



# RYE COLLEGE

## *End of Term 3 Newsletter*

February 2024



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## **SPRING IN THE AIR**

*by Mr Downes, Head Teacher*

We have had a fantastic term with a number of high profile and excellent events taking place. Events, such as our inaugural Spring Concert, showcased the brilliant talents, enthusiasm and passions of our students, giving them opportunities to shine both in front of their families as well as the community as a whole. The Spring Concert saw talent from across the school perform alongside our Key Stage 4 Music students to an enthusiastic audience. The event was a fantastic foretaste of the performing excellence that will be on display in our summer school production led by Mr. Harrison and Mrs. Chillingworth.

Another example of Rye College students shining was the Y11 one-to-one careers interviews held in January, where our students were given mock interviews by a range of local professionals. We are exceptionally grateful for the support we receive from our community in providing opportunities for our students to experience and help them prepare for their next steps beyond the school.

Next term will see the second round of Pre-Public Examinations for our Y11s as they continue their preparation for their terminal examinations starting in May. It is vital that they maintain their focus and revise little and often, building up their knowledge and confidence for the final push. While it may seem far away, there are only 47 school days left before the first examinations (Engineering - Thursday 9th, May).

Wishing all our families a restful and enjoyable half term break. We look forward to welcoming all students back to Term 4 on Monday 19th February to a Week A timetable.





# PERFORMING ARTS SHOWCASE

Families were treated to a brilliant evening of entertainment from our talented students at our Performing Arts Department Spring Concert. We were incredibly proud of everyone who participated and helped with the event management. From Birdy, to The Beatles, Pachelbel to Cream, Ray Charles to self penned guitar compositions and of course our fabulous and unique Wurlitzer organ in action; there really was something for everyone to enjoy!

It was a special event for our Year 11 BTEC music students who have had limited opportunities to showcase their talents owing to pandemic disruption to school life. They really enjoyed the opportunity to get back on the stage. Jack our lead guitarist said: "When I started in Year 7, I was really inspired to see the older student perform in concerts. It really cemented my decision to pursue music". Ed and Zac our drummers and backstage organisers echoed these sentiments "Music is such a big part of my life and a subject I really enjoy at school. We're so happy we got to put on this show in our final year - it was such a great feeling working as a team in the band"



A big thank you to all families who attended and kindly supported our Student Enrichment Fund. An enormous thank you to Mr Maxim for all the hard work he put in to giving us such a special show.

## SPORTING NEWS

Term 4 sees some exciting developments in the PE Department.

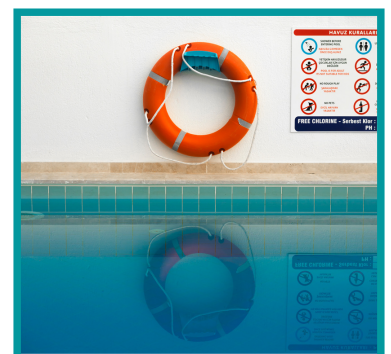
We're delighted that our fitness suite is undergoing further development with the addition of new items of high-grade equipment including treadmills and a range of fixed weight machines. To help our students learn more about the benefits of this fantastic resource, we have PlaySport Personal Training coming into school to deliver 10 weeks of after school fitness sessions. Sessions will have limited numbers so be sure to sign your child up quickly.

Don't forget to complete the new gym consent form which was emailed to families this week. Students cannot use the new equipment without a returned consent form.



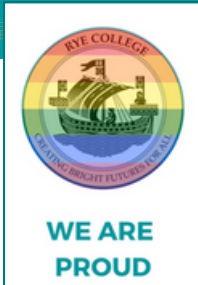
### Lifesaving Swimming Lessons

Another exciting offering in Term 4 will be the opportunity to participate in Lifesaving Swimming Lessons at Freedom Leisure Centre. The course will include theory based classroom lessons and practical pool time. Further details will follow in Term 4.



### Half Term Table Tennis Club

Don't forget Table Tennis Rother are running a fantastic FREE half term table tennis club at Rye College on Tuesday 13th February from 9.30am - 3.30pm. Few last spots available - sign up via ParentPay.



# CAREERS SPOTLIGHT

The focus in Careers this term has been with our Year 11s who have completed their college applications and are starting their interviews.

They are well prepared following the very successful Mock Interview Day in January. Students were given a number of different jobs they could apply for; from Alpaca grooming, to Border force, to tree surgery! The task involved completing an application form and drafting their CV and covering letter to take to their interview. We were lucky enough to have the support of 17 professionals from a wide range of careers, who gave their valuable time to support our young people. The students introduced themselves to the professionals, informing them of their job choice. They then spent up to 30 minutes discussing their application, their strengths, interests and aspirations, before receiving constructive verbal and written feedback. The response from the students was fantastic and wholly demonstrated their employability skills and readiness for their next steps. We are extremely grateful for the local employers and professionals for supporting us in this event.

We received some lovely feedback on our students from our interviewers:

*"I really enjoyed talking with the students. They were all a credit to your college. Please thank them all for being so fantastic".*

*"Such a great event - wishing I had the opportunity to do this when I was at school!"*

*"Very well thought out answers. All of the students were able to engage in meaningful conversations".*



Another careers focus was National Apprenticeships Week. Students enjoyed assemblies explaining the different types of apprenticeships, and spent time in Mentor time and lessons discussing and researching the different levels of apprenticeships, the benefits and variety of different opportunities.



