



Abbotskerswell Primary School

Slade Lane, Abbotskerswell, Newton Abbot, Devon, TQ12 5NS

Tel: (01626) 353605 Email: admin@abbotskerswell-primary.devon.sch.uk

Website: www.abbotskerswell-primary.devon.sch.uk



For every minute
you are angry you
lose sixty seconds
of happiness.

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

www.happier.com

Friday 14th February 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Required Play Leader and Meal Time Assistant

The happy and friendly children of our School are looking for that special person who can look after them at lunchtimes. Duties include supervising and initiating play outside as well as the supervision of children in the dining hall. This post is 5 days per week 12:30pm – 1:30pm, although equally one or two days would be welcome.

Abbotskerswell Primary School is committed to safeguarding children and this post is subject to an enhanced DBS check. If you are interested please speak to Becky or Marie by emailing admin@abbotskerswell-primary.devon.sch.uk, ringing 01626 353605 or popping into the school office.

School Council Fundraising event

Our hardworking School Council team organised a fund raising event for the RNLI. The children came up with the idea of wearing wellington boots into school today instead of their usual shoes, for a donation. They raised a fantastic **£80.70** for the RNLI charity.



A Message from Catherine Denning – Core Curriculum Governor

As part of our role as core curriculum governors, Jen Hersey & I visited school last Monday to undertake a learning walk, with a focus on vocabulary and the bar model. It was clear to see that the school has introduced a display in every classroom which promotes the use of high level vocabulary (Spine Vocabulary). The aim is to introduce children to a new word and encourage them to use it in their spoken and written language. We spoke to the teachers about how it is used. Teachers were enthusiastic about the approach and commented that they are using the new

words when teaching to illustrate its use. Keep an eye out for these displays when visiting your children's classrooms, and try and introduce these words at home when you can.

Teachers recently had a staff meeting on using the bar model to support pupils conceptual understanding when solving a maths problem. There was evidence of pupils using the bar model in every classroom. In one class the teacher was using it to solve an addition problem and showing the relationship between addition and subtraction. In another class, pupils were given the answer to a maths problem and were asked to use the bar model to explain why it was that answer. This encouraged the children to focus on their conceptual understanding of the maths involved rather than just achieving the answer. Again all teachers were enthusiastic about using this approach in their teaching. We talked to several children about their use of the bar model and looked at their books with them.

We would like to acknowledge how impressed we were with the learning environment around the whole school. Every classroom and shared space had high quality displays which either displayed pupils work or supported children with their learning. The governors would like to thank staff for their hard work in making the school a vibrant and stimulating place to learn.

Undertaking the learning walk reminded me why I became a governor, it was a pleasure to visit the classrooms, and witness the children engaged in their learning.

Goodbye to Mrs Kerswell

On Wednesday we held a goodbye assembly. We wish Mrs Kerswell all the best for the future at St Margaret's School. Mrs Kerswell has asked me to pass on this message 'Thank you for such a lovely last day! Thank you so much for all your kind words, cards and presents and for all the support you have shown me as part of the school community. It has been an absolute pleasure to work with you and your lovely children and I will miss you all very much!

Staff appointment

After a rigorous interview process, we would like to inform you that we have appointed Mrs Amy Pearson for the permanent part time job share alongside Miss Walsh in Swift class and we have also appointed Mrs Amy Cooke as a part time teacher for the Summer term. Mrs Cooke will work in Kingfisher as well as across the school with other classes. Staff, governors and the school council were very impressed by both teachers and feel that they have many skills that they will bring to the school.

Many of the children were involved during the interview process and played an important part in the day. They were a real credit to the school and are very excited and pleased with the two appointments. Thank you!

Internet safety

Safeguarding our children is of the utmost importance here at Abbotskerswell School and supporting our children and parents to understand and know how to be safe online is an essential part of our work in this area. Safer Internet Day provides us with the opportunity to highlight this area of keeping children safe. As you will know, Safer Internet Day is a national initiative aimed at promoting awareness of staying safe online. Children will be exploring ideas about identity online with a focus on 'It's good to be me!'

