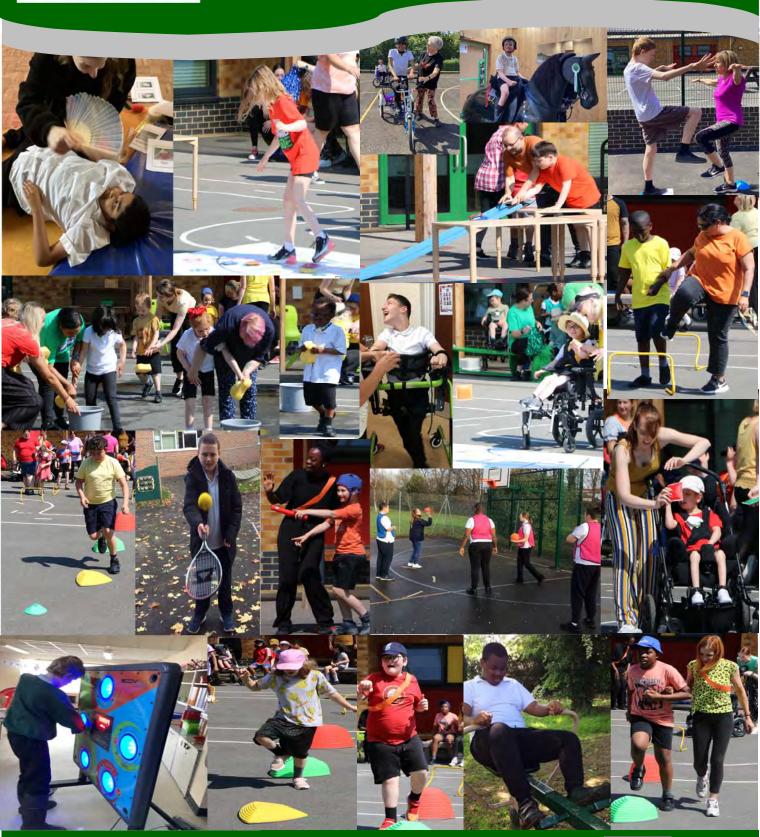


Abbey Court MATTERS

Summer Term 6 2023 Issue 379 Circulation 1112



















MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNORS



DR TIM WALKER
Partnership Governor

As we hurtle towards the end of the school year, it seems no time at all since we were discussing whether the secondary phase of the school development would go ahead, if we would ever get back to some kind of normality following the Covid 19 pandemic, and who would be our new head teacher. We now have a wonderful new school building, have recruited Vicky Aspin as head teacher, and have been able to deliver the majority of the children's learning at school.

It feels very much like this all fits in with the school motto, "We grow people", or more widely put, we grow our own family. Abbey Court is the outstanding school it is because we have grown and developed pupils, staff, and the facilities as one. At times I thought I would never see the secondary phase built. The primary building is such a well designed space that meets the needs of our pupils, largely due to the hard and sustained effort by the school team who had a far better understanding of what was needed than many planners and architects do. The exacting standards were quite a challenge for the Local Authority to deliver, making a second phase quite an ask.

After many years with Karen Joy leading the school, it was time to find her replacement. Despite a national recruitment effort, we found our replacement already at the school, giving us the continuity pupils need, the understanding of what makes our school different, and in so many ways better than other special schools (in my opinion), as well as a fresh start. I am sure Vicky and her team will build on the excellent foundations and take the school in new directions as we move forward.

Covid 19 has hit so many of you so hard and both the education and health systems remain challenged by the aftermath. However, we learnt some new ways of working / teaching that we will keep to complement our more traditional methods, and as we get back to a new normal, we must focus on ensuring our kids and young people grow and reach their maximum potential. I believe that with our new buildings, new head, and a new school year just around the corner we are ready to help our pupils shine!

In the meantime, I hope you all have a wonderful summer holiday, although I know that for many of you it is not a break. I look forward to us all sharing the next exciting phase of Abbey Court's Journey together.

