



# Abbey Court **MATTERS**

Spring Term 4 2024 Issue 383 Circulation 1112





# MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNORS



**JANE HEYES**  
**CHAIR OF GOVERNORS**

Since I last contributed to the newsletter, the governing body has been working hard to meet all of its statutory duties, keeping knowledge and skills up to date with briefings and training and working on specific things that we set out to achieve this year. One of our main tasks has been to attract new governors. We have two high quality candidates to consider. We hope we can introduce you to our new recruits soon.

The governors have also been paying close attention to how well the school engages with you as parents and carers and how well you respond to invitations to participate in school activities. We were pleased to notice that the take-up by you has increased recently. The school provides many opportunities for you to become involved, to learn about your child in school and to learn about aspects of SEND, as well as simply to have fun. We want to make sure that these events are things that you want to attend.

We urge you to join in as many of the school events designed for parents and carers as you can. It is good for staff to get to know you better and for you to get to know them. Most of all, it is of huge benefit to your child if you become more familiar with the school and how it operates.

The next activities in which parents and carers can participate are listed in the dates for your diary section at the back of this newsletter. Please come along to learn and have fun. The governors look forward to seeing if this important upturn in parents and carers visiting Abbey Court continues.

19

216

94

## Trust Lottery Draw

218

234

37



The Sixth Trust Lottery Draw of the 2023/24 Academic Year took place on Friday 23rd February 2024. The first prize of £40 went to Mrs P Milton; the second prize of £20 to Mrs. J Harle; and the third prize of £10 went to Miss E Dean-Weeden.

The Seventh Trust Lottery Draw of the 2023/24 Academic Year took place on Friday 22nd March 2024. The first prize of £40 went to Mr & Mrs S Hitchings; the second prize of £20 to Mrs M King; and the third prize of £10 went to Mrs C Hoskins.

Many congratulations to all of the lucky winners!

# TOPIC WORK AT PRIMARY TERM 4



In P3, we have been learning about beat. We began by engaging in an Attention Autism session, where we created 'musical rain'. The pupils each had a turn to scatter the rice onto the xylophone, listening to the music it created. We then chose an instrument and sounded out the syllables of animal names onto the instrument, such as 'el-e-phant'.

In RE, we have been learning about what we may do in preparation to go into places of worship. We watched a video of the routine that is carried out and then completed this ourselves. We waited outside of the classroom, taking our shoes off and waited for our turn to follow the routine. We especially loved washing our feet.

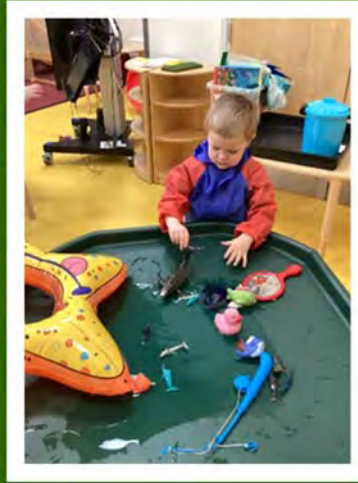


In Geography, we have been looking at habitats, including searching for insects in sensory trays, filled with grass, twigs, and leaves. We then used a magnifying glass to explore the insects we found further. Next lesson, we will be transferring our learning to searching for insects outside in their natural habitat.

# ANIMALS

Our topic in Nursery this term has been 'Animals'. We have been exploring lots of different animals and their habitats. Sea creatures were our favourite as we liked splashing in the water and feeling the cold ice.

We also enjoyed visiting the animals on the farm as well as having them join us in class.



# WEATHER

In our recent lessons, we have been studying various aspects of the weather. We have delved into topics like rain, wind, sunshine, and ice. Our focus has been on understanding how wind affects the movement of objects, discovering ways to make sand stick together, and nurturing flowers with care.





# ROMANS



In our P4 class, we have been studying the fascinating time of the Romans. As part of our learning, we got creative and crafted our very own shields using cardboard and paint. It was so much fun to immerse ourselves in role-playing and practice various Roman battle formations with our unique shields. We couldn't help but laugh throughout the whole experience!



# ON THE FARM



P12 pupils have been dedicated to acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge to nurture the growth and well-being of animals and plants. They have diligently prepared seed pots, planted seeds in compost, and provided them with water. Witnessing the transformation of these seeds into seedlings, the pupils have then transferred them to the poly tunnel at Larkin Farm. Throughout the term, they have attentively cared for the seedlings, watering them and observing their progress. The aim is to utilise the produce in upcoming weeks and months for cooking purposes.



