ACS House Newsletter

26th June 2026

A Fantastic Year for the House System

What a year it has been for our House System! Across Zeus, Athena, Apollo and Hera, students have embraced every opportunity to compete, collaborate and demonstrate the values that make our school community so special. From sporting competitions and talent showcases to charity events and awareness campaigns, the enthusiasm and house spirit on display have been outstanding.

House Day 1 got the year off to a flying start, with Athena securing the first major victory of the year. However, one of the standout moments of the day had to be Mr Gingell's unforgettable performance in The Masked Teacher. Dressed as a capybara and performing *Let It Go*, he delivered a performance that will undoubtedly live long in the memory of students and staff alike!

This year also saw the introduction of several new sporting events. The House Bleep Test challenged students' endurance and determination, while Inter-House Sports Week gave every student the opportunity to represent their house. These events showcased not only athletic ability but also teamwork, resilience and house pride.

House Day 2 brought another fantastic atmosphere, with Hera taking the overall victory. Abbeywood's Got Talent competition was also a particular highlight, with Apollo dominating the stage and securing all three of the top places. The standard of performances was exceptional, making it a truly memorable celebration of the incredible talent within our school community.

Alongside our competitions, students have been making a real difference through this year's Ethos Competition, with each house championing a cause and raising awareness across the school.

Zeus focused on wildlife awareness and organised a fantastic community dog show, which brought together students, families and members of the wider community. Athena celebrated World Earth Day, raising awareness through documentary screenings and leading a term-long recycling campaign. Hera's Health Awareness initiative saw students and staff taking to the track to promote physical wellbeing and healthy lifestyles in 3/5k races. It was great to see students resilience throughout and pride when they reached the finish line.

There is still plenty to come, with Apollo's Music Day just around the corner. Having already heard some of the plans, I am incredibly excited to see what the students have in store. If the events so far are anything to go by, it promises to be another fantastic occasion.

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As we enter the final stages of the competition, everything is still to play for. There are plenty of points still available through the Creative Showdown, the final Ethos results, Sports Day, Golden Tickets, House Points, Sparx competitions and Tutor Competitions. Every point matters, and it remains impossible to predict who will lift the House Cup at the end of the year.

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome our new Head of Zeus House, Miss Smerdon, and to offer a heartfelt thank you to Mr Scott. Over his time leading Zeus, he has guided the house to victory and has been an outstanding leader, role model and champion for his students. His contribution to the House System has been immense, and we are extremely grateful for everything he has done. He also wins best dressed lead (his outfits leave you in no doubt which house he is representing) and his style will surely be missed on our House days.

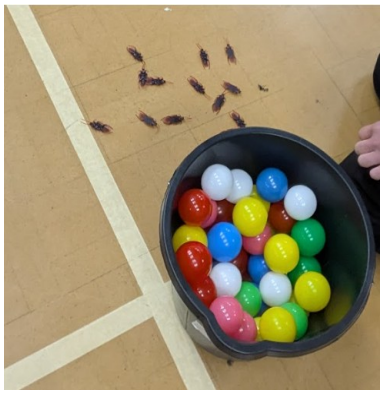
Finally, none of this year's success would have been possible without the dedication of our House Leads. Thank you to Mr Gingell (Hera), Miss Maxted (Athena), Miss Tipping (Apollo), and Mr Scott (Zeus) for the enthusiasm, commitment and leadership they bring to their roles. Their hard work has helped create opportunities for students to challenge themselves, build friendships and create lasting memories.

The House System continues to be one of the most vibrant aspects of school life, and this year has once again demonstrated the positive impact it has on our students. We look forward to an exciting finish to the year and seeing which house will ultimately be crowned champions!

Miss Mahoney

Zeus's Wildlife awareness dog show

Mr Gingell winning the Masked Singer



Bushtucker Trial task from House Day 2 (no real cockroaches were used!)

APOLLO ATHENA HERA ZEUS

Apollo

What a fantastic year it has been for Apollo House! The enthusiasm, imagination and determination shown by our students have made this another unforgettable chapter. Whether taking part in competitions, supporting whole-school events or simply cheering each other on, Apollo has shown a level of unity and positivity that truly stands out.