The school has recently increased the number of ipads we have and we are in the process of improving our wireless infrastructure setup. We know this will have a huge impact on our

Computing Curriculum and also on the effective use of technology throughout our curriculum. Online Safety will be an ongoing parallel thread to our teaching to increase and sustain our pupil's awareness and knowledge of how to keep safe online both at school and at home. We feel very passionate about this aspect of safeguarding. I have attached an online safety tips newsletter for parents.

Advice from the Department for Education: Coronavirus

The government is closely monitoring the spread of the Coronavirus and is taking action at home and abroad. The overall risk of Coronavirus to the UK remains moderate. However, we understand that people may be concerned where there are children, students or staff returning from or visiting China. Public Health England and the Foreign Office have issued advice for anyone travelling to the area. This can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/china>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-and-avian-fluadvice-for-travel-to-china>

Latest information and advice can also be found at:

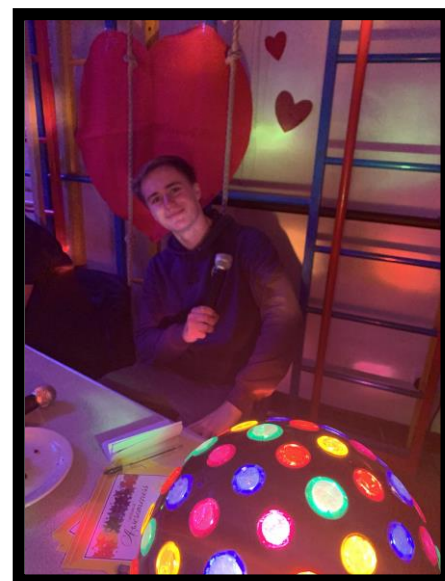
<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Advice for parents/guardians

You should not be unduly worried about the possibility of your children catching the Coronavirus. There is no reason why your children should not continue to attend their early years, school or further education setting as normal. We recognise that some families or children may be planning to travel to China during the forthcoming half term period. If so, please refer to the FCO's latest travel advice via the link above.

Disco

Many thanks to our hardworking PTFA team who put on another fantastic event for our children. The hall was transformed and the children clearly had a great time. The selection of delicious cakes went down well, many thanks bakers! I would like to give a special thanks to Mr Vile, who stepped up at the last minute to display his DJ skills. We were unsure who had the better time during the disco, the children or Mr Vile...



Production

Well done to our amazing and talented children who put on a fantastic show. With a shorter time frame to get this done in, the children (and adults) really rose to the challenge. Many thanks to Mrs Johns, Mrs Kerswell, Mrs MacDowall, Mrs Tucker and Mrs Moss for your hard work as well as our volunteers on the evening with the bar.



PTFA Messages

Do you want to feel involved? Do you want to make a real difference?

The PTFA are holding their AGM and would love to invite you along. It is to be held at the Court Farm Inn on the 26th February at 7.15pm. Come and see what we've been up to and what plans are afoot for the next 12 months.

If you really want to get involved, then all of the committee positions will be up for grabs. A new PTFA Chair, Treasurer or Secretary could be lurking amongst you! I hope you will be able to join us and help us to help your children.

Attendance

Our overall attendance figure for this week is **98.11%**. This is above Devon and National averages. Our weekly target is 97%.

Attendance this week						
Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
98.04%	95.68%	97.92%	100.%	96.53%	99.31%	99.26%

Well done to Year 3 who have the best attendance this week.

Children's regular attendance at school is essential to ensure that they maximise their learning opportunities to achieve their full potential.

For any planned absence, please use the S2 Absence Request form which can be obtained from the rack outside of the office. As you are no doubt aware, holidays in term time are strongly discouraged and the school will continue to follow Government guidelines which do not allow for authorisation of holidays in term time.

