



Abacus Primary School School Prospectus Academic Year 2025-2026



Headteacher: Mrs H Blakeley



This booklet will give you some idea of what our school is like. It cannot, however, be as good as coming to visit us and see us at work. If you would like to do that, please contact our office by phone or e-mail and they will make an appointment for you to come to the school.

You will be made very welcome

Welcome

We are very pleased to welcome you and your child to our very happy and thriving school. Starting/moving school can be a very challenging time for the whole family and so our aim is to make the experience of transferring into Abacus Primary School as smooth and trouble free as possible, by working in partnership with you.

Our most recent OFSTED inspection took place in March 2023 and we are very proud to say that they judged our school to be a GOOD school. The report can be viewed on our school website www.abacusprimaryschool.co.uk Taken from the OFSTED report: **'Children make a strong start to learning in early years because leaders understand the importance of this stage in providing a secure base for future learning.'**

Since January 2011, I have been the Headteacher here and consider myself to be privileged to work alongside a very committed, enthusiastic and hardworking team. We have a wonderful team of staff and governors, supportive families and a bright, modern building. Our school is well-resourced and our pupils have access to a wide variety of learning opportunities both in and out of the classroom. Although the school has grown, we continue to foster a family and community ethos and work in partnership with our families. We all have the children's best interests at heart and plan for a rich, creative and enjoyable curriculum, which allows every child to access it.

This prospectus will give you some idea of what our school is like. It cannot, however, be as good as coming to visit us and see us at work which you hopefully managed to do when considering your school choices. If you would like to view our school then please contact our office by phone or e-mail and they will make an appointment for you to come to the school- **you will be made very welcome!** We have tried to include as much information as possible in this prospectus; it will answer many of your questions about the school.

We look forward to developing a successful home-school partnership, which will provide the best possible support for your child's education.

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact the school via the school office.

Mrs Blakeley
Headteacher

Our Mission Statement

(We are very proud that our Pupil Council worked together with staff to write this)

ABACUS

Aspire

Believe

Achieve

Create

United

Success

Our School Procedures

Children will be allowed to go straight into their classroom from 8.45am. Their class teacher will welcome them at the door each morning. At the end of the school day, pupils will leave the school through the same door. As children become more confident you can arrange to meet them at an agreed place. When children enter Year 6 you may decide that your child can walk home on their own in preparation for secondary school; we would require written parental permission for this arrangement.

It is very important that children arrive on time; we ask that you ensure that your child is in the classroom ready to begin learning at **8.55am**. All children arriving after this time **must** report to the school office. If there is a problem, please contact the school to inform us when we can expect your child. The register will be taken at **8.55am** and after this time your child will be marked as late.

Attendance at school is crucial to ensuring your child has access to the curriculum. The Headteacher will contact parents whose children are late on a regular basis or who have irregular attendance to arrange an attendance meeting to discuss any issues and offer support where we can.

If your child is absent for any reason:

- **Inform the school on the day before 8.55am (by telephone, leave a message on the answerphone or via text message 07480 635577).**
- **If your child has an infectious illness/contagious condition/ or presenting coronavirus symptoms, do not send them to school until they are fully recovered.**

The office check registers daily. All schools in Wickford follow the same policy on unauthorised and authorised absence. Children attend school for 190 days per year. It is expected that parents will take their holiday leave during the school holidays.

Important changes to the regulations concerning term-time holidays:

From September 2013 amendments to the 2006 regulations removed references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make it clear that Headteachers may **NOT** grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If parents do not apply for leave of absence in advance of taking it, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. If you keep a child away for longer than was agreed, any extra time is recorded as unauthorised. If the pupil fails to attend school within 10 school days immediately following the date the pupil was due to return, and the school has no reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any other unavoidable cause, and both the school and the Local Authority have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil is, the pupil can be removed from roll and referred to Children Missing in Education (CMIE).

Due to these changes, Headteachers are no longer able to authorise any leave for absences which may have done in the past; this includes family holidays and extended weekend breaks. However, consideration will be given to requests for leave, if the conditions detailed in the application cover letter can be deemed as an exceptional circumstance - any information given in these letters will remain confidential.

