



# ABBOT'S LEA SCHOOL

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



2 September 2024

Dear Families

**Ref: Academic year 2024-25**

Welcome to the new academic year!

As we prepare to welcome all of our students – returning and new - I write to formally introduce myself and key members of my Leadership Team as well as to share with you a few points related to attendance, uniform, mobiles/internet devices and communication with the school.

This is my ninth year of leading our wonderful school and I feel both privileged, proud and humble to hold this important position of responsibility and trust. I care deeply about our students and my philosophy of education is now shared amongst all staff, as we jointly place equal importance on:

- Academic excellence and progress
- Specialist therapeutic support
- Development of life skills

This philosophy of education is known as The ASD Model ©.

I work with truly amazing professionals and all of us are here to help your child thrive. On a day-to-day basis, your main contact will be your child's class team. It is, however, important that you know there is support available beyond that, should you need it. Therefore, I share with you the details of this year's leadership team, with contact details to help with direct dialogue.

## **Leadership Team**

During 2024-25 academic year, our school is organised as follows:

### **Teaching and Learning operation:**

Our Primary Department is led by Mrs Cartwright (nee Gibney), Assistant Headteacher [primary@abbotsleaschool.co.uk](mailto:primary@abbotsleaschool.co.uk) who oversees the following age groups:

- Early Years and Key Stage One (EY/KS1)
- Key Stage Two (KS2)

Our Secondary Department is led by Mr Mason, Assistant Headteacher [secondary@abbotsleaschool.co.uk](mailto:secondary@abbotsleaschool.co.uk), responsible for:

- Key Stage Three (KS3)
- Key Stage Four (KS4)
- Key Stage Five (KS5)
- Supported Internships (SI)

## **Multidisciplinary Team (MDT):**

**Safeguarding Team** is led by Miss Sharpe, Safeguarding Manager  
[safeguarding@abbotsleaschool.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@abbotsleaschool.co.uk)

**Our Therapies Team** is led by Miss Welch, Head of Therapies  
[therapies@abbotsleaschool.co.uk](mailto:therapies@abbotsleaschool.co.uk)

This team includes specific therapeutic interventions, including:

- Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy (please note that this post is currently vacant and we are actively recruiting).

If you have any questions regarding the teaching and learning, care, safeguarding or therapeutic support for the students, please contact my Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Tobin on [deputy@abbotsleaschool.co.uk](mailto:deputy@abbotsleaschool.co.uk)

**School Business Support (SBS)** operation is led by Mrs Myers, my School Business Manager, who oversees our school's finance and operations ([sbm@abbotsleaschool.co.uk](mailto:sbm@abbotsleaschool.co.uk)).

## **Autism Research and Professional Development**

Our vision is to be an International Centre of Excellence in Autism Education, Research and Professional Development, where every student and member of staff can be the best that they can be – we hope you join us on our journey!

If you are keen to be our research and development partner, please contact me directly at [headteacher@abbotsleaschool.co.uk](mailto:headteacher@abbotsleaschool.co.uk)

I am also the person who is here to hear all of the positive feedback and help resolve formal complaints, so please do contact me if needed – I will always do my best to help.

## **Expectations placed upon our students and their families**

I want to thank those of you who always ensure that your child attends school each day and appears presentable at all times, with full compliance with our school's uniform requirements. For those new to the school, or others who may benefit from a reminder, I wish to reiterate our expectations regarding both of these important issues:

### **School attendance**

All students are expected to attend school every day, for 190 days a year, as per the Term Dates published on our website:

<https://www.abbotsleaschool.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/ALS-Term-dates-2024-25.pdf>

Children will, on occasions, feel unwell. In such situation, you should use your judgment as to whether with some minor medicinal support, they are likely to be able to cope with, benefit from and enjoy their school day.

Please alert your child's class team that the child may not feel 100% and remain available on the emergency phone number that day, should they deteriorate during the day.

We will only call you to collect them if, after a period of support, they are clearly too unwell to stay at school.

If you decide in the morning that your child is too unwell to attend, you must email: [reception@abbotsleaschool.co.uk](mailto:reception@abbotsleaschool.co.uk) or call 01514281161 on the first day of illness absence, specifying the health problem your child is suffering with.

If your child does not appear at school and we have not received an official notification of their absence by you, we will call you after the morning registration, for safeguarding reasons. Please note that we are obliged as a school to make such welfare telephone call and/or to make a welfare home visits, too.