Next term is an exciting one with our Careers Week focus. We have lots of exciting events planned across the curriculum. Year 9 also begin to consider their GCSE choices and will be supported in group interviews with one of our partners from My Future Starts Here, as well as the Guided Choices evening where we also welcome East Sussex College Hastings, Bexhill College and the University of Brighton to provide information on pathways.

# INVESTMENT IN TECHNOLOGY

We have been working hard to make sure that our technology systems at Rye College are future proofed to give students the best support for their studies.

In the last year we invested over £300,000 to upgrade, not only our wifi system, but also to replace the computers in the Art and Design and Technology departments. These upgrades mean that students can now work quickly and easily maximising their lesson time, saving seamlessly to the Cloud.

We are committed to enabling our students to embrace new technology and new ways of working.



*Our students making the most of the new technology in Photography and Information Technology lessons.*



# RYE ADVANCE 5 MINUTES WITH.....

*We are delighted to introduce you to Rye Advance - our Curriculum and Enrichment provision for students who are identified as working at Greater Depth. Mrs Chillingworth who is the programme lead, explains more.*



**Tell us about your role at Rye College?**

I have had lots of different roles in my seventeen years at Rye College and currently I am responsible for a range of different areas of the school. I am the Director of English, which means I lead the English Department, as well as being Director of Curriculum, which involves supporting other colleagues in developing our Curriculums across all subjects and making sure our students are getting the best possible learning experience. My final role within the college is Director of the More Able. This involves making sure that every student has access to a Curriculum that is challenging and focuses on the depth and breadth of knowledge they will gain. It also involves identifying students who are More Able in different subject areas and monitoring their progress and experience across the school.



**What's the best part of your job?**

The best part of my job in general is teaching the students and being in the classroom. I love my subject and being able to analyse and discuss different ways of viewing the texts I have chosen to be part of the Curriculum is something I have never stopped enjoying, even after all of these years! Creating my English Curriculum is something I have really enjoyed doing and I am constantly making tweaks and changes to it. I love providing enrichment opportunities for students and have taken students on some wonderful trips over the years, my favourite of which is always going to Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London. We are currently writing and rehearsing our own adaptation of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory as a school, which I am absolutely loving, as the performing arts has always been such a passion of mine, and which I think teaches students so much. Seeing how our wonderful students are writing music with Mr Harrison, writing parts of the script and designing the costumes and set is fantastic to see. I also love running Student Voice sessions, as speaking to the students about their experiences in the school, what is going well and what they would like to see develop, is always so insightful and helps shape my own plans.

**Tell us about the Rye Advance programme?**

At Rye College we aim to transform the life of our students through the Curriculum provision and enrichment opportunities we provide, having high aspirations for every child. The Rye Advance programme is designed to ensure that those students who are identified as working at Greater Depth, either from Primary School, through their SATS, or through our own internal testing, have their learning needs met to make sure that they continue to advance throughout their time at Secondary School. We have a Rye Advance class (or classes depending on the number of students) in each year and the Curriculum and teaching methods for these classes are adapted to ensure that there is depth, breadth, stretch and challenge for these students. The Rye Advance programme considers students working at Greater Depth in the practical subjects, such as PE, technology and the visual and performing arts as just as important as those working at this level in the classroom-based subjects. Therefore, the Rye Advance programme also seeks to ensure the Curriculum in these areas is adapted to give these students a chance to flourish, both within the classroom and through extracurricular provision.

**Are there any exciting programme plans and activities you can share with us for the year ahead?**

As part of the Rye Advance program, we want to spread what we are doing in school to the local community, giving a chance to celebrate our students' achievements. We are in the process of forming the Rye Advance Team, which is a group of our students working at Greater Depth across all subjects, who have volunteered to manage the promotion of Rye Advance, our college and our values within the local community. Part of this will involve communication with families through the college social media pages, newsletters and local newspapers. Equally, students will be considering how we can create displays and further avenues to celebrate achievement within school. Alongside this, we will be inviting students in Year 5 from our local Primary schools to take part in a range of Greater Depth workshops run by our own Greater Depth students, the first of which being a collaborative English and Art based project. Once this group is established, my long-term vision is to use them to work alongside me in reviewing the provision for students within the Rye Advance programme.

**What book or song has made a big impact on you?**

I always loved reading and English was my favourite subject at school. One book that I really remember standing out to me was studying *The Lord of the Flies* in Year 9. I thought of myself as a bit of a rebel at the time and I think I was impressed that a book that was about a bunch of schoolboys going feral and creating a savage dictatorship was part of the Curriculum! I remember being fascinated by the moral arguments and ideas that William Golding used the book to present to the reader and I loved debating this within my English class. What had an equal impact on me during this time was beginning singing lessons. I had played the flute since Year 7, but when I started singing lessons it completely transformed the way I understood music, as my singing teacher was very traditional and taught me to sing classically. I became obsessed with *The Phantom of the Opera* and operatic singing, which was very different to the music I typically listened to. Learning to read music and developing my understanding of music theory through this really opened my eyes to all sorts of other aspects of the curriculum and it is what has given me my passion for advocating the importance of music and the performing arts within education.