School Organisation for September 2025

We have 14 classes throughout the school. There are 30 children in each class so there are 60 places in each year group.

2 x Foundation
2 x Year 1
2 x Year 2
2 x Year 3
2 x Year 4
2 x Year 5
2 x Year 6

Medical Appointments

We ask that you make every effort to book appointments outside school hours. However, should you have to take your child out of school during the day, please:

- Inform the class teacher in advance
- Provide evidence of the appointment
- Report upon pick up to the school office
- On return report back to the school office.



Medical Information (Please read in conjunction with our Medication Policy)

It is important that the school has all relevant medical information about children at the school. This information will be securely stored in the school medical room and made available to all staff as

appropriate. Parents are asked to ensure that the school is kept informed of any changes in relation to medical conditions and allergies.

- If a child requires regular medication, parents are asked to complete a written permission form for staff to oversee the administration, with clear instructions about timing and dose. Medicines can only be administered in school if they have been prescribed by the child's GP and are 4x per day.
- We are unable to give children non-prescription medication such as Calpol and ask that non-prescription medication is not brought onto the school site; this includes throat pastilles and lip balm.
- Medication can be administered in exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher.
- Medicines are administered just before or during the lunch break and every dose given is logged. All medication will be kept in the school medical room excluding asthma inhalers which will be kept in your child's classroom.
- If your child is unwell during the school day we will make every effort to contact you. It is important that we have up-to-date information about contact numbers as it can be very distressing for a child to have to remain in school when they are unwell if we cannot contact anyone to collect them.
- If your child sustains an injury in school that requires first aid treatment, this will be administered by a member of staff. If we have any concerns about a child following an injury, parents will be contacted immediately and, where required, your child may be taken straight to hospital.
- If a child sustains a head injury during the course of the day, you will be informed by a text and your child will be given a wrist band to wear that states they have had a head bang thus minimising the risk of mistaken diagnosis should the child become unwell on returning home.

Infectious Illnesses

If your child has an infectious illness, such as chicken pox, please do not send them into school but do advise us as soon as possible and refer to your doctor or pharmacist for further advice.



Should your child contract an infectious illness, we would be grateful if you would notify the school as soon as possible.

In the event of a child suffering from sickness or diarrhoea, parents are asked to keep the child at home for **48 hrs** after the last bout.



Health and Welfare

If you do have any concerns about your child, please don't hesitate to contact the school. All information is strictly on a need to know basis.

There will be procedures in place for any child who has a strict medication routine and a Health Care Plan will be drawn up in liaison with the Deputy Headteacher; these plans are updated on an annual basis as a minimum or as advised by parents of any changes during the year.

Health checks will be carried out by the school nurse as and when necessary, but parents will be informed in advance.

Health and Safety

The School will strictly adhere to the Health and Safety Policy produced by Essex County Council. Essex Local Education Authority is insured in respect of its legal liability to pupils, but for a claim to succeed the Authority has to be found to have been negligent and /or in breach of some statutory duty. Parents may wish to make their own arrangements for personal accident insurance for their children.

Risk Assessments will be carried out in the school to spot potential hazards.

Fire Drill

We carry out a fire drill termly so that the children know exactly what to do in case of an emergency. All staff take part in regular fire updates and the fire extinguishers are checked regularly.

Car Parking

All schools have parking issues. Abacus is a local school, so we anticipate children and parents walking to school together. There will be **no parking** in front of the school gates or inside the school grounds.

Please **do not** use the Staff and Official Visitors car park unless you have a Blue Badge. Please present your Blue Badge at the office.



Bicycles/ scooters

Children are allowed to ride their bicycle to school in the company of their parents. Only those children who have passed a cycling proficiency test can ride unaccompanied. All children must wear a safety helmet.

As children enter the school grounds, they must walk their bike or scooter to avoid any accidents.

Bikes and scooters can be left during the school day in our bike shed, which is situated at the side of the school building, or use the scooter parks. The school supports the Balanceability and Bikeability schemes and sessions are offered throughout the year.



Visitors

We are very security minded and to that end, all visitors must report to the office where they will be asked to sign in and be given a badge. Access to the school is only via the main entrance.

