

# Abacus Primary School

## Newsletter 523 22/3/24



Well done to Aaryan, Amelia and Sameeha for their amazing efforts in raising awareness across the school yesterday for World Down Syndrome Day. What amazing siblings you are!




Next week we are on Week 1 of our revised menu. Which you can view on our website:

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



# We love to read!

## BOOK CLUB



Well done to Year 2 for all their enthusiasm at Silvana Court on Monday afternoon. The residents loved hearing your stories and seeing your smiles.

On the 15th March 2024, our Sports Ambassadors invited children to take part in an Red Nose Day Challenge.



**RED NOSE DAY**

The Sports Ambassadors set up a Red Nose hunt around the playground by taking pictures of different locations.



Children then had to use the pictures to find the Red Noses which had letters on to reveal 2 words.





# LET'S CELEBRATE!



# WELL DONE!

Well done to Harry, Posie, George and Louie for their achievements out of School.

We have had a number of concerns raised this week regarding online behaviour. Parents have contacted me to discuss online bullying and children's language online.

In order to keep all children safe when playing/ searching online, please ensure as parents you are constantly monitoring your children's use. Lots of children are talking about APPS they are using which as you can see from the chart have age restrictions well above the age of primary school children.

# eSafety

- Twitter
- Facebook
- Instagram
- Pinterest
- TikTok
- Google+
- Tumblr
- Reddit
- Snapchat
- Secret

## Age Restrictions for Social Media Platforms

action for children

- Youtube
- Foursquare
- WeChat
- Keek
- Flickr
- Kik



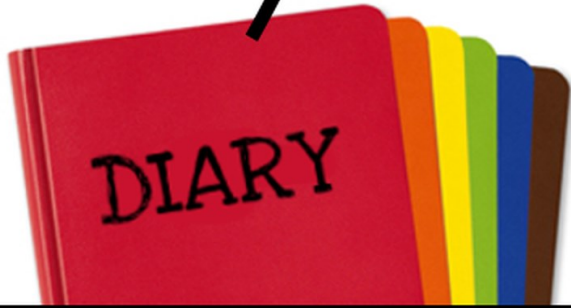
LinkedIn

WhatsApp

Vine  
Tinder

Path

# Dates for your



Please ensure that you keep up to date with the events taking place in school by regularly visiting our school calendar  
[www.abacusprimaryschool.co.uk/school-calendar](http://www.abacusprimaryschool.co.uk/school-calendar)



We are so excited to announce the date for the Year two sleepover. This will take place on Friday 14th June 2024. We will be holding a meeting after Easter to talk through the organisation of the event.

The Year 5 concert will be taking place on:

2.15pm Wednesday 22/5/24

10am Thursday 23/5/24

Tickets will be coming home after the Easter break.





