



The Abbey CE VA
Primary School

Prospectus 2020/2021

Headteacher's Welcome

Welcome to the Abbey Church of England, Voluntary Aided Primary School. I hope this prospectus will answer many of your questions about who we are and what we do. In the absence of a tour of the school, please see our website for two introductory videos www.abbey.herts.sch.uk.

This is indeed a school where Every Child Matters and this fact is reflected in the school's commitment to inclusive education. My staff and I value each and every one of our pupils as individuals and our aim is to ensure that coming to school is a positive experience for all of them; we understand that children learn best when they are happy and feel secure.

The Abbey School is a voluntary aided school affiliated to the Church of England, and it enjoys strong links with The Cathedral and Abbey Church of Saint Alban. The school's Christian ethos permeates all areas of school life. In our most recent Church School's Inspection (May 2018), inspectors considered the school to be an 'Outstanding' Church of England school.

In September 2019 Ofsted judged Abbey School to be 'Good' in Overall Effectiveness and in all the five areas judged: Quality of Education, Behaviour and Attitudes, Personal Development, Leadership and Management and Early Years. This is something we are very proud of and reflects our self-evaluation against the inspection criteria.

We were particularly pleased to read in the report...

"This is an inclusive and welcoming school. Pupils told us that school is like being part of a big family."

"Teachers expect the pupils to behave and work hard in lessons."

"Pupils told us that they like many things about their school. Music is a favourite subject.....In most subjects, pupils who fall behind catch up quickly because they receive extra help when they need it."

"Safeguarding has a high priority for leaders. Staff are well trained and know how to identify any signs that pupils may be at risk from harm."

We look forward to working with you and we hope you enjoy your association with the school.

Emma Fenn
Headteacher



THE ABBEY CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL VISION, MISSION, VALUES AND AIMS

Our Vision Statement

We aspire to build foundations, inspired by Christian values, that nurture and empower confident citizens of the future to lead and serve.

Our Mission

Together we learn, we care, we achieve – for ourselves, for each other, and for the community in which we live.

Our Values

We work hard to live up to **Our Christian Values**:

- Thankfulness
- Love
- Friendship
- Forgiveness
- Wisdom
- Trust
- Justice
- Endurance

Our Aims

- Our **school environment** provides a safe, nurturing, positive and dynamic learning place, shaped by our Christian values, that enables us to grow – intellectually, spiritually, creatively and physically
- Our **teaching** offers a broad, challenging and outstanding education that every pupil can access to reach their full potential
- Our **approach to learning** will nurture the skills, motivation and working habits that inspire a positive attitude to independent learning and thinking so that every pupil approaches the future with confidence
- We will nurture and celebrate British values (democracy, rule of law, individual freedom, mutual respect and tolerance of difference) and promote awareness of the world around us, so that pupils are **responsible citizens**
- We **value the unique individuality** of each member of the whole school community. We celebrate those things we have in common and our differences
- We work in **constructive partnership** with parents and carers to achieve outstanding outcomes for every child

THE HISTORY OF THE 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 Junior Girls and Seniors. Increased numbers led to the splitting of the school 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. The school retains strong links with the Cathedral, which is its Parish Church.

THE ORGANISATION OF THE SCHOOL

The Abbey School is a one form entry primary school which caters for children from rising 5 to 11. There are 210 pupils on roll and we operate a single intake into Reception each September. The class teachers are responsible for the education and welfare of the children in their class. Each class is supported by a Teaching Assistant with a full-time Early Years Practitioner in Reception. The children are grouped into seven mixed ability classes of 30 as follows:

Key stage	Class	Age
Foundation Stage	Reception class	Rising 5s - 5
Key Stage 1	Year 1	5-6
	Year 2	6-7
Key Stage 2	Year 3	7-8
	Year 4	8-9
	Year 5	9-10
	Year 6	10-11

Teaching methods

Teachers use a variety of teaching methods and strategies to enable all children to learn, achieve and make good progress. Methods are varied depending on the subject being taught and the needs of the children in the class. They will include whole class teaching, small group teaching, one to one teaching and a range of practical activities. Different approaches are used to enable children to access their learning in different ways.

