

Abbeywood First School Newsletter



Friday 3rd October 2025

Telephone: 01527 962794

Dear Parents and carers, welcome back! It's been a joyful and energetic start to the new academic year with the children embracing our core values - Ready, Respectful, and Safe - with enthusiasm and pride. From exciting new initiatives like the Zones of Regulation to creative learning in Art, Science, and phonics, it's clear that our pupils are thriving both academically and emotionally. We're particularly proud of the noticeable improvement in the standard of presentation in pupils' work, thanks to the introduction of our new handwriting scheme, Letterjoin. It's wonderful to see children taking pride in their writing and producing beautifully presented work. We've also seen fantastic engagement from families, whether through our phonics workshops or the wonderful support for our Macmillan Coffee Morning. Your involvement makes a real difference, and we're so grateful for the strong sense of community we share – thank you for your continued enthusiasm and support in all areas of school life. As we continue through the term, let's keep encouraging curiosity and supporting one another.

Mrs Gilmour

The Zones of Regulation:

We're excited to launch a new initiative called the 'Zones of Regulation' at Abbeywood which is designed to help children better understand and manage their emotions, behaviour, and overall well-being. It is a simple, colour-coded system that helps children identify how they're feeling, understand how those emotions affect their behavior and the tools and strategies they can use to regulate those emotions. It's not about labeling feelings as "good" or "bad"— it's about recognising them and responding in healthy ways.

There are four coloured zones:

- Blue Zone – Feeling low (e.g. sad, tired, bored)
- Green Zone – Feeling calm and ready to learn (e.g. happy, focused)
- Yellow Zone – Feeling heightened (e.g. anxious, excited, silly)
- Red Zone – Feeling overwhelmed (e.g. angry, out of control)

You can support your child at home by:

- Talking about the zones together
- Utilising books and films to discuss which zone characters might be in
- Asking questions like "What zone are you in right now?"
- Helping them practice calming strategies (e.g. deep breathing, taking a break)

This approach aims to create a shared language between school and home, helping children communicate their feelings effectively and feel supported in both environments. If you would like any more information or support with the Zones of Regulation, please speak to your child's class teacher.

Abbeywood Expectations:

 AT ABBEYWOOD WE ARE Ready TO LEARN Ready: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• TO BE CURIOUS• TO THINK HARD• TO LEARN	 AT ABBEYWOOD WE ARE Respectful Respectful: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• OF OURSELVES• OF OTHERS• OF OUR ENVIRONMENT	 AT ABBEYWOOD WE MAKE Safe CHOICES Safe: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• BY FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS• IN THE WAY WE MOVE AROUND• IN THE CHOICES WE MAKE
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At Abbeywood, the children are constantly striving to demonstrate our three key expectations: Ready, Respectful and Safe. Each class sets a weekly target linked to one of these values and children get moved onto the recognition boards for modelling these expected behaviours. There have been lots of faces on these boards already – well done Abbeywood!

New Handwriting Scheme:

We are really excited have moved over to using Letterjoin as our new handwriting scheme in school. From introducing the correct sitting position and pencil grip, learning letter shapes and enhancing gross motor skills in EYFS, the children develop their fine motor skills and pre-cursive patterns in KS1 before gaining confidence with the different letter families. In KS2, the children will refine their cursive letter style whilst developing their legibility and writing consistency. Children all have access to an online digital platform where they are set weekly homework tasks to reinforce the letter patterns they're learning; please encourage them to log on and take a look.

Long Ladder Letters



i l t u j y

Curly Caterpillar Letters



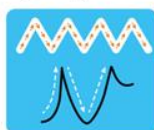
a d c o f e s g q

One-armed Robot Letters



b h k m n p r

Zig-zag letters



v w x z

A Love of Reading:

At Abbeywood, we want all children to develop a love of books in order to become life-long readers.

To help develop this, children are encouraged to read every day at home. All children have two books: a levelled/phonics reading book and a reading for pleasure book that they have selected from their in-class library. Please ensure all reading done at home is written into your child's reading diary and signed so that class teachers have an accurate log. Reading books and diaries should be brought into school daily please.