We've enjoyed so many memorable moments, including another amazing **win** in the Talent Show! Across every house event, Apollo students have thrown themselves in with energy and pride, showing exactly what makes our house community so special.

A major focus for us this year has been preparing for our upcoming *World Music Day* celebration in Term 6. Students in Years 7–10 will be taking part in an exciting beat boxing workshop, along with a range of fun, hands-on music activities designed to spark creativity and confidence. We've also put together educational resources exploring how music supports brain development, emotional wellbeing and overall health. Apollo House Captains have played a huge role in shaping these plans; their ideas, leadership and enthusiasm have been exceptional, and they've helped keep the whole house engaged and inspired. This year also saw the launch of our new house motto: **Born to Shine!** This speaks for itself and is a true representation of our wonderful and creative community.

Finally, I'd like to say goodbye to Mr Scott who is leaving us at the end of the year. We are so sad to be losing him from our House team and will miss his infectious energy and excellent organisational skills in our meetings! Thank you for all the laughs.

I'm incredibly proud of everything Apollo has achieved and I'm excited to see how we finish the year. The real question is: could we be champions 3 years in a row?!

Let's go Apollo!

Miss Tipping

Athena

Miss Maxted, Athena Head of House: I am so proud of the achievements of Athena House this year. We started the year strong by winning our first House Day, led the way academically by earning the most Golden Tickets and House Points across both Terms 1-2 and 3-4, taken part in a wide range of tutor, lunchtime and House Day competitions. Alongside this, our House Leaders have been busy with their Ethos Project raising awareness of environmental issues on World Earth Day, involving the whole school community in their range of activities. We have spent the majority of the year at the top of the leaderboard - coming back strong following our ranking as 2nd last year. It really feels like this could be the year that we take the 1st place spot! I continue to be amazed by our House's ambition, resilience and determination. The 'can do' spirit is what makes me so proud to be Head of House for Athena!

Here are some of the best moments of the year described by some of our House Captain team:

House Ethos Competition: World Earth Day, 22nd April - Sienna B, Y9

- We had all classes from Y7-Y10 play a David Attenborough documentary during their period 5 lesson to encourage students to care for the environment and wildlife.
- We raised £63.75 from a bake sale during break time which will go towards improving the Abbeywood allotment.
- We had a recycling competition which helped teach students what can be recycled and what can't.
- We held a "design you perfect world competition" at lunch time to allow people to share their views on what would make a perfect world for them.

We stuck pictures around school with key statistics about animals and the environment.

Winning House Day 1 - Jack W, Y7

At the end of the first term of this academic year, we had our first house day of the year. We took part in lots of different activities to get points for our house. During this House day, we were lucky enough to win throughout the day. I find that the first house day was an eye opener to the house system for year 7. The first house day gave Athena a massive lead in points over the other houses.

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Athena

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Talent Show - Harriet J, Y10

On the 17th of March ACS held their annual Talent show and many proud Athena members were able to show off their skills. Special shoutouts to: Lola S (year 10) who sang a beautiful rendition of 'Slipping through my fingers' and blew the judges away, Phoebe R (year 10) performed a self choreographed, powerful dance number (where she even cut and mixed her own music) wowing the judges with her expressive facials and movements, Leo W (year 7) showed off his magical skills with entertaining cards tricks and mind reading and we were even graced by a staff act including our very in Miss Maxted and Mr Smart. Well done to any and all who auditioned!

Winning Golden Tickets and House Points - Preston G, Y10

In terms 1-4, Athena was the winner of the most golden tickets and house points acquired. This is notable as Athena winning this competition isn't just limited to this year, we have always been consistent in winning this. This goes to show our core values in Athena; we always give everything 110% effort!

