

A brief history of Abbey School

The first Abbey School was built on a site in Spicer Street and opened in 1848. By the 1870s, there were three schools on the site – catering for Infants, Junior Boys and Girls, and Seniors.

The land on which the School was built originally had 24 cottages known as Emma's Buildings. The original site drawings are stored securely in the Diocesan offices.

Under the 1841 Act to Afford Further Facilities for the Conveyance and Endowment of Sites for Schools (School Sites Act), land owners were allowed to sell or donate a maximum of one acre of land to charities for the provision for schooling 'poor persons'. The Rector of the Abbey Church (Walter John Lawrance) and the Rector's Churchwarden (John Thomas Nicholson Lipscomb) – acting on behalf of the Abbey Church - signed the conveyancing deed, on 17 April 1885, granting management control and inspection of the site to the Rector and six Churchwardens. These became the first 'governors' for the school:

Venerable Walter John Lawrance: appointed as rector of Abbey Church in 1868, archdeacon of St Albans since 1884, and appointed the first dean of St Albans in 1900

John Thomas Nicholson Lipscomb: former Mayor (twice elected) and Alderman of St Albans, elected to the Town Council in 1855 and as Mayor in 1870. 41 years as the Rector's Churchwarden at Abbey Church, consulting physician to St Albans hospital and Surgeon to the prison at St Albans.

Thomas Weedon Kent: owner/manager of the small family-owned Holywell Brewery at 1 Holywell hill and a licensed beer house called the Beehive

Benjamin Agutter: Assistant to the Mayor & Alderman of the City of St Albans

John Chapple: Mayor of St Albans 1879, magistrate 1881, architect and Clerk of the Works, St Albans Abbey

Reverend Philip Deedes: Curate at Abbey Church, 1881 to 1884 and Canon of St Albans 1886 to 1904

Henry Younger: master cabinet maker

Increased numbers of pupils led to the splitting of the three schools operating on the site, and the establishment of Townsend CE School for secondary age pupils.

In 1970, the current school building was built on land belonging to the original dissolved monastery of St Albans.

How the school is organised: its constitution and governance

The official title of the school is **The Abbey Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, St Albans**. Its constitutional and governance arrangements are set out in our Trust Deed (the conveyancing deed of 1885) and our Instrument of Government.

A voluntary aided school is a state-funded school in England and Wales, in which a foundation or trust – in our case the Diocese of St Alban and the Chapter of the Cathedral and Abbey Church of St Alban – contributes to building costs and has a substantial influence in the running of the school.