If your child has developed school-attendance concerns, school-attendance refusal or school phobia and you struggle to get them to school, please contact the Class Teacher to discuss support on offer. We are here to help.

Please note that term time holidays will not be authorised. All exceptional term time absence requests will be considered by me as the Headteacher and should be sent to [reception@abbotsleaschool.co.uk](mailto:reception@abbotsleaschool.co.uk)

## **Transport protocol**

We run a very busy and highly-controlled transport on our school site.

Transport window timings are as follow:

- Morning transport window: gates open at 8:45am
- Afternoon transport window: gates opens at 2:45pm

## **Safety first:**

Please note that speed of all vehicles on site must be very slow.

Please also note that during the transport operation (both morning and afternoon), there is no right of way to any user of the site:

- our pedestrian crossings do not give right of way to pedestrians
- all vehicles must follow clear instructions from the Transport Team as to whether and where to move.

Please also note that the site, including inside vehicles, is a non-smoking/non-vaping environment.

## **Morning:**

The gates will open at 8:45am

Students arriving in vehicles (private cars, taxi, minibuses):

Drivers are welcome to enter the site as soon as the gates are open for the morning window. All vehicles must proceed up the driveway (do not turn left into staff' car park) and follow directions from the Transport Team.

Students must remain in the vehicles until the Transport Team instruct the staff team to begin welcoming students. School staff will then come to the vehicle to collect students. Please do not allow students to leave the vehicle until the staff are there to collect them.

Students arriving on site on foot:

Students arriving on site as pedestrians (whether accompanied by adults or independently) must report to the Main School entrance and sit on the benches by that entrance, awaiting school staff to welcome them. If students arrive with a responsible adult, that adult must remain with the student they are supervising until the staff take over.

All students must be on site by 9am.

### **Afternoon:**

The gates will open at 2:45pm

Students leaving site independently will leave at 3pm.

All other students, being collected by adults, will be subject to the following protocol:

- Adults arriving on site to collect students on foot will be directed to the Man School Building entrance. They will be greeted by the Transport Team and asked for the student's name.
- Adults arriving in cars (personal vehicles, taxis, buses) will enter the site when the gates are open and proceed up the driveway (do not turn left into the staff' car park), they will be greeted by the Transport Team members who will ask for the student's name, or in the case of buses or taxis collecting multiple students, they will give the code for the name or number of the bus/taxi route
- The Transport Team will then direct the vehicles to the allocated holding parking position.
- The drivers and, where applicable, Passenger Assistants, must remain the vehicles until the students arrive.
- Please be mindful of the long walk that students have to make from their learning location to the transport collection point and please remain patient.
- When the student enters the vehicle and has seatbelt on, the Transport Team will direct the driver to join the leaving traffic. Please follow instructions and do not overtake other vehicles unless instructed to do so.

All students must be collected by 3pm.

### **School uniform**

All students at Abbot's Lea School must wear a school uniform.

Our School Uniform Policy is here and its sets clear expectations not just about the clothing and footwear, but also hair, nails, jewellery and other presentational and safety expectations:

<https://www.abbotsleaschool.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/School-Uniform-Policy.pdf>

Our uniform supplier is: <https://www.whittakersschoolwear.co.uk/store/southport/> Orders can be made online or purchases made in the Southport branch of the store.

We also hold a free pre-loved uniform swap shop and you are both encouraged to donate good quality clean uniform items to us, as well as warmly welcome to take items in the right size for your child. Please contact our Office Team on [reception@abbotsleaschool.co.uk](mailto:reception@abbotsleaschool.co.uk) or call 01514281162 if you would like to donate or re-home via this wonderful scheme.

We recognise that some students with complex needs struggle to learn how to accept expectations placed upon them and support may be needed to help them tolerate different to their usual clothing items. If this is the case, please contact your child's Assistant Headteacher (Mrs Cartwright for Primary Department, or Mr Mason for Secondary Department) and a plan of phasing in those expectations will be formally agreed to support full compliance over time.

## **Mobile and internet-connected devices**

Our protocol for mobile phones and other internet-connected devices is as follows:

1. Students are not permitted to use any such devices brought from home at school.
2. Students are therefore encouraged to come to school without phones or other such devices
3. If families decide that their child will benefit from having such device with them on their journey to school, they must reiterate our school's expectation of surrendering these upon arrival
4. Staff will do their best to keep all such devices safe, whilst neither the staff nor the school accepting liability for any loss or damage
5. If a student refuses to hand over their electronics to the class team, staff will support them to do so for a period of up to 15 min
6. If after that, the situation is not resolved, the family will be called and expected to arrive on site without delay to collect the item and take it home with them.
7. If the student continues to refuse to hand over the item, the family will be asked to take the student home and the learning that day will be home-based/remote. The family will also be asked to ensure that the next morning the student arrives either without such technology or with full acceptance of the school rules and commitment to handing it to the class team.