The pupils have also been taking care of the farm animals by following the daily diet plans for each animal and cutting up fruits and vegetables for their feed. After preparing the food, they bring it to the animal pens for the animals to enjoy.

Caring for the seedlings and the animals provided the pupils with an opportunity to think of others before themselves, developing a sense of responsibility and respect for the needs of others. Well done P12 pupils - you have worked with confidence, care, engagement and enjoyment throughout.

# SECONDARY LEARNING

## OLIVER TWIST



In English and Drama classes, pupils in S2 have been studying, 'Oliver Twist', by Charles Dickens. They have engaged in writing assignments, reading part of the book, and even dancing to songs from the film for inspiration. The pupils have shown great enthusiasm for this topic, particularly enjoying dressing up!

## "REDUCE, REUSE AND RECYCLE"

During Terms 3 and 4, S5 conducted an investigation on the various types of bags people use and the reasons behind their usage. After understanding the purpose of them, they learned how to create their own mini canvas bags. This project was part of our PSHE&C topic of "Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle." S5 decided to repurpose old clothing that would have otherwise been discarded. Initially, the pupils attempted to hand sew the bags, but found it challenging. However, with the help of a sewing machine and adult supervision, they successfully produced well presented and functional bags, as shown in the photographs. Congratulations to S5 for their achievements!



# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

This term, S6 have been developing their skills during PE lessons. For some, this included getting dressed into their PE kits in a timely manner, whilst others worked on their communication skills during PE activities. They have worked on their balance and coordination through yoga sessions as well as when going up the stairs to the first floor, and back down again.



In swimming, they have been working towards achieving swimming awards by working on specific water skills. One pupil even created his own trampoline routine, selecting the actions he wished to perform before putting them together in a routine and demonstrating these on the outdoor trampoline.



# RIVERS

During Spring Term 4, S7 have been working hard on creating their own rivers and labelling appropriately.



S7 have been learning the following key vocabulary: source, waterfall, meander, riverbed, riverbank and sea.



The pupils were then encouraged to independently label the river whilst it was in action. We all had great fun exploring this topic hands on!



# WORLD BOOK DAY

On Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024, we celebrated World Book Day.



Primary (Traditional Tales) - This year for World Book Day, Primary classes worked together in pairs and completed activities that combined to revealing their allocated Traditional Tale. These activities helped the pupils to work out clues to guess which Traditional Tale. They were exploring! Some classes went on a treasure hunt around the school looking for pictures and symbols relating to the story; some classes used sensory trays, to search for hidden items relating to their Traditional Tale; while other classes played 'Guess Who?' with the characters from the Traditional Tale.





Secondary (Twisted Tales and Book Club) - This year for World Book Day, Secondary classes re-wrote some of their favourite stories, in the style of 'Twisted Tales'. Classes shared the twisted tale, 'The Three Little Wolves and The Big Bad Pig', and then re-wrote their favourite class story, using Write Dance, photographs, symbols and sensory items to support them. At the end of the day, the Twisted Tales were collected and judged by a special guest. The winner of the Twisted Tale was CLASS S7.

The FE Department explored the concept of a book club, exploring what a book club is, what happens at a book club, where these are held, why book clubs are popular etc. In the afternoon, FE then hosted their own Book Club meeting where they reviewed some books they had been recently reading.