We do not want the children to get into the habit of going over to the fences or gates during lunch or break times if strangers call to them so please, if you pass by during the day, do not call to your children. There is always a minimum of two members of staff on duty in the playground during breaks to monitor the situation.

In the event of an Emergency

Should the school have to close due to an emergency such as flooding or extreme weather conditions, announcements will be made via our school website and the school text system. Please do not ring the school office to avoid blocking the telephone line.



Organisation of the school day:

EYFS	Morning	8.45 am	~	11.45 am	Lunch
	Afternoon	12.45 pm	~	3.15 pm	
KS1	Morning	8.45 am	~	12.00 pm	Lunch
	Afternoon	1.00 pm	~	3.15 pm	
KS2	Morning	8.45 am	~	12.15 pm	Lunch
	Afternoon	1.15 pm	~	3.15 pm	

End of the School Day

Please note that the teaching sessions finish at 3.15pm. Staff will supervise the children getting ready at the end of the day. Any child not collected will be brought to the school office. If you are delayed in collecting your child for any reason, please inform the school so that alternative arrangements can be made. If you intend to arrange for someone else to collect your child, please introduce him/her to the class teacher beforehand. If someone else is to be sent in the case of any emergency, please inform the school office who will inform the class teacher or send a message to the text system.



School Meals

We operate our own in-house school meal service. Our cook and assistant cooks are highly trained and have always received a 5-star food hygiene rating. We were also awarded Gold Star status as a highly recommended place to eat. This is a scheme run by Basildon Council.

All our food is fresh and prepared on site; children have a choice of four meals. The school has achieved the National Healthy Schools Award.

Following a change in policy by the Government, all children in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 are now entitled to a free school lunch every day. From September 2014 all pupils in Foundation, Year 1 and Year 2 in state-funded schools in England should be offered a free school meal (UFSM). This includes academies, free schools, pupil referral units and alternative provision as well as maintained schools.

Our Foundation Stage children participate in a daily snack time which forms part of their curriculum. We ask for a termly donation of £20.00 to contribute to the buying of a wide range of foods. The children in KS1 receive fruit for their break in the morning which is provided by the Government.

The cost of our meals for KS2 from September 2025 is £3.00 (our current price, this is subject to change). We encourage all our pupils to have a school meal, if not every day, at least for part of the week and we invite parents in at different times throughout the year to share a family lunch session. We also plan a number of themed meals throughout the year. School menus are created on a three-week rotational system and the Pupil Council meet with our kitchen staff to make suggestions and offer feedback on the choice of meals. Menus are seasonal and are sent out each term; they can also be

viewed on our website. We offer 4 options each day including a meat, vegetarian, jacket potato and a cold option (including a sandwich/wrap/pasta/roll).

Example Menu (week 1 of 3):

Week 1	Red Band	Green Band	Yellow Band (DF)(GF)(EF)	Purple Band	Dessert
Monday	Chicken Nuggets, Corn on the Cob & Wedges (DF)(EF)	Mexican Quesadilla (Wrap, Cheese, Rice & Mixed Veg) Corn on the Cob & Wedges (GF)(EF)	Jacket Potato with Filling	Cheese Roll & Crisps (GF)(EF)	Flapjack or Fresh Fruit
Tuesday	Meatballs in a Tomato Sauce & Pasta (GF)(DF)(EF)	Sweet Potato Korma, Rice & Naan Bread (GF)(DF)(EF)	Jacket Potato with Filling	Ham Sandwich & Crisps (GF)(DF)(EF)	Apple Crumble & Custard or Fresh Fruit
Wednesday	Roast Chicken, Roast Potatoes, Yorkshire Pudding & Seasonal Vegetables (GF)(DF)(EF)	Roasted Quorn, Roast Potatoes, Yorkshire Pudding & Seasonal Vegetables (GF)(DF)	Jacket Potato with Filling	Tuna & Cucumber Wrap (GF)(DF)(EF)	Cheese & Crackers or Fresh Fruit
Thursday	Sausage Pasta in a Tomato Sauce & Sweetcorn (GF)(DF)(EF)	Roasted Vegetable Pasta in a Tomato Sauce & Sweetcorn (GF)(DF)(EF)	Jacket Potato with Filling	Bacon, Lettuce & Tomato Sandwich (GF)(DF)(EF)	Jam Sponge & Custard or Fresh Fruit
Friday	Jumbo Fish Finger, Chips & Peas (GF)(DF)(EF)	Macaroni Cheese & Peas (GF)(EF)	Jacket Potato with Filling	Tomato Pasta Pot (GF)(DF)(EF)	Cookie or Fresh Fruit

