

Prospectus

ABBOTS CROSS PRIMARY SCHOOL



Our Vision Statement

Our vision is for Abbots Cross Primary School pupils to become aspirational achievers, resilient learners and caring contributors to a challenging world.



Mrs J Griffith MA, BA, PGCE,
PGDip(SEN), PQH(NI)

Welcome!

Dear Parent/ Guardian

Welcome to Abbots Cross Primary School and thank you for taking the time to get to know us. With an enrolment of around 320 students in a 14-class structure, Abbots Cross Primary is in a position to provide a high level of resources while at the same time pupils are known on a more personal level.

The happy, family-friendly nature of our school community is underpinned by an excellent pastoral programme. Staff members are trained to support children of all abilities: those children with special gifts and talents, those on the Autistic spectrum and those with specific learning needs such as dyslexia and dyspraxia. Our pupils are further supported by a fully qualified school counsellor and by participation in Equine Assisted Learning programmes.

Pupils at Abbots Cross Primary achieve outstanding results. In the academic year 2017-2018 **100% of our P7 pupils achieved their predicted level in Numeracy while 91% achieved their predicted level in Literacy.** Three of our pupils actually exceeded the level predicted for them in Literacy.

We want our school to be at the heart of the community and while it has a Christian ethos and history we welcome and want to learn from families from all cultures, creeds and backgrounds.

If you are in our catchment area, then we would love to have you join our school. Please feel free to call into the school or you can phone the office on 02890864171.

As Principal, my door is always open to parents wishing to discuss their child's progress or anything at all related to the school. I welcome and encourage you to be involved in our school family as this is the best way for our children to become "*aspirational achievers, resilient learners and caring contributors to a challenging world.*"

Mrs Joanne Griffith
Principal



What makes us unique?

- Fully qualified school-based health and wellbeing counsellor.
- Indoor Fit and Fun soft play area and ball pool.
- Parents' room especially equipped for parent meetings and activities.
- Individualised Transfer tutoring support.
- Dedicated Learning Support teacher and assistants providing literacy, numeracy and dyslexia support.
- A wide range of school clubs, including sport, music, art, gardening, homework help and breakfast club.



- Programmes to support pupils with dyslexia, dyscalculia or with English as a second language.
- A fully equipped ICT suite where every pupil has individual access to a workstation or iPad.
- A high standard of school grounds and facilities including a woodland area, rainbow garden and Eco greenhouse, outdoor classroom, friendship and quiet area.
- Two well equipped outdoor climbing and balance play areas with safety surfaces.
- We are currently developing a sensory area for children on the Autistic spectrum or with other sensory issues.
- An Equine Assisted Learning programme is provided which allows pupils to build confidence, face fears and discuss anxieties.

Pastoral Care

The Pastoral Care of children is central to our work. We provide a very warm and welcoming family atmosphere. This allows our pupils to feel happy, safe and secure in their learning environment whilst ensuring they feel valued and respected. As a result, our children are more likely to experience academic success and mature into responsible adults.

In addition to the Pastoral Care offered by our teachers and assistants, we have our own School Counsellor who can also support children and families when life gets tough.

Examples of the things our School Counsellor can offer support for include:

- Bereavement
- Changes in the family (e.g. divorce, illness, conflict)
- Friendship problems
- Bullying
- Worries about school work or moving to 'Big School'

If you think your child or your family would benefit from counselling, please speak to your child's teacher.

We are also one of a very small number of schools who have access to Equine Assisted Learning. This work is carried out in cooperation with Glenview Farm. Our pupils benefit from activities there which support the following areas:

- Confidence building
- Transition to Post Primary school
- Dealing with trauma
- Self-awareness and self esteem

Safeguarding Children

All staff at Abbots Cross Primary are fully trained in child protection. We have three designated teachers who coordinate child protection.

For more information, please see our Safeguarding Policy which reflects current guidance from the Department of Education.



The teachers and classroom assistants know the children and their families very well and the support for each child and family is central to the work of the school; a nurturing environment has been created by the staff.

ETI

The School Day

Breakfast club
8:00am-8:40am

Supervisors on duty in playgrounds
8:30am

School begins
8:40am

Break
10:30am – 10:45am

Lunch
12:00noon – 1:00pm

End of Day Arrangements

Primary 1 and Primary 2:
Monday – Friday 2pm finish

Primary 3:
Monday and Tuesday 3pm finish
Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 2pm finish

Primary 4, 5, 6 and 7:
Monday – Thursday 3.00pm finish
Friday 2pm finish

Break

At Abbots Cross Primary School we actively encourage pupils to eat healthily and to engage in adequate amounts of exercise. In light of this, all children should bring fruit or vegetables for their snack each day. Milk is also available daily and is paid for in advance each half-term. For more information, you can view our Healthy Eating Policy on the school website.