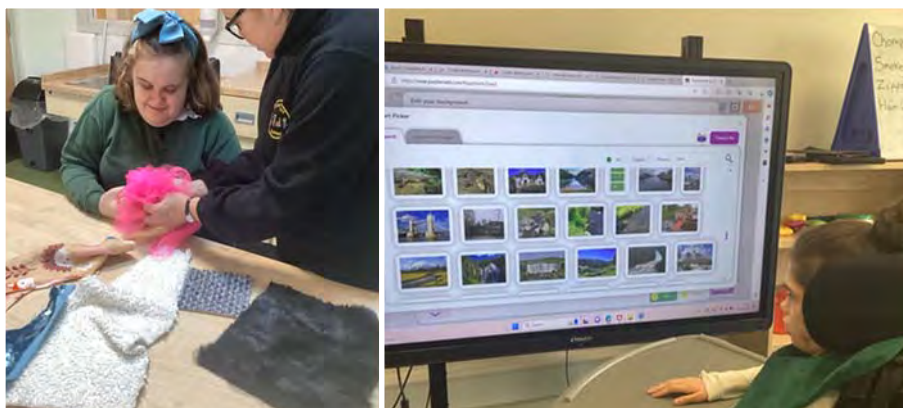
**Where's The Golden Ticket?**



**Billy Goats In The City**



**Oliver  
Twist  
With A  
Twist**



**Twisted  
Tales Of  
Little  
Red  
Riding  
Hood**



# FAMILY FEAST

## KS2 & KS3

We were delighted to have parents and carers join us on Wednesday 6th March for our Family Feast in KS2 & KS3. It was a wonderful occasion where pupils and their family members came together to enjoy a delicious meal. To make the event even more special, each class had prepared beautiful placemats and table centrepieces to honor Mother's Day and show appreciation for everything our parents or carers do for us.





The pupils were able to share with our visitors the routines and social aspects of lunch at Abbey Court, as well as demonstrating all of our independence, communication and self-care learning. All who attended the event left smiling and with full stomachs.

# SWIMMING



Throughout this term in P2, we have been focusing on building our confidence in the hydrotherapy pool.

Prior to each session, our pupils have been given the opportunity to choose which adults they would like to work with in the pool, as well as select the lighting, music, and toys they prefer.

The pupils have demonstrated their ability to recognise objects of reference to aid in their transitions, and have shown great excitement while waiting for their turn to enter the pool.

While in the pool, the pupils have been actively initiating movement and collaborating with adults to kick their legs for travel.

They have enjoyed engaging in singing and games, such as 'Row, Row, Row Your Boat', and 'Whirlpool', to promote movement, resulting in lots of laughter and smiles all around.



# OFF SITE SWIMMING



Throughout this term, KS3 pupils have dedicated themselves to achieving various milestones of the Alpha Award during their swimming sessions at Strood pool. The skills they have worked hard to master include front and back strokes with the assistance of a float, practising the rhythmic motion of rocking in the water, and gaining independence by entering and exiting the pool unaided, among numerous other valuable skills.





# PUPIL LUNCHTIMES

# VOICE & PLAYTIMES



This term's Pupil Voice focus has been 'Playtimes & Lunchtimes'. Pupils discussed in their classes what they 'like' and 'don't like' about their playtimes and lunchtimes, and at the first Pupil Voice meeting, the class representatives discussed this and came up with some new ideas they wanted to implement. There was a very popular request for 'calming music' to be played in the background whilst pupils are having their lunch, and pupils have also requested to trial a new Cooking Club, along with some exciting playground games. In the second meeting, posters were created after pupils researched which playground games they would like and letters were written and sent to the kitchen staff about napkins and tomato ketchup! In the final meeting, Pupil Voice representatives reflected on what they had achieved this term in the meetings. We are looking forward to exploring next term's focus.



In the FE Department, pupils focused on their leisure time and had a particular focus on designing 'Our Dream Common Room', including the activities and items they would like to have access to. FE pupils came up with a long list of items that they were keen to have in the common room, including items such as a games table and a dart board! FE also discussed new leisure time activities that they could start accessing during their leisure time at school. Pupils spoke about starting TV & Film Club, Hair and Nail Club and a Games Club.



# CAREERS WEEK

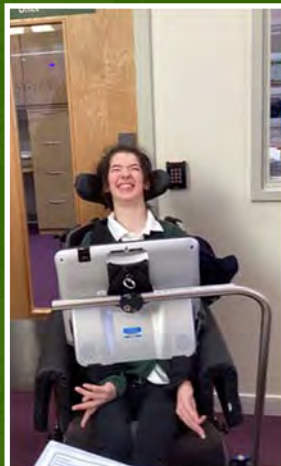
S3 have been looking at a variety of 'Work Experience' jobs they can be part of at Abbey Court School.



It has come to our attention that there are numerous crucial tasks to be carried out within the school setting. S3 pupils have assessed the tasks they can collectively undertake to contribute to the school community. They have actively participated in various roles during Careers Week, including Caretaking, Office assistance, cleaning, and Farm duties. Among these responsibilities, their preferred tasks have been distributing newsletters and organising school resources.



In S10, we have been exploring careers in a variety of contexts including within an office environment, as a musician, and working on the farm. We considered the attributes and skills that would be relevant to each of these roles.