In the **Foundation Stage**, pupils work towards the Early Learning Goals which are assessed at the end of the summer term. Each half term the topic work will cover the seven areas of the curriculum, enabling the children to showcase their skills and understanding.

The seven areas focused on in the Foundation Stage are:

- Personal, Social, Emotional Development (PED)
- Communication and Language (CL)
- Physical Development (PD)
- Literacy, including reading and writing (L)
- Mathematics (M)
- Understanding the World (UW)
- Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Attendance and punctuality are important to all members of Abbey School. An attendance rate of below 90% is defined as 'persistent absentee' by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), as the Local Education Authority, who along with parents have a legal responsibility to ensure each child attends school regularly. We are required by law, to keep a record of your child's attendance at school. Attendance below 90% or late arrival to school has a high impact on learning.

If your child is absent because of ill health or an exceptional family circumstance such as a bereavement, please telephone/email the school office before 9.30 am so that the absence can be officially recorded. Absences without adequate explanation are marked as unauthorised.

Attendance is monitored termly by the Attendance Improvement Officer. Children who arrive late will have the minutes late recorded in the register. Applications for authorised absence must be made two weeks in advance, where possible.

Applications for Authorised Absence Due to Exceptional Circumstances

Holidays should be taken during the normal school holiday periods. We strongly discourage families from taking leave of absence during term-time and will not authorise holidays at the start of an academic year.

If an absence is exceptional, please complete an authorised absence form two weeks in advance to request an authorised absence. Leave of absence in term-time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances by the Headteacher. It should be emphasised that any absence during term time disrupts the children's education, whatever stage they are at within the school and homework or missed class work will not be provided by the school.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

An act of collective worship takes place every day. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from both Religious Education and Collective Worship. If they wish to exercise this right, they should notify the Headteacher in writing.

ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS

The Abbey School Governing Board is responsible for admissions to The Abbey School.

All applications in the first round of admissions to the Reception Class should be made using the County **Common Application Form** – available online. In addition, parents/carers are advised to complete our **Supplementary Information Form (SIF)** and return it to the school office by the closing date for applications. The Supplementary Information Form enables the school to apply its admissions criteria. Not returning this form may result in your application being given a lower priority than it merits.

Parents and carers will be given a range of practical information about the school, and children will have the opportunity to spend time with the class teacher and to sample a school lunch.

Admission to other year groups in the school will depend on the availability of places. Please apply direct to the school.

INCLUSION

Equal Opportunities

Our primary aim is to enable children to develop their full potential and to equip them for useful and creative lives in society. We promote equal opportunities by acknowledging and responding to individual needs and strengths. Hertfordshire County Council's guidelines and policies are followed, and the curriculum and all school activities are made accessible to all children regardless of race or gender.

Special Educational Needs

The Abbey School is committed to the inclusion of all children and every effort is made to ensure all children have full access to the curriculum and school activities. We provide a range of support for children experiencing difficulties in aspects of their learning or behaviour. The Headteacher and the SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator) organise the provision for pupils who need extra support. Teaching Assistants work in each class; the amount of time in each case is dependent on the level of help needed by the pupils.

Individual and group programmes of study are devised, and the teachers and the Teaching Assistants work with identified children to help maximise their achievements. In some cases, external professionals will be asked to carry out an assessment of a child's difficulties and needs, so that appropriate support can be set up in school. Children on the Inclusion Register will be given a Learning Passport which will identify targets to help them make progress. Parents will, of course, be fully involved in these arrangements.

Physical Disability

The school has drawn up a 5-year Access Plan, which sets targets for improving access to the school for pupils with disabilities. However, we regret that the steeply sloping site, upon which the school is built, has meant that, at present, some facilities, from classrooms to lavatories, can only be accessed by means of stairs. Until modifications can be made to the building and access paths, non-ambulant children would not be able to access all areas of the school.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

Home School Agreement

We believe in developing a strong partnership between home and school. A positive relationship between parents and school has a crucial bearing on the child's progress, and we hope that parents will not hesitate to contact the school about any areas of

concern. Parents and pupils are asked to sign up to a Home School Agreement when joining the school; this outlines the expectations and commitment for all parties.