Finally, just to wish you all a great half term – and look out for Dennis (the Menace) this weekend.
Yours sincerely

Kevin Martin
Headteacher

Key Dates

<u>February 2020</u>	
Monday 24 th February	First day back at school for children
Monday 24 th February	Full Governors Meeting – 6pm
Wednesday 26 th February	NSPCC workshops and assembly
Wednesday 26 th February	PTFA AGM everyone welcome
Friday 28 th February	Robins class – Warburton's visit
<u>March 2020</u>	
Tuesday 3 rd March	Year 3/4 & Year 5/6 Gymnastics Competition at NAC 2-4pm
Tuesday 17 th March	Puffin & Robin St Patrick's Day Celebration
Wednesday 18 th March	Music Performance for Guitar children @2.40pm
Monday 23 rd March	Full Governors Meeting – 5pm
Tuesday 24 th – Thursday 26 th March	Year 5/6 Residential to London
Friday 27 th March	Last day of term
<u>April 2020</u>	
Tuesday 14 th April	First day back at school for children
<u>May 2020</u>	
Monday 4 th May	Reception Festival at NAC 10-11.45am
Wednesday 6 th May	Class Photos
Friday 8 th May	Bank Holiday – VE Day 75 th Anniversary
W/B 11 th May	Key Stage 2 Sats week
Monday 18 th May	Year 5/6 Cricket Competition
Monday 18 th May	Full Governors Meeting – 6pm
Friday 22 nd May	Last day of half term
<u>June 2020</u>	
Monday 1 st June	Non Pupil Day
Tuesday 2 nd June	First day back at school for children
Wednesday 3 rd June	Year 1/2 Fun Athletics at NAC 1-3pm
<u>July 2020</u>	
Thursday 16 th July	Whole school reward trip
Friday 17 th July	Last day of term



YOUR CHILD'S TRANSITION
from primary to secondary school

10-14 AUGUST 2020 at COOMBESHEAD ACADEMY
17-21 AUGUST 2020 at TEIGN SCHOOL

THE BIG STEP!
YEAR 6-7 TRANSITION PROGRAMME

'MAKING THE BIG STEP A SMALLER STEP'

THE BIG STEP 2020 PROGRAMME
Your child's invitation to attend

Our transition programme aims to achieve:

- Smoother transition from primary to secondary school
- Increase literacy and numeracy skills
- Develop and improve students self esteem and confidence
- Improve the educational attainment of students, ensuring gains in primary school are not lost on transfer
- Familiarising them with their new surroundings
- Help to meet and make new friends
- Provide a taster of activities and learning, allowing students to gain new skills and knowledge
- Activities include: Escape room, giant cluedo, Exeter Chiefs, pizza making, sports, arts and crafts, drama and crazy golf

100% of parents agreed their child had fun and made friends

AVERAGE PARENT RATING 9.5
Very Satisfied to Delighted

'MAKING THE BIG STEP A SMALLER STEP'

Theme of the day	Registration (8:00-9:00)	1 (9:00-10:00)	2 (10:00-11:00)	3 (11:00-12:00)	4 (12:00-13:00)	5 (13:00-14:00)
Teamwork	Introduction Overview of week Fun games	Team Building Activities	Team Building Activities	Cluedo: The Case of the Missing Color	Tournament Dodge-ball	
Communications	Reflection & Praise to Success tasks	Learn a New Sport Handball, American Football, ultimate Frisbee	Workshop Cyber bullying	Sports Day	Tournament Football or basketball	
Challenge	Reflection & Praise to Success tasks	Escape Rooms 'Night at the Museum'	Workshop Coding with 'Anxiety'	Workshop Mobile Phone App Making Design an app to help with year 7 life	Tournament	
Independence	Reflection & Praise to Success tasks	Individual Sport Badminton, tennis, gymnastics	Workshop Cookery design and make your own healthy pizza	Easter Chiefs Rugby skills and games		
Reflection	Reflection & Praise to Success tasks	Workshop Drama	Danish Imperial	Street golf	Workshop Building Resistance	Ceremony Celebration & awards

Example timetable, subject to change

100% of parents agreed their child's anxiety was reduced and they were more confident about starting secondary school