Lunch

During the school lunch break, teachers and lunch time supervisors work together to create a happy, sociable dining environment to encourage the development of good table manners.

The canteen provides a delicious, nutritious dinner for pupils each day. You can view the menu on our school website and Facebook page. The cost of meals is set by the Education Authority. Those children entitled to Free School Meals will not be charged. If you would like to apply for Free School Meals, you can do so by contacting the Education Authority on: 028 82 411 411 or by downloading the form from the Education Authority website.

Alternatively, your child can bring a packed lunch to school. We encourage parents to support the school's Healthy Eating Policy by providing a healthy, balanced pack lunch.

If your child has any allergies or dietary requirements it is very important that you notify the class teacher or school office. All children have outdoor playtime when they can engage in a range of games and activities. We have a 'Playground Pals' scheme in place where Primary Seven pupils assist supervisors in organising activities for our pupils over their lunchtime.



School Uniform

At Abbots Cross Primary we consider the wearing of school uniform to be very important. We believe wearing a uniform provides our children with a sense of identity and encourages them to take pride in their appearance. It is also more cost effective for parents than if children were to wear their own clothes every day.

Boys

- Yellow School Polo Shirt with logo or white shirt and tie
- School Sweatshirt
- Grey or black trousers
- Grey socks
- Black shoes
- optional school coat
- can wear shorts in term three

Girls

- Yellow School Polo Shirt with logo or white shirt and tie
- School Sweatshirt
- Grey skirt or trousers
- White socks/grey tights
- Black shoes
- optional school coat
- can wear summer dress in term three

'Their behaviour during the inspection was exemplary. The children are proud of their school'.

ETI FEB 2014

PE Uniform

Boys and Girls

P1-P2

- Black gym shoes

These are to be sent into school in September so the children can simply change into them for lessons.

P3

- Black or grey shorts or tracksuit bottoms
- White T-shirt
- Black gym shoes

Children should come to school wearing these under their usual school uniform on the day of their PE lesson. Black gym shoes are to be sent into school in September so the children can simply change into them for lessons.

P4-P7

- Black or grey shorts or tracksuit bottoms
- White T-shirt
- Black gym shoes
- Trainers

Children will change into their PE uniform in school.

*****Please label all items of clothing with your child's name*****

Jewellery

Pupils may wear a watch and one pair of small, plain stud earrings. The wearing of other items of jewellery is not permitted for either boys or girls.



Curriculum

It is the aim of Abbots Cross Primary School that all pupils will receive a broad and balanced curriculum, promoting the personal, social, emotional, spiritual and academic development of our children. We acknowledge that children learn in many different ways and so we ensure we provide opportunities for our pupils to learn through a range of methods.

Our curriculum is driven by this vision.
For further details on curriculum content please visit www.ccea.org.uk

Religious Education

We offer a programme of non-denominational Religious Education to all pupils. Religious Education is provided within class and through the two assemblies we have each week. Assemblies are led either by members of staff, ministers from the local community, guest speakers or our own classes.

We also hold annual events of celebration and reflection which parents and members of the wider community are encouraged to attend. These include our Harvest Service, Christmas Carol Service, Christmas Concerts and Easter Assembly.

There is also a weekly Scripture Union which meets every Wednesday at lunch time. Pupils can be withdrawn from Religious Education through consultation with the Principal.

Shared Education

At Abbots Cross we are proud to offer our pupils Shared Education experiences through the Peace IV Programme.

Our partner school for the programme is Cliftonville Integrated Primary School. Together, we create and deliver fun, stimulating lessons to enhance the Numeracy, Literacy and STEM knowledge and skills of our pupils. In addition to this, the programme allows our children to develop their confidence, ability to cooperate as well as their awareness of personal similarities and differences and how these can be celebrated.

www.abbotscrossps.co.uk



ICT

Information and Communication Technology is a powerful tool in the teaching of children. It empowers pupils, develops their self-esteem and promotes positive attitudes to learning.

At Abbots Cross, our pupils have access to a wide range of ICT resources to enhance their learning experience including:

- A fully equipped ICT suite
- A full class set of iPads
- Interactive whiteboards in every classroom
- Bee-Bots

Such resources are used to provide pupils with the opportunity to transfer knowledge, understanding and skills across the curriculum in a variety of contexts. These include:

- Explore digital sources of information, investigate and solve problems
- Express creative ideas using multimedia presentation
- Exchange work and collaborate online
- Evaluate and reflect on processes and outcomes for improvement
- Exhibit, manage and showcase their learning

Online Safety

We live in an increasingly digital world which poses risks for any child. We aim to equip our pupils with the skills and knowledge they need to remain safe when online.

