the raffle where prizes consisted mainly of homemade marmalade, a fan favourite. It wasn't a full house, but chatting to audience members beforehand their excitement was infectious, and I couldn't help but feel like we were in for a good show. Once settled in our seats, our marmalade making host Richard appeared sporting a giant bow tie and a gingerbread man waistcoat. The entertainment ranged from a perfectly performed medley of Oliver tunes to a poetry recital by a man dressed as a princess fairy, with numerous waistcoat changes and regular smatterings of marmalade hype throughout. The show was a roaring success: eliciting groans for the numerous gags, tense attention for the prize draw and respectful silence for the beautiful music. The sound the notes made as they reverberated around the hall left you awestruck.

One of the best bits about the show was that it gave the young organists a chance to showcase the year's work in a safe space. The crowd cheered equally loudly for the internationally acclaimed Michael Wooldridge as they did for Rye College's own students who performed as part of the Wurlitzer Academy and it wasn't hard to see why. The quality of music was extraordinarily high for students only in their second or third year of lessons. Performances included 'Walking in the Air', 'Fairytale of New York' and 'We Three Kings' all challenging pieces of music to perform, especially when you consider the chord transitions, presets and pedals.



*Rye College students performing at the concert*

Another great thing about the performance was that it opened Rye Wurlitzer to the public. My personal highlight were the carols accompanied by the organ; the audience warbled joyfully through classic after classic. We may not have been completely in tune all the time, but to me it sounded fabulous and carried the Christmas cheer deep into our hearts. It's not often as a teenager you get to just sing for fun and not feel self-conscious, but the people were so nice I didn't even give it a second thought. So, if you're looking for an evening full of good music and good people, I urge you to attend one of their future concerts, I guarantee you'll enjoy it!

Although I loved the concert, something that made it less inviting was that there weren't very many young people attending. I think if they did some shows targeted at younger audiences this could help encourage more young people to get involved, ensuring the Wurlitzer's future. But even so, it was incredible! The people were lovely, kind and incredibly friendly and the rapport between the crowd and the organists really made the show, making you feel like part of the community.

If you do get the chance to go, I would highly recommend it!

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Thank you Isabel for your excellent review and recommendation to a brilliant attraction literally on our doorstep! If any students would like to contribute an article to future newsletters, please see Miss Tomlinson.