



# The Abbey CE VA Primary School

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20<sup>th</sup> November 2015

Dear Parents

## **The Sunday Times Recognises Abbey Primary School in the Top 200 State Schools**

Last week's Sunday Times ran an article identifying the Top 200 State Primary Schools. We were delighted to see that in the 2015 ranking Abbey School was ranked as 6<sup>th</sup> in the UK, the only St Albans school in the top 200. As the table shows, the ranking in this league table was based on the end of Year 6 2014 SATs results combined in reading, writing, grammar and maths to calculate the highest achieving average point school per child.

<b>2015 Rank</b>	<b>Name of School</b>
1	Fox Primary School, Kensington, London
2	Meanwood C of E Primary School, Leeds
3	Hampden Gurney C of E Primary School, Marylebone, London
4	St Faith's C of E Primary School, Winchester
5	Newton Farm Nursey, Infant and Junior School, Harrow
6	<b>The Abbey C of E VA Primary School, St Albans</b>
7	Our Lady of Victories Primary School, Putney, London
8	Courtland School, Mill Hill, London
9	Lowbrook Academy, Maidenhead
10	South Farnham School, Farnham

## **Governing Body and Parent Forum**

The results of the summer term parental questionnaire regarding various aspects of school life are now on the school website under the Parents Views section in Our School. <http://www.abbey.herts.sch.uk/our-school/parents-views/>

The Governing Body would like to invite parents to a Governing Body and Parent Forum on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November from 7-8pm in the School Hall. At this event several Governors will join me as we learn more about the thinking behind the responses in the survey and discuss actions implemented or planned. We will share the School Development Plan objectives for the year ahead and I will give parents an overview of the changes to assessment for this academic year.

We hope that the evening will prove informative to parents and that many of you can join us. This will be the first of two Governing Body and Parent Forums this academic year. The second Forum will be on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> March 7-8.30pm.



Healthy Schools





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## **Netball Team Success**

The netball team won our first match 4-2 against Bernards Heath Junior School on Monday. The parents watching and the squad were thrilled with the result and are all looking forward to their next match tonight. Well done to the Year 5 and 6 girls who played in Monday's match: Milli, Jemima, Iorwen, Scarlet, Hannah, Helena, Sophia and Ruby.

## **Harvest Donation**

155.9 Kilos of food was donated to St Albans and District Foodbank following our Harvest Service last month. I received a letter of thanks for our generosity which explained that this donation furthers the work of the Foodbank as it continues its efforts to support single people and vulnerable families.

## **Midday Supervisory Assistant Job Opportunity**

Abbey Primary School is looking for an additional midday supervisor to help with the supervision of children during the lunch break. The hours are 11.50 am to 1.05 pm at an hourly rate of around £7.30. We would be delighted to hear from applicants who would be interested in working Tuesday and or Wednesday. You would be joining a supportive team and working with well-behaved and friendly children. Please contact the School Office on 01727 851802 for further details.

## **School Christmas Tree**

Our school Christmas tree is being donated by Aylett Nurseries again this year and our children will decorate the tree in the week of the Christmas Fair, Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December. Any new children (such as the Reception class or new starters this academic year) who joined the school since last December are invited to bring in one decoration from home to hang on the tree that week. This decoration remains in school and is not returned home. This Abbey School tradition is fun for the children, but if your child is unable to find a decoration, or forgets, we will make sure he or she can choose a decoration from our box.

## **Christmas Fundraising at the Christmas Fair Saturday 5th December 12-3pm**

Our Christmas Fair promises to be a festive fun day for all the family! Please do come along and look out for our Year 6 Young Apprentices and of course Santa Claus is coming to town!

To tempt your taste buds there will be a variety of tasty treats to buy such as cakes and hog roast baps. All of the money raised at the Christmas Fair will go towards the Friends' Association fund raising target to upgrade our school facilities for the children. So far this term the Friends' Association have funded a Soundfield system in the Year 5 and a new set of 16 laptops for the entire school.

## **Non-Uniform Day – Friday 4<sup>th</sup> December**

In preparation for the Fair, children can wear non-uniform to school on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> December in return for a donation of a bottle of wine or similar for the bottle tombola or a smart box of sweets/chocolates for tombola prizes.

## **Christmas Fair reminders from Steve Samols, Chair of the Friends':**

- **Raffle tickets** have been sent home today with your eldest child and a purple tin is in the school library to deposit any monies in a sealed envelope OR preferably post into the Friends post box in the school entrance. CHEQUE payments are welcome - cheques made out to "**Friends of Abbey JMI School**".
- **Hamper contributions** - money donations by Friday 4<sup>th</sup> in an envelope in Friends post box or luxury Christmas food item or new toy. (see attached letter)



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- **Donations of books and pre owned toys** especially dressing up/dolls and accessories/action men/transformers.
- **Christmas Fair Bake Off** - Cakes - 6 per entrant - 1 to be judged, 5 sold at fair. Prizes for taste, decoration, originality.
- Class reps signing up volunteers - **please help!! We need you!**

## **Key Stage 1 Nativity**

Tickets for Key Stage 1 families to see 'The Little Fir tree' will be in an envelope in your eldest Key Stage 1 child's bag at the end of the day today. With 90 children performing, each Key Stage 1 family has been issued with two tickets for the evening performance on the Tuesday and two tickets for the matinee performance on the Wednesday. Parents are free to exchange their allocated tickets amongst themselves and return any unwanted tickets to the School Office. The School Office has no spare tickets, but the returned tickets will be given out on a first come first served basis to names on the request list which we will compile.