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Trust Lottery Draw

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The fifth Trust Lottery Draw of the 2022/23 Academic Year took place on Friday 26th May 2023.

The first prize of £40 went to Mrs Wendy Taylor; the second prize of £20 went to Mrs Michelle Mills; and the third prize of £10 went to Mrs Rosemary Thoroughgood.





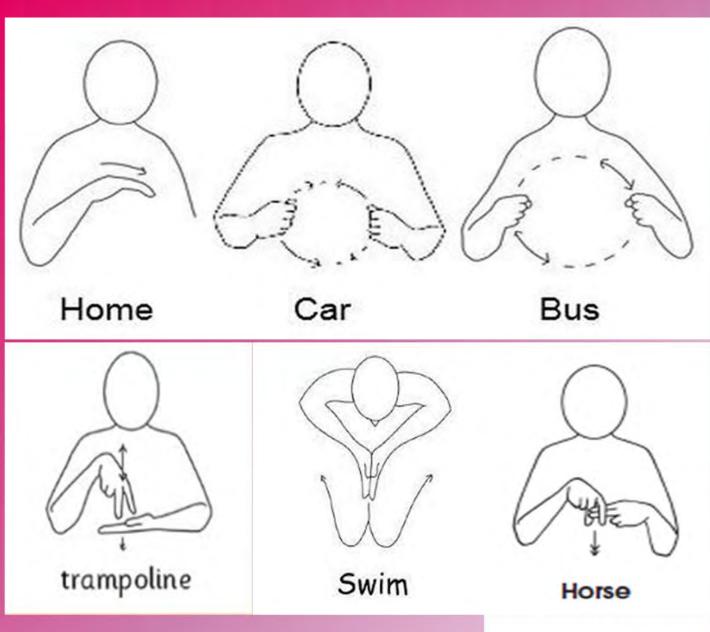
The fifth Trust Lottery Draw of the 2022/23 Academic Year took place on Friday 30th June 2023.

The first prize of £40 went to Mrs Jacqui Rudden; the second prize of £20 went to Mr & Mrs Steve & Suzie Hitchins; and the third prize of £10 went to Mr Keith Paine.

Many congratulations to all of the lucky winners!



Below is a list of Makaton signs relating to extracurricular activities that your children will do at school. Please share these with your family and friends to enable to them 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.



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.



Father's Day Lunch

n Thursday 15th of June 2023, KS2 pupils enjoyed welcoming their loved ones to

a Father's Day Lunch, to thank them for all they do and share in the social experience with them. It was so lovely to see the pupils share a meal with their loved ones in school and demonstrate their eating and/or social skills. Thank you to Clotaire and the kitchen team for providing a delicious meal for the dads. Happy Father's Day to all!



KS1-STAY TO TEA

The pupils in Key Stage One had a great time when they had the opportunity to stay after school and have tea with their friends!

First, the children got to visit the farm and help to look after the rabbits and plant some Pansy seeds. The children learned about how to feed and give water to help the rabbits to survive, and understood the importance of being gentle and quiet when around them. They also used tools safely to fill pots with soil, added some seeds and then watered them. We will keep watering the seeds and watch them grow! Once grown, these will be sold to raise funds for the farm.



After this, we returned to school to share a yummy tea together before going home.

There were plenty of opportunities for the children to make choices and to demonstrate their likes and dislikes. The children enjoyed joining in with the songs. There were lots of happy smiley faces by the time parents came to collect the pupils for home!







During the summer term, we have been learning about mini-beasts and insects. Through this topic, we have explored and developed a range of skills in Science and DT. We have learnt about and sorted insects by their features, such as wings or no wings and number of legs. We used familiar stories such as, 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar', by Eric Carle, to explore the life cycle of insects and had the opportunity to observe this with our own caterpillars. We observed the caterpillars growing over the course of a couple of weeks, noting the changes in how they moved and their size. It was exciting to see them create their chrysalises and hang on the top of their temporary home. At this point, we carefully transferred them to their butterfly net and waited patiently for them emerge as butterflies. Gradually, we saw them break out of their cocoons and spread their wings. We kept them safe by providing butterfly nectar, flowers and fruit, as we watched them move and become stronger. Eventually, the day came when we were able to release the butterflies and let them fly freely. They were reluctant to leave their net, but one by one they came to the opening and flew away to the next stage of their life.