# FURTHER EDUCATION

## THE GYM

The pupils in Further Education have been embracing their new space over the course of this term. In our gym, we have treadmills, exercise bikes, a rowing machine and a set of free weights, as well as plenty of floor space to practise our Yoga or carry out our warm ups and cool downs.



The pupils have been setting themselves goals and challenges, focusing on improving their stamina, as well as their techniques.



In addition to the fitness opportunities that this new space is providing, the pupils are also learning how to maintain the equipment, ensuring it is cleaned down after use, and how to effectively make use of it, taking note of speeds and resistance.

The pupils are looking forward to using this space more across next term, and setting themselves more challenging goals!

## GREEN FINGERS



The pupils in Pathway 3 have been busy working towards their gardening AQA Award this term.

They have been using their senses to explore different gardening resources and materials, such as soil, seeds and water from a watering can.

They were asked to show preferences of textures and scents, which they did using their appropriate communication aids and techniques.

As well as working on this in the classroom, they have taken their learning down to Larkin Farm, and made use of the polytunnel, using their sense of smell to breathe in the different aromas, and their sense of touch to explore the differences between petals, stems, leaves and roots.

Well done to all on achieving your award!



# Farm News



On Friday 15th of March, we received some very exciting news regarding two of our sheep at Larkin Farm. A sheep sonographer came to see if our sheep were expecting lambs, and were very pleased when she confirmed that Dolly is pregnant with one lamb, and Barbara is expecting twins! Two of our young farmers and some other FE students visited the farm to watch the scanning taking place. They watched the scan via an iPad and they had some rather interesting questions. Some of the questions they asked were, 'When will the lambs be born', 'How big are the lambs now?' and, 'Is that the spine of the lamb? I have a spine!'. We are very excited for our new arrivals and this brings with it a new learning opportunity for the pupils during our Summer Term.

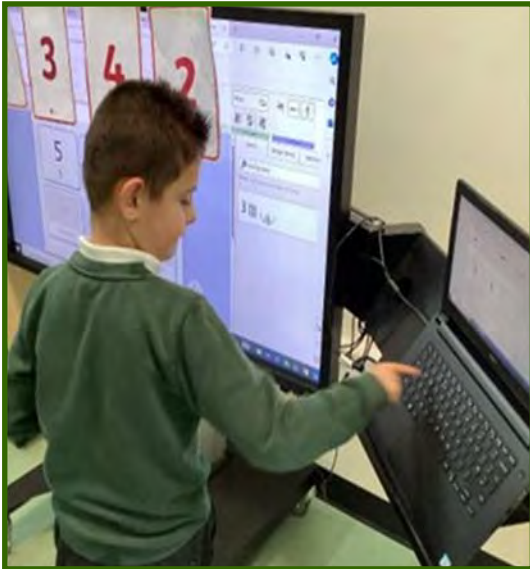




# Internet Safety Day 2024

We have recently celebrated and brought awareness to Internet Safety Day 2024.

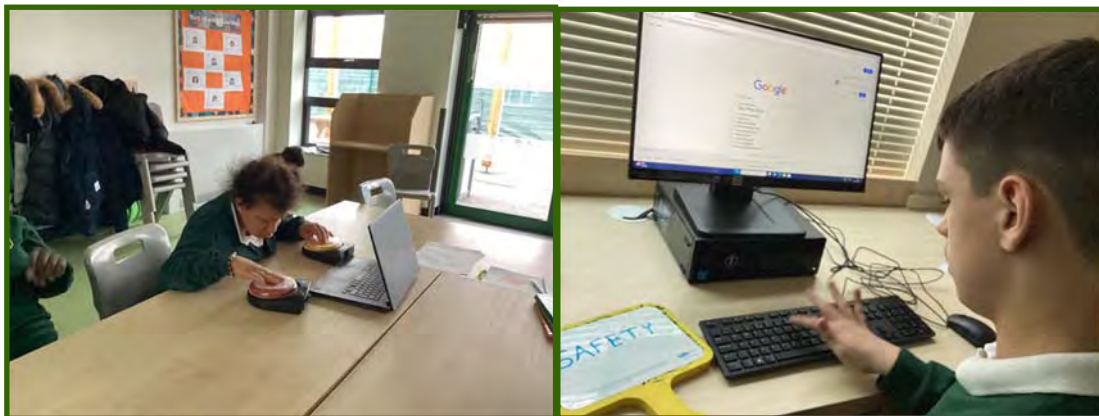
This year, we had our Primary Password Pirates, and our Secondary Masked Gamer.