I realise that for some it is very difficult as technology is now a major part of our lives, but I know you will agree that safeguarding of the children and young people must always come first.

## **Communications**

Your **routine communication** will be with the class team and you are welcome to contact the whole team via class email or your child's class teacher via their personalised email. These details have been shared with you at the time of notification of the class and teacher allocation. If you need a reminder, please contact [reception@abbotsleaschool.co.uk](mailto:reception@abbotsleaschool.co.uk).

All communication with class teams will need to consider the **latency** that will, inevitably, occur, as the teachers are unlikely to be able to respond to enquiries during their teaching time, and so, just before 9am and after 3pm are the likely response times. Thank you for your patience. If your enquiry is urgent, please always contact [reception@abbotsleaschool.co.uk](mailto:reception@abbotsleaschool.co.uk)

All communication which is for groups or whole school community will be sent via Parentmail and Arbor, with website and social media updates also lively.

Each student's educational experience and progress is captured via Evidence for Learning application and you will have access to the day-to-day information, as it is captured by the staff working with your child.

Each Friday, I publish a *Head's Weekly Newsletter* which is shared with you and which contains updates from each class, a celebration of our students' successes, as well as key diary dates for your calendar.

Each Friday (apart from the last Friday of each term), we hold open assemblies and coffee mornings and families are warmly invited to join us whenever your busy lives allow you to. If your child's class is "performing" at one of those, you will receive an advanced notification.

Twice a year, you will receive a formal progress report of your child's learning and we hold annual reviews of Education, Health and Care Plans.

We also hope to see you for any open events organised from time to time at school and published in the Key Diary Dates document shared with you six times a year ahead of each term. Term 1 key diary dates are published here:

<https://www.abbotsleaschool.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/2024-25-Term-1-Key-Diary-Dates-1.pdf>

Lastly, we operate a Parent-Teacher-Association (PTA), called FAB! (Friends of Abbot's Lea School). You are all automatically its members and we warmly encourage you to take active part in our school life. A WhatsApp group is in operation for FAB! and if you wish to join it, please do so by sending a message with your name and your child's name and class, so that we can welcome you to the group and keep you in the loop with events and news.

It is also a great way to meet other families – of existing or new students!

To join WhatsApp chat, please follow the link or QR code:

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/E1VTkN0lr92E6X7e30mgdO>



Thank you in advance for your cooperation and I look forward to seeing all of our students presentable and compliant with the school's dress code as well as the wider school expectations.

I have every confidence that this will be a brilliant year for all of our students – I certainly wish them all every success in their studies, personal development and social belonging.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "A Hildrey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mrs A Hildrey  
Headteacher



## Term Dates 2024-25

### Term 1

- **INSET 1, Monday, 2 September 2024** — school closed to all students
- **INSET 2, Tuesday, 3 September 2024** — school closed to all students
- **Students' return:** Wednesday, 4 September 2024
- **End:** Friday, 25 October 2024, 3pm
- **Half term:** Monday 28 October 2024 to Friday 1 November 2024

### Term 2

- **Start:** Monday, 4 November 2024
- **End:** Friday, 20 December 2024, at 1pm
- **Christmas break:** Monday 23 December 2024 to Friday 3 January 2024

### Term 3

- **Start:** 6 January 2025
- **End:** Friday 14 February 2025 at 3pm
- **Half term:** Monday 17 February 2025 to Friday 21 February 2025

### Term 4

- **Starts:** Monday 24 February 2025
- **Ends:** Friday, 4 April 2025, at 1pm
- **Easter break:** Monday, 7 April 2025 to Monday, 21 April 2025

### Term 5

- **Start:** Tuesday, 22 April 2025
- **May Bank Holiday:** Monday 5 May 2025
- **End:** Friday, 23 May 2025 at 3pm
- **Half term:** Monday 26 May 2025 to Friday 30 May 2025

### Term 6

- **Start:** Monday, 2 June 2025
- **Leavers' Last Day:** Friday, 27 June 2025, finishing at 1pm
- **INSET 3: Friday, 11 July 2025** – school closed to all students
- **Transition Week:** 15 July 2025 – 18 July 2025
- **End:** Friday, 18 July 2025 at 1pm