Should your child have any allergies or dietary requirements, please ensure we know. Our school meals now include some gluten (GF), dairy (DF), soya free (SF) and egg (EF) free options, these are marked on the menu as above. School meals are paid for online via ParentPay, an online payment system that the school uses. School trips are also paid for using this service.



It would be helpful to the administration of the school if parents would observe the following procedure for the payment of school meals:

- Please contact the school if office if you are eligible for free school meals.
- School kitchen staff need to know meal numbers by a certain time. Therefore, if your child has an appointment and will not arrive until later on a particular day, please let the office know in advance and they will order your child's lunch.

Packed Lunch

Children bringing a packed lunch to school will eat in the school hall. As with our school meals, we do promote healthy choice and so we ask you to prepare suitable foods and pack them into sealed containers.

Drinks should be in leak proof containers or individual fruit drinks carton. **No fizzy drinks will be allowed. Glass bottles, chocolate and sweets are also not allowed.** If these are in lunch boxes, they will not be allowed to be eaten... so please help us by packing healthy choices.

Our midday staff will supervise the children and check that children are eating their lunch. We do not allow the children to throw anything away so that you, as parents, can see what your child has eaten. Therefore, children will bring their rubbish home and any uneaten food.

Should you have any concerns regarding your child at lunchtime, please see their class teacher or come to the office.



*The school participates in the **HEALTHY SCHOOL AWARDS** initiative.*

We encourage all our children to make healthy lifestyle choices including eating breakfast before they come into school and



drinking plenty of water during the day. So please ensure that your child brings a named water bottle to school with them each day. We do have a central water dispenser so children can top up their bottles if required.

Educational Visits

During the school year, various educational visits are arranged in connection with the curriculum. Attendance on these visits is voluntary but, naturally we hope that you will allow your child to be included as we value this important extension of the curriculum.



Appropriate supervision by the class teacher, assisted by other responsible adults, is always maintained, whether visits are in the immediate vicinity or further afield. We will require consent and payment where necessary in order for your child to take part. Risk assessments are completed for all visits.

We offer our children the opportunity to take part in residential experiences in Years 4 and 6, and our Year 2 sleepover is great preparation for these experiences.

We also have a range of visitors come into school to enrich our curriculum.



Governors' Policy on Charging and Remissions

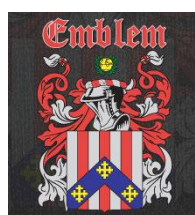
Parents are asked to contribute towards extra costs such as educational visits, swimming etc. and your voluntary contribution towards these excursions is very much appreciated.

Remissions are paid to all parents on the rare occasions that overpricing occurs. No child will be prevented from taking part in such activities on the grounds of financial hardship. If there are not enough contributions made, we may have to cancel some school trips. Should you experience financial difficulties that may prevent your child from participating in such an offer, please speak to Mrs Blakeley in confidence.

Publicity

From time to time the children will be filmed and photographed for various publicity events. If you object to your child being included in these please do let the school know as soon as possible in person. We ask that parents complete a permission form when their child starts school.