What Athena means to us:

Abby Y11: From being an active House Captain from year 7 until the very end of year 11, I have had an absolute blast. Although we haven't lifted the House Cup (yet!) the impact that this house has had on the school and the wider community has been something that I have been so happy to be a part of. I've had a lot of time to reflect, and to me, Athena is more than a house, it is a community that gives people a chance to connect with their peers, and the house system is a vital part of the beating heart of Abbeywood.

Harriet Y10: Athena has taught me teamwork and resilience over my year of being an Athena house captain. Over the year we have all faced some obstacles but have been able to overcome them as a team!

Preston Y10: I have been an Athena house captain since Year 8. It has been a tremendous experience. It has allowed me to make new friends, gave me something productive to do out of school and has generally been a great time. Yet despite all the fun we have, it cannot be denied the good we have done for charities and gives everything we do in Athena a common cause. Athena is a remarkable example of how we can bring both students and staff together and co-operate so well.

Sienna Y9: This is my second year as house captain and it's been amazing. It has given me great opportunities and experiences. To me Athena means being confident and striving to be better so that we can make a difference within our community. I hope our hard work has paid off so that we can finally lift the house cup this year!

Alfie Y8: Athena is a house that everyone cares for each other - there are loads of people you can speak to and interact with. Being a house captain is very fun and you get to be very enthusiastic about your house. It's a great opportunity to build leadership and communication skills. Hopefully we can win this year!

Hannah Y8: Athena is the best! Being a house captain has been really fun because I get to influence others in our house and make a difference.

Jess Y7: For me Athena means a house that doesn't do it for the glory or for what we win, but for the experiences of having fun, meeting new people and learning from our mistakes. We wouldn't be the same without the values that we hold and the happiness we bring to the rest of the school. I am really proud to be an Athena house captain and I hope everyone (house lead or not) can feel that this is the house they belong in and that it is not about the prizes we win, but the friends we make along the way.

Jack Y7: For me Athena means my house, of which I'm very proud to be a part of, especially after our success during the first house day.

Hera

As the academic year draws to a close, it's the perfect moment to reflect on what has been another brilliant year for Hera House. I couldn't be prouder of what all the students have achieved together. After falling short last year and finishing 4th, this year we were determined to compete for that top spot. The culture of the house and the image was the most important thing to change over the first year leading the house. It is safe to say we have achieved our goal through continuous participation and enthusiasm through our students and staff this year! Throughout this year we have followed the schools 3 values – Confidence, Ambition and Success. As well as our 6 virtues – Respect, Resilience, Curiosity, Self Awareness, Community and Leadership. 2025-2026 has been filled with growth, spirit, and standout moments that have solidified Hera's place to challenge for the number one spot.

Hera would not be the same without the amazing work from our amazing house captains. Their dedication, leadership, and positivity have been a driving force behind everything we've accomplished. From rallying the team for tutor/lunch time competitions, leading the Ethos competition with confidence, to putting in hours of planning behind the scenes, they have represented Hera with excellence. The efforts haven't gone unnoticed.

House Day 1&2

House Days 1 and 2 were shining examples of what Hera House is all about: effort, unity, and resilience. From group challenges to recreations of game shows and athletic feats, every single student who got involved brought something special to the table. Hera students didn't just participate they threw themselves into every task, supported one another, and proved that when we work together, we can enjoy and achieve incredible things. House Day 1 we finished 3rd. House Day 2 we didn't just challenge we won the whole day finishing 1st. A brilliant day to celebrate which has put us in a really good position to win the overall house championship.

House Ethos Event

This year myself and the house captains had a tricky decision on deciding what charity we were going to raise money for. We decided on Sport in Mind. Sport in Mind is the leading mental health sports charity in England and Wales. Their mission is to transform the nation's mental health through sport, and their trailblazing work harnesses the power of sport to inspire, educate, and promote good mental health. The Hera house captains and I decided to also link up with a fantastic organisation Fanto5k. They promote exercise through friendly rivalry. We used their idea and transformed it into our very own 5k/3k charity run. Our aim was to create an inclusive and supportive environment where every student has the opportunity to take part in a 5K charity run in recognition of World Health Day. We ensured that participation is accessible to every student, regardless of fitness level, background, or personal circumstances, by promoting encouragement, flexibility, and a strong sense of community. Through this event, we inspired students to value both physical and mental wellbeing, while also raising awareness and funds for an important global health cause. Ultimately, the goal was to bring people together in a positive, motivating way that highlights the importance of health, unity, and making a meaningful difference. While incorporating an element of friendly house competition. Our event was extremely successful where throughout the day we had **547 students ran over 3K. 212 students completed the full 5K.** 20 plus members of staff joining in and altogether, the school ran an incredible **2,786.8 km!**