# Our Curriculum



<p>Early Years Foundation Stage</p>	<p>"We are the doubles!" I hope the children have been singing this at home! Learning doubles this week, can we tell you what you have learnt? Spring has continued in our theme this week. We drew our favourite part of Spring and used a poem to inspire us to make a class poem. Music has been great fun with the instruments and making a beautiful sound!</p>
<p>Year 1</p>	<p>This week we read 'Cops and Robbers' and used it to write a newspaper report. In Maths we have started to learn to count in 2s, 5s and 10s. Ask us to recite these up to 100 for you. In Science we learnt some facts about reptiles. Ask us what we know. PE has been lots of fun as we have been learning to throw and catch accurately. Finally in Art we used our paper skills to create a 3D picture called the Tree of Life.</p>
<p>Year 2</p>	<p>This week in Year 2 we have been writing our own stories based on the text 'Yeti and the Bird'. We planned our own version by changing the characters, the setting and some of the events. We included lots of our learnt grammar in our stories; question and exclamation sentences, conjunctions and made sure they were written in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person and past tense. We did a fantastic job! In Maths we have been learning about mass (weight) and have been comparing objects and reading from a scale. We have been evaluating 'The Lighthouse Keepers Lunchbox' in DT and realised that there were lots of things wrong with it and so we have designed a much better product that we are going to make next week. In Science we investigated things that are alive, dead or have never been alive. Did you know that some of our shoes used to be alive and so did our tables? We used MRS GREN to help us. Ask us who she is.</p>
<p>Year 3</p>	<p>In Year 3 this week we have been very busy practising our assembly! We can't wait to perform for you next week - thank you again for all of your support with learning songs and lines and getting costumes sorted. In English we have been learning to write direct and indirect speech to help us write news reports. See if children can tell you the difference between direct and indirect speech and whether they can give you some examples! In Spelling, we have been adding the +ly suffix to words ending in -ic, like <i>historic</i> and <i>public</i>. Can children explain what we add to our suffix when adding +ly to these words? In Maths we have been continuing to work on measuring and comparing mass (in grams and kilograms) and we have begun to look at how we measure volume (in millilitres and litres). In Geography, we have labelled the parts of a river, learnt about how rivers transport and deposit materials and begun to recognise how these processes change a river's shape. See if children can explain how oxbow lakes are formed!</p>
<p>Year 4</p>	<p>There has been no slowing down in Year 4. All this week we have been practicing our Standard English in GPS. In Maths we have been practicing our fractions of amounts, fraction tenths and decimal tenths. In Reading we have been investigating a book called 'The Tales of Africa', it is stories from West Nigeria. Traditional African stories often have talking animals and there is usually a moral to the story. We have started designing a light box in DT, linking our knowledge of electrical circuits to help develop our designs. In PE during our dance lessons we have been listening to samba music, giving it a carnival atmosphere. Ask your child if they remember the moves. Less than a week until the Easter Holidays, what is in store for next week?</p>
<p>Year 5</p>	<p>In Year 5 this week we have been looking at decimals in Maths and because we did so well with our fractions we have found it really fun. In English we completed our biographies on Charles Dickens. We had a great time in PE this week completing our gymnastics topic, we were in groups and were able to create a routine based on everything we had learnt. Some of us even gave our routine a story. Our teachers were very impressed. In history we continued learning about transport and how it has changed over the years. On Thursday, we had a visitor John come to speak to us about steam engines and how they have changed It was really interesting to see his wonderful models.</p>
<p>Year 6</p>	<p>This week in English, we have been writing persuasive letters to Queen Victoria regarding the relocation of the dragons back to the Galapagos, based on our class text. We have been using more formal language and sentence structures, as well as emotive language and persuasive phrases. In Maths, we have been learning about area, perimeter and volume. Ask us to tell you the formulae for working them out. In History, we have been learning about the Maya civilisation and comparing them to Vikings. We have found about their housing, religious beliefs and social structures. We also learnt how LiDAR technology is used to discover old ruins beneath the surface of the rainforest and how this, combined with their writing and excavations, can help to build a picture of what life was like.</p>



Below is a Focus on nurturing your ADS child.

## Nurturing a child with ASD

*As a mother of a child with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and a specialist SEN teacher, **Krista Dadford** understands the joys and challenges of this journey.*

**A**utism is a complex neurological condition that affects social communication, behaviour and sensory processing. Your child's challenges are not indicative of their potential but rather a unique lens through which they experience the world. Children with ASD may exhibit a wide range of behaviours and characteristics. Some may have difficulty with social interactions and communication, while others may display repetitive behaviours or intense interests in specific topics. Understanding this spectrum of behaviours is key to tailoring your support.

Each child with ASD is a unique individual with their own strengths and passions waiting to be discovered. As you get to know their interests, you can tap into these as powerful motivators for learning and growth. Whether it's a fascination with numbers, a love for art, or a deep interest in animals, these passions can serve as entry points for learning and building connections. Encourage and nurture these interests to help your child develop skills and boost their self-esteem.

Communication can be a challenge for children with ASD, but it's a skill that can be developed with patience and persistence. Explore various communication tools, such as visual schedules, social stories, and AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) systems. Tailor these tools to your child's needs and preferences. Consistency is crucial in developing effective communication strategies. Set clear expectations, provide opportunities for your child to communicate, and reinforce positive attempts at communication. Over time, you'll see progress in their ability to express themselves and understand others.


Children with ASD often thrive on routine and predictability. Establishing a structured daily routine can provide a sense of security and stability for your child. However, remember to allow room for flexibility and adaptability as well. Create




■ Positive reinforcement can be a powerful tool.

### About the author

**Krista Dadford** is an experienced SEN tutor at **SENsational tutors**.

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 @sensationaltutors


 SENsational Tutors LTD



visual schedules that outline daily activities, helping your child anticipate what's next. Be mindful of transitions, which can be challenging. Use visual cues and verbal reminders to ease transitions and reduce anxiety.

Sensory sensitivities are common among people with ASD. Pay close attention to your child's sensory triggers and preferences. Each young person's sensitivities are unique, so it's essential to observe and adapt your environment accordingly. Creating a sensory-friendly home environment involves minimising sensory overload. This may include dimming lights, using noise-cancelling headphones, providing sensory toys, or creating a calm space for relaxation. Experiment with different sensory activities to help your child regulate their sensory experiences.