The School Hall has capacity for 160 adults when the stage is in place with 90 children performing. Every person watching must have a ticket which will be collected by the headteacher on arrival.

There will not be parking for buggies inside the school (hall or library) due to ensuring that fire exits are clear. No parents will be allowed to stand at the back without a ticket. As always, a polite request that if you choose to bring a toddler they must have a seat (restricted view) and a ticket and we ask that our youngest actors are able to have our full attention and that children are removed if distressed and distracting to our children performing.

All Key Stage 1 children will perform in both performances and Key Stage 2 children will watch the performance at the dress rehearsal. Children in Years R-2 will need to be at school at 6pm on the evening performance when the doors open for the audience for the 6.30pm performance. On the matinee performance the children will return to class at the end of the performance and be collected at 3.20pm as per normal. Both performances will hold a retiring collection, split between the school and the Children's Society.

## **Christmas Post Box**

Our school Christmas post box will be ready for use from Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December. Children are invited to post their Christmas cards at convenient times when in school (not during lesson time!) and our Year 6 children will act as postmen and postwomen each lunchtime.

Please ensure Christmas cards identify:

- child's full name on the envelope
- child's year group on the envelope
- name of the child who wrote the card on the inside!

## **Extreme Weather Conditions**

Thinking ahead, with potential future unpredictable weather conditions, our large and complex school site can make the start of the day difficult in ensuring the school is not only open but safe for children, parents and staff. On days when we experience snow and icy conditions the school will always endeavour to clear pedestrian walkways to the school building.

If the conditions are severe, the entire school site may not be cleared in time for 8.45am. On these occasions we will ensure that the pedestrian walkways to the front door of school via the pedestrian gate at Grove Road and the pedestrian gate at Lady Spencer Grove are clear for the start of the day.



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With a split level site we cannot always guarantee that the pathway from the Abbey Orchard gate is safely cleared in time, as parents and children walk across two playgrounds and it encompasses many flights of steps. Health and safety is always a priority and our flights of stairs could prove dangerous in adverse conditions. I hope you can understand that we have parents and children's safety in mind at all times if we do not open all three entrances to school. On such days, any assistance from parents is much appreciated, even from 7am or 8.45am.

To help you plan your journey to and from school on snowy and icy days it is best to rely on the clear access points of Grove Road and Lady Spencer Grove. Thank you for your continued support and understanding as we try to provide a safe learning environment for your children.

## **School Closure Procedure**

In the very rare event we were ever forced to close the school for health and safety reasons, please familiarise yourself with our school closure procedure. All parents would receive a text and an email if the school is closed, ideally between 6-7am, and notification may even be the night before.

## **A school closure will not be posted on the website or left on the school answering machine.**

You can also check if the school is closed on [www.hertsdirect.org/services/edlearn/schlife/schoolclose/](http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/edlearn/schlife/schoolclose/) you should also listen to your local radio station.

The station will announce the school closures regularly throughout the 'Drivetime' slot in the morning and/or put a list of closed schools on their website if possible (please note that not all stations put the information on their website).

BBC Three Counties Radio 103.8fm/92.1fm/90.4fm/630mw/1161mw

Areas covered: The whole of Hertfordshire

[www.bbc.co.uk/news/england/beds\\_bucks\\_and\\_herts/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/england/beds_bucks_and_herts/)

Heart 96.6

Areas covered: Watford, Hemel Hempstead, St Albans, Rickmansworth, Berkhamstead, Redbourn, Borehamwood, Kings Langley, Radlett

[www.heart.co.uk](http://www.heart.co.uk)

## **Travelling Crib 2015**

The Journey to Bethlehem. The figures start their journey at the Parish Advent Tea on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> November. If your family would like to host Mary, Joseph and their donkey for the night between Advent Sunday and Christmas Eve, please contact Sarah and Quentin Brooks on 01727 834801.

## **St Albans Christmas Market**

A magical, wintery launch event for all the family will mark the opening of the third St Albans European-inspired Christmas Market. The event will take place between 5pm and 7.45pm on Thursday 26 November in the Cathedral's walled Vintry Garden, which will be transformed into a magical wintry Vintry Village.

The much-loved Bjorn the polar bear will be making a welcome return to the Christmas market, along with the cheeky Nutkins, the ethereal Winter Fairy and an icy juggler, amongst other artists and performers.

Local bands such as Dauphin and Alex and the Christmas Lights will be providing the festive music. All of the chalets will be open and there will be Outdoor Inn selling gluhwein. The mayor will be officially opening the market at 7.15pm.



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Throughout the 24-day market, there will be a Santa's Grotto open in the afternoons and free craft activities in the craft tent. The Market will run from the Grand Opening of the Vintry Village on Thursday 26th November, through to Sunday 20th December. Opening hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday: 11am - 6pm; Thursday 11am - 8pm; Saturday and Sunday: 10am - 6pm

I wish you all a nice weekend.

Kind regards

Miss Emma Fenn  
Headteacher