



ABBOT'S LEA SCHOOL

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



7 September 2022

Dear Families

Ref: Key Information for Term 1 (5 September – 21 October 2022)

Firstly, may I begin by saying a warm “welcome back” after the summer holidays.

I hope that you managed to spend some time as a family and that you were able to enjoy some good experiences. It has been a pleasure listening to the students’ accounts of what they have done during the summer.

I am writing to share information on a range of key diary dates and topics that I hope you will find helpful:

Date	Activity	Notes
Monday 5 September – Friday 21 October	This term all students will be screened/rescreened for Visual Stress.	Please see additional information at the end of this letter
Wednesday 7 September	Head Student application process starts	This is available to KS5 students. Information will be shared with KS5 students by Mrs Hildrey
Friday 9 September	Weekly open assemblies led by Mrs Tobin (Deputy Headteacher) and coffee morning Assembly times: 9.10 – 9.30 – KS4 and 5 9.35 – 9.55 – Primary 10.00 – 10.20 – KS3 Coffee morning: 9.30 – 11am Head’s Weekly Newsletter published on our website and shared via Parentmail and FB page	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 Dr Sara Mursic at Sara.Mursic@abbotsleaschool.co.uk
Monday 12 September – Friday 16 September	Family survey	A link will be sent to you via Parentmail. We ask that you take time to complete it so that we can learn from you.
Monday 12 September and Tuesday 13 September	School photographs – please ensure that your child is wearing a full formal school uniform on these days	Our photographer works with us every year and has a high level of knowledge in the field of Autism
Tuesday 13 September	Roald Dahl Story Day	Students will enjoy a range of activities in their classrooms
Thursday 15 September and Friday 16 September	Recruitment of Head Student (and deputy) position	Held by our Headteacher, based on applications (KS5 only). Appointments will be shared with students, staff and families on Friday

<p>Friday 16 September</p>	<p>Weekly open assemblies and coffee morning</p> <p>Assembly times: 9.10 – 9.30 – KS4 and 5 9.35 – 9.55 – Primary 10.00 – 10.20 – KS3</p> <p>Coffee morning: 9.30 – 11am</p> <p>Head's Weekly Newsletter published on our website and shared via Parentmail and FB page</p>	<p>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 Dr Sara Mursic at Sara.Mursic@abbotsleaschool.co.uk</p>
<p>Monday 19 September – Monday 26 September</p>	<p>Application window for our Student Council and Young Student Leaders Club</p>	<p>Our student voice is split in two groups this year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Student Leaders' Club for Primary Department • Student Council for Secondary Department <p>All students can apply by filling in the application form that their teacher will share with them (available in alternative formats if needed)</p>
<p>Wednesday 21 September</p>	<p>Photographs taken of students who were absent on 12 or 13 September</p>	<p>Our photographer works with us every year and has a high level of knowledge in the field of Autism</p>
<p>Friday 23 September</p>	<p>Weekly open assemblies and coffee morning</p> <p>Assembly times: 9.10 – 9.30 – KS4 and 5 9.35 – 9.55 – Primary 10.00 – 10.20 – KS3</p> <p>Coffee morning: 9.30 – 11am</p> <p>Head's Weekly Newsletter published on our website and shared via Parentmail and FB page</p>	<p>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 Dr Sara Mursic at Sara.Mursic@abbotsleaschool.co.uk</p>
<p>Monday 26 September</p>	<p>European Languages Day</p>	<p>Students will enjoy a range of activities in their classrooms and there will be an opportunity to taste test a range of European foods.</p>
<p>Friday 30 September</p>	<p>Weekly open assemblies and coffee morning</p> <p>Assembly times: 9.10 – 9.30 – KS4 and 5 9.35 – 9.55 – Primary 10.00 – 10.20 – KS3</p> <p>Coffee morning: 9.30 – 11am</p> <p>Head's Weekly Newsletter published on our website and</p>	<p>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 Dr Sara Mursic at Sara.Mursic@abbotsleaschool.co.uk</p>

	shared via Parentmail and FB page	
Friday 30 September	Student Council elections	The Secondary Department will elect their representatives for the Student Council (while Primary Department applications automatically join our Young Student Leaders' Club)
Tuesday 4 October	Online training (Zoom) Working with and for families (Dr Sara Muršić)	Online event (Zoom) Find out about our support and events offer this year. Information is available on our Facebook, Twitter and Webpage. Two sessions will be delivered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 pm (lunchtime) • 6pm (after school)
Thursday 6 October	National Poetry Day (Class Choice)	Students will enjoy a range of activities in their classrooms
Friday 7 October	Weekly open assemblies and coffee morning Assembly times: 9.10 – 9.30 – KS4 and 5 9.35 – 9.55 – Primary 10.00 – 10.20 – KS3 Coffee morning: 9.30 – 11am	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 Dr Sara Mursic at Sara.Mursic@abbotsleaschool.co.uk
Friday 7 October	World Dyslexia Awareness Day (Class Choice)	Students will enjoy a range of activities in their classrooms
Monday 10 October	World Mental Health Day (Class Choice)	Students will enjoy a range of activities in their classrooms
Friday 14 October	Weekly open assemblies and coffee morning Assembly times: 9.10 – 9.30 – KS4 and 5 9.35 – 9.55 – Primary 10.00 – 10.20 – KS3 Coffee morning: 9.30 – 11am	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 Dr Sara Mursic at Sara.Mursic@abbotsleaschool.co.uk
Monday 17 October	World Food Day (Whole School)	Students will enjoy a range of activities in their classrooms
Tuesday 18 October	Discussion with an expert – Dr Anna Mariguddi: Music in Education Online (Zoom) 3.00 – 4.00pm	Online event – Zoom Discussion about the impact music has on creativity and development of students Information is available on our Facebook, Twitter and Webpage.
Friday 21 October	No assemblies No coffee morning	
Friday 21 October	Sharing of Term 1's Learning Journey	Each term, your child's teacher will share with you their learning journey via email.

Assemblies

Assemblies will always be facilitated by me. However, each week a different person or class will lead the assembly. When your child's class leads the assembly, their teacher will contact you in advance to let you know so that, if possible, you can join us for that morning.

Weekly Attendance Reports

There is clear evidence that strong attendance at school links to strong educational outcomes for students. Mrs Hildrey set out in her letter last week the processes regarding our expectations related to school attendance. Each Friday, you will be sent your child's attendance data so that you can support the school in ensuring it remains at 100% or as close to it as possible.

Student Progress Reports

You will receive a mid-term progress report (21 February 2023) and an end of year report (5 July 2023) for your child. This report will summarise progress in all areas of the curriculum as well as providing a summary of the qualities your child displays at school. In the meantime, you are warmly encouraged to remain in regular contact with your child's class team and help us shape our educational and therapeutic focus, as well as receive brief updates on how your child is progressing.

Visual Stress Assessment/Re-assessment

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. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me.

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

Yours sincerely

Mrs Tobin
Deputy Headteacher – Teaching and Learning