STORYTIME BAG BOOKS BAG BOOKS Multi-sensory stories for people with

learning disabilities







'Kofi and the Magic Shaker Bag Book'

Carole from Bag Books came into
Abbey Court on Friday 30th June to
read a story called 'Kofi and the
Magic Shaker' to our Primary
pupils. Our pupils absolutely loved
the story and the experience.
Multi-sensory books encourage the
listener to become involved in the
story. They take the listener on a
journey to explore a range of
sensory experiences all designed to
engage the key senses of sight,
sound, touch, smell and motion.



What is a Bag Book?

A Bag Book provides multi-sensory books and storytelling. Our stories are told through voice and emotion, rather than words and pictures.

CLASS P1 ROYALENGNEERS MUSEUM

This term, P1 have been learning about journeys. As part of this learning, we found out about different vehicles that take us on journeys. Some of the vehicles were tanks and trucks, which we explored as part of our history lessons. We were lucky enough to visit the Royal Engineers Museum where we got to see lots of these vehicles in real life. We enjoyed looking at how tall they all were and also how big the wheels were. We then took some photos in front of them to help us remember our day when we came back to school.





CLASS S1 SHORNE WOODS COUNTRY PARK



S1 went off to explore Shorne Woods Country Park, as part of their Art Schemes Of Work — Sculpture and also to consider the natural world, as part of their Science learning. One pupil found the bulrushes and the dragonfly sculpture at the pond area, each of which, the class had learnt about this term through their Pond Life Schemes of Work. When we returned to school, some of the pupils noticed that we had made our bulrushes a different colour. Great observational skills, everyone! The pupils then chose to explore the Sensory Garden and smelt some of the amazing herbs. Most liked the lavender, although one pupil particularly liked the smell of the Thyme, which was quite fragrant. During the walk the pupils noticed many sculptures and really enjoyed the sensory experience of touching them, then describing them with a range of words such as: smooth, soft, rough and cold. One pupil thought that one of the sculptures looked like it had horns, and he signed this to his friends to share his view. Great communication!

CLASS S2 GRAVESEND PROMENADE

For one of S2's weekly visits and to enhance the learning of Geography and PSHE, we decided to visit Gravesend Promenade. Whilst there, the class learnt about local travel and tourism, including exploring why people visit different areas. They looked at the local scenery and also saw the local ice cream and fish and chip shop. The class also looked at the differences between man made items and natural items. S2 love their learning outside of the classroom.





Class S8 have had great fun on their Educational visits to Tesco's and Morrisons. The pupils searched for the items on their shopping list independently; once they had completed their list, they located the till. Some pupils used the self check out, while others interacted with the supermarket staff members. Pupils developed their mathematical skills by calculating if they had enough money to buy the items on their shopping list. Pupils had a great opportunity to develop their independence skills through this learning experience!





FURTHER EDUCATION

WORK EXPERIENCE BROOMHILL PARK



In partnership with Community Project Friends of Broomhill Park











Each week, FE students are very excited to visit Broomhill Park, and meet the project organizers in the car park. Students collect and hand out the equipment they need: high vis jackets, gloves, litter pickers and bin bags. They look carefully at the map of the park, to work out a route to take to find the most likely areas they will find rubbish. The students travel carefully through the park, enjoying the natural environment, putting the litter into the bin bags. It is an amazing opportunity for students to exercise outdoors and use their observational skills, which often turns into a bit of a competition! They collect at least three bags of litter each week. Everyone helps to keep the park looking at its best, and students and staff feel a great sense of achievement doing something positive for the local community. Fantastic work related learning!