Formal 10 minute **parent/teacher consultations** take place in the middle of the Autumn and Spring Terms using Parent Evening System video. This is an opportunity to discuss your child's progress. **Curriculum information** is shared with parents each term, specific to the child's year group.

Complaints Procedure

If you are concerned about any aspect of your child's education, you should discuss the problem first with your child's teacher. This may include any aspects of support for Special Educational Needs.

If you still have concerns, you should make an appointment to see the Head of Key Stage 1 or 2 as appropriate. If concerns still remain then an appointment with the Headteacher can be arranged via the school office.

In the rare event that this does not succeed in solving the problem, you may make a formal complaint to the Governing Board, who will consider the matter in confidence. If this still does not resolve the problem, you should write to the Local Education Authority so that the Conciliation, Advice and Appeals service can investigate the matter independently. Abbey School complaints policy is available on the policies page of the school website.

BEHAVIOUR AND DISCIPLINE

We endeavour to create a happy learning environment and to emphasise caring behaviour at every level. The children are encouraged to care for each other and for the school. To ensure a consistent standard of good behaviour throughout the school, we have adopted the following 'Golden Rules' with an emphasis on positive behaviour:

- 1. We are gentle. We don't hurt others.**
- 2. We are kind and helpful. We don't hurt anybody's feelings.**
- 3. We listen. We don't interrupt.**
- 4. We are honest. We don't cover up the truth.**
- 5. We work hard. We don't waste our own or other's time.**
- 6. We look after property. We don't waste or damage things.**

The Behaviour Policy gives full information on behaviour expectations, rewards and sanctions. These are made clear to the children from the beginning of their school lives and regular reminders are given. If school rules are broken or behaviour is deemed to be unacceptable, privileges or treats may be withdrawn. Parents will always be consulted where there are concerns about a child's behaviour. In the rare event of a pupil causing serious disruption to the school's normal routine, the Headteacher has the right to authorise a fixed term or permanent exclusion.

Bullying

Bullying in any form is not tolerated at the Abbey School. Any incidents of bullying will be treated very seriously and investigated thoroughly. The Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies are available on the website.

Abbey School Rules 2020-2021

1	Children and adults are expected to speak politely and with respect to all on the school grounds and to comply with the home school agreement.
2	Verbal or physical intimidation and aggression is not permitted on the school grounds.
3	Pupils should arrive on the school grounds no earlier than 8.45am. Children go straight to class between 8.45-8.55am.
4	Children must be collected promptly at 3.20pm when school ends and leave the grounds no later than 3.30pm except with the Headteacher's prior permission. Children not collected by 3.30pm will wait in the library. Pupils attending after-school clubs should be collected promptly at the appointed time via the front door.
5	Children who arrive after 8.55am must be accompanied to the front door of school by an adult. Children who arrive after 9.10am must be signed into school by an adult. Pupil absence must be reported by 9.30am, otherwise unauthorised. School lunches can be ordered up to 10am, otherwise home packed lunch will be required.
6	The playground equipment and grassy areas are out of bounds to all children before/after school.
7	No bicycles/scooters may be ridden in the school grounds.
8	Children must keep to the marked pedestrian path around the school site and carpark.
9	The carpark is for staff parking only during school hours and until after school club pick up. The marked top part of the car park is for staff only at all times.
10	All children are required to wear smart school uniform and school PE kit. No jewellery may be worn except a wristwatch and a small pair of stud earrings. Loose hair must be tied back and hair accessories should be blue and discrete. Hair gel, make up, hair stencils and nail varnish are not permitted.
11	Children must change into black plimsolls when inside school and walk to and from school in their black school shoes, which must have an enclosed toe and not be fashion shoes. Children who attend an extracurricular sporting club, out of hours, may leave the premises in sports kit.
12	Mobiles phones may only be brought into school in accordance with the mobile phone agreement.
13	Articles of value or money are not encouraged to be brought into school with the exception of cash payments for fundraising events when it must be given to the teacher at the start of the day.
14	No items of an offensive or dangerous nature may be brought to school. This includes knives, guns, fireworks, lighters etc., as well as inappropriate items of an 'adult' nature.
15	Dogs are not allowed on to the school grounds, apart from guide dogs.
16	Pupils must follow all instructions from all staff and fully participate in all educational activities.
17	Running is not allowed inside school or around the site – children are required to walk and line up quietly.
18	Fruit, healthy cereal bars or prepared vegetables may only be eaten during morning break. Sweets, chewing gum, biscuits and fizzy drinks are not permitted. Children should not share their food. Nuts are not permitted in school at any time. Named water bottles are allowed in the classrooms.
19	Packed lunch contents may only be eaten in the dining hall at lunchtime. Glass containers/canned drinks/drinks other than water/nuts are not permitted. Lunches should be brought in a sealed, well-labelled box. Children eating school dinners are not permitted to bring extra food or drink. Children must not share food.
20	Children should come to school with all equipment needed for the day, including homework, reading book, PE/swimming kit, packed lunch and musical instrument as appropriate.

