

Abacus Primary School

Newsletter 522 15/3/24



8-17 March
British
Science
Week
2024

We've had a great week taking part in a number of Science activities including Chromatography, DNA bracelets, fire triangles, PH painting, investigating, handshake hazard and fossils and rocks to celebrate British Science Week.

Thank you to the volunteers from the Royal Society of Chemistry; Sarah Phillips, Alan Osbourne, Edmund King, Colin Smith, Jill Readings, Bharat Odeda, Lyn Mathers and to Ginny Hall from Essex Rock and Mineral Society and lastly thank you to Gareth Girling from Wellcome Sanger Institute. The children have enjoyed learning about famous Scientists throughout the week.



Next week we are on Week 3 of our revised menu.
Which you can view on our website:

<https://www.abacusprimaryschool.co.uk/school-meals>



Keep an eye on the website for more photos.



We love to read!



Well done Bow, Ella-Rose, George, Frankie, Freya and Liv. You put the biggest smiles on our resident friends faces on Monday afternoon at book club. What a pleasure it was to share the experience with you.



**RED
NOSE
DAY**

15 March

Thank you to everyone who has made a donation to the Red Nose Day charity via ParentPay. At the time of writing this newsletter we had raised over £200.

LET'S CELEBRATE!



Wow, so many achievements outside of school to celebrate this week!

WELL DONE!

Netball Festival

On the 14th March 2024, we took 2 teams to a Wickford Netball Festival which took place at William De Ferrers School in South Woodham. They got to play 6 games against other Wickford Schools using the High 5 Netball game rules. This can be very confusing as you have to rotate your position each game.

Our A team (back row of photo) were members of our netball club who train after school on Wednesdays. We also had our B team (front row) which was made up of Year 5 children who have been learning the game in their PE lessons.

Abacus A had some very close games with lots of goals scored and came 2nd overall.

Abacus B came 7th but it was really good to see how the children's confidence grew over the festival being that this was their first experience of playing competitively. They have all said they want to continue playing netball and are looking forward to a second festival in the Summer Term.



We have an enormous amount of lost property in the foyer, please check here if you are missing anything. Any items unclaimed by the Easter holidays will be donated to the nearly new sale.



Our Curriculum



<p>Early Years Foundation Stage</p>	<p>Foundation staff do love a themed week! Science week has involved lots of investigations, experiments and the use of pipettes! Ask us what our favourite experiment was! We have also been investigating ways to make 7, can we tell you? Lots of work on our Curly Caterpillar letters and enjoying PE with Mr Adams</p>
<p>Year 1</p>	<p>Science Week! What a great time we had in our Science workshop finding out about alkaline and acids. We also learnt about the computer scientist Tim Berners Lee. Ask us why he is famous. In another Science lesson we looked at facts about mammals. In Maths we learnt about capacity and volume. Ask us what the difference is. In PSHE we learnt where money comes from and discovered that you have to work to earn it! Art was also lots of fun - who would have thought shaping paper could be so creative.</p>
<p>Year 2</p>	<p>Year 2 have had so much fun during 'Science Week' this week. We have made butter out of cream and enjoyed it on scones with jam and whipped cream! We have learned all about the fire triangle with two Chemistry visitors and now know all about how fire has to have oxygen, fuel and heat to burn. We have been reading 'George's Marvellous Medicine' and loved listening to all the crazy ingredients George found for Grandma, and we have been revising our knowledge of the continents and oceans of the world too. We have also been writing our own non-chronological reports about the amazing Greta Thunberg, and have talked about how we can make little changes to help save the planet like walking instead of taking the car on short journeys, turning off the lights and making sure we always recycle when we can.</p>
<p>Year 3</p>	<p>Year 3 have had a busy week! As it is Science week, we enjoyed a workshop where we had the chance to look at different fossils, shark teeth and lots of different types of rocks. We have also been learning about light and dark in Science and how we can ensure we are visible and safe when riding a bike or walking the dog. We have written our own invention of an adventure story in English. In Maths, we have moved onto measuring in grams and kilograms. We have been practising our performance (please keep practising those lines!)</p>
<p>Year 4</p>	<p>Busy, busy, busy...Science week has been so much fun! We have been continuing our own topic of Electricity, experimenting with insulators and conductors. We found out that metal is a really good conductor, but wood is not. On Wednesday we had a visitor in that talked to us about DNA and what it is. Ask your child about it and what they have learnt. We looked at the different DNA strands of different living things and made our own DNA bracelets. We then researched about a famous British inventor, Alexander Graham Bell and created our own research booklets about everything we found out about him. Do you know what he invented? This week we have come to an end of The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane. We have all really enjoyed the story and the ending was such a surprise! The story has really helped us to write our own invention of the story. We've included speech using inverted commas and reported clauses. Fronted adverbials with the correct punctuation. Also, making sure it is written in the correct tense. Spellings have been about words ending in '-sion'. We've been segmenting the words into the correct syllables and phonemes. In French we have been learning 12 classroom objects and then how to say what we have in our pencil case.</p>
<p>Year 5</p>	<p>We have had a busy week in Year 5. We started our week learning about the famous astronaut Mae Jemison, as part of Science week, she was an inspiration to so many. We wrote a mini biography about her life. In Maths we continued to find fractions of amounts, we found it quite tricky but got there in the end. We did lots of solving word problems, some were 5 step problems! During Science week we were lucky enough to have a workshop where we made our own batteries in and we managed to create 7.3volts! It was amazing. We started our History lessons this week and have been looking at the evolution of transport. We looked at the invention of the wheel on Thursday, it was wheely good fun!</p>
<p>Year 6</p>	<p>Year 6 have enjoyed Science week. As well as learning about famous people from the STEM world such as Steve Jobs, we were visited by a real scientist who helped us learn all about our genes. We discovered that many of us can roll our tongues, and have freckles and dimples inline with the percentage of the general population, but that far fewer of us have sticky earwax compared to the 93% average! In English, we delivered some of the fantastic speeches we had written, focussing on our intonation and volume. Everyone made a great effort to include the required features such as statistics, rhetorical questions and repetition for effect. In Maths, we particularly enjoyed Pi day, where we learned how to divide the circumference by the diameter and find and how to find the area of a circle. We also loved eating apple pies! Ask us how many digits of Pi we can remember!</p>

