Abbeydale VET NURSE TRAINING

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www.vetnursetraining.co.uk

Staying in touch



Celebrating Abbeydale's Ofsted Success

We are delighted to share the fantastic outcome of our recent Ofsted inspection, which recognises Abbeydale Vetlink Veterinary Training as delivering the Expected Standard overall, with a Strong Standard for Achievement and safeguarding judged as Met. This is an achievement that everyone across the Abbeydale community should be incredibly proud of.

While "Expected Standard" may sound modest at first glance, it is important to understand what this actually means. Under Ofsted's renewed inspection framework, the Expected Standard represents a high benchmark of quality, confirming that a provider is meeting the professional, statutory and educational standards expected across the sector. It demonstrates that learners receive a quality education, are well supported, and are being prepared effectively for successful careers.



For Abbeydale, this recognition reflects the dedication, professionalism and expertise of our tutors, clinical coaches, employers and apprentices. Ofsted highlighted our highly inclusive learning environment, strong learner support, expert teaching staff and positive culture where apprentices feel safe, valued and respected.

Achievement Rated as Strong Standard

The standout result from the inspection was our judgement of Strong Standard for Achievement. Ofsted reserves this judgement for providers where learners are achieving particularly well and where outcomes go beyond what is typically expected. Ofsted noted that apprentices achieve very highly, with achievement rates consistently above national averages and a very high proportion passing their examinations at the first attempt.

This is especially significant for our Veterinary Nursing (VN) and Veterinary Nursing Assistant (VNA) apprenticeship programmes. Inspectors recognised that our apprentices develop professional skills beyond the requirements of their apprenticeship and rapidly become valued members of veterinary teams.

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Celebrating Abbeydale's Ofsted Success

The inspection highlighted that apprentices produce written work of an extremely high standard, develop advanced veterinary nursing skills, contribute to patient care and welfare plans, and progress successfully into veterinary careers. Almost all apprentices remain in veterinary roles after completing their apprenticeship, with many continuing their professional development.

What This Means for Abbeydale

This report reinforces what we already know: Abbeydale is helping to shape the future of the veterinary profession. Our strong achievement outcomes demonstrate that the combination of expert teaching, workplace coaching, individualised support and industry partnership is delivering exceptional results for learners and employers alike.

We are particularly proud that Ofsted recognised our commitment to supporting apprentices with individual learning needs, our close collaboration with employers, and our shared ambition to raise professional standards across the veterinary industry.

As we celebrate this success, we remain committed to continuous improvement. The report provides a strong foundation on which to build, while recognising that our apprentices already achieve outcomes that place Abbeydale among the strongest performers in the sector.

A huge thank you to our apprentices, employers, clinical coaches and staff. This achievement belongs to all of us and reflects the passion, expertise and dedication that make Abbeydale such a special learning community.

Applications Now Open for January 2027 Intake

Abbeydale Vet Nurse Training is delighted to announce that applications are now open for our January 2027 cohorts:

- **Level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing**
- **Level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing- online classes**

Whether you're beginning your journey into veterinary nursing or taking the next step toward becoming an RVN, our programmes offer high-quality training, expert support, and a welcoming learning community.

How to Apply
Applications can be submitted online through our website www.vetnursetraining.co.uk

A Brilliant Start to Our New Preceptorship Programme

July marked an exciting milestone at Abbeydale as we officially launched our brand-new Preceptorship Programme — something our team has been eagerly preparing behind the scenes.

Designed with newly qualified RVNs in mind, the programme offers structured, confidence-building CPD throughout the year. But just as importantly, everyone is welcome.

Whether you're returning to practice after a break, exploring a new area of nursing, or simply refreshing your knowledge, our 12-month bespoke programme aims to give you a supportive, accessible way to keep learning.

A Mix of Online and In-Person Learning
Each month features either a face-to-face session at Abbeydale or a live online talk, giving you flexibility to learn in a way that suits your schedule.

July: Small Mammal Nursing with Emma Hickey RVN APVN

We were delighted to welcome Emma on 16 July for a fantastic session on small mammal nursing. Emma delivered an in-depth and practical exploration of rabbit and guinea pig husbandry, considerations for their time in practice, anaesthesia monitoring, post-operative care, and so much more.

The atmosphere was relaxed and interactive, with plenty of opportunities for questions and discussion. It was wonderful to see both current and past Abbeydale students attending and sharing their own experiences — a real reminder of the supportive community we're proud to foster.



Upcoming CPD Events: Join Us This September

We are delighted to be welcoming Jenny Gribble RVN CertVN ECC to Abbeydale on **9 September at 6pm** for the next session in our preceptorship programme.

Jenny will be discussing lines, drains and stomas in the critical patient, providing practical insights and guidance on managing these important aspects of critical care nursing. Whether you are newly qualified or looking to refresh your knowledge, this promises to be an engaging and informative evening.



Jenny will be the third speaker in our current preceptorship programme.