Safeguarding

Abbey School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. **Our Designated Senior Person for Child protection (DSP) is Miss Emma Fenn (Headteacher).** Our Deputy DSP is Miss Lisa Felstead (Deputy Head). The Designated Governor for Safeguarding is Ms Myf Hopkins.

We have a number of policies and procedures in place that contribute to our safeguarding commitment, including our Child Protection Policy which can be viewed in the Parent Information section of our website.

The Children Act 1989 places a clear responsibility on schools to ensure that they work together with other agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. If any concerns are raised that a child may be suffering from abuse or neglect, we have a legal obligation to report this to the Children, Schools and Families service. We will ensure that any concerns about our pupils are discussed with his/her parents/carers first unless we have reason to believe that such a move would be contrary to the child's welfare.

We actively support the Government's Prevent Agenda to counter radicalism and extremism. All adults coming into contact with children in the school have been DBS checked.

Illness

If a child becomes unwell during the course of the day, and there are no signs of improvement, parents or carers will be asked to collect the child from school so that they can be cared for in comfort at home.

Health Protection Agency guidelines state that children must not return to school for 48 hours following the last episode of sickness or diarrhoea. This is for their own comfort and also to prevent it spreading to the rest of the class. Similarly, if your child has had conjunctivitis or impetigo, please keep them at home until your child has received medication from the doctor as these conditions are both highly contagious.

Please inform the school immediately of any infectious diseases, particularly Covid-19, Rubella (German measles) and slapped cheek so that we can warn any mother in the early stages of pregnancy, who may be in school.

Medicines

Where possible, medicines should be prescribed in doses which enable it to be taken outside school hours. It is also noted that medicines that need to be taken three times a day could be taken in the morning, after school and at bedtime. Medicines should only be administered at school when it would be detrimental to a child's health or school attendance not to do so. No non-prescription medication will be administered at school. Medicines must not be brought to school by pupils. If parents wish their child to be given medication during school hours, parents must complete school forms advance which must be approved by the Headteacher. Throat lozenges are not allowed without written permission from parents as they can be confused with sweets. All medicines, including inhalers and Epipens, must

be clearly labelled with the child's name and kept in the school office and parents must ensure that they are in date.

School Dinners

The children are supervised by Midday Supervisors. Universal Infant Free Meals (UIFM) are provided for all Reception and Year 1 and 2 children, if parents wish their child to have a school meal.

Lunch is cooked in the school kitchen and the menu each day includes three choices, including a hot meal and a vegetarian option. Menus are sent home to parents. Key Stage 2 pupils choose on the day. Key Stage 1 and Reception parents submit their child's choices in advance. Children are provided with water and are not allowed to bring other drinks.

Children are also allowed to bring in a packed lunch from home. Please do not include products containing nuts to ensure allergic children do not come into contact with nuts in any way. Children are provided with water and are not allowed to bring other drinks.

THE CURRICULUM

At the Abbey School we provide a broad and balanced curriculum which aims to make learning enjoyable and fun for the children, while achieving high standards in all areas. The school meets the statutory requirements of the new National Curriculum, but also designs the curriculum to make it relevant for children in the 21st century with an emphasis on environmental issues, global awareness and information technology skills. Where possible, links are made between different areas of the curriculum to give all learning a meaningful context for the children to give a cross-curricular approach. The curriculum is organised as follows:

Core Subjects:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Computing

Foundation subjects:

- Religious Education
- History
- Geography
- Art and Design
- Design and Technology
- Music
- Physical Education
- Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)
- Modern Foreign Language – French (Key Stage 2 only)

Through our rich curriculum we promote the British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

English

The requirements of the National Curriculum are met through a daily English lesson which covers reading, writing (including spelling, grammar, punctuation and handwriting) and speaking and listening. We aim to develop effective oral communication from the first days in school. Confident, clear, expressive speaking is encouraged, as well as attentive listening.