# Abbot's Lea School Term Dates

2024/25



SEPTEMBER							OCTOBER							NOVEMBER						
Mon		2	9	16	23	30	Mon			7	14	21	28	Mon			4	11	18	25
Tues		3	10	17	24		Tues		1	8	15	22	29	Tues			5	12	19	26
Wed		4	11	18	25		Wed		2	9	16	23	30	Wed			6	13	20	27
Thur		5	12	19	26		Thur		3	10	17	24	31	Thur			7	14	21	28
Fri		6	13	20	27		Fri		4	11	18	25		Fri	1		8	15	22	29
Sat		7	14	21	28		Sat		5	12	19	26		Sat		2	9	16	23	30
Sun	1	8	15	22	29		Sun		6	13	20	27		Sun		3	10	17	24	
DECEMBER							JANUARY							FEBRUARY						
Mon		2	9	16	23	30	Mon			6	13	20	27	Mon			3	10	17	24
Tues		3	10	17	24	31	Tues			7	14	21	28	Tues			4	11	18	25
Wed		4	11	18	25		Wed	1		8	15	22	29	Wed			5	12	19	26
Thur		5	12	19	26		Thur	2		9	16	23	30	Thur			6	13	20	27
Fri		6	13	20	27		Fri	3		10	17	24	31	Fri			7	14	21	28
Sat		7	14	21	28		Sat		4	11	18	25		Sat		1	8	15	22	
Sun	1	8	15	22	29		Sun		5	12	19	26		Sun		2	9	16	23	
MARCH							APRIL							MAY						
Mon		3	10	17	24	31	Mon			7	14	21	28	Mon			5	12	19	26
Tues		4	11	18	25		Tues		1	8	15	22	29	Tues			6	13	20	27
Wed		5	12	19	26		Wed		2	9	16	23	30	Wed			7	14	21	28
Thur		6	13	20	27		Thur		3	10	17	24		Thur		1	8	15	22	29
Fri		7	14	21	28		Fri		4	11	18	25		Fri		2	9	16	23	30
Sat		1	8	15	22	29	Sat		5	12	19	26		Sat		3	10	17	24	31
Sun		2	9	16	23	30	Sun		6	13	20	27		Sun		4	11	18	25	
JUNE							JULY							AUGUST						
Mon		2	9	16	23	30	Mon			7	14	21	28	Mon			4	11	18	25
Tues		3	10	17	24		Tues		1	8	15	22	29	Tues			5	12	19	26
Wed		4	11	18	25		Wed		2	9	16	23	30	Wed			6	13	20	27
Thur		5	12	19	26		Thur		3	10	17	24	31	Thur			7	14	21	28
Fri		6	13	20	27		Fri		4	11	18	25		Fri	1		8	15	22	29
Sat		7	14	21	28		Sat		5	12	19	26		Sat		2	9	16	23	30
Sun	1	8	15	22	29		Sun		6	13	20	27		Sun		3	10	17	24	31

Term Time		Holidays	
Bank Holiday		INSET DAYS	
Term 1: Mon 2 Sept – Fri 25 Oct 24	40 days		
Term 2: Mon 4 Nov – Fri 20 Dec 24 (1pm finish)	35 days		
Term 3: Mon 6 Jan - Fri 14 Feb 25	30 days		
Term 4: Mon 24 Feb – Fri 4 Apr 2025 (1pm finish)	30 days		
Term 5: Tue 22 April – Fri 23 May 2025	23 days		
Term 6: Mon 2 June – Friday 18 Jul 25 (1pm finish)	37 days		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>195 days*</b>	

Christmas Bank Holidays	25 <sup>th</sup> December 2024
	26 <sup>th</sup> December 2024
New Year Bank Holiday	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2025
Good Friday	18 <sup>th</sup> April 2025
Easter Monday	21 <sup>st</sup> April 2025
Early May Bank Holiday	5 <sup>th</sup> May 2025
Spring Bank Holiday	26 <sup>th</sup> May 2025
Summer Bank Holiday	25 <sup>th</sup> August 2025

\*195 days are defined as "School days". In the school year 2024/25 students must attend for 190 days. ALS has designated the 5 INSET days as 3 full days and 21and 22 July 2025 as Twilights (these are closure days to students but they count towards the 37 days in Term 6)