



The Abbey CE VA Primary School

Headteacher: Miss E. Fenn

Grove Road

Telephone: 01727 851802

St Albans

Fax No: 01727 766991

Herts

Email: head@abbey.herts.sch.uk

AL1 1DQ

Website: www.abbey.herts.sch.uk

Dear Parents,

Happy New Year! The spring term is well underway here at school, albeit with very changeable weather!

Curriculum Information to Assist Parents

The teachers have been busy uploading useful information onto the school website and the Curriculum section of the website may prove very interesting for parents: <http://www.abbey.herts.sch.uk/parent-information/curriculum/> . This link will provide you with the curriculum letters for each year group, long term planning overview for each year group and long term planning overview for each curriculum subject. **The spring term curriculum letters and the spring term diary dates will be circulated to parents on Friday 16th January and then uploaded to the website.** We want to make the school website a useful tool for parents and we aim to keep it up to date so it can be used as a first port of call for queries and information.

The Spring Term Clubs List was sent out with the last newsletter and can be found on the school website. Also you will find there the academic term dates for 2015/2016 to help with your future holiday planning: <http://www.abbey.herts.sch.uk/news-dates/term-dates/> . 2016/2017 term dates were sent to parents in the last week of term and will shortly be uploaded onto the school website.

Award for Abbey Primary School

I was delighted to receive a letter from the Minister of State Schools, Rt Hon David Laws MP, this week to inform us that we had won an award in the Key Stage 2 category of the Pupil Premium Awards 2015. We were praised for our high achieving results in terms of the attainment and progress of children, especially of children who have qualified for the Free School Meals Pupil Premium since 2011, preparing them well for secondary school.

The Government introduced new funding arrangements for schools in 2011. One of the key changes has been the introduction of the Pupil Premium, which is linked to the number of pupils within the school who are eligible for Free School Meals. In 2014-2015 Abbey School was allocated £14,300.





The Abbey CE VA Primary School

Since 2011 these funds have been allocated to the staffing budget, and used to fund qualified teachers Mr Silver, Mrs Kendall and Mrs Cole to provide one to one tuition each week for identified children in English or Maths.

This decision has been made in line with our school development plan, which outlines our commitment to vulnerable learners. This tuition has, and continues to ensure that, children receiving grant funding under the Pupil Premium scheme will reach their full potential, making at least expected progress, and in many cases exceeding targets set. Year 6 children who qualify for Pupil Premium are also supported by the funding to enable them to take part in the Year 6 residential journey to West Runton.

As more families apply for Free School Meals at Abbey School, the funding increases. The increase in funding in 2014 allowed the school to employ a Librarian to develop all children's love of reading, raise the profile of reading, and improve the fiction and non-fiction resources and to teach the children library skills. In addition to, extra Teaching Assistant hours within all classes. The impact of this was reflected in 2014 Key Stage 2 Reading SATs results with 90% of Year 6 children reaching Level 5 and above and 100% reaching Level 4 and above. 2014 Key Stage 1 results showed that 97% of Year 2 children reached Level 2 and above in Reading and 53% reached Level 3 in Reading.

In short, the more children that qualify for Free School Meals at Abbey School, the more funding the school will receive for those identified children and for the benefit of all children as detailed above. If you currently receive one of the following benefits you may be eligible for Free School Meals:

- Income support
- Income-based jobseeker's allowance
- Income-related employment and support allowance
- Pension credit (guarantee credit)

Child Tax Credit with a taxable income of no more than £16,040 and not in receipt of working tax credit, you may also be eligible to receive Free School Meals and other educational benefits:

- Help with music fees
- Help with Year 6 cycle training fees
- Help with transport
- Help with Year 6 School Journey costs
- Weekly 1:1 tuition with a qualified teacher



The Abbey CE VA Primary School

Even if your child does not wish to have a school meal, please still make an application and take full advantage of all the other benefits on offer. The system for applying for Free School Meals is now much easier to apply. All you need to do is fill in your application form online or phone the Customer Service Centre and the rest will be done for you. Applications will be processed within 7 days. To apply log on to www.hertsdirect.org or phone the Customer Service Centre on 01438 737370 or 01923 471370.

The details of families who qualify for Free School Meals always remain confidential. Any school age children of families who qualify will receive weekly 1:1 tuition in school to support or extend their learning by a qualified teacher which has proven to have a very high impact. This support will continue for up to six years after the family no longer qualify if their circumstances change.

Year 6 Booster Classes

As in previous years, our Year 6 Booster Classes will begin next week and will run until the SATs in May. Mrs Tumber will be assisted by Mr Silver, Mrs Arnold and Mrs Johnston to teach the Year 6 children in three groups on a Tuesday and Wednesday morning for English and Maths. The groupings will be fluid based on Mrs Tumber's ongoing assessments and professional judgement. All children will be prepared for their forthcoming tests and will benefit from smaller teaching groupings. **There is a planned SATs and School Journey meeting for Year 6 parents and children at 2.45-3.20pm on Wednesday 18th March.**

Swimming Success

On the 28th November four of our Year 5 and 6 girls, Jemima Samols, Eilidh Dunwoodie, Florie Geurts and Beth Barker, represented Abbey School in a range of strokes in the Primary School Regional Finals for the East and South East of England. Children travelled from as far as Norfolk, Kent and Oxfordshire to compete and qualifying times were very high. All four girls swam very well for the school and Florie won the Gold medal in backstroke and Eilidh the Bronze medal just behind her <http://www.hertsssa.org.uk/primary2.html>. There is a team relay event in the spring which the girls are well placed to do well in. Eilidh was recently selected to swim representing Hertfordshire at the inter county gala on 8th February in Luton which is a great honour as only five children from her swimming club (City of St Albans) were chosen as part of the team. Well done Eilidh!

Friends' Events for your diary

- **Quiz Night:** Friday 6th February 2015 in the School Hall 7.30pm onwards (tickets only)
- **School Ball:** Saturday 16th May 2015 at St Albans School (tickets only)

Healthy Snacks in School

Fruit, healthy cereal bars or prepared vegetables may be eaten during morning break. A Government initiative entitles all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 to receive a free piece of fruit or vegetable each day, which they eat during their mid-morning break. Junior children may bring in prepared fruit or vegetables (carrot/celery etc) or a healthy cereal bar. Sweets, chewing gum, biscuits, crisps and nuts are not allowed.



The Abbey CE VA Primary School

Cool Milk for Key Stage 2 Children

From January 2015, parents who wish to purchase milk for their Key Stage 2 child to drink at morning break, can register and pay with Coolmilk. They can be contacted by telephone on 0844 8542913 or online: www.coolmilk.com . Parents need to register by a Tuesday in order for their child to start receiving milk the following week.

Giant African Snails

The School Library is the proud owners of two giant African snails. We are looking for a rectangular glass tank (with a lid!) to give them a larger home. If you have a spare empty tank that you are happy to donate to school please speak to Mrs Johnston or the School Office.

Kind regards,

Miss Emma Fenn

Headteacher