FURTHER EDUCATION CELEBRATING PRIDE MONTH





In the Further Education Department this term, we have to been celebrating and learning about Pride Month. The students have been looking at their similarities and differences, and learning that these are what make us who are we, and that we should take pride in ourselves. The students have been learning about different races, cultures and religions, as well as the different types of relationships that people choose to have with one another.



All of the students' learning culminated in a 'Pride March' around the school building. The students made their own flags and props, dressed up in different clothing that they chose and then marched with pride, chanting, 'We are different, we are proud.' The kitchen, office and nursing staff all came out of their own work





spaces to watch us march, and joined in with their chants.

Well done to all of the students for participating, and demonstrating what an inclusive school we are!



SPONSORED SPLASH

Pupils have loved participating in the 'Sponsored Splash' this term!

In the Primary Department, pupils enjoyed swimming races, noodle races and, as you can see,.. the 'Collect the floats' competition was a firm favourite.

It was wonderful to support our pupils to further develop their water confidence and independence by participating in such engaging activities Activities included: water play on the playground, welly wanging and hydrotherapy sessions. Pupils took part in noodle races across the width of the pool and carried out their physiotherapy exercises, too.

















The Secondary pupils particularly enjoyed practising some new teambuilding exercises in the pool. A firm favourite was the 'Caterpillar Race'. They had to pass the ball over their heads to the person behind them! At the end, the pupils had to swim quickly to the front of the line to start again. This helped them to develop their communication skills, as well as physical coordination when moving objects through the water.





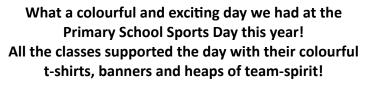
Pupils participated in noodle races across the width and length of the pool. It was so much fun! Pupils laughed and tried very hard to gain their balance. With more practice, the classes became more confident and their favourite games are now used as a warm-up activity during Hydrotherapy swimming sessions.

1st 189 & 182 SPORTS DAY and











The class teams were supported to complete a variety of agility, balance and precision based activities and cheer one another on. Pupils celebrated their achievements in a Sports Day assembly, where each pupil received a medal and a personalised certificate to recognise their efforts on the day.







Thank you also to the FE students who supported with the warm-up and provided some much needed refreshments on such a sunny day!



Thank you so much to all of the parents who attended to watch their children participate and develop their physical literacy skills in such a fun way!











SECONDARY Orienteering SPORTS WEEK Morning mile













The Secondary pupils really enjoyed exploring a variety of areas on the new site to participate in PE and other physical activities of their choice. It was great to see everyone putting in so much effort to try out some new sporting activities, and to help one another achieve their personal best. The activities were chosen to specifically focus on developing coordination, balance, teamwork, and a sense of fun and engagement for everyone in the classes. Pupils' achievements were celebrated across the week with photographs and an achievement assembly, where they were presented with a 'Let's get moving' certificate and a 'Sports Week' medal.



KEY STAGE 2 RESIDENTIAL BORE PLACE FARM

On 24th-26th May 2023, a group of six KS2 pupils attended an off-site residential at Bore Place Farm. The pupils spent three days and two nights engaging a variety of activities from orienteering, nature walks, cooking, movie nights, farm tours (we even got to see the cows being milked!) and roasting delicious 'S'mores' on the campfire. All pupils had a wonderful time and worked on their social skills and independence, whilst experiencing their first off-site residential. Well done to all who attended!



















Silver Award Scheme

On the 5th -7th June 2023, a group of students from the FE Department began their work to gain their Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award, undertaking a practice Duke of Edinburgh expedition that took place at Hope Hill Campsite and Shorne Country Park. Some of the skills that they learnt were how to pitch a tent, read a map and navigate different types of terrain. This group worked really, hard and have mastered their skills, ready for their real Duke of Edinburgh Silver expedition on the 3rd -5th July 2023. They have put in an incredible amount of effort and determination and...



