



# ABBOT'S LEA SCHOOL

Headteacher: Mrs Ania Hildrey, FCCT, B.Ed(Hons), M.Ed, NPQH, NPQEL



16 July 2024

Dear Families

## Ref: Key Diary Dates – Term 1 (Wednesday 4 September – Friday 25 October 2024)

As we approach the end of this academic year, I am writing to share information about the activities coming up during the first term of next school year.

As you know, our Philosophy of Education is the ASD Model ©. This means we place equal value on students' academic progress, specialist therapeutic support and development of life skills.

As a result, we carefully design all learning and enrichment opportunities to meet our students' diverse and changing needs and support their progress academically, personally and socially.

This year has been full of amazing opportunities for our school community and it has been a pleasure to watch our students engage in a range of events which all play a vital part in the development of their skills, their enjoyment of school and in their capital culture.

I hope you find the calendar of events helpful and that you are able to join us for some of the open events:

May I take this opportunity to thank you for all of your support over this last academic year and welcome all new families to our school community.

Date	Activity	Notes
Thursday 22 August	GCSE results day	All students who are expecting GCSE results will be contacted personally to decide on the best method of communication for them.
Monday 2 September	INSET DAY	School closed to students
Tuesday 3 September	INSET DAY	School closed to students
Wednesday 4 September	School reopens for students – 9am	School reopens for students
Friday 6 September	Weekly open assemblies led by Mrs Tobin (Deputy Headteacher), Mr Mason (Assistant Headteacher for Secondary) and Miss Gibney (Assistant Headteacher for Primary) <b>Assembly times:</b> 9.30 – 10.00 Primary 10.00 – 10.30 KS3 10.30 – 1.00 KS4 and 5 <b>Coffee morning:</b> 9.30 – 10.30am	We encourage families to attend where they are able. If there is any topic you would like to hear about or contribute to during the coffee mornings, please advise school via your child's class teacher.  Please see a plan for how assemblies will work this year below.

Monday 9 September	Visual Stress Assessments	Please see information below
Wednesday 11 September	School photographs	Please ensure that your child attends school in their full formal school uniform on both of these dates to have their photograph taken. If your child normally wears PE uniform on those days, please note that they must wear the full formal uniform instead. There will be the opportunity for you to also purchase your child's photograph if you wish and you will be provided with the details of how to order online and have the photos delivered to the school or your home address.
Thursday 12 September	School photographs	
Friday 13 September	Roald Dahl Day	Students will be learning about the life and works of Roald Dahl in their classes.
Friday 13 September	Weekly open assemblies led by Mrs Tobin (Deputy Headteacher), Mr Mason (Assistant Headteacher for Secondary) and Miss Gibney (Assistant Headteacher for Primary) <b>Assembly times:</b> 9.30 – 10.00 Primary 10.00 – 10.30 KS3 10.30 – 1.00 KS4 and 5 <b>Coffee morning:</b> 9.30 – 10.30am	We encourage families to attend where they are able. If there is any topic you would like to hear about or contribute to during the coffee mornings, please advise school via your child's class teacher.  Please see a plan for how assemblies will work this year below.
Friday 20 September	Weekly open assemblies led by Mrs Tobin (Deputy Headteacher), Mr Mason (Assistant Headteacher for Secondary) and Miss Gibney (Assistant Headteacher for Primary) <b>Assembly times:</b> 9.30 – 10.00 Primary 10.00 – 10.30 KS3 10.30 – 1.00 KS4 and 5 <b>Coffee morning:</b> 9.30 – 10.30am	We encourage families to attend where they are able. If there is any topic you would like to hear about or contribute to during the coffee mornings, please advise school via your child's class teacher.  Please see a plan for how assemblies will work this year below.
Tuesday 24 September	Family Wellbeing Session 1	Further information sent to families regarding this opportunity – please book via <a href="mailto:reception@abbotsleaschool.co.uk">reception@abbotsleaschool.co.uk</a>
Thursday 26 September	European Languages Day	Students will get to experience food from different European countries, play games and learn different languages.
Friday 27 September	Weekly open assemblies led by Mrs Tobin (Deputy Headteacher), Mr Mason (Assistant Headteacher for Secondary) and Miss Gibney	We encourage families to attend where they are able. If there is any topic you would like to hear about or contribute to during the coffee mornings, please advise