Reading

Reading skills are taught through whole class teaching in English lessons, in Guided Reading sessions in a group and through individual support. There is a strong emphasis on the teaching of phonics in the first years at school.

Throughout the school, there is an emphasis on the enjoyment of books, and there is a wide choice available to the children. In addition to levelled reading books, children can choose from class libraries. Key Stage 1 follow Letters and Sounds phonics and have embedded the new Oxford Reading Tree Reading Scheme.

Writing

Children are taught to write for a range of purposes and audiences and the children regularly use word-processing skills to present their work. Drafting and editing skills are taught, as well as knowledge of grammatical structures and spelling. Handwriting and correct letter formation are taught from the Reception stage to enable a neat, free-flowing style to develop following the Continuous Cursive style as they move through the school.

Mathematics

In Mathematics, children are taught how to apply and develop their mathematical knowledge through investigation, problem solving and working on practical tasks. Children are encouraged to develop different mathematical strategies to calculate mentally, and to discuss their work. It is expected that children will record and present their findings in a variety of ways.

Religious Education

The school follows the Bedfordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. The programme of study places a significant emphasis on Christian beliefs, but enables pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of major world religions during their primary school years, and make meaningful comparisons between them.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from both Religious Education and Collective Worship. If they wish to exercise this right, a letter of notification should be sent to the Headteacher.

End of Key Stage 1 and 2 National Curriculum Assessments

July 2019 –most recent data

Key Stage 2	Working at the expected standard and above			Working at a high standard		
	Abbey School 2019	Herts 2019	National 2019	Abbey School 2019	Herts 2019	National 2019
R, W, M combined %	67%	67%	65%	23%	13%	11%
Reading Test %	73%	76%	73%	40%	31%	27%
Writing TA%	80%	79%	78%	27%	25%	20%
SPAG Test %	73%	80%	78%	33%	37%	36%
Maths Test %	80%	80%	79%	40%	29%	27%

Key Stage 1	Working at the expected standard and above			Working at a high standard		
	Abbey School 2019	Herts 2019	National 2019	Abbey School 2019	Herts 2019	National 2019
R, W, M combined %	67%	66%	65%	20%	15%	11%
Reading TA %	87%	78%	75%	40%	32%	26%
Writing TA %	77%	72%	70%	30%	20%	16%
Maths TA %	83%	78%	76%	27%	26%	22%
	(GLD) Good Level of Development					
Early Years	Abbey School 2019	Herts 2019	National 2019			
%	83%	73%	72%			

Breakdown of Admissions Applications and Offers in Recent Years

Reception 2020 – 2021

Category	Applications	Places Accepted
1 (Looked after children)	0	0
2 (Children of teaching staff)	0	0
3 (Siblings)	19	19
4 (Catchment & Abbey)	8	6
5i (Catchment – Non-Abbey)	15	5
5ii (Abbey – Non-Catchment)	1	0
6 (Other Church)	2	0
7 (Other)	40	0

Reception 2019 – 20

Category	Applications	Places Accepted
1 (Looked after children)	1	0
2 (Children of teaching staff)	0	0
3 (Siblings)	14	14
4 (Catchment & Abbey)	8	4
5i (Catchment – Non-Abbey)	15	9
5ii (Abbey – Non-Catchment)	3	3
6 (Other Church)	3	0
7 (Other)	50	0

Reception 2018 – 19

Category	Applications	Places Accepted
1 (Looked after children)	1	0
2 (Children of teaching staff)	0	0
3 (Siblings)	14	14
4 (Catchment & Abbey)	10	10
5i (Catchment – Non-Abbey)	23	4
5ii (Abbey – Non-Catchment)	2	2
6 (Other Church)	3	0
7 (Other)	31	0