

Abbey School



Summer 2 edition



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Acting Headteacher Message

I have to start by saying how fast the past 6 weeks have gone! It has been a busy 6 weeks with the 2 days HMI monitoring visit and exciting curriculum developments. I have mostly enjoyed spending time with Parents and Carers talking about the future vision of the school—what you would like your child’s school to become. The need for Post-16 provision came out as the strongest message by everyone involved and we are working hard with the Local Authority and IEB to make sure this vision becomes a reality for near future. The new Parents and Carers group have some fantastic ideas on how you can be even more involved in school.

The topics this half term have been great. Staff have worked hard on making sure their classrooms are engaging to the pupils it seems a shame to take down all the hard work they have produced. However, I know the ideas for the new topics are going to even better than this half terms. There will be a lot of hardworking teacher in over the holiday making sure your child’s environment is the best it can possibly be.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you as Parents and Carers for supporting me in my first few weeks as Acting Head and I am looking forward to developing our relationship even further. Can I also on behalf of all the staff thank you as always for ‘lending us’ your fantastic children who give us so many happy memories every day.

I hope you all have a lovely week and are able to spend some real quality time with your children

and family.

Luci Windle—Acting Headteacher

Dates for your Diary

1.6.15—Class Enrich curriculum trips and experiences.

18.6.15—Year 11 Prom

18.6.15—Ramadan Celebrations

23.6.15—Whole school Sports Day

7.7.15—Meet the teacher transition days.

6.7.15—End of year class trips

14.7.15—Parents/Carer class visit.

17.7.15— Last Day



Abbey's Got Talent Competition coming this Summer.... Organised by Aaron in Year 11 on behalf of the school council.

Date to be confirmed.

Special points of interest:

- Updates on the new school logo and uniform
- Look our for our new website ... coming soon.
- Look our for the new Parent / Carer group activities.

Return to school...

Wednesday 2nd

September

HMI Report...

The second monitoring visit from HMI went very well. As a staff we were very pleased to receive such a positive report that highlighted all the things we are working on. There is still a long journey to go to get out of the Special Measures Category but the staff have a real team spirit and working together as we have been doing will really move the school forwards.

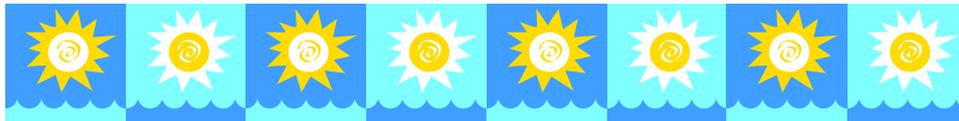
Highlights of the report—

- School's progress data clearly show a sudden surge in progress... as a consequence of improvements in teaching, greater engagement of pupils in learning,.
- The quality of teaching is improving rapidly.
- Systems to manage pupils' behaviour have improved radically.

Updates from Mrs Halford

This half term Mrs Halford has been very busy working alongside an outstanding special school for 3 days per week. For 2 days per week she has been working hard travelling up and down the country to find out where the best special schools are, what they do that makes them the best and what we can learn from them to secure our own future.

We have had visits from Mrs Halford so that she can keep in contact with her own school and check on the progress we are making. As the best schools in the country now work together, it is very important that we find a partner school(s) that we can share expertise and developments. Mrs Halford has been given this exact task! We look forward to hearing about her adventures in finding the best possible partners for our school.



Did you catch us in the Advertiser?

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RECOVERING Abbey School has signed up a former Titans rugby star to help tackle its failings and score points with inspectors.

Jon Skurr has been brought in as a consultant as the Kimberworth special school — saved from closure in February — battles special measures.

A new curriculum has been adopted and pupil numbers lowered from 105 to 60 with a specific range of moderate special needs.

Colourful displays related to topics being studied cover the walls of each classroom and a group is being set up to build on parents' input following the successful campaign to keep open the school.

Mr Skurr, who played at Clifton Lane from 2007 to 2010, said: "There's a huge journey to go on, but Abbey has definitely turned a corner.