Praise, rewards, and acknowledgment of achievements can motivate your child to engage in positive behaviours and develop new skills. Set clear expectations and provide specific feedback when they accomplish tasks or display positive behaviour. Be consistent in your reinforcement, and tailor rewards to your child's preferences. Positive reinforcement can be a powerful tool in shaping behaviour and building self-confidence.

Connecting with support networks, both online and offline, is invaluable on this journey. Other parents who are on a similar path can provide practical advice, empathy, and a sense of community. Additionally, seek guidance from professionals, such as therapists and educators, who specialise in working with children with ASD. Online communities and social media groups can be excellent sources of support and information. Here, you can share experiences, ask questions, and learn from the experiences of others. Remember that you don't have to navigate this journey alone. There are people and resources available to assist you. 







# Essex Year of... Something for everyone!

Spring into action this Easter with the **Essex Year of Numbers Easter Egg Hunt!**

This Easter, we're launching a maths competition to encourage all pupils preparing for SATs at home.

Each day from March 25th to April 5th we'll add a new maths puzzle on the Essex Year Of... app so children can have fun keeping their maths skills sharp. And every correct answer earns an entry to our daily prize draw!

Following the success of our Advent competition, this activity can strengthen links between home and school, supporting parents to participate in their child's learning journey.

We encourage schools to promote this opportunity to parents and have provided a sample letter for you to send.

The Essex Year of... app is FREE and full of engaging educational content and activities for all ages. It offers important opportunities for your pupils and their families to read for pleasure and have fun using numbers.


Although designed with Year 6 SATs in mind, parents and carers and siblings of all ages can come together to challenge themselves and each other.

Join us for an egg-ceptional Easter adventure in the Year of Numbers!

Use the codes below to download the app.







# Essex Year of...

Dear Parents/Guardians,




Spring into action this Easter with the Essex Year Of Numbers *Easter Egg Hunt!* We're excited to announce a new opportunity for your child to practise their maths skills this Easter. The Essex Year of Numbers initiative is hosting an Easter Maths Competition!

Each day from March 25th to April 5th, we'll add a new maths puzzle to the Essex Year Of... app to help your child have fun with maths over the Easter holidays.

Although we've got the Year 6 SATs in mind, everyone in your family can come together to challenge themselves and each other and every correct answer enters your child in a daily prize draw.


Participating in this competition is a great opportunity to support your child's learning and celebrate their achievements together.

To join the Easter Maths Competition, scan the QR codes below to download the Essex Year Of... app and look for the *Easter Egg Hunt* in the *Numbers* section. The Essex Year Of... app also hosts free maths and reading content for the whole family, so everyone's invited!

Join us for an egg-ceptional Easter adventure in the Year of Numbers!

Essex Year of Numbers Team




Join us on our sponsored **Superhero Fun Run**. Put on your cape and your favourite running shoes to help raise vital funds to support families affected by childhood cancer.

# 5K FAMILY SUPERHERO FUN RUN

At Brentwood Rugby Club

**& Family Fun Day**


Sunday 23rd June 2024  
Registration at 10.00am  
Race start 11.00am  
Brentwood Rugby Club, Ingrave Road, Brentwood, Essex, CM13 2AQ





Register

Scan the QR code to sign up today!!


Free Family Festival & 5k sponsored Superhero Fun Run to help raise vital funds to support families affected by childhood cancer.

# FAMILY FUN DAY LENNOX FEST & SUPERHERO FUN RUN

At Brentwood Rugby Club

Classic cars, craft stalls, food vendors, inflatable activities, entertainment, local artists, raffle & more...


Sunday 23rd June 2024  
10.00am - 4.00pm  
Brentwood Rugby Club, Ingrave Road, Brentwood, Essex, CM13 2AQ





More info

Scan the QR code to find out more...





# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

## ENCOURAGING OPEN CONVERSATIONS AT HOME

With tricky topics and occasional clashes of opinion, it can be challenging to maintain an environment where children feel able to talk candidly and honestly. However, encouraging such conversations helps to develop trust – making it easier to unpack even sensitive subjects as children get older. Here are our top tips for promoting open conversations at home.

### 1 CREATE A SAFE SPACE



Criticism, blaming or shaming can all prevent children from feeling emotionally safe – while showing affection, positive attention and an interest in what a child has to say builds their sense of security. These formative years are when children's opinions and values begin to take shape, so it's important to provide a non-judgmental environment in which to discuss them – especially if their opinions differ from your own.