School Uniform



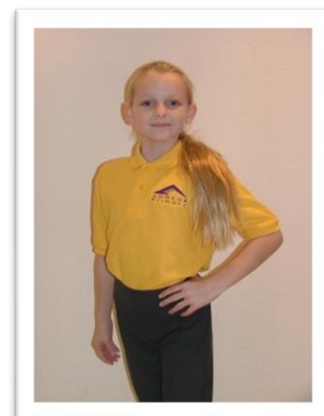
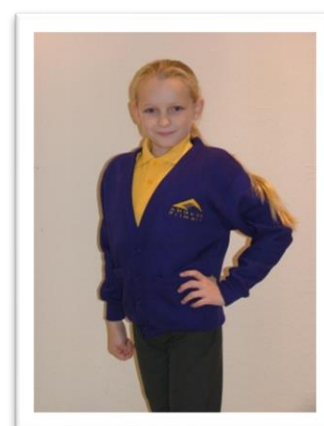
Parents are encouraged to support us in providing the suggested items of clothing which can be purchased either from our School Shop (Emblem in Wickford: 18 The Broadway, Wickford, Essex, SS11 7AA) or at www.myclothing.com We believe that uniform helps to create a school identity and the children should wear our uniform and the Abacus logo with pride.

Please note: Trainers and hooded sweatshirts/jackets are not allowed in school.

We do ask that long hair be tied back and that designs or logos are not shaved into hair. No unnatural hair colours (dyed hair) or unconventional hairstyles will be accepted.

Our school colours are PURPLE and GOLD

Sweatshirt/Cardigan	Purple
Fleece	Purple
Trousers/Skirt/Pinafore	Grey
Polo Shirt	Gold
Girls' Dresses	Purple or Yellow Gingham
Footwear	Black shoes, no heels (no trainers)



Physical Education

Shorts	Black
T-Shirt	House Colours (see pg 15: red, yellow, green or blue)
Footwear	Plimsolls
P.E. Bag	Yellow



ALL ITEMS OF SCHOOL CLOTHING MUST BE CLEARLY MARKED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.
(You can buy pre-printed labels from various retailers).

Other items

Book Bag Purple

Hats Purple



No large bags/holdalls will be allowed in school as there is limited space. White, navy or black sandals may be worn in the summer, but these need to be appropriate for all day wear.

Jewellery should not be worn in school.

Plain studs/sleepers may be worn provided that the children can remove and replace them by themselves for P.E, however no earrings are permitted in Foundation. This is in line with the **Health & Safety policy of Essex County Council**; *We understand parental concerns around removing earrings, however there is a risk when taking part in a PE activity to both the child wearing the jewellery and to other children involved in the activity. All jewellery needs to be removed for PE, including earrings. We also request that children do not wear nail polish in school.*

Transfer to Secondary School

Parents may choose which Secondary School their child will go on to from a wide area. Our children transfer to a variety of local secondary schools and we try to establish as closer links as possible through collaborative work.

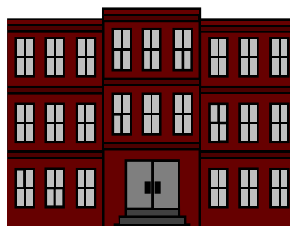
Sweyne Park



Bromfords



Beauchamps



We have very strong links with the two more local schools, Bromfords and Beauchamps and the children will visit these schools in Year 5 for 1 day to participate in various activities. These two schools are part of the Wickford Consortium of Schools. We recognise that not all children apply to local schools and will support transition to all secondary schools ensuring that it is a smooth continuum for both pupils and parents. We invite Year 7 tutors into school to meet with the Year 6 pupils and promote attendance at transition and taster days. During the Autumn term all schools have open afternoons/evenings where you can view the schools to help you and your child make a decision. Should you have any worries or questions, please come in and talk to us.

The Governing Body

Governors are one of the largest volunteer forces in the country and have an important part to play in schools. A governing body oversees the development of its school, is responsible for the conduct of its school, and must promote high standards of educational achievement in its school.

National Governors Association

The governing body of Abacus Primary School is proud to have played its part in seeing the school establish itself at the heart of our local community. Our wish is to continue as a school which cares for all its pupils and their families, while always working hard to enable all the children who attend the school to fulfil their full potential.

The governing body of Abacus Primary is composed of volunteers from the school and outside community. We meet formally at least once a half term and use working parties when required. We have a responsibility in three main areas: Strategic Planning, Critical Friend & Accountability.

