



Abbey Lane Primary School

Autumn 2 2023-24 Newsletter (2)

Can't believe it's almost Christmas!

I honestly have no idea where this term has gone! You blink your eyes and suddenly there are Christmas trees up outside and around school and Christmas decorations in every classroom. It's brilliant to see the school looking so festive – the children (and certain members of staff!) are getting incredibly excited by it all. It's such a nice time of year to be working in a school – you can feel the buzz intensify as we move closer to the big day!

As always, a huge thank you to all the hard work that the staff here put into their work every day. November and December tend to get very congested with all the events that are happening in school and, consequently, workloads inevitably pile up. Everyone here works tirelessly throughout all of that to make this a special time of year for the children.

I need to also comment on the children. As mentioned in a previous newsletter, we have been working hard on embedding our Core Values at Abbey Lane this school year and I have noticed a big improvement in so many of the children since September. We have had a focus on the Core Value of Respect and this is the one that I have been particularly impressed with as I've walked around school and into classrooms. Well done, everyone. These Core Values underpin our ethos at Abbey Lane and you are really starting to feel that inside school.

Lastly, I hope that everyone has a lovely time over the Christmas period and that all the children enjoy some much-needed rest. I know that not everyone at Abbey Lane celebrates Christmas but I hope that you all enjoy some family time whilst the children are off school.

Mr Calcutt

Staff Changes

It is with great sadness that, at the end of this term, we will be saying goodbye to four members of our staff team – Miss Pearson, Mrs Whirledge-Green, Miss Peevor and Mrs Alexander. Miss Pearson has been a valued teacher, Phase Leader and PE co-ordinator at Abbey Lane for just over 3 years. She is a fantastic teacher and it is really no surprise that she is moving to a new school as an Assistant Headteacher. We wish her the best of luck in her new role. Mrs Whirledge-Green has been at Abbey Lane for around 6 years and has really embedded herself in school life here. She is a very popular teacher at school who will be sorely missed. She is leaving us to make the big move to Australia and none of us here are jealous of that whatsoever! Miss Peevor has been working at Abbey Lane for 8 years now and really will be a big loss for the school – she is a brilliant teacher who has taught many of our KS2 children. We wish her good luck for whatever the future holds for her. Finally, Mrs Alexander has worked at Abbey Lane as a teaching assistant for a number of years on and off. The children in Y2 have benefitted greatly from her support this year and I know that they have all enjoyed working with her.

We'd like to thank these members of staff for all of their hard work with our children over the years and we'd also like to wish them the best of luck for the future. You will all be missed!

These staff changes also bring new members of staff into our team. Miss Field (who some of the children know as Mrs Killi when she did some work, supporting some of our children in school last year) will be taking over Miss Pearson's Y4 class.

Miss Field is an excellent teacher who is very eager to get started in her new role after Christmas. We also have a new teaching assistant starting in January who will be working predominantly in Y4. Miss Heaviside is a good addition to our school and she is very excited to become part of our staff team here at Abbey Lane.

Y1 Animal Encounter

The Y1s were very lucky this term as they were recently paid a visit by Beasties, an external company, who delivered a hands-on animal encounter in school. The children absolutely loved this as there were some very exotic animals included in this experience.



Here is what some of our Y1 children had to say about this amazing visit:

I liked the chinchilla because it was so soft – Brynne (Y1AB)

I had the snake over my shoulders. I liked Polly the Python, she is a bit shy of humans though – Emme (Y1AB)

My favourite part was holding the centipede because it was very tickly – Freddie (Y1M)

When the python was on my shoulders, it felt really heavy. That was my favourite animal because I hadn't seen a snake before - Charlie (Y1S)

Safeguarding Page

As some of you may be aware, our school website has a page dedicated to safeguarding. This page has useful links and phone numbers should anyone in your family need them at all.

We have recently added a new section to that page, called 'Raising a Safeguarding Concern'. If there is a safeguarding concern that you have about your child or another child at Abbey Lane, there is a form on this page for you to complete which will be sent directly to a member of the safeguarding team at school.

Related to this, Mr Boulton has worked really hard with some of our Y6s to create a 'child-friendly safeguarding policy' which will be introduced to children in school in the near future. This can also be found on our website.

Children in Need

On Friday 17th November, it was Children in Need where school raised lots of money to go towards all of the charities that Children in Need support.

We held a non-uniform day to help us raise the money and also gave children the opportunity to be entered into a Build-a-Bear prize draw. Below are the lucky winners of this:

Reception – AbdulAziz (YRH)
Y1/Y2 – Harley (Y2C)
Y3/Y4 – Jax (Y4B)
Y5/Y6 – Ewan (Y5HL)

A special 'well done' to these children and thank you to everyone for their donations.

Governor Changes

As well as our staff changes, we also have some new faces within our Governing Body. We have three new parent governors – Andrew Mumford, Asifa Khan and Katie Leonard, and our new staff governor is Emily Hunt, one of our teaching assistants at Abbey Lane. We would like to welcome these governors to their new roles and thank them, and all of the governing body, for the time that they put in, helping to drive forward Abbey Lane's school improvement.