...On 3rd—5th July 2023, the Silver Duke of Edinburgh group visited Brentwood, Essex, for their Silver Qualifying expedition. They stayed in a lodge, at Thriftwood Campsite, whilst they practised map reading skills at Weald Country Park, walking 5 Miles at Thorndon Country Park and went on a nature trail at the campsite. A great time was had by all and all eight students achieved their Silver Award!



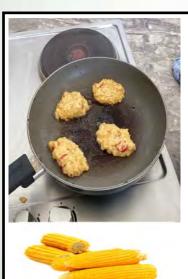
VEG GLORIOUS VEG CHALLENGE

On 13th June 2023, every class took part in a Challenge Morning that was all about vegetables. The students were set the challenge to learn about a particular vegetable, and had options of support activities to complete. They learned the Makaton sign for their vegetable, saw the vegetable growing in the polytunnel, explored it, made artwork/ printing with it, and even had the option of making something tasty, too!

Everyone really enjoyed learning about their different vegetables and how they grow, including whether any animals on the farm eat them.



EXPLORING PEPPER SEEDS

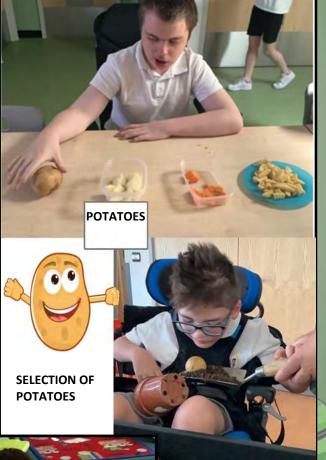


SWEETCORN FRITTERS



vegetables







BROCCOLI FACT FILE



PAINTING AND EXPLORING BROCCOLI AND ITS LEAVES



SHOWTIME



ON THE FARM!

It has been a busy term on the farm and the pupils have been helping to get animals ready for two different shows. We went to the South of England Show with Peppa pig, and she came home with a rosette and certificate for coming 6th place in the 'Non-Breeding Pet Gilt Class'. The pupils from across the school supported her beauty routine by washing, shampooing and scrubbing her weekly.



The pupils and Young Farmers have now also been helping to wash and train the Black Nose Valais sheep to take them to the Kent County Show in July. They have been washing their woolly, curly coat with shampoo, brushing any knots out of their legs and fringe, and rinsing them with the hose. A selection of the older students have been helping to train the sheep by leading them by halter around the spare paddock and supporting them to walk and stand as in a show situation.

















7,8,9 JULY 2023

Larkin Farm took part in the Kent County Show this year. We took our sheep to be shown in the main-line class by farm staff, and then two of the Young Farmers were able to show in the Young Handlers' section and received beautiful rosettes! We were thrilled and so excited to be a part of this event. Back at school, the Young Farmers and students from across the school have been working so hard to get the sheep ready for show by shampooing and washing, cleaning, brushing and making sure they were practising walking on a lead around a paddock.



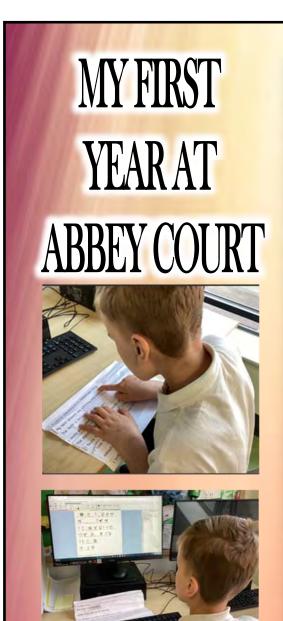














One of our pupils in S1 has been working really hard this year to develop his sentence writing skills. He loves to look at the school newsletter, and he was asked if he wanted to write something for it. He was very excited by this, and that became his Writing target on his IEP for the summer term.