"The classroom displays immerse young people in what they are learning, which I don't think was always the case. Good quality teaching and learning always supports better behaviour too.

"If you search online, the first results about this school are negative, but that's not what you see here.

"The staff want to be here and the pupils are enthusiastic and want to learn. There's a culture being created that will make this a fantastic place for young people to learn and grow."

He added: "The school's reputation will go up. It won't take long for this to be back as a great school."

Mr Skurr is supporting acting head Luci Windle, who has stepped up while head teacher Karen Halford is seconded to Fusion Teaching School, Sheffield.

Abbey's failed link-up with nearby secondary Winterhill School will be scrapped at the end of the academic year and another established with a more appropriate partner.

Mr Skurr — qualified to assistant head teacher level when he joined the Titans — took a couple of years away from education to be head coach of the Ireland Rugby Sevens team.

He said: "I had moved back to Leeds and it was a chance meeting with a couple of people in the local authority and I felt my skill set matched what they required at Abbey.

"I had experience of working in special measures and in February, I came for a look around. It's a fantastic place in a beautiful location."

Mrs Windle said: "The biggest change was the decision to keep Abbey open. Before, parents

'A CORNER HAS BEEN TURNED'



GARETH DENNISON
gareth.dennison@rotherhamadvertiser.co.uk
@GarethAWork

Ex-rugby coach helps troubled Abbey tackle its problems

were concerned about their children and staff were concerned about their jobs.

"You only have to go into the classrooms to see that we're moving in the right direction."



ON THE RIGHT TRACK:
Jon Skurr, educational consultant and Luci Windle, acting head-teacher 150693-3

Heartbreaking break-ins

SECURITY has been increased as thefts topping £10,000 since December have hampered the efforts to restore the school.

Acting head Luci Windle said: "We've been broken into six times and had go-karts, bikes and no end of iPads taken.

"A lot of our students have

difficulties and the iPads are set up for them. They're not ones you can simply go and replace straight away.

"It's heartbreaking. We seem to take two steps forward and then something like that knocks us back."

A downside of the school's peaceful and picturesque setting on Little Common Lane, Kimberworth, is its isolation.

Mrs Windle said: "We've added extra security and we have people coming up at night monitoring the building. But it's all money taken away from the kids.

"It's a balancing act, but we're trying to break this cycle."

ROTHERHAM

Advertiser

Cornerstone Curriculum—this term

We have had pupils learning about Darwin whilst sat in a jungle, building a mini-beast with creatures throughout the classroom, a class learning about Mexico, a class learning about the city whilst sat on a monopoly board classroom and finally a class who have made up potions and read famous texts like Macbeth. It has been a hectic half term for learning at Abbey.

Here are some of the classes favourite bits from the topics this half term

Class 3—"It was cool to do the spray painting and graffiti!" "We did lots of

drawing and learning about buildings in the centre of town!"

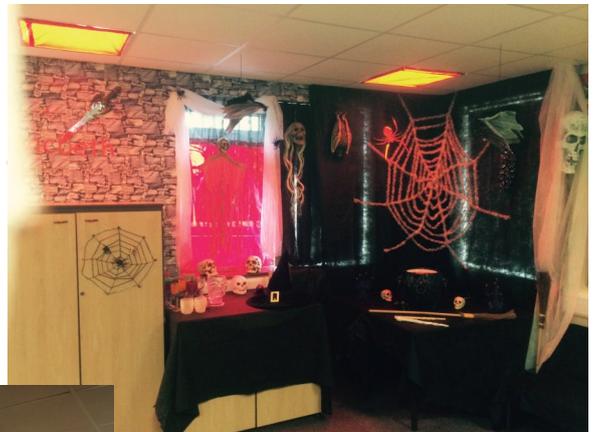
Class 4—"We learnt about Macbeth and read parts of the play!" "It was fun seeing our classroom with a real bubbling and smoking cauldron!"

Class 6—"My classroom was a jungle, I couldn't believe it!" "We learnt about Darwin and even went to Twycross zoo, it was brilliant!"