Sadly, there is another change within the school's Governing Body that will be taking place at the end of this term. Jemma Taylor, our current Chair of Governors, will be stepping down. Jemma (or Mrs Taylor to the children!) has been a governor at Abbey Lane for 16 years and has been the Chair of Governors for the last 12 years. Her unwavering dedication and tireless service to help make the school the best place it can be for our children has been truly commendable. The countless hours that she has devoted to ensuring the success of Abbey Lane have not gone unnoticed and her legacy will, undoubtedly, endure. We can't thank you enough, Jemma, for all that you have done for the children, and staff, of our school and wish you all the best for everything in the future – may your passion continue to inspire others.

With this change means that there will be a new Chair of Governors in place for after Christmas. The governors have voted that two of our existing governors, Jane Austin and Dan Smith, will take on the role of Chair between them. Jane and Dan both know the school really well and are keen to continue the positive work that Jemma has undertaken at Abbey Lane. They have the necessary skills to do this and both are more than capable of helping to take the school forward in the next chapter of its journey.

Breakfast Club

Thank you to all of you that are using our before school Breakfast Club provision. It is run by school staff who work very hard to make these morning sessions exciting and engaging for the children and, because of this, the club is proving to be very popular with the children that are accessing this.

I'd like to give a quick reminder to all parents to ensure that their child is booked onto Breakfast Club before bringing them in the mornings. We can only have a certain number of children each morning and, if this is exceeded, we won't be able to accept your children into the club. Please **always** book a place before dropping your children off.

It is also really important for the children's safety that if you are dropping off a child directly to Breakfast Club (via the car park) then you need to hand your child over to a member of Breakfast Club staff. This is because cars, and other vehicles used by the builders, may be moving around the car park at this time.

Thank you, again, for cooperating with this and for helping to make our Breakfast Club a success.

Christmas Trees

As well as the various Christmas trees that we have up around school currently, you may have also noticed that there are some Christmas trees outside the main entrance to school as well. These, along with the lights, have been donated to school by various companies – Creative (the building contractors involved with our building work), Lookers Ford Sheffield, Greenwood's DIY and Elegance Music.

They look fantastic, all lit up, with the dark mornings and late afternoons that we are starting to get. A big thank you to Mrs Naylor, our site manager, for spending a lot of time getting them set up with their lights on and making them look so good.

School Crossing

Sadly, due to unforeseen circumstances, there will be no school crossing on Abbey Lane outside the main entrance to school at either the start or the end of the day. Mrs Kirkup, the school crossing patrol warden, will be back helping the children and families to cross the road safely to school on the 8th January.

Remembrance Day

On Friday November 10th, the children did some work in their classrooms related to Remembrance Day. Each class produced something to go up on display in our main entrance. As you can see below, there were some great pieces of work.



Diary Dates

Please find below a list of provisional dates for the remainder of Autumn term (and the beginning of Spring term). We have tried to include as many **provisional** dates as possible. We will send more dates out once they have been finalised.

Thursday 7 th December 2023	Save the Children Christmas Jumper Day (children welcomed to wear a Christmas jumper and bring a donation)
Monday 11 th December 2023	Y6S homework showcase (2.45pm start)
Tuesday 12 th December 2023	Y2 Nativity performance (2.15pm start)
Wednesday 13 th December 2023	Y6R homework showcase (2.45pm start)
Wednesday 13 th December 2023	Y2 Nativity performance (9.30am start)
Wednesday 13 th December 2023	Y4 homework showcase (2.45pm start)
Thursday 14 th December 2023	Y1 Christmas Songs Performance (2.45pm start)
Thursday 14 th December 2023	Y6BG homework showcase (2.45pm start)
Wednesday 18 th December 2023	Y3 dance showcase
Monday 18 th December 2023	Y5 and Y6 to visit the church for a Christmas service
Tuesday 19 th December 2023	Y2 parent storytime in the Main Hall (2.45pm start)
Wednesday 20 th December 2023	Y3 and Y4 Christmas Songs Performance (2.45pm start)
Wednesday 20 th December 2023	Christmas Dinner Day (Christmas jumpers welcomed for this day)
Thursday 21 st December 2023	Christmas Party Day
Thursday 21 st December 2023	Y5 and Y6 Christmas Songs Performance (2.45pm start)
Friday 22 nd December 2023	INSET (children not in school)
Monday 25 th December 2023 – Friday 5 th January 2024	School closed for Christmas holidays
Monday 8 th January 2024	First day back at school after Christmas holidays
Friday 19 th January 2024	Reception trip to The Emergency Services Museum
Friday 26 th January 2024	Y4 Roman Day
Friday 9 th February 2024	Last day of school before Half Term
Monday 12 th February 2024 – Friday 16 th February 2024	Half Term
Tuesday 20 th February 2024	Young Voices