Our primary aged pupils worked to crack a range of passwords to unlock their 'treasure'. Throughout this fun activity, we were teaching the pupils about why we have passwords, the importance of keeping them private and that when you use a password, it will unlock something that you could not see before.



In the Secondary Department, the pupils worked all week to try to unmask our 'Masked Gamer'. One of our familiar adults had recorded a message, under the guise of being someone different. Each day, the pupils worked on a range of computing tasks, and then a clue was revealed at the end of the day, to help solve the mystery. The pupils worked together as part of a class team to work out who it was, and by the end of the week, some were confident at saying who it was.



For our older pupils, we were teaching about how to keep yourself safe online, and how that anybody can pretend to be someone that they are not, if they disguise their face and their voice.

Internet Safety Day is a whole lot of fun, but it is important to remember that staying safe online is a continuous process, and as a school we take pride in our teaching of this concept throughout all of our Computing lessons across the school year.

For further information, please see <https://saferinternet.org.uk/> or contact the school for any specific advice you may need.

# ENGLISH AS ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

One of our duties is to use knowledge of pupils' background to advise on their academic, cultural, personal, social and spiritual development. We try our best to support EAL pupils by using bilingual and multicultural resources, attending individual sessions, providing assemblies and hosting events e.g. Language of the Term, Pancake Day with recipes from around the world, World Food Festival, music from around the world, Diwali, Mother Language Day, Eid al-Adha and many more.

## EAL PARENTS COFFEE MORNING

*We had the pleasure of meeting EAL parents/cares over a cup of tea/coffee. They had the opportunity to ask questions, make suggestions, speak to the Leadership Team and have a great time. It was our second meeting in this academic year and we are already looking forward to the next one. Thank you to all of the parents/carers for participating in our Coffee Morning.*



## PANCAKE DAY

*It was great to see pupils working on the recipes from all over the world. Pupils created different types of pancakes, such as spring roll pancakes or Russian beetroot pancakes. They all looked yummy! Well done to all of the staff and pupils, who tried flipping the pancakes!*



## LANGUAGE OF THE TERM

As you all know, Abbey Court School values diversity. This is why we have been celebrating the 'Language of the Term' for each term this year. Each term we choose a different language when pupils learn about the country where the language is spoken, the food, the culture. They learn simple phrases in the language, listen to the stories and music. In Term 4, we focused on Visayas and Tagalog languages. Children explored the culture of Philippines, saying 'Hello' – 'Kamusta' and even learning a traditional bamboo dance called Tinikling.



## COOKING WITH MRS OCHAVILLO

Students in the Further Education Department had the privilege of a parent from the Philippines visiting the school to share insights about Filipino culture and languages. Mrs Ochavillo also guided the students in preparing a traditional Filipino noodle dish known as 'Pancit'.



# Communication Corner



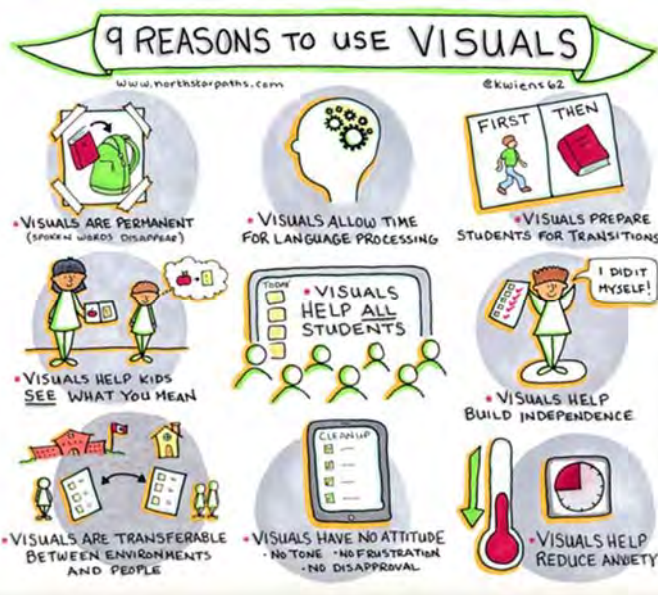
Lynsey Cook  
Speech & Language Therapist



Kelly Ann Ralph  
Speech & Language Assistant

In this newsletter, our focus is on the use of visual supports and strategies we use here that our pupils benefit from. We all use visual supports throughout our days to support our understanding as well, and they are an effective way to reinforce pupils' understanding when they are asked to complete tasks. When instructions are being repeated verbally, this can extend the processing time for our pupils and can lead to frustration; use of visual aids can reduce this.