COMPETITION TIME!

ABACUS

Easter Bonnet

COMPETITION & PARADE

THURSDAY 28TH MARCH



Prizes for every year group

If you would like to enter the Easter Bonnet competition please ensure your bonnets are in school by the end of the school day on Wednesday 27th March 2024.



The next Bags 2 School collection is on 14th June 2024.

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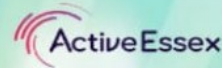
Uber Eats



Department
for Education



Essex County Council



**Crafty
Katie**

Make & MOVE

HOLIDAY ACTIVITY CLUBS

Easter holidays

Craft and Fun Activity Days

All days are suitable for 4-12 years.

Venue: Abacus School, Tresco way, Wickford, SS12 9GJ

Tuesday 2nd April – Make & Move - Pic N Mix Day

A day full of crafting and activities. Pick from your favourite crafts or try something new! which may include wooden craft blanks, sand art, painting, brick building and enjoy outside play with archery, swing ball and other fun games and movie afternoon too!

9am to 3pm - £24 10am to 3pm - £21

Wednesday 3rd April – Easter Fancy dress fun day!

The Easter bunny will be joining us for our biggest Egg hunt Yet! Inflatable fun and Lots of themed crafts, games and sweet treats await in our Easter fun day. (fancy dress is optional)

9am to 3pm - £24 New longer day 8.30am to 4pm - £30

Thursday 4th April - Make & Move - Pic N Mix Day

A day full of crafting and activities. Pick from your favourite crafts or try something new! which may include wooden craft blanks, sand art, painting, brick building and enjoy outside play with archery and guest tennis coach Brad

9am to 3pm - £24 10am to 3pm - £21

Friday 5th April – Fun on the Farm– Real animal visits!

After the fabulous success of last years farm visit from Gemmas farm, Once again she will be joining us with this years spring babies, and a selection of animals that children can interact with. A day full of Farm themed crafts and activities.

9am to 3pm - £24 New longer day 8.30am to 4pm - £30



Crafty Katie - Children's Parties



@craftykatie.activities



Monday 8 th April – Wonka Day!

Children will take part in a chocolate workshop where they will create their own bar and wrapper and enjoy other themed crafts like golden ticket making! also a movie afternoon with popcorn!