Epraise points can be earned each week:

Reading Rewards

- 1 read = 1 Epraise points
- 2 reads = 2 Epraise points
- 3 reads = 5 Epraise points
- 4 reads = 7 Epraise points
- 5 reads = 10 Epraise points
- > 5 reads = 15 Epraise points



Communication:

The old saying of 'a problem shared is a problem halved' really is true. That is why we urge parents who have questions, queries or concerns to talk to us about them as soon as possible. We pride ourselves on our open-door policy and the visibility of senior members of staff. Your first port of call should always be your child's class teacher followed by the appropriate phase leader should you have further questions:

- Mrs Davies for EYFS
- Mrs Mills for KS1
- Mr Legg for KS2



Please speak with your child's class teacher on the door for quick information handovers or questions. If you require a longer conversation, however, please book an appointment.

Attendance:

What parents/carers must do:

- Report your child's absence each day on our website before 8am:
(www.abbeywoodschool.org.uk)
- Tell the school in advance of any medical appointments and bring in appointment cards/letters. Regular check-up appointments should be booked outside of school hours.
- If you are not sure whether your child is well enough to attend school, send them in anyway as they often perk up on arrival. You can also check on [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/) (www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/)
- Have a backup plan for if your child misses transport - call on a family member, neighbour or friend.
- If you and your child are experiencing difficulties with school attendance, then talk to us as a first step so we can help!
Please ask for Mrs Hughes.

What the school will do:

- Check your child's attendance every day
- Phone home to discuss your child's attendance with you
- Invite you into school for attendance meetings if we are concerned
- If we cannot establish a reason for absence, then we may make a welfare home visit

Art in Year 1:

This term, Year 1 have been busy building their drawing skills in Art - and having lots of fun along the way! We've explored: different papers to see how texture affects our art; learning to press softly or boldly with our tools with different pressure and cross hatching. Inspired by *Storm Whale*, the children have created expressive whole class art full of curved, wavy and straight lines.



Phonics Workshop:



A big thank you to all the parents and carers who joined us for our KS1 Phonics Workshop on 16th September!

It was fantastic to see so many of you eager to

learn more about how we teach reading through the Read Write Inc. (RWI) programme here at Abbeywood.

During the session, we explored how children learn to read using pure sounds—the clear, crisp sounds that help build strong foundations in phonics. We also introduced Fred Talk, where children blend sounds together to read words (like c-a-t becomes cat). It's a fun and effective way to help early readers grow in confidence! The feedback asked for more information about Fred Talk so please use the QR code for a sound blending tutorial for parents.



If you have any further questions, please see Mrs Mills, the phonics lead, who would be more than happy to help.

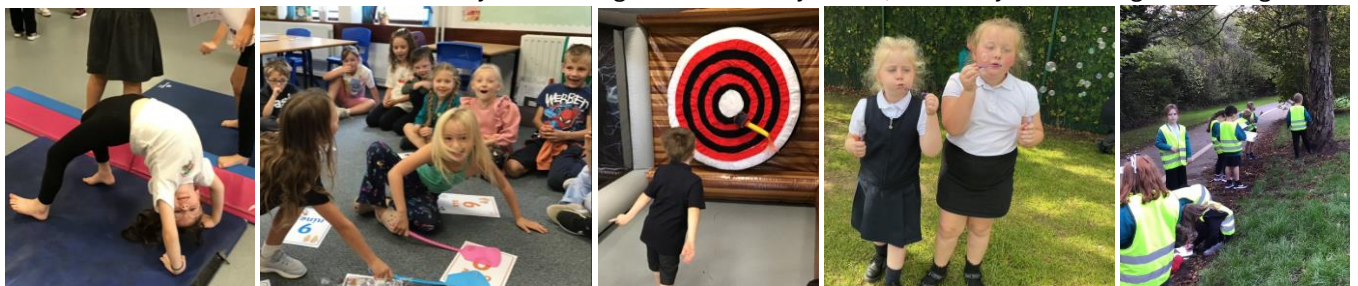
Phonics at Home:

Reading at home makes a huge difference - just a few minutes a day can boost your child's fluency, vocabulary, and love of books. Whether it's a bedtime story or practicing their RWI book, every little bit helps. Sounds are sent home each week in EYFS and in KS1 books are added on Oxford Owl and sent home in book bags too - make sure to check them regularly!

Fun in Year 2:

Year 2 have had a very busy start to the year with lots of fun activities and great learning. We have been exploring human and physical features in Geography and really enjoyed our walk spotting these in our local area. In PE, we have been practicing our gymnastics skills and exploring how to balance high and low, using different parts of our body. For our KIRF (key instant recall facts) lessons, we have been working really hard on our number bonds to 20 and even got to play our favourite game of SPLAT to practice.