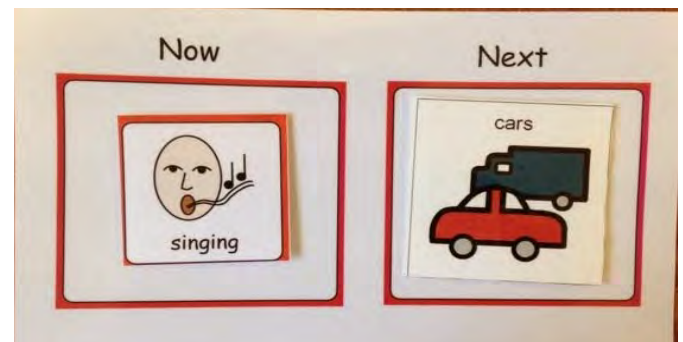
There are many reasons to use visuals. Below is a good image to demonstrate some of these:



An example Object of Reference:



An example Now, and Next, board:



Visual supports also promote independence skills as they can support in the community by providing a shopping list to follow, sequencing preparing a meal, and following an individual timetable to know what it happening next, or the next activity they need to follow.

The following link is to a YouTube animation that explains visual supports in a great way!

<https://youtu.be/s1eZ7h6u3JM>

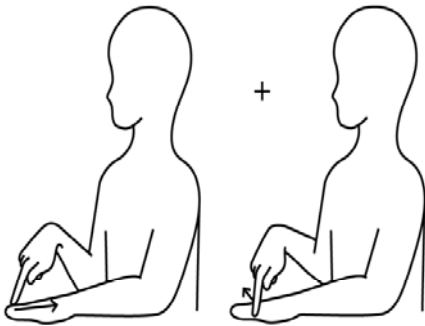
As always, if you have any questions or want more information about anything, please contact me via the contact book or the office.

Lynsey Cook, Speech and Language Therapist

We use a range of the following in school to support pupils to understand and follow routines:

Objects of Reference ; symbols; photos; written words; lists; sequencing cards; communication boards and books; 'Now and Next' boards; the TEACCH approach , and Visual Timetables.

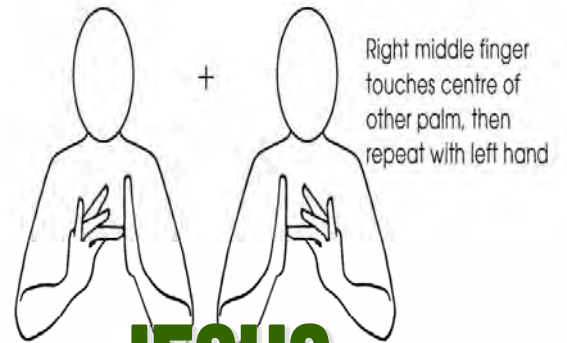
Below is a list of Makaton signs relating to Easter. Please share these with your family and friends to enable them to communicate with your child. Remember to always say the word when you are Makaton signing and also remember to use your dominant hand and sign slowly and to the length of the word.