9am to 3pm - £24 10am to 3pm - £21



Tuesday 9 th April – Make & Move - Pic N Mix Day

A day full of crafting and activities. Pick from your favourite crafts or try something new! which may include wooden craft blanks, sand art, painting, brick building and enjoy outside play with archery, swing ball, and other fun games

We will also be joined by Netball coach Jo for a fun session for all.

9am to 3pm - £24 10am to 3pm - £21

Wednesday 10 th April – Spring Fun Day – Mini Fairy gardens and Gymnastics!

Spring into action with a gymnastics session led by fully qualified coaches on the equipment. Children will then spend their crafting time creating a miniature spring garden in a plant pot to bring home and enjoy as it grows. Such a creative and fun activity. Plenty of time for outside fun and games too!



9am to 3pm - £24 New longer day 8.30am to 4pm - £30



Thursday 11 th April - Make & Move - Pic N Mix Day

A day full of crafting and activities. Pick from your favourite crafts or try something new! which may include wooden craft blanks, sand art, painting, brick building and enjoy outside play with archery, swing ball, and other fun games

9am to 3pm - £24 10am to 3pm- £21



To book text or call on 07929 044959 or email a booking form request to craftykatie10@gmail.com or contact us on socials.

Please provide a nut free packed lunch, and a refillable bottle



10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

DEVELOPING HEALTHY SLEEP PATTERNS

Quality sleep is paramount for wellbeing as it impacts our cognitive function, emotional balance and overall health. A World Health Organisation study highlighted that 44% of young people reported difficulty sleeping – potentially affecting their mood, concentration and immune system. Our guide offers expert tips for helping children to sleep more healthily.

1 MINDFUL TECH USE

Encourage a balanced approach to screen time. While phones, laptops, tablets and so on can serve as a helpful means of stress relief, it's advisable to minimise their use right before bed. These devices can keep the mind racing long after they're switched off, impacting how easily and how well a person can sleep.

2 EFFECTIVE SLEEP PRACTICES

Offer practical advice on reinforcing certain habits that have a positive influence on sleeping patterns. Children could start keeping a diary which they add to each evening, for example – or they could use up excess energy by exercising during the day.

3 HYDRATION HABITS

Underline the importance of drinking plenty of water throughout the day, while limiting drinks close to bedtime to prevent disruptions during the night: it's a lot harder to switch off if you keep needing to get out of bed for the toilet. Avoiding caffeinated drinks later in the day also allows the body and brain to slow down naturally, without any chemicals firing them back up.

4 CONSISTENT BEDTIME SCHEDULE

Assist children in developing consistent bedtime routines that tell the body it's time to wind down, promoting a more relaxed state. Establish specific activities for young ones right before going to bed – such as brushing their teeth – to set up an association between that action and falling asleep.

5 OPTIMAL SLEEP ENVIRONMENT

Ensure that the bedroom is comfortable, dark and free from distractions, fostering an ideal space for quality rest. The room's temperature should also be suitable for sleeping – that is, not too hot and not too cold – while rooms should be kept as tidy and free of clutter as possible.

6 RELAXING EVENING ACTIVITIES

Recommend activities that have a calming effect on the mind – such as reading or gentle stretching – in the lead up to bedtime, to prepare the mind for a peaceful night's sleep. Doing something quiet, relaxing and low intensity signals to the brain that it's time to rest and makes falling asleep much easier.

7 PRIORITISING ADEQUATE SLEEP

Emphasise the crucial role of sleep in maintaining physical and emotional wellbeing. It's especially important to sustain a healthy sleep pattern during challenging and intensive periods in our lives: during the exam season for children and young people, for instance.

8 NUTRITIONAL BALANCE

Highlight the significance of a healthy, balanced diet – and its role in establishing a more consistent sleep pattern. Try to lean towards preparing meals with plenty of fruit and vegetables, served in reasonable portion sizes: not only is this a lot healthier, but it also reduces the chances of feeling too full to be comfortable in bed.

9 PARENTAL SUPPORT

Parents and carers, of course, are uniquely situated to support their children in establishing and maintaining healthy sleeping habits. Parents can review their own sleep habits (incorporating anything from this list that they don't do already) to model a balanced bedtime routine and reinforce the importance of self-care.