We regard educating children about online safety as extremely important. We do so through our teaching of ICT and participating in initiatives organised by external bodies such as the PSNI.



Enriching the Curriculum

Extra Curricular activities are an important part of school life at Abbots Cross and our programme of activities is continually evolving to meet the needs and requests of our parents and children. The wide range of clubs on offer to our pupils helps them to develop socially and emotionally whilst having fun and learning new skills.

The following after school activities are provided for our pupils throughout the school year:

- Football
- Hockey
- Netball
- Multi-sport
- Modern Dance
- Irish Dance
- Cycling Proficiency
- Choir
- Scripture Union
- Art and Design
- Cookery
- Gardening
- Board games
- Coole Kids (Homework club)



Eco Council

Our Eco Council is made up of members from P5-P7. The council meet once a month and promote recycling, conserving energy, biodiversity as well as the need for litter to be disposed of appropriately. As a reward for all of our hard work, the school have recently been awarded the prestigious Green Flag for the first time.



School Council

At Abbots Cross Primary School we are very proud to have a dedicated and hardworking School Council.

Each year we conduct an exciting election campaign process for P5-P7. The children create posters, write speeches and persuade pupils to vote for them. Finally, each class conducts a secret ballot to elect three worthy representatives from their year group.



Outdoor Learning

Outdoor Learning plays an important role within the education offered at the School.

By utilising the natural environment and providing some inspiring places for outdoor work, we have been able to provide unique and meaningful learning opportunities for the children.

Our school grounds boast:

- Two garden areas
- A meadow
- An orchard
- Woodland trails
- A greenhouse
- A compost area

Below are some examples of the fun learning activities that take place in the Outdoors:

'Super Science'

Experiments conducted in the outside area such as erupting volcanoes or rocket launching. There are also many seasonal activities organised.

'Habitats'

Exploring the Bug Hotel and spotting mini-beasts

'Victorians'

Children take part in Victorian based lessons, dressed in period costumes

Art activities

Making autumn baskets, making grass caterpillars, making puppets and performing a puppet show

Planting activities

Planting bulbs, seeds and beans and monitoring growth in diaries

Numeracy

Activities such length and capacity tasks, data handling, tally charts

Literacy

Using the sights and sounds of the environment as a stimulus for creative writing



Additional Needs

At Abbots Cross Primary School we believe it is of the utmost importance that all children are able to access a broad and balanced curriculum and that they achieve to their potential. In light of this, we carefully identify children who require specialised teaching and provide for their unique learning needs.

Specialised learning programmes are created for children with dyslexia, ASD and other sensory issues as well as children for whom English is not their home language.

Within school, we have our Learning Support teacher and a school based SEN assistants deliver the following programmes:

- Catch-up Numeracy
- Toe by Toe
- TTS Numeracy Support Programme
- Accelerated reading
- Reading Partners
- Numicon
- Izak9

If at any point you feel your child is finding school work difficult please talk to your child's class teacher.

'The teaching and support staff use well the individual education plans and employ a range of appropriate strategies to support the children'.

ETI

Educational Visits

Educational visits provide many opportunities to inspire and stimulate children. Real world experiences help to put learning in context for pupils so they can understand the purpose and significance of the concepts and topics they have been exploring.

Places visited include:

- Ulster Museum
- W5
- Crumlin Road Jail
- Tayto Factory
- Carrickfergus Castle
- Colin Glen Forest Park
- Ark Farm
- Viking Experience
- World of Owls

Each year, children in Primary Seven have the opportunity to go on a residential trip to an outdoor centre. They are able to take part in a wide range of exciting activities including banana boating, rock climbing, orienteering and a high ropes course.

Such trips have great benefits for our pupils both educationally and socially.

photo from the school trip

Home School Links

At Abbots Cross Primary, we see learning as a partnership between school and home. We firmly believe a strong link is vitally important for the success of children at school. In light of this, we operate an open door policy which means parents can come and speak to teachers and the Principal at any time that is mutually convenient.

Our parents are informed of all that is happening in school through the school website, school Facebook page, notes home, Class Dojo and Seesaw.

We value and seek the opinion of parents and guardians and use this information to meet the individual needs of our pupils and their families.

Parent's expectations of the School:

- Child to be valued and respected as an individual in a safe, stimulating and caring environment
- Teaching and learning planned and delivered in a way that allows all pupils to be confident, motivated and challenged appropriately
- To provide channels for communication to express views and discuss school issues
- Provide parents and guardians with early warnings of problems with work, relationships or discipline

School's expectations of parents and guardians:

- Parents to promote school as a positive and happy experience
- Children to attend regularly and punctually every day
- Parents to attend meetings to discuss the curriculum, pupil progress and attainment
- Parents to share with the teacher or Principal any problems or difficulties that may affect the child's progress, happiness or behaviour

'The children are developing as independent learners; they solve problems and use their thinking skills through their connected learning tasks'.