	(Assistant Headteacher for Primary) <b>Assembly times:</b> 9.30 – 10.00 Primary 10.00 – 10.30 KS3 10.30 – 1.00 KS4 and 5 <b>Coffee morning:</b> 9.30 – 10.30am	school via your child's class teacher.  Please see a plan for how assemblies will work this year below.
Tuesday 1 October	Start of ADHD awareness month	Student will learn about different people who have ADHD and some of the strengths this condition brings with it.
Tuesday 1 October	Family Wellbeing Session 2	Only open to those accepted onto the course
Friday 4 October	Weekly open assemblies led by Mrs Tobin (Deputy Headteacher), Mr Mason (Assistant Headteacher for Secondary) and Miss Gibney (Assistant Headteacher for Primary) <b>Assembly times:</b> 9.30 – 10.00 Primary 10.00 – 10.30 KS3 10.30 – 1.00 KS4 and 5 <b>Coffee morning:</b> 9.30 – 10.30am	We encourage families to attend where they are able. If there is any topic you would like to hear about or contribute to during the coffee mornings, please advise school via your child's class teacher.  Please see a plan for how assemblies will work this year below.
Tuesday 8 October	Family Wellbeing Session 3	Only open to those accepted onto the course
Thursday 10 October	World Mental Health Day	Students will practise new techniques to support positive mental health.
Friday 11 October	Weekly open assemblies led by Mrs Tobin (Deputy Headteacher), Mr Mason (Assistant Headteacher for Secondary) and Miss Gibney (Assistant Headteacher for Primary) <b>Assembly times:</b> 9.30 – 10.00 Primary 10.00 – 10.30 KS3 10.30 – 1.00 KS4 and 5 <b>Coffee morning:</b> 9.30 – 10.30am	We encourage families to attend where they are able. If there is any topic you would like to hear about or contribute to during the coffee mornings, please advise school via your child's class teacher.  Please see a plan for how assemblies will work this year below.
Tuesday 15 October	Family Wellbeing Session 4	Only open to those accepted onto the course
Wednesday 16 October	World Food Day	Students will learn all about different food from around the world. We will look at where our foods come from and the employment involved with getting food to our tables.
Friday 18 October	Weekly open assemblies led by Mrs Tobin (Deputy Headteacher), Mr Mason (Assistant Headteacher for Secondary) and Miss Gibney (Assistant Headteacher for Primary)	We encourage families to attend where they are able. If there is any topic you would like to hear about or contribute to during the coffee mornings, please advise school via your child's class teacher.

	<b>Assembly times:</b> 9.30 – 10.00 Primary 10.00 – 10.30 KS3 10.30 – 1.00 KS4 and 5 <b>Coffee morning:</b> 9.30 – 10.30am	Please see a plan for how assemblies will work this year below.
Wednesday 23 October	Diversity in: NHS	This is the first of our series of “diversity in:” sessions to be held this year. Students will look at hidden figures who have been instrumental in medical professionals.
Friday 25 October <b>CHANGE TO ROUTINE</b>	<b>No assemblies or coffee morning this week!</b>  Halloween party	Our KS5 students will organise a Halloween party for all other students in the school. Students may dress up in Halloween themed costumes. Please note that, despite the nature of this celebration, all outfits must be suitable for a school setting and bear in mind that we have students as young as 3 in our school. No face mask.  Where possible, please bring a voluntary contribution of an item of chocolate which will be used during our Christmas Fair next term
Friday 25 October	School closes for the October holidays at 3pm	Students will return to school on Monday 4 November, 9am

### Attendance and punctuality

There is clear evidence that strong attendance at school links to strong educational outcomes for students. If your child’s attendance is below 90%, we will expect to work closely to understand your family context and work with you on providing the support you need to help your child improve their attendance.