The pupil worked with an adult and began to consider how to structure a sentence, so that it made sense. He looked at a visual stimulus such as a photograph and talked about what he could see. The adult supporting him then helped him put the key words into a sentence, adding the additional important words to help it make sense.

Once the pupil was familiar with this, he was asked questions about his year and how sentences were structured and written in the same way as he had been practising. He then grouped each sentence to keep the content similar. Once he was happy with the order, he used Symwriter on the computer to rewrite them, so that the symbols were added. Together, the teacher and pupil read the sentences and checked spellings. When he was happy with his work, he printed a copy and took it to the staff member in the office, who puts the newsletter content together. He was very proud to hand it over. Great work, IEP Target achieved!



IT'S GOOD TO HAVE FRIENDS!

Sometimes, one hears that phrase in life, "It's not what you know, it's who you know". For nearly 30 years, Landscape Services have been taking care of the ground's maintenance at Abbey Court School. Some of their guys have worked on Abbey Court grounds longer than any school staff have been employed at the school! As you can imagine over that amount of years good working relationships are born and developed. They, as an organisation, have been keen to help the school in numerous ways over that time. Most recently, a very useful donation has come our way in the form of a trailer, for use at the school and farm.

Already, in the short time the we have had it, it has come in incredibly useful for all sorts of tasks.



We are very grateful to Landscape Services for the trailer, and also to our friends at Raydor Signs, who donated the coloured coded panels free of charge to give the trailer a new look. Thank you!

We would like to say thank you to Tesco
Gillingham for the donation of 10 crates of
carrots for the animals at Larkin Farm.

Also a huge thank you to everyone that donated to the sponsored splash and sponsored movements!







WELCOME

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

COURT TEAM.



dragon.

Mark Kingston joined Abbey Court this term as a Teaching Assistant in class P1.
Mark has been working in school settings for the last two years. In his spare time,
Mark enjpys music and spending time wih his French bulldog and bearded

Vicky Knight joined Abbey Court as a Teaching Assistant in P1. She has previously worked as a TA with nursery to year one pupils and recently as an Early Years Educator

and SENCO in a private nursery.

She enjoys hiking, cake decorating and gardening in her spare time, with lots of time spent on developing her pond and nature habitats.



Emma Bryant joined Abbey Court as a cleaner at Cliffe Road. She is a mum to two teenage girls and one grown up son and enjoy fun days out, movie and pamper nights. Emma has a passion for gardening, loves the great outdoors and visiting new places.



Eleanor Benjamin joined Abbey Court as a UQT and has just completed her final year of teacher training here at Abbey Court. Eleanor is so excited to have her own class in September! In her spare time, Eleanor enjoys taking her dog for walks on the beach and reading new books.



Amy Budgen will be joining Abbey Court School in September as a teacher in class P6. Amy has worked in a mainstream school for four years, working in a Year 4 Class. She is excited about joining the Abbey Court team

and getting to know all the children and staff. Amy has a passion for the world and animals, having previously lead Science at her previous school. In her spare time, she enjoys exploring the local area with her dog, Fe, and seeing friends and family.

Emad Hussaín has joined FE3 as a Teaching Assistant. Emad has worked in three secondary schools prior to joining Abbey Court. He has lots of experience of working with pupils with ADHD and autism. Emadhas joined Abbey Court to challenge himself more and carry on making a difference to students, helping them reach their full maximum potential.

In his spare time, Emad enjoys some gardening and DIY, when he is not catching Pokémon!



Racheal Bharlat joined Abbey Court this term as Teaching Assistant in class P5. Racheal had previously worked as the on-duty County Courts Advocate, specializing in Housing Law. She is enjoying being part of the Abbey Court School team and having such a great team to work with in P5.



Daísy Tierney joined Abbey Court as a UQT and has just completed her Primary Education degree, where she undertook her third-year placement here at Abbey Court. Being here since November has shown her that working in SEND is her passion and something she wants for her future. Daisy is very excited to say she is now a teacher, starting with her very own class in September! In her spare time, she enjoys playing volleyball with her team, socialising and baking.