Strategic Planning Role

- To ensure the school has clear aims and values that are supported by the whole school community, and to ensure that these are evident in the day to day operation of the school.
- To focus on raising standards of achievement, establishing high expectations and promoting effective teaching and learning, so that pupils achieve their potential.
- To provide direction through the school development planning process, in collaboration with the Headteacher, staff, pupils and parents.
- To set the school's annual budget.
- To ensure that school resources are directed to the school's priorities, as determined in the School Development Plan.
- To set and regularly review school policies, providing a broad framework for the Headteacher and staff to run the school.

Critical Friend Role

- To visit the school regularly.
- To monitor and evaluate the school's progress and to identify where the school is not achieving its full potential.
- To support the Headteacher and school staff, but also be prepared to challenge decisions made to ensure the whole school aims and values are met.
- To recognise and celebrate the achievements of the school.

Accountability Role

- To be accountable to pupils, parents, staff and the local community for the school's overall performance and conduct.
- To respect the professional roles and management responsibilities of the Headteacher and other staff.
- To produce an Annual Report to parents.

In order to do this, governors are committed to attending workshops, conferences and training to ensure their knowledge and skills are continually updated and enhanced. We welcome queries, suggestions and feedback from everybody involved in the school; pupils, staff, parents, carers and members of the community.

By working together, we can ensure that the children at Abacus receive not only a high standard of education, quality resources and a wonderful environment but that they enjoy their time in school and will remember it as a happy and inspiring experience.

If you would like any further information on the above, contact me through the school office.

Cindy Lewis
Chair of Governors
Abacus Primary School

Home /School Partnerships

The school welcomes the involvement and co-operation of parents and carers in their children's education. This is of the utmost importance, especially when your son or daughter takes their first big step from home to school. Families are welcome to visit the school with their children at any time and can telephone to make an appointment to view the school.

Home/school partnerships are vital. Here at Abacus Primary school, we pride ourselves in working in partnership with our families and carers and provide many opportunities for you to come into school and celebrate your child's education and progress.

These opportunities include:

- Christmas performances
- Sports Day
- Parent evenings
- Family Read
- Open Teach
- Summer Shows
- Spring Performances
- Family Consultations

It is always our policy to encourage home/school contacts so that parents and staff work together for the benefit of the children. We do understand that it may be difficult for some parents and carers to attend all events but we hope that you can join us whenever you are able to. Parent and teacher meetings take place each term.

Many parents enjoy helping in school or helping on school trips and we really value their contribution.

If you are interested in being a voluntary helper, please talk to your child's class teacher (a DBS check will be necessary).

Working Together: Our Home /School Agreement

We believe that the school and families should work in partnership to provide the best possible support to children's learning. We encourage your interest and are always happy to explain our methods and to suggest ways in which you can help at home. We believe that children achieve more when there is an effective partnership between parents and our school. Parents of new pupils are requested to sign the agreement and return it to school at the beginning of the term when their child starts school or at the 'New Intake Meeting'.

Induction

Starting school can be a challenging time for the whole family. We feel our induction arrangements help the whole family prepare for this important time.

Our induction arrangements include:

- An 'Induction Evening' for parents when your child has been allocated a place at Abacus; this includes an opportunity to taste our school meals, tour the school and meet with the Foundation Stage team
- A home visit before your child starts school (for those who start in September);
- A transition morning for your child to see their classroom, meet their new class mates and their new teacher.
- We also liaise with preschool/nursery settings prior to the children starting school.

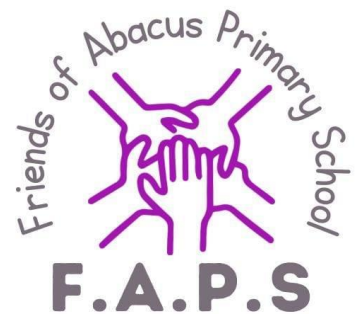
Expressing Your Concerns

If you have any concerns at all about your child's education or welfare at school, please speak to your child's class teacher in the first instance. If an issue is not resolved, please contact the Headteacher via the school office to arrange an appointment to discuss your concerns. We will then explain what action we can take to help resolve the problem. A copy of our complaints policy can be viewed on our school website www.abacusprimaryschool.co.uk/school-policies

Parents Association

We have an active PTA which we call FAPS (Friends of Abacus Primary School). They hold a variety of fantastic social and fundraising events throughout the year including school discos, the summer bounce, photo shoots, Mother/Father's Day gifts and 'The Colour Run'.

