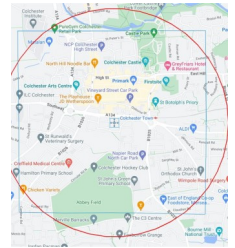




HISTORY ON OUR DOOR-STEP... ONE SQUARE MILE.



St John's Abbey Gate

Did you Know?

- St John's Abbey, also called Colchester Abbey, was a Benedictine monastic institution in Colchester, Essex, founded in 1095 .
- The only substantial remnant is the elaborate gatehouse, while the foundations of the abbey church were only rediscovered in 2010.
- The abbey suffered a disaster in its early years, when a large fire in 1133, which burned much of Colchester, severely affected the monastery.
- Following the Tudor victory in the Wars of the Roses King Henry VII appears to have viewed the abbey with suspicion, although he stayed there during his visit to Colchester. Catherine of Aragon also stayed at the abbey during her visit to the town in 1515. Following Henry VIII's divorce of Catherine, he began the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1536.
- St John's was one of a handful of abbeys that refused to surrender to Henry VIII's Commissioners during the Suppression, succumbing only after the execution of the abbot for treason.
- The property was eventually acquired by the Lucas family who converted some of the abbey buildings into a house. It remained their family seat until the mid-17th century, but it suffered considerable damage as a Royalist stronghold during the siege of Colchester in 1648. The gatehouse itself was stormed by Parliamentary troops and their artillery damaged the vaulted roof and destroyed part of the upper storey.
- The site was used to house Dutch prisoners in the 1660s, after which the remaining abbey buildings appear to have been demolished; there are no references to occupation after the mid-18th century.
- The Abbey Gate is about 100 meters from the school's Town site.