TERM DATES

LAST DAY OF TERM: -

Friday, 21st July 2023

Summer Break:-

Monday, 24th July 2023 to Thursday, 31st August 2023

Inset Days

Friday, 1st September 2023 Monday, 4th September 2023

CHILDREN RETURN TO SCHOOL:-

Tuesday, 5th Sepember 2023



we would like to wish them, "Good Luck!" in the next exciting chapter of their lives.

During their time at Abbey Court, they have left so many wonderfully awe inspiring memories with the adults who have taught and laughed alongside them over the years. It has been a pleasure to watch our FE3 leavers mature and grow into fine young adults.

We wish them all the very best for the future and hope they are all very happy with their new placements.













Megan Payne - Teaching Assistant based in Secondary - has moved to a school closer to her home. We thank her for all of her hard work, and supporting in the Office.

Wendy Donovan - Teaching Assistant based in Further Education, made the decision for a change of career, and we thank her for all her hard work over the years.

Karen Lee - Finance Officer - has moved 'up north' and is taking a well earned rest after 16 years at Abbey Court - thank you for all that you did!



ABBEY COURT NEEDS YOU!

We are on the hunt for Christmas jumpers! It's a jolly fundraising idea! Any old or unwanted Christmas jumpers/ t-shirts that no longer fit? Please show your Christmas spirit by donating anything you can that could be a Christmas hit.

We will be opening our Abbey Court Christmas Grotto selling those jumpers and t-shirts. All money raised will go towards school funds.

Many thanks for your support!

Race Night

Abbey Court School Trust

Friday 13th October 2023

Doors open and food delivered at 7pm

Abbey Court Primary Dept Cliffe Road ME2 3DL



SAVE THE DATE- TICKETS AVAILABLE TER SUMMER HOLIDAYS

Bring your own drink and nibbles Buying horses and betting available on the night Raffle

Abbey Court School Trust is a registered charity 1160511

Presented by......Simon Chapman



w.goracenights.co.uk

Play the Abbey Court School Trust Lottery

Cash prizes every month!

In aid of

Abbey Court School Trust

a application approximation enclosedi Sign up the Sign using the

Registered Charity Number 1160511







Abbey Court School Trust

ABBEY COURT SCHOOL TRUST MONTHLY LOTTERY DRAW APPLICATION FORM

The trustees continue to run a monthly lottery draw which is open to all parents, staff, friends and anyone else interested. The draw helps to raise money for the Trust while also providing entrants with the chance of winning in every month of the draw. The draws take place in school, at alternating sites, across 10 months of the year. There is no draw in July or August. The prizes are:-

- 1st prize -£40
- 2nd prize £20
- · 3rd prize £10

In the December draw, there is an additional prize of £100

The first draw for the 2023/24 academic year will take place in September 2023.

year. You may purchase as many ball entries as you wish. To do so, please complete this form and The cost per ball is £10 and purchased balls are placed in each of the 10 draws throughout the send, along with your payment, in to school or to the address below.

ADDRESS:

TEL NO: POST CODE:

EMAIL:

NUMBER OF BALL ENTRIES REQUIRED:..

STANDING ORDER (please contact your bank in branch or on-line to set PAYMENT BY:

Abbey Court School Trust 48198358 Account number: Account name:

(please tick)

60-21-02 Sort code: your name and ball number(s) (if known)

a CASH/CHEQUE (please enclose along with your application form)

DATE

SIGNED

School, Rede Court Road, Strood, Kent ME2 3SP or Email to finance@abbeycourt.medway.sch.uk Please return your completed application form and payment as soon as possible, to Abbey Court

You will be notified of your ball number(s) and the dates of the draws in due course.

Discraimer: If not enough entries are sold to make the draw viable, all monies will be returned and no pnzes awarded.

Could your child be entitled to a





Reception, Year 1 and Year 2

All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to a free school meal. Please apply online via Medway Council website - with this link, or just search on line 'Medway Council Free School Meals" -

https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200164/school_information/354/free_school_meals/3.