ETI

Homework

We believe homework provides children with an opportunity to practise and revise the work they have completed in school. It provides an insight for you as a parent into what your child has been learning whilst encouraging the development of self-discipline and independence in our pupils. Our full Homework Policy is available on request.



quote from child



Assessing and Reporting Progress

The monitoring and assessment of an individual child's progress is an integral part of the planning, learning and teaching process at Abbots Cross Primary.

Pupils are continually monitored to assess their progress and to celebrate achievement. Teachers use a variety of methods to do so including observations, marking of work and assessment tasks. Pupils are given clear feedback on the quality of their work and how they can improve further. Pupils are also encouraged to evaluate their own work as well as that of their peers.

Standardised assessments are carried out during the Autumn and Summer terms. They provide teachers and parents with a better understanding of a child's academic development compared with a large sample of other children.

Parent/Teacher meetings

In September, parents are invited to meet with their class teacher. The teacher will outline how the areas of the curriculum will be covered, classroom routines and expectations with regard to classwork and homework.

Meetings to discuss the progress of individual pupils are arranged in October and February each year. The school operates an open door policy and it is possible to make an appointment to see your child's class teacher at any time of the year.

Written reports

A written report is issued to parents in June.

PTA

The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is a group of parents who work closely with the school to provide our children with a wide range of stimulating events and experiences.

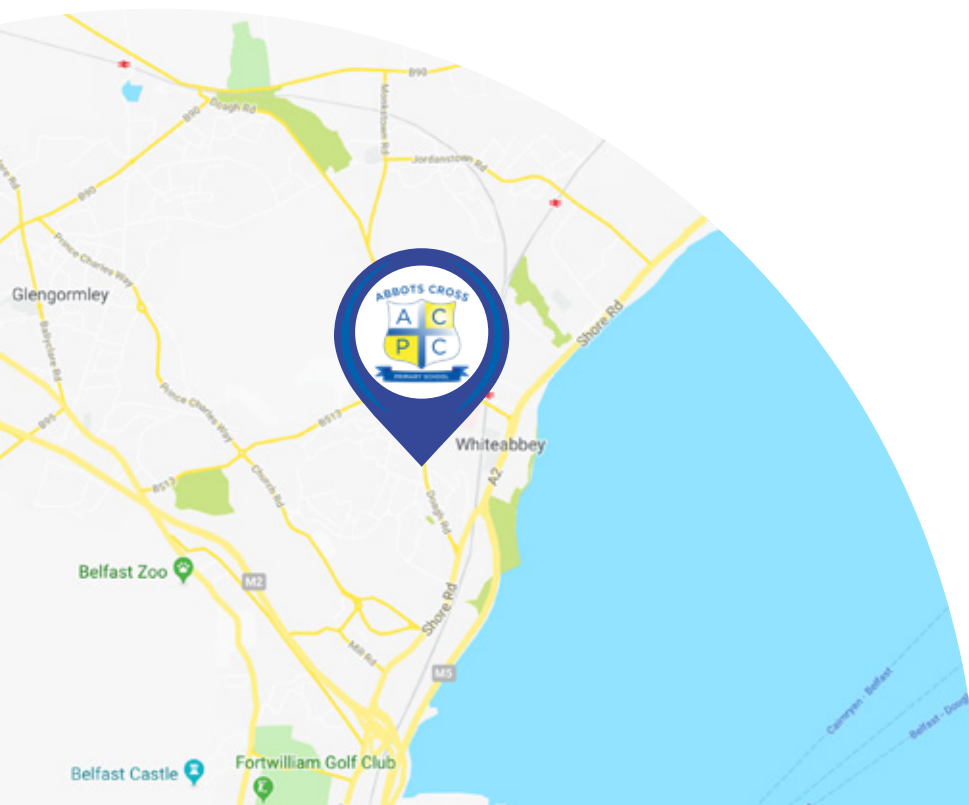
They organise fundraising events both for charity and to provide resources for use by our children in school. In the past few years they have presented the school with play equipment and reading scheme materials.

PTA volunteers also give of their time in school to help in the library and book room, with administration tasks, to go on school trips and with ICT support. In addition, they provide refreshments at school events such as class assemblies, curricular events, Sports Day and parents meetings.

Abbots Cross PTA members have fun together and have formed good supportive friendships.



'To be the best I can'



Our Address:

86 Doagh Road
Newtownabbey
Co. Antrim
BT37 9QW

Contact us:

028 9086 4171