We have also felt very lucky to take part in lots of attendance activities, such as the bubble play time, the short film in the morning and our games afternoon with our adults. However, I think a highlight for most of us in Year 2 was our inflatables session. The children were very excited to go on the bouncy castle, and to try out the target throwing!



Exploration in Reception:

In Reception, children have been exploring traditional tales, sparking their imaginations and developing a love for storytelling. From *The Three Little Pigs* to *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, the children have enjoyed retelling familiar stories using props and role play. These classic tales have provided wonderful opportunities for the children to discuss characters and settings, as well as using their imaginations and creativity when thinking of their own ideas, recording them through 'drawing club'. It's been fantastic to see their confidence grow as they share their ideas with their friends and teachers. Acorns have also thoroughly enjoyed their Forest School sessions, embracing the outdoors with curiosity and enthusiasm. They've been busy exploring nature, making mud pies, and learning about the changing seasons. These sessions support the development of confidence, independence, and teamwork, all while having fun in a natural setting. It's been wonderful to see the children's creativity and problem-solving skills grow as they connect with the environment around them.



Curriculum Highlights in Year 3:

Year 3 have made a fantastic start to their new learning this term. In Science, the children have been learning all about Rocks, exploring the different types, their properties, and how they are formed. Meanwhile, in Art, they have been developing their creativity through printmaking, experimenting with ink and rollers to produce striking patterns and designs. The children have shown great enthusiasm in both subjects, and it has been wonderful to see their curiosity and imagination shine through. The children have also been thoroughly enjoying their new after-school clubs, with lots of excitement around new additions such as board games, mindfulness, movie club, and computing. These clubs have given pupils the chance to try new things, develop their skills, and spend time with friends in fun and creative ways!

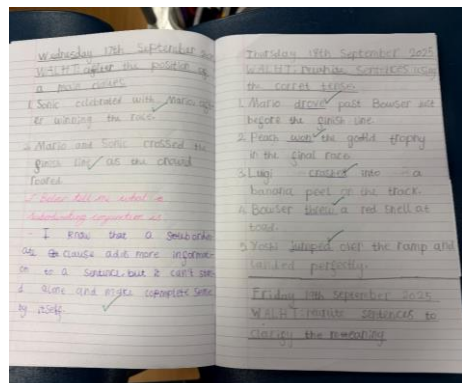
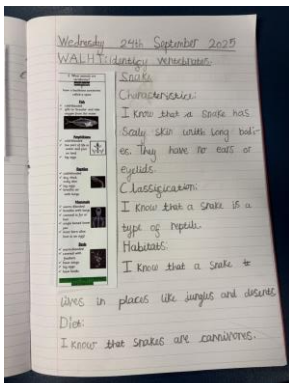


Learning in Year 4:

We've had a fantastic start to the new school year in Year 4! The children have shown great enthusiasm and dedication across all areas of their learning, and we're incredibly proud of their efforts. One of the highlights this month has been the children's improved punctuality and attendance. It's been wonderful to see everyone arriving on time and ready to learn each day. This commitment makes a huge difference to their progress and wellbeing, and we'd love to keep this momentum going—let's aim for 100% attendance weeks!

The children thoroughly enjoyed taking part in their Colour Games too, showing great team spirit and sportsmanship. In PE, they've been developing their skills in Basketball, focusing on dribbling, passing, and teamwork. In English, they've been working through our Strong Start unit, where the children have been strengthening their writing skills. In Maths, the children have been diving into place value, building a solid foundation for the year ahead as well as taking part in TT Rockstars battles against each other. Did you know, practicing for just 21 minutes a week can make a huge difference? Why not challenge your child to a battle to see who will come up on top!

Our budding scientists have also produced some fantastic work on vertebrates, learning to classify animals and understand their characteristics during our Science topic. Finally, in Art, the children have impressed us with their sketching and pastel work, showing creativity and growing confidence in their techniques.



Macmillan Coffee Morning:

A huge thank you to everyone who donated cakes towards our Macmillan Cancer Support's annual fundraiser. The event was really well attended and raised nearly £500 as a result! This is another example of the power of the Abbeywood community and how fantastically we come together to make a difference.