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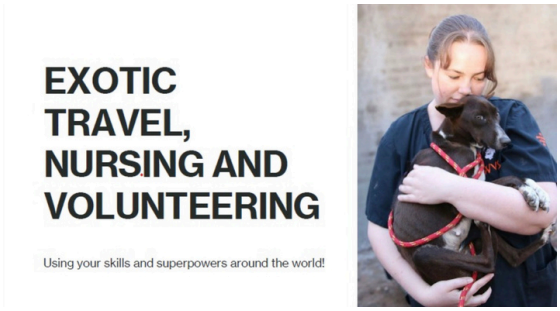
More recently, Lucy Gooding RVN hosted a live Zoom session in August, sharing her experiences of volunteering both in the UK and overseas and discussing how she has utilised her RVN skills throughout her travels.



Ready to Reserve Your Spot?

You can book your place by calling 01600 737040 or emailing info@vetnursetraining.co.uk

Our preceptorship sessions take place monthly, either face-to-face at Abbeydale or live via Zoom, providing attendees with opportunities not only to learn from experienced speakers but also to ask questions, share experiences and network with fellow veterinary nurses.

Looking ahead, we are pleased to announce that Emma Hickey RVN APVN will be returning in October, this time to present a session on wildlife nursing. Keep an eye on our social media channels and website for further details.

While the programme was originally designed to support newly qualified RVNs, we are proud to welcome nurses at all stages of their careers. If you are a qualified veterinary nurse interested in attending one of our sessions, we would love to hear from you.

CPD Pricing
£10 per session for Abbeydale alumni
£100 for the full 12-month preceptorship programme, including a CPD certificate

Student Aspiration Award 2026

Congratulations to Chelsea, this year's deserving recipient of the Gemma Brown Student Aspiration Memorial Award.

Chelsea's journey has been marked by significant personal and academic challenges. Despite these obstacles, she has shown exceptional resilience, professionalism, and determination throughout her course.



Always arriving with a smile and a positive attitude, Chelsea has worked tirelessly to complete her qualification and has been an inspiration to both staff and fellow students. Her perseverance and commitment to achieving her goals make her a truly worthy winner of this award.

We are incredibly proud of everything Chelsea has achieved and since being awardied this Chelseas has also passed her OSCEs. 🎉👏

Meet Kirstie: A Passion for Nursing, Teaching and Cats



Meet Kirstie Sherman, one of our DipVN tutors. Balancing a career in practice, teaching the next generation of veterinary nurses at Abbeydale, and family life, Kirstie brings a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to everything she does.

What is your favourite animal, and why?
I honestly love all creatures great and small, but my favourite animals are cats. Cats are clever, sassy and affectionate on their own terms! I feel that no home is complete without a cat. They require intelligence, understanding and patience to nurse. You either have it or you don't with cats.....and I love that about them!

How did you first become interested in Veterinary Nursing?
Very cliché but I always wanted to work with animals, and growing up, spent my summer holidays at the local stables and smallholding looking after a variety of animals. I wouldn't have wanted to be doing anything else. After A levels, I was steered towards university (before the veterinary nursing degree was introduced) with no real career's guidance. After watching the Animal Hospital documentary on the tv, I was inspired by the role of the Veterinary Nurse and after doing my own research, sent away to the BVNA who sent me a paperback careers booklet. That was it, this was what I was going to do! After writing letters to all the practices in the area using the yellow pages, I was invited to an interview, and my university application was withdrawn. Two weeks later I started my new position at student veterinary nurse within a veterinary hospital and training practice. There was no looking back from there....

What is your journey to Abbeydale?
This summer marks 30 years in clinical practice, and I credit my longevity to the fantastic teams and practices that have supported me throughout my career. I've worked mainly in hospital practice, with roles in referral nursing, locum work and team management, but I've always loved the variety of GP hospital nursing and simply being there when patients need us most.
Today, I work as a clinical nurse, Training Practice Principal and member of the nurse management team. Supporting and mentoring student nurses as they grow into confident RVNs is one of the most rewarding parts of my role. It also complements my work as a VN Tutor at Abbeydale, where I enjoy discussing students' experiences in practice and sharing cases that help bring the theory to life.

What is your favourite snack during a busy day in practice?
I am usually accompanied on shift with.....a bag of Squahies, and a combination of caffeinated drinks. My colleagues will refer to my emotional support beverages in the form of a flask, can and a water bottle (I am sure that Abbeydale students will now start to recognise this too). Obviously, the secret to a long and happy veterinary nursing career appears to be sweets and caffeine – not much of a role model here!

What advice would you give to someone dreaming of becoming a vet nurse?

Fundamentally, I would say you must do your research into the role of the veterinary nurse and know that you are getting into before anything else! Be relentless and determined to succeed – grit and a stubborn streak will assist you nicely! Volunteer lots and be pro-active in finding your opportunity.
Work hard, always genuinely do your best and have a big heart.....don't lose sight of what you are doing and why.