We appreciate that for many of you, punctuality is not within your control, as you rely on SEN transport providers to bring your child to and from school.

However, where you are in control of the journey to school, we do expect a punctual arrival.

Despite a heavy flow of traffic, all students have been consistently in lessons by 9.15am each morning unless their transport has arrived late.

In the same way as we monitor attendance, we now also monitor punctuality and will be inviting the families of those students who are regularly late to explain their situation to us so that we can support improved compliance with a punctual arrival to school.

## School uniform and personal presentation

All students must wear a full school uniform (formal on the days with no PE, and PE uniform on the days when PE lessons take place).

Expectations related to the uniform and personal presentation, including hair, jewellery, etc can be found on our website under policy section:

<https://www.abbotsleaschool.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/School-Uniform-Policy-1.pdf>

Families are asked to adhere to the expectations and support their child with compliance.

## Assemblies

Assemblies are facilitated by Mrs Tobin (Deputy Headteacher), Miss Gibney (Assistant Headteacher – Primary Department) and Mr Mason (Assistant Headteacher – Secondary Department).

Each week a different class will contribute to the assembly. When your child's class leads the assembly, their teacher will contact you in advance to let you know.

We work with high expectations that by the end of the year, all students will be able to sit through a whole assembly and listen well.

However, we recognise that this skill, like any, needs to be taught.

In order to do so, we will follow a graduated approach to full attendance in assembly for our youngest students.

We warmly welcome families to attend assemblies (with coffee morning on the same day).

However, if your child leaves assembly before the end, you are invited to leave with your child and enjoy a focussed "stay and play" session with your child.

Where the weather permits, we will be making great use of our fantastic grounds.

Please note our gradual approach to full attendance in assembly over the period of a year:

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
Ireland, Wales, Portugal, France, Italy, Spain and Canada	Welcome song followed by "stay and play" – see schedule below	Welcome song followed by "stay and play" – see schedule below	Welcome song and class assembly followed by "stay and play" – see schedule below	Welcome song and class assembly followed by "stay and play" – see schedule below	Full assembly <i>An alternative to stay and play will be offered</i>	Full assembly <i>An alternative to stay and play will be offered</i>

## Stay and Play focus:

Our **Stay and Play** sessions will be led by a different class team each week. They will take place in the Conference Room, or where weather permits, the grounds of the school.

Week	Host
1	Laura Gibney, Assistant Headteacher for Primary Department
2	Mrs Alex Leyland, Wales class teacher
3	Mrs Maria Hattersley, France class teacher
4	Miss Sarah Livermore, Portugal class teacher
5	Miss Emily Quinn, Ireland class teacher
6	Mr Richard Manley, Italy class teacher
7	No assembly

## Visual Stress Information

### What is Visual Stress?

Visual stress is the experience of unpleasant visual symptoms when reading, especially for long periods of time. Symptoms include illusions of shape, movement and colour in the text. It can also include distortions of the print, loss of clarity and general visual irritation. It can cause sore eyes, headaches and frequent loss of place when reading.

It is caused by the striped effect of black writing on white paper which causes over stimulation and excitation of the visual cortex. Visual stress, if identified, is also known as “Meares-Irlen Syndrome” or “Scotopic Sensitivity Syndrome”. The condition, if diagnosed, will always be present and there is no life-long cure.

However, the symptoms can be eased by the use of an overlay and this is why it is key to screen and support the child affected by it.

### What is a coloured overlay?

A coloured overlay is a transparent sheet of coloured plastic that can be placed over a page so as to colour the text. The sheet enables some people to read more fluently with less discomfort and fewer symptoms of Visual Stress.

### Your child's results

Once the class team have completed the screening, and if the syndrome appears to be present, the Class Teacher will contact you to share their findings and to discuss strategies that will be used in class and others that you may wish to consider at home.

I hope that you find this information useful. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your child's class team.

I wish you and your family a lovely summer.

Yours sincerely



Mrs E Tobin

Deputy Headteacher – Teaching and Learning and Designated Safeguarding Lead