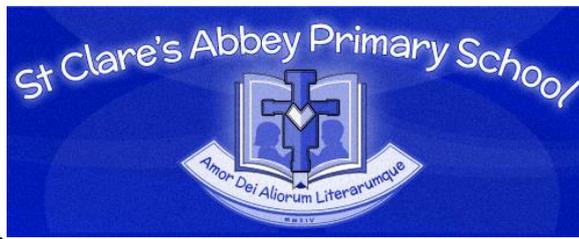


St Clare's Abbey Primary School
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12/10/15

Dear Parents,

As we reach the end of the sixth week of the school year I write to you about a few important matters:

Settling in: The children are settling very well and that is due to the phenomenal effort of our staff and the support that we are receiving from you, our parents so we thank you sincerely for that. I would love you to be able to see our children in their classrooms. There is a lovely, happy, industrious mood and everyone seems to be excited to be part of this adventure that we find ourselves in. Your children will have great stories to tell in the years to come. Any small issues we have had, and inevitably there have been some, have been worked out in a gentle and sensible manner and we will continue to work with you on this. Thank you so much, we needed you to play a key role this year and you certainly have so far, we couldn't have got to this stage in one piece, without your sensible backing.

Parents' questionnaire: Thank you to all those parents who responded to our on-line questionnaire relating to plans for future parental sessions. Your thoughts and suggestions were very useful and we will be using them as we move forward with our school. We want to accommodate you so that we can develop very strong home/school links.

Whilst the response to our management of the amalgamation has been overwhelmingly supportive, a few concerns were raised which I would like to 'shine a little light on':

1. A few parents felt that the joining of the pupils into boy/girl classes would have been better had we waited until we moved into the new build. This was an option that we had considered but could not have implemented as it would have meant having to employ an extra teacher for the first part of the year, which the budget did not allow, and then mixing the children into new classes mid-year. We firmly believe that this would have been very disruptive to the children's education as they would have had to get used to the dynamics of a new building, a new class and a new teacher in January, too much all at once. As it stands they will move forward as well established classes experiencing the minimum amount of disruption to their learning.
2. Some parents are concerned that they are no longer able to walk their child to his/her class on the Abbey site. I ask for understanding in this matter. When we move to our new site classes will be collected by their teacher from an external point and brought to their classroom. All new schools are designed in this way. As such we felt that it was better to start the year as we mean to go on. Whilst this may seem harsh, teachers were losing valuable teaching time each morning, as all the snatched conversations with parents really add up and they were also worried about supervision of their class whilst they were preoccupied. The teachers collect their classes at 8.45 and can have a quick word with a parent at that time. If a longer conversation is required, our teachers are very accommodating and will happily arrange a time for a chat if requested via a note or telephone call.

FAST Programme (Family and School Together): Miss O Shea is co-ordinating this programme sponsored by 'Save The Children', throughout term one. It promotes school and families working together to enhance education. We invite you to an information session on Tuesday 13th Oct@ 9am

Build Update: Our new build is proceeding very well and promises to be truly fabulous. The builders are working so hard and are still on target for a January handover. We are at the stage where we are choosing colour schemes and furniture for the classrooms, it is very exciting!!!! We are so lucky.

Holidays: Whilst it is fully anticipated that we will get the keys in January, I have been advised to hold back on clarifying the school holidays from January onwards for another short while. I hope that you understand and in the meantime please find the dates for the remainder of term 1.

Wednesday 21st October: Early finish@ 12.45pm to facilitate Parent Teacher Meetings.

Halloween break : Wednesday 28th – Friday 30th, with school reopening on Monday 2nd November.

Staff training day : Monday 23rd November

Staff training day: Tuesday 8th December

Christmas holidays : Commence at 12pm on Tuesday 22nd December. The re-opening date will be confirmed in November.

Sacramental dates:

First Confession = 26th November @7.30pm in Cathedral

First Holy Communion = 16th April @11.30 am in Cathedral

Confirmation = 23rd April @ 11.30 am in Cathedral.

Life in St Clare's Abbey is busy beyond belief, but we all agree that we have made a wonderful start to the year. We will continue to work hard to ensure that your children feel safe and happy in our care and that they engage in good solid work to help us achieve our school aims:

Please feel free to contact our deeply committed teachers, Mr Sweeney or myself if you have any queries,

I remain yours in partnership,

Mrs Monaghan

Principal

