

**THE ABBEY SCHOOL
READING**



Headmistress: Mrs Barbara Stanley BA (Hons), PGCE, FRGS

The Abbey Junior School

We hope that the following gives you useful information about The Abbey Junior School.

In essence, we are and have:

- Happy, motivated, well behaved and 'sparky' girls of above average ability who seek challenges and love to learn
- Experienced, committed and motivated staff who are well qualified and excellent practitioners
- A commitment to professional development for all staff
- A caring and values-led environment where we aim to achieve each girl's potential
- A tradition of 'aiming high' and expanding horizons through a very wide range of curricular and extra-curricular activities
- Excellent resources and buildings, including a recent £3 million build and plans for the future
- Supportive Governors and Headmistress, who wish to continue the current culture of productive innovation
- The largest independent and the only selective Junior School in the area

The Abbey School is an academically selective girls' school for girls from Nursery to Upper Sixth. It prides itself at every stage on its high standards in all areas of pastoral care, the curriculum and beyond. As part of the whole Abbey School, the Junior School is able to enjoy the benefits of this much larger community for resources and support. The Junior School, currently educating 345 girls from 3-11, is a self-contained unit on its own site, about a quarter of a mile from the Senior School. It is housed in two Victorian houses, one of which has a large modern extension as well as a further new building, opened in October 2006. Extensive building work being undertaken at present at the Senior School will bring facilities there up to the high standards already in place at the Junior School.

The Early Years Centre (3-5 years) is based in Knell House and comprises a Nursery Unit and three Reception classes. There is a very good staff : pupil ratio with both teachers and nursery nurses. Parents appreciate the warm and nurturing atmosphere which accompanies the excellent educational experience. The girls are able to play outside in the secure garden and make use of their outdoor classroom. They follow the Early Learning Goals which they usually complete early in the Reception year. A recent Ofsted inspection gave The Early Years Centre an excellent report.

The values-led education with high expectations and a strong pastoral emphasis continues when the girls move across the road to the larger Junior School site. We set great store by community spirit and aim to set a positive spiritual and moral tone with a Christian emphasis but accessible to children of all faiths or none. Morning assembly is an essential, but by no



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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The Abbey School exists to educate academically able girls

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means the only, vehicle for this and all staff continue the values-based education in the form room and around the school.

Key Stage 1 and the Lower Juniors have their form rooms in Kensington House. This building includes a very well equipped library with networked workstations, purpose-built Science and DT laboratories, a fully networked ICT suite, an art room, a multi-purpose hall with stage and greenroom and a recently refurbished and extended dining room. Throughout the Junior School, ICT is well resourced and excellently supported by a very efficient Network Management Team.

A significant influx of pupils at Year 5 and 6 enables us to split into three classes in each year group, though this sometimes happens earlier when demand for places is particularly high. A £3m new building, Somerleaze House, was opened in 2006 for the Upper Juniors, housing the Upper II (Year 5) and Lower III (Year 6). This attractive and environmentally friendly building contains six spacious form rooms, a music wing including a suite of practice rooms, a studio for dance and drama and other teaching areas. Children in all year groups benefit from the specialist facilities in both Somerleaze and Kensington Houses.

All form staff take full responsibility for the planning and delivery of the curriculum for their form, in liaison with the parallel form teacher/s and specialist staff. In addition, form staff take on the leadership of a curriculum or other area of school life and are fully assisted by support staff. From an early age, children experience specialist teaching in Science, ICT, French, Music and PE. The school has a particularly strong tradition in Music, Drama and PE (Sportsmark and Activemark Gold), and is committed to producing work of the highest standard in these areas, as in Art and Design. All classrooms are fully networked with computers and data projectors. All staff contribute to the wide-ranging extra-curricular programme.

The Abbey has a very strong academic record and believes that it is vital to recognise the importance of the whole child. The School Council and Eco-schools Council meet regularly. The school has achieved The Healthy Schools Award and has recently developed an ecological garden. The Golden Rules emphasize the positive attitude to behaviour throughout the school, and girls are rewarded for keeping these rules. Awards are given for commitment, effort and good behaviour, as well as achievement, to create a positive environment for work and play. In Circle Time, the girls' needs for emotional literacy are addressed. The residential visit programme encourages personal development. The school has a diverse charity programme and enjoys many links with the local community.

As a school we feel that it is important to involve parents in their daughters' education. Regular curriculum meetings, parents' evenings, productions, Open Days and other activities are held and staff are fully involved in these events. There are before and after school care facilities for girls together with high quality holiday provision. In addition, a thriving Parent Association organises a variety of events.

The Abbey Junior School is a lively and vibrant community where staff and pupils alike enjoy their work and thrive. We aim to enable our girls to fulfil their all-round potential and to begin a journey of lifelong learning and responsible citizenship.