When applying you will be asked to provide the following information

- Your name
- Your date of birth
- Contact details
- Your National Insurance number
- Child's name
- · Child's date of birth
- School your child is attending or will be attending (Abbey Court School)



Free School Meals from Year 3

If you have children under 19 years old and in full-time education, they may be entitled to a free school meal if you get certain benefits (you will have to provide proof of benefit received), which you will find on the Medway.gov.uk website.

You must apply online (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 and Year 3 to FE3), in order for Abbey Court to receive confirmation that your child is entitled to a free school meal, otherwise if your child has a school meal you will be charged.

If you feel you are unable to apply online, please contact the school office who will be able to assist you.

Is your child entitled to FREE milk?



subsidinged pringe of arreand Every thild over the age of five is mittilled to milk at a



Registration the naw and you can pay attenuate away:

6.15 per terry

Every child under the age of five is entitled to FREE as hool milk.

school milk

Register your

child today!

subsidised

FREE and



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child for school Register your milk today.

Sign them up in a few clicks...



Go online and quickly register your child for school milk at

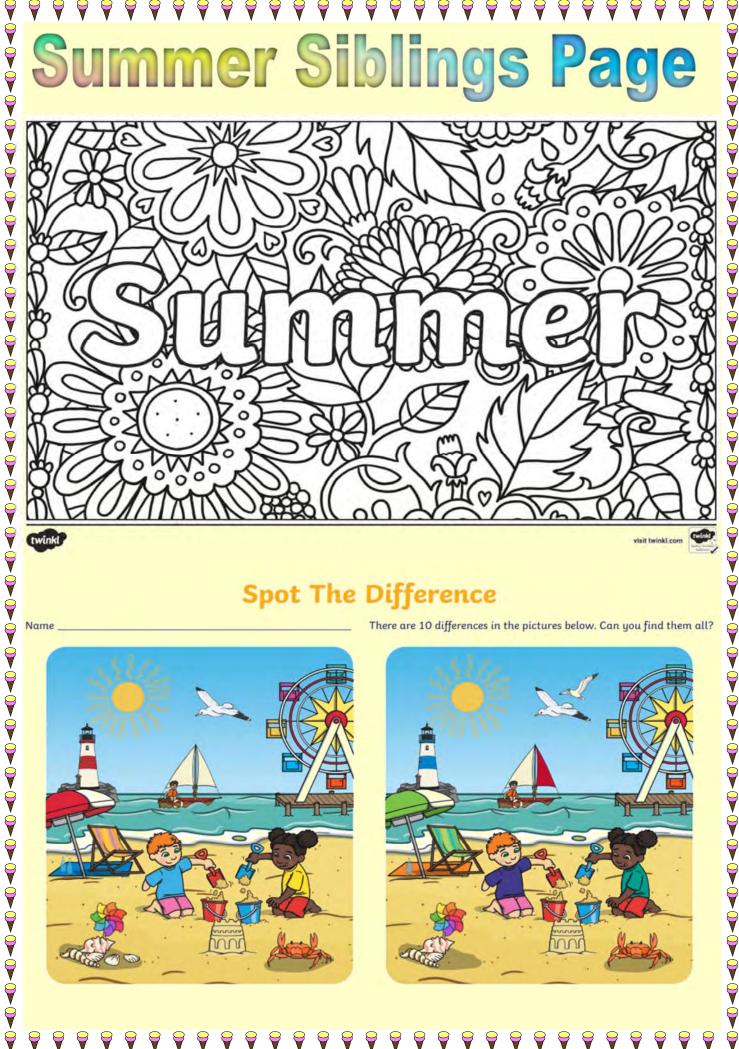


Need help? Contact our Customer Service team on 0000 321 3148 or Via mmail at





r Siblings



Spot The Difference

Name

There are 10 differences in the pictures below. Can you find them all?