10 MILITARY SLEEP METHOD

Look up 'the military sleep method': it's a technique for falling asleep quickly, which incorporates deep breathing exercises. You could encourage children to try it or even use it yourself. While it can take a good deal of practice to perfect, eventually it will start to feel natural – and the results are often extremely impressive!

Meet Our Expert

Minds Ahead design and deliver the UK's only specialist postgraduate mental health qualifications. Winner of the Social Enterprise UK: 'One to Watch' award, the charity provides training and support to education organisations and local authorities. This guide has been written by Adam Gillett – a learning and development specialist who is also Associate Vice-Principal for Personal Development at a large secondary school.



What Parents & Carers Need to Know about GROUP CHATS

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WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

BULLYING

Unkind comments or images which are purposely aimed at an individual can be shared freely in a group chat – allowing and often encouraging others to join in the bullying behaviour. If this content is shared in a group of their peers (especially a larger group), it serves to amplify the hurt, embarrassment, anxiety and isolation that the victim feels.

EXCLUSION AND ISOLATION

This common issue with group chats can happen in several ways: starting a new group, for instance, but deliberately excluding a certain child. Likewise, the chat may take place on an app which one child doesn't have access to, meaning they can't be involved. A child can also feel isolated when a group chat is used to discuss or share images from an event that everyone else but them attended.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some discussions in group chats may include inappropriate words, swearing and unsuitable images or videos. These could be viewed by your child if they are part of that group, whether they actively engage in it or not. Some chat apps have a disappearing message function, so your child may be unable to report something they've seen because it can only be viewed once or for a short time.

SHARING GROUP CONTENT

It's important to remember that – while the content of the chat is private between those in the group – individual users can easily share a message, photo or video with others outside of the group or screenshot what's been posted. The risk of something your child intended as private becoming public (and potentially going viral) is higher if there are people they don't know well in the group.

UNKNOWN MEMBERS

Within larger group chats, it's more likely your child will be communicating with people they don't really know. These strangers may be friends of the host, but not necessarily friendly toward your child. It's wise for young people not to share personal details and stay aware that they have no control over the messages and images they share after they've put them online.

NOTIFICATIONS AND FOMO

A drawback of large group chats is the sheer number of notifications. Every time someone in the group messages, your child's device will be 'pinged' with an alert; potentially, this could mean hundreds of notifications a day. Not only is this highly distracting, but young people's fear of missing out on the latest conversation results in increased screen time as they try to keep up with the chat.

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Advice for Parents & Carers

CONSIDER OTHERS' FEELINGS

Group chats are often an arena for young people to gain social status. This could cause them to do or say things on impulse, which could upset others in the group. Encourage your child to consider how other people might feel if they engaged in this behaviour. If your child does upset a member of their group chat, support them to reach out, show empathy and apologise for their mistake.

PRACTISE SAFE SHARING

In any online communication, it's vital for young people to be aware of what they're sharing and who might potentially see it. Discuss the importance of not revealing identifiable details like their address, their school or photos that they wouldn't like to be seen widely. Remind them that once something is shared in a group, they lose control of where it may end up and how it might be used.

GIVE SUPPORT, NOT JUDGEMENT

Remind your child that they can confide in you if they feel bullied or excluded in a group chat, instead of responding to the person who's upset them. Validate their hurt feelings and help to put them back in control by discussing how they'd like to handle the situation. On a related note, you could also empower your child to speak up if they're in a chat where others are being picked on.

AVOID INVITING STRANGERS

Sadly, many individuals online hide their true identity to gain a child's trust – for example, to gather information on them, to exchange inappropriate content or to coax them into doing things they aren't comfortable with. Ensure your child understands why they shouldn't add people they don't know to a group chat – and, especially, to never accept a group chat invitation from a stranger.

BLOCK, REPORT AND LEAVE

If your child is in a chat where inappropriate content is being shared, advise them to block the users sending the material, report them to the host app or platform and exit the group. If any of this content could be putting a minor at risk, contact the police. Emphasise to your child that it's OK for them to simply leave any group chat that they don't feel comfortable being a part of.

SILENCE NOTIFICATIONS

Having a phone or tablet bombarded with notifications from a group chat can be a massive irritation and distraction – especially if it's happening late in the evening. Explain to your child that they can still be part of the group chat, but that it would be healthier for them to turn off or mute the notifications and catch up with the conversation at a time which better suits them.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



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#WakeUpWednesday