We appreciate the effort all parents make to support this association and each year they provide the school with extra resources. We are always looking for new faces and fresh ideas. If you would like to know how you can be involved, ask the PTA chair, the Head Teacher or visit our website (www.abacusprimaryschool.co.uk) for more information. All families are automatically members and the association organise events and fund raising activities.



School Policies

You are welcome to see a copy of any of our school policies. These can be viewed on our school website: www.abacusprimaryschool.co.uk/school-policies. We can also provide you with a copy to take away, if

you wish, though we may have to make a small charge to cover photocopying costs. Please enquire at the school office.

Pupil Voice

There are a number of ways in which we try to involve our pupils across the school these include inviting or selecting individuals to become:



- Play Leaders
- Anti-Bullying Ambassadors
- Pupil Council Member
- Team Captains and Vice Captains
- Sports Ambassadors
- Wellbeing Ambassadors
- Good Practice Seekers
- Young Leaders

To find out about projects our School council have been working on visit their page on our website:

<https://www.abacusprimaryschool.co.uk/pupil-council>



All of our children belong to a team which they earn house points for. The winning team is rewarded weekly and termly. Our current teams are names for the four Saints on the Union Jack:

Saint George (Red); Saint David (Yellow); Saint Patrick (Green) and Saint Andrew (Blue).

House Points			
978	839	751	832



Communication

Communication between home and school is vital. We communicate weekly through a newsletter each Friday which is displayed at the front of the school, sent by text to parents and then added to our website. Information can also be accessed on our website, as well as copies of letters and forms for completion: www.abacusprimaryschool.co.uk We have a Facebook page which publicises upcoming events, provides signposting to other agencies and celebrates happenings in school!

Another method of communication is via text; the texting service has proved to be a very fast and efficient way in which the school can contact parents to notify of any club changes, special events, etc. Letters are also sent home by 'pupil post' so please check your child's book bag for those letters you think you haven't received! We use Tapestry in our Foundation Stage as an online learning journal. More information about this will be given once your child starts school.

Please ensure that we have up-to-date addresses, telephone numbers and email details. Please also inform the school office immediately of any changes to your emergency contact numbers/people.

In the event of your child being unwell we would always contact parents in person.

Clubs and Activities

The school offers a variety of clubs and activities which take place beyond the school day. These enrich the life of the school and give the children a chance to develop their skills and talents. Some of these are led by staff and others by outside organisations.

Due to the space and weather, clubs change each term. A current list of the clubs can be viewed on our website. We do ask for children to be committed to clubs that they have signed up to. If you have a particular skill or expertise and wish to run a club, we would love to hear from you.

Admissions

Abacus Primary School is a popular school serving residents on The Wick. The school receives more applications than there are places available and regularly has appeals from parents who have been unsuccessful in gaining a place for their child, including some who reside in the priority admissions area.

The school shares its priority admission area with neighbouring Oakfield Primary School. Parents can now apply for a place for their child at primary or secondary school level on line at www.essex.gov.uk/topic/admissions

Before applying for a school place parents are advised to:

- Check whether their address is located within the priority admissions area.
- Obtain a copy of the Primary Education in Essex (Basildon District) booklet which contains information about applying for a school place and the processes and timescales involved. A copy can be obtained online at www.essex.gov.uk Investigate and consider applying for other schools as well as Abacus as this will increase the chances of gaining a place at a preferred school, should your application for Abacus be unsuccessful. You can rank the schools in your order of preference on the application form.

There is no guarantee of a place for children in the priority admissions area.

In the event of over-subscription places will be allocated using the following criteria in the order given:

- Children who are looked after;
- Children living in the priority admission area with a sibling attending the school;
- Other children living in the priority admissions area;
- Children living in the geographical area of Wickford (as defined on the map available at the school) with a sibling attending the school;
- Other children living in the geographical area of Wickford (as defined);
- Children living outside the geographical area of Wickford (as defined), with a sibling attending the school;
- Remaining applications.