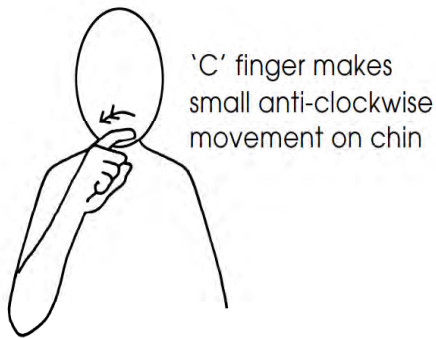
**EASTER**



**CHURCH**



**JESUS**



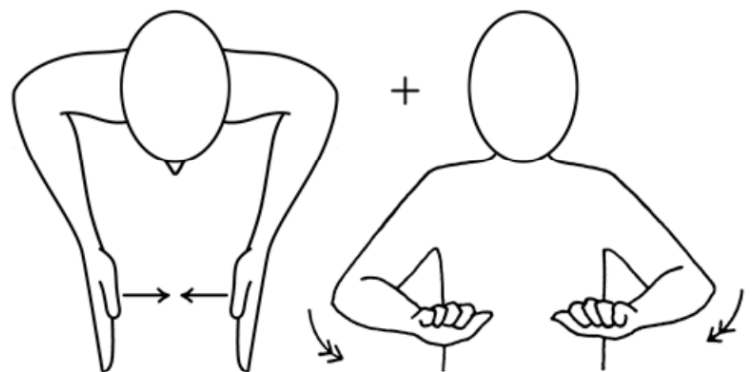
**CHOCOLATE**



**EASTER EGG**

**What is Makaton?**

*Makaton is a unique language programme that uses symbols, signs and speech to enable people to communicate. It supports the development of essential communication skills, such as attention and listening, comprehension, memory, recall, and organisation of language and expression.*



**CHICK**

# WELCOME

WE WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND A  
WARM WELCOME TO AND  
INTRODUCE SOME NEW STAFF  
MEMBERS TO THE ABBEY COURT  
TEAM.



Elisabeth Murray joined Abbey Court School as a Catering Assistant at the Cliffe Road site. Elisabeth has had some catering experience, having previously worked in a restaurant; she has also worked as an Administrative Assistant

for Learning Disability England. Elisabeth has a passion for preparing good food and supporting children with additional needs and looks forward to gaining more experience. She loves working with children and has two of her own. In her spare time, she likes to go to the spa and spend it with her children and partner, seeing their families and taking their children to their various activities.



Saliya Mudiyanse has recently joined Abbey Court School as the caretaker for our Further Education site. With 23 years of experience as a caretaker in Secondary schools, Saliya brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to his new role. Outside of work, he enjoys running, climbing mountains, and exploring various destinations across the globe.

GOOD LUCK

ON YOUR NEXT

ADVENTURE

HAPPY RETIREMENT



Sue Williams' voice and welcoming smile have become familiar to many of you when contacting Abbey Court School. Sue has been a Clerical Officer since 2008 and has been a wonderful colleague with many stories to share from her 16 years here. Sue has decided to retire early to embark on new adventures and enjoy a life without early mornings! We wish her all the best and extend a big "Thank you!" for her dedication to Abbey Court School.

Good Bye!

We are sorry to say goodbye to Teaching Assistant Rachel Bharat, Class Teacher Amy Budgen and Caretaker Nick Barnes. We would like to thank them for their contribution to Abbey Court and to wish them all the best for the future!



# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



APRIL TERM DATES	APRIL EVENTS	MAY TERM DATES	MAY EVENTS	JUNE TERM DATES
TERM 5 START: MONDAY 15.04.2024	TUESDAY 16.04.2024 PARENT MEETING FOR KS2 RESIDENTIAL	TERM 5 END: FRIDAY 24.05.2024	WEDNESDAY 08.05.2024 EAL COFFEE MORNING CLIFFE ROAD	TERM 6 START: MONDAY 03.06.2024
INSET DAY MONDAY 15.04.2024	THURSDAY 18.04.2024 PARENT MEETING FOR KS3 RESIDENTIAL	EARLY MAY BANK HOLIDAY: MONDAY 06.05.2024	TUESDAY 21.05.2024 PARENT VOICE MEETING	
	24 - 26.04.2023 KS2 OFFSITE RESIDENTIAL		TUESDAY 21.05.2024 KS3 TRANSITION PARENT MEETING	
	29.04.2024- .01.05.2024 KS3 OFFSITE RESIDENTIAL			



Abbey Court School Trust

# SPRING GRAND DRAW

**YOU HAVE TO BE IN IT TO WIN IT!**



Click on the link or scan the QR code to order your tickets: [Spring Grand Draw](#)

**1st Prize — £400 Cash**

**2nd Prize — £200 Cash**

**3rd Prize — £100 Cash**

Cash prizes kindly donated by: LW Burt, J Brazil, Kent Boiler Maintenance & Robin Hood Garage

**Further prizes:**

**Laptop** (donated by Cantium)

**Meat Hamper** (donated by Salvatori)

**Fruit Hamper** (donated by R J Kingsland)

**Tickets cost £1 each, or £5 for a book of 5 tickets**

**Last purchase of tickets accepted on 26th April 2024**

**Winning tickets will be drawn on 3rd May 2024**

# EASTER SIBLINGS PAGE



**HOW MANY CAN YOU FIND?**



**HAPPY**   
*Easter*

