

The Abbey School Newsletter

Newsletter No 6 / 2020-21

Friday 4th December 2020

The staff in the PE department have had to work very hard to revise the curriculum to comply with COVID prevention measures. Off-site visits to play badminton at the Bourne Club, use the sports hall at Farnham Heath End School or the pool and gym at Farnham Leisure Centre have all had to be suspended.

Nevertheless, students have been enjoying a full and varied programme of physical activities – outdoors whenever possible – and have been developing their ‘no tackling’ football skills at break and lunchtimes, too.

To reduce the amount of mud coming into school, please send your child to school with a change of shoes for outside play. Thank you



The deadline for entries to the House Christmas card design competition is Monday 7th December



LIMA group were indoors last week and have made a cracking start on the Christmas decorations.

Mrs Horton has been busy updating the photos on the display boards.

Although there are far fewer visitors coming into school to enjoy the displays, it is nice for us all to catch a glimpse of what's going on in each other's 'bubbles'.

Support Group for Girls with ASD

APPEER is an organisation set up to benefit girls and women with an Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) and other neuro-diverse conditions and those around them, including their families.

Their most recent newsletters have been emailed via Parentmail to the parents and carers of all the girls at The Abbey. The online sessions on offer include hobby-based workshops, talks and social support groups.

To join the mailing list and get monthly updates please email jo@appeer.org.uk or go to <https://www.appeer.org.uk/news>

Attendance

We are delighted to report that despite all the anxiety surrounding the ongoing pandemic and preventative measures, attendance at The Abbey is currently slightly higher than at the same point last year. Absences due to COVID are being excluded from the official figures but thanks to our families' vigilance in identifying possible symptoms and self-isolating where required, daily absence levels including those related to the virus have also come down below last year's levels recently, too. We would, of course, inform all parents and carers if there were to be a confirmed case of Coronavirus within the school community.

Nevertheless, it is the school's duty to remind parents/carers every term of their responsibilities in respect of their child's attendance and of the expectations of the local authority Inclusion Service, so please find details below.

For further information, please refer to our School Attendance Policy which is available on the school website <https://www.abbey.surrey.sch.uk/1209/key-information/category/43/attendance>.

Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Absences & Persistent Absence

A Penalty Notice may be issued as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school and will be used by Surrey County Council in the following circumstances:

- Leave of absence in term time (5 days or 10 sessions or more). Please be aware that The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, which became law on 1st September 2013 state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher is also required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

In such cases the Headteacher/Governing Body have to judge whether there are exceptional circumstances and may request that the Local Authority issue Penalty Notices when the absence is not authorised. Warnings will not be given where it can be shown that parents have been notified that such absences will not be authorised.

- Where it is judged that a parent is failing to ensure their child's regular school attendance. This will be considered when a pupil has incurred 10 or more unauthorised sessions in the previous 6 school weeks, which may include a pupil arriving late after close of registration.
- In line with the guidance from the DfE, Leave of Absence during GCSE, Entry Level Course moderation and Assessments, mocks and other external exam periods will not be authorised by the school and a Penalty Notice may be issued.
- If a child is excluded from school, Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on parents/carers to ensure that their child is not in a public place without justifiable cause during school hours. This duty applies to the first five days of each exclusion. Failure to do so will render the parent/carer liable to a Penalty Notice. (Alternative education provision will be made available from the sixth day of any exclusion.)

If you believe at any stage that your child's absence from school may leave you liable to receive a Penalty Notice, it is extremely important that you take action without delay to secure their regular attendance. If you have any questions or require further support to achieve an improvement, please contact the school or the Inclusion Officer (01483 517179).

Amount Payable for a Penalty Notice

The amount payable for a Penalty Notice issued in any of the above circumstances is £60 if paid within **21** days of receipt of the Notice, rising to £120 if paid after **21** days but within **28** days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid, the Local Authority must consider a prosecution in the Magistrates Court for the offence for which the Notice was originally issued.