### 2 CONSIDER OTHER OUTLETS



Some children may find it easier to talk while they're participating in another activity such as drawing, writing, walking or sport. If it's possible, taking part in these activities together presents you with an opportunity to communicate while doing something side by side. A child may feel less pressure that way and can be more inclined to open up of their own accord.

### 3 NORMALISE CHATS ABOUT FEELINGS



Incorporate mental health and emotional wellbeing into everyday conversations, using age-appropriate language and examples to help children understand their emotions. Ask questions like "How are you feeling today?", "What was the best and worst part of your day?", "If you could start today again, what would you do differently?" and "Is there anything you want to talk about?"

### 4 LISTEN ACTIVELY



When children express themselves, make it obvious that you're listening closely and giving them your full attention. Maintain eye contact and validate their feelings without immediately trying to solve the problem. It's not helpful to dismiss their issues as childish or 'teenage angst' – or to assume that they'll simply 'get over' whatever they're feeling. Children don't have your life experience; their resilience is still developing as they learn to push through difficulties and handle problems.

### 5 ASK OPEN QUESTIONS



Encourage children to share their thoughts by asking open questions about their feelings and experiences. Closed questions (such as "Did you enjoy school today?") are more likely to elicit a simple "yes" or "no" response. Instead, you could ask things like "Who did you spend time with at break?" or "Who did you sit with at lunchtime?"

### 6 RESPECT THEIR BOUNDARIES



If a child isn't ready to talk to about something yet, respect their boundaries: this reinforces that their feelings are important and worthy of consideration. Ideally, you're aiming to let them know you care without smothering them, so just make it clear that you're there for them whenever they're ready to chat. Gentle, regular check-ins can sometimes be the best form of progress.

### 7 LEAD BY EXAMPLE



Model open, honest and healthy communication in front of children and young people. Try to demonstrate kindness when talking about others and yourself, because if children hear adults being overly harsh, critical or judgmental, or see them having unrealistic expectations of themselves, it makes them more likely to adopt and repeat this behaviour themselves as they grow.

### 8 HAVE REGULAR CHECK-INS



Check in with children periodically to discuss how they're feeling and what's going on in their lives. This could be a weekly or monthly conversation, where the child has an opportunity to share whatever's on their mind. For parents and carers, getting away from the house and other distractions might be productive here: you could consider regular trips to a coffee shop or a café, or just a weekly walk.

### 9 PROVIDE RESOURCES



It's often beneficial to let children know about other support that's available to them if they're struggling to talk to you specifically. Encourage them to talk to school counsellors, trusted adults or even a therapist, if necessary – while normalising this route and dispelling the harmful stigma around asking for help. Older children could engage with resources such as Kooth or YoungMinds.

### 10 CELEBRATE EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION



It's beneficial to praise children for expressing their feelings honestly – emphasising how important it is to talk about their emotions and how proud you are of them for doing so. This can be especially pivotal for boys, who often experience more of a stigma around talking frankly about their feelings and their mental health – a barrier that can be overcome, with enough love and support.

## Meet Our Expert

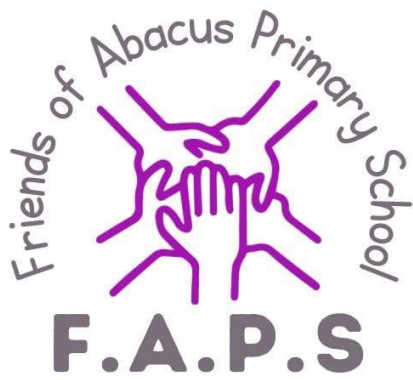
With 30 years' experience as a teacher, trainer, consultant and interim executive board member, Anna Bateman has a superb understanding of what works in pedagogy, school improvement and leadership. She has also advised the Department for Education on their mental health green paper.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College





# COMPETITION TIME!

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.

If you would like to purchase a wristband ready for the Easter break, these can be purchased from our school office next week and are now £15





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JOHN  
LEWIS



Viking

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Uber Eats

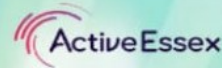




Department  
for Education



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](mailto:craftykatie10@gmail.com) or contact us on socials.

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







**FLAMES**  
**NETBALL CLUB**

**EASTER**  
**CAMP**

**WEDNESDAY 3RD APRIL**

10-2

BASILDON SPORTING VILLAGE  
MINI ME'S (YEAR 2) - YEAR 8  
£15 PER PLAYER

PLEASE CONTACT JO MARTIN ON  
07936716525 TO BOOK A SPACE