Zeus

As we come to the end of another fantastic year, I wanted to take a moment to celebrate everything that Zeus has achieved. It has been a year full of energy and pride, and it has been a privilege to be part of so many memorable moments with our students and staff.

One of the real highlights this year has been the incredible House Days we have shared. These have brought out the very best in Zeus, teamwork, enthusiasm and a real sense of belonging. Whether competing, supporting or simply getting involved, students have represented the House with pride, and those days have been a true reflection of what the House system is all about.

A particular standout was our Zeus Wildlife Awareness Day, which was a brilliant success. As part of this, we hosted the Zeus Dog Show, the first event of its kind at Abbeywood. It not only brought a lot of fun and enjoyment, but also helped raise awareness in a meaningful and engaging way. It was wonderful to see such positive involvement from students and the wider community, creating an atmosphere that truly reflected the spirit of Zeus. A special well done to Darcy for winning the Dog Show, a fantastic achievement and a lovely highlight of the day. We are hopeful that the fantastic work and dedication shown by our Zeus House Captains in organising this event means it can become a lasting tradition that continues into next year and beyond.

While we may not have taken the House Championship title this year, what Zeus has built is something far more lasting. We have created a legacy of consistently being at the very top, a House known for its commitment, pride and togetherness. Winning the House Championship in 22-23 and following that with a very close second place in 23-24, missing out by just one point, speaks volumes about the standards that have been set. That legacy is something that will continue to drive Zeus forward in the years to come.

I would like to give a special thank you to our Zeus House Captains, who have worked incredibly hard this year, particularly in helping to organise and host the Dog Show as part of the Wildlife Awareness Day. Their leadership, commitment and enthusiasm played a huge role in making the event such a success, and they should be very proud of what they have achieved.

I would also like to take a moment to recognise the incredible Heads of House I have had the privilege of working alongside. Miss Tipping, Miss Maxted and Mr Gingell, have been a constant source of support, laughter and collaboration. Working together has created some truly special moments, and I am so grateful for the sense of teamwork and shared purpose we have built. It is rare to work within such a supportive group, and I will genuinely miss those moments we have shared.

I would also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all the staff who have supported Zeus throughout the year, as well as Miss Mahanoy and Miss Sims for their guidance and support. Your leadership, encouragement and belief have been invaluable, and I have truly appreciated the opportunity to work alongside you.

Finally, I wanted to share that I will be stepping down from my role as Head of Zeus. This has not been an easy decision, as being part of Zeus has meant more to me than I can fully put into words. It has been a genuine honour to support such an incredible group of students and to watch them grow in confidence, character and pride for their House.

Zeus is something very special, and I will leave this role with a huge sense of pride in everything we have achieved together and with so many memories that I will genuinely carry with me. The spirit, energy and sense of belonging within this House is something I will miss greatly.

I would also like to wish Miss Smerdon all the very best for the future of Zeus, I have no doubt the House will continue to thrive and go from strength to strength with you at the wheel.

Thank you to everyone who has been part of this journey, it has meant a great deal.

Warmest regards,
Mr Scott

I am delighted to have been appointed as Head of Zeus, and I am excited to take on the role in September. I am excited to work alongside the House Captains and to get to know the students within Zeus; celebrating their strengths and encourage them to get involved in as many opportunities as possible. I am keen to ensure that Zeus is a house where everyone feels supported and proud to belong. By working together, showing resilience, and supporting each other, I am confident that we can build a strong community and achieve great things. I look forward to an exciting and successful year ahead for Zeus.

Miss Smerdon