Please be aware that each parent is liable to receive a Penalty Notice for each child who incurs unauthorised absences, for example, if there are two parents and one child, each parent will receive one Penalty Notice. If there are two parents, and two children incur unauthorised absences, each parent will receive two Penalty Notices, which in this case would amount to £120 each if paid within 28 days.

KS4 Catering Students: Gingerbread Houses



Mrs Child's KS4 Catering students have baked and constructed fantastic, festive gingerbread houses.

None collapsed and the students' uniforms still look remarkably pristine given the copious amounts of icing involved – mind you, Mrs Franklin is taking no chances and maintaining a watchful eye from a safe distance!

Free School Meals

The government have undertaken to fund meals during the Christmas holidays for students who are entitled to free school meals. This is the responsibility of the Local Authority and at this point we have not been advised what, if any, role schools will be expected to play. If we do receive further guidance this will be communicated via Parentmail email so please monitor your inbox if your child is in receipt of FSM.

Making a new claim for Free School Meals if your circumstances have changed

If your circumstances have changed and you would like to make a new claim for Free School Meals entitlement, please contact the school.

Your child may be eligible for free school meals if you get any of the following:

- Income Support
- income-based *Jobseeker's Allowance*
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- *Child Tax Credit* (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

The application form is available to download from the school website

<https://www.abbey.surrey.sch.uk/1245/school-meals> or we can email you an electronic application form to complete so that we can register your claim, in confidence.

You will only need to provide your legal surname, date of birth and National Insurance number.

Dates for your Diary

Monday 14th December 2020		Phyllis Tuckwell Reindeer Run
Tuesday 15th December 2020		Virtual End of Term Performance School Christmas Lunch Live Panto Streaming
Wednesday 16th December 2020		Staff Panto After School Parties for each Bubble
Thursday 17th December		Form Group Talent Shows
Friday 18th December 2020	1:50p.m.	Non-uniform Day (donations for NHS) Last day of term. School closes early.
CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS		
Monday 4th January 2021	9:05a.m.	BACK TO SCHOOL
Tuesday 9th February 2021		Safer Internet Day
Mon 15th – Fri 19th February 2021		Half-Term (no early closing on Friday 12th)
Monday 8th March 2021		WMAT INSET Day (School closed to students)
Wednesday 10th March 2021		Whole school progress review day
Tuesday 16th March 2021	3:40p.m. – 7:50p.m.	Parent:Teacher Consultation Meetings <i>(10 minute appointments booked in advance)</i>
Thursday 25th March 2021	3:40p.m. – 7:50p.m.	Parent:Teacher Consultation Meetings <i>(10 minute appointments booked in advance)</i>
Thursday 1st April 2021	1:50p.m.	School closes early for Easter Holidays
EASTER HOLIDAYS		
Monday 19th April 2021	9:05a.m.	BACK TO SCHOOL
Monday 3rd May 2021		May Day Bank Holiday (School closed)
Mon 31st May – Fri 4th June 2021		Half-Term (no early closing on Friday 28th)
Tuesday 8th June 2021		Year 11 progress review day
To be confirmed	4:30-6:30p.m.	Life After The Abbey - preparation for post-16
Thursday 24th June 2021		Last day of school for Year 11 students
Friday 25th June 2021		INSET Day (School closed to students)
Thursday 1st July 2021		Year 7/8/9/10 progress review day
Monday 5th – Friday 9th July 2021	To be confirmed	Year 10 Work Experience Week
Tuesday 6th & Wednesday 7th July 2021		Induction Days for New Students starting in September
Wednesday 14th July 2021		Sports Day
Wednesday 21st July 2021	1:50p.m.	Last Day of Term for Students School closes early at 1:50p.m.
SUMMER HOLIDAYS		

In the present circumstances, plans are subject to revision as national guidance and local restrictions change, so please monitor Parentmail messages and the school website for up-to-date news.