SCHOOL HOURS £80 PER WEEK*
inc. 2 ceremony tickets

100% of children agreed the BIG STEP to make for them

keep in touch and register your interest visit thebigstep.org or email info@thebigstep.org with any questions

* If your child receives free school meals or has at any point in the past they were you may be entitled to a reduced cost. Contact us to find out more. 'The Big Step' is a trading name of Teign Educational Services Ltd Company No. 1060376.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

10 Conversation Starters for Parents

Talking about mental health to children is sometimes hard. To the point that we can put off raising the subject, not wanting to unearth problems or raise overwhelming subjects that we perceive our child is too young or not ready for. But rather than keeping children in the dark, this guide is designed to help you confidently talk about mental health, so they feel comfortable talking about their own worries and seek any support before it begins.



National
Online
Safety*

#WakeUpWednesday

1 LISTEN

This sounds obvious, but it is not something we are always great at. Active listening is when we listen without interrupting or making judgements, and shows interest in what is being said. If your child feels listened to in the 'moment of problems' they will become confident that you will listen when the 'biggest of problems' arise.

2 ASK TWICE

The campaign from live to change is great. <https://www.live-to-change.org.uk/parent-ask-twice-campaign>. The lessons about your child's wellbeing. Children learn to know when your questions and support come from a place of wanting to help and care.



Are you sure?

3 THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A STUPID QUESTION

This advice also relates to the first point. If your child can ask you any questions about the mental of things and you listen and answer without shaming or belittling, then they will have more confidence to ask the biggest of questions.



4 BE OPEN AND HONEST

Children appreciate honesty, particularly if you are having to share information or talk about a difficult subject. For example, you may be talking about death or loss: 'It's very sad that Nana has died' or 'I lost our dog Nana has died'. How you talk about a subject will differ depending on their age and developmental maturity. Talking about death to a younger child for example will be different to that of an older teen, as their experience and understanding of death is different.



5 KNOW WHEN TO SEEK HELP

Assess the severity of the mental health difficulty you are noticing. Is the difficulty making it hard for your child to have that regularly throughout everyday life? How frequently is your child affected, how long does it last and how persistent is it? Are they having problems controlling the difficulty? Talk to your child about your concerns and that it is likely they will need for their support beyond family and friends.

6 TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH NATURALLY

Speak about mental health as part of everyday life, so that talking about our feelings and those of others is normalised. If the usual 'are you ok?' is not creating an opportunity for dialogue then say something like 'I know when something like that has happened to me I felt like this... is that how you are feeling or are you feeling something else?'

7 EMPATHISE

It makes sense that you would feel this way. It is understandable. Children often worry about things that we, as adults, might see as trivial or silly. However, for them at their age and stage it is a big concern and they need our kindness and care when they share their vulnerability and share their worries.



8 HELP YOUR CHILD FEEL SAFE

Times particularly feel that by talking about their worries or concerns that this will make things worse. Reassure your child that you will discuss a plan of action together and what may or may not need to happen next. If they are a younger child, it is likely you will need to lead the conversation and explain next steps.



9 MIND YOUR LANGUAGE

Be mindful of the language you use at home to describe and talk about mental health. Stigma often arises from misconceptions and a choice of language which is harmful. Using the word 'mental', 'brain' or 'other such words in a derogatory way won't encourage your child to talk about their mental health for fear of being labelled.



10 IT IS OK TO SAY 'I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO NEXT'

Adults do not have all the answers but often children think they do. It is ok to acknowledge that what your child is experiencing is not something you have come across before or know anything about, but that you will work it out together and seek help together.



Meet our expert

This guide has been written by Anna Bakeman. Anna is passionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school, integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture and systems. She is also a member of the advisory group for the Department of Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.



Sources of Information and Support

Free CPD

Young Minds <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/>

<https://www.schoolsframeworks.co.uk/mental-health-support>

<https://www.actiononchildren.org.uk/news-and-events/parenting-tips/2016/10/mental-health-a-simple-guide-to-active-listening-for-parents/>

<https://www.dhsmh.org.uk/mental-health>