Class 7—"We had mini beasts in our classroom, real ones!" "I liked learning about the minibests—it was fun!"

Class 8—"Mexico is a nice place!" "We did Mexican cooking—it was very spicy but I enjoyed it!"

Also this term we celebrated VE day. Mr Askham and Mrs Yorke organised a street party but unfortunately it rained so we had to have a corridor party instead. We had all the old songs on and lots of treats to celebrate the special day.



New Topics..... Summer 2

Class 3 will be learning about a topic called 'Flow'. It is all about the water cycle. They will be going to visit Magna for the day to kick start the engage phase of the topic. The class plan to have a waterfall in the middle of the classroom!

Class 4 will be learning about a topic called 'Misty, Mountain Sierra' - hills, mountains and possibly finding a Yeti!!! The class plan to search mountains and valleys for the famous monster.

Class 6 will be learning about a topic called 'Tomorrows World'. It is a topic about information technology and will start with an engaging trip to the Bradford Photography Museum. Mrs Yorke cannot wait to be a weather girl on the visit and Mr Askham tells me he is taking the pupils on a magic carpet whilst they are there.

Class 7 will be learning about 'Allotments', a topic that will be spent mostly outdoors. They will be growing things and making things and learning all about plants in the garden. Lets hope they manage to grown some nice fruit and veg to bring home.

Class 8 will be learning about a topic called 'Frozen Kingdom'. This topic start off at the Doncaster Wildlife Park where they will be visiting Hector the Polar Bear.

We are on twitter...

@AbbeyLearning

Attendance Update -

Currently the whole school attendance is **93%**
We are always trying to improve this percentage so please help us by sending your child to school. We generally have a lot of holiday request forms at this point in the year and although we realise the importance of family time together we cannot authorise any holidays in term time apart from in extreme circumstances.

If your child is too ill for school please call first thing to report this to us.



Change in Logo and Uniform

To celebrate the 'new Abbey' we have consulted on having a new school uniform for September 2015. Since the pupils are wearing the uniform it has been important that we ask them what colour they would like. The colour they have chosen is..... **Green.** We did have some interesting choices, gold, brown, multi-coloured, but felt that this was the most sensible suggestion and fitted in so well with the beautiful surrounds that we have around the school.

The new logo has also been chosen through consultation and all suggestions were considered and make up the final product. We hope you like it!

There will be a letter about uniform sent home shortly as we intend to pay for your child's first school uniform from our own budget. As before it is expected pupils will wear black trousers, tailored shorts or skirts and also black footwear, shoes or all black trainers. (no distinctive markings)

We take school uniform seriously and will expect to see all children in the correct uniform each day.

E-SAFETY—Protecting you and your family...

Just a reminder from our Healthy Me, Safe Me day. Please remind your children to be safe when using the internet and especially social media. As part of our policy on safeguarding children, we ask staff not to be friends with parents/carers and especially pupils at school. It is essential that we keep you and your child safe from the dangers of the Internet especially on social media like Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram.

5 Top Tips...

- 1) Do not accept anyone onto your social media page who you do not know.
- 2) Be careful what is written on social media, even when you have set your privacy settings on, the friends that you have may not which makes your photographs and comments visible to all.
- 3) Be open with your child, ask them questions about their activities on the internet and have a relationship where they know you will check up on them.
- 4) Check your own security settings.
- 5) If you ever feel uneasy or threatened by something online, always report it!

New Parents and Carers Team

We would like to introduce our new Parents and Carers team who are currently working hard to fundraise for much needed school funds. At the first meeting we walked around school looking at all the things we liked and didn't like, this gave us ideas on what we needed to fund raise for.

We will be having a stall at the Summer fayre this year and we are planning to have Ladies Fashion Show at Abbey in the new school year.

We are always looking for new members to get involved so please do come along to our friendly group and be part of our team to support all our children's school.

Next Meeting Date... 21.5.15 at 9.30—11am

New Staff Uniform

To improve the image of your child's school even further we are also introducing a staff uniform. We are currently looking at what uniform is appropriate for everyone and will look forward to keeping you up to date when we see you next.