N.B. Exceptional medical circumstances (supported by medical evidence), may override the above. If a child has an EHCP, admission is via consultation with the school. This process is managed by the SEND Department at Essex County Council.

Curriculum Organisation

We offer a broad and balanced curriculum which is both interesting and stimulating. We feel it is important to meet the needs of the individual child through personalised learning, and provide all children with equal curriculum opportunities. We follow the revised curriculum from September 2014

and use this to create a creative and exciting learning journey for the pupil, which ensures progression and excitement.



Our four key curriculum drivers are:

Communication

We believe that communication in all forms is a life skill that we want our children to learn and to be able to use confidently. We believe that the very first step of everything we teach starts with the ability to communicate - to speak and to listen effectively. Each subject leader in our school recognises the importance of subject specific vocabulary and the ability to verbalise their ideas before putting them onto paper. An observer should walk into our lessons and see effective communication in all subjects, including active learning (Kagan Structures) and opportunities for discussion and 'talk'.

Independence

We have recognised that our children, whilst eager to learn, lack confidence in making decisions for themselves without reassurance from the adults. We want our children to leave primary school with skills for life, specifically the ability to problem solve and manage their own learning independently. Our curriculum is designed around 'learning to learn' skills which provide children with opportunities to develop skills such as independence and resilience, and our subject leaders are developing our curriculum with this in mind. An observer should notice that all children throughout the school in every subject are encouraged to manage their own learning by, for example, collecting their own resources, changing their own reading books, and so on.

Engagement

We are passionate about increasing our children's engagement in all curriculum areas. We have designed our curriculum around topics that aim to excite and inspire our children and we offer many exciting learning opportunities in each year group to capture their interest and spark their imaginations. Examples include: topic weeks, theme days, trips, 'hooks' and hands-on experiences. We also offer a range of inspiring extra-curricular activities to build on the children's learning and to further their knowledge and understanding. We are using Kagan Structures in all year groups to engage reluctant learners and to provide active learning opportunities for all. An observer would see children participating in 'active' learning, through Kagan Structures and Active Maths, for example. We also have class 'curriculum journals' that are used to record those 'Wow!' lessons as well as the opportunities for learning outside the classroom, as discussed above.

Wellbeing

We believe that the wellbeing of our children is paramount. We offer an extensive range of nurturing opportunities and emotional support for our learners, both in the classroom environment and as interventions. Each subject leader is aware of the importance of developing self-esteem, confidence and independence, and as a result, these qualities are truly valued and celebrated throughout the school year. Our staff are supported by our SENCo who provides a wealth of knowledge and experience in these areas. All staff are fully trained in safeguarding procedures and recognise the importance of health, safety and risk assessments in delivering our curriculum. Visitors to our school will see the development of this driver in all classrooms, and the impact of this on our children's everyday lives and happiness. We also have a wellbeing mentor who offers individual or group support to children and a counsellor who is in school one morning a week to work with children and parents/carers.

Mathematics

We endeavour to make our Maths sessions as interactive and hands on as possible. This enables us to offer each child an appropriate challenge daily.

A large part of our mathematical work begins with practical tasks, which help children understand concepts more easily. We recognise that it is important to plan activities which are related to children's own experiences and environment to ensure better understanding. We do this by using whiteboards, number fans and other equipment that is fun to use and interactive.



Selected activities are designed to cover the programmes of study prescribed in the National Curriculum and Primary Strategy. This includes calculator work, perimeter, mental arithmetic, area, percentages and much more.



MATHS WEEK @ Abacus



We also hold an annual 'Maths Week' to promote practical Maths and problem solving.

Literacy (Communication, Language and Literacy)

We aim to teach literacy in as an enthusiastic and motivating way as possible. We aim to provide and develop the necessary skills for the children to use the English language confidently, appropriately and accurately to the best of their ability and use a range of different genres to capture children's imagination.

In English, we write stories, letters, newspapers, leaflets, arguments, postcards and many more different text types, all linked to the children's topic, to capture their imagination and interest!

Children are also taught to write effectively for a range of audiences and purposes. We use 'Talk for Writing' approaches that ensure the children can learn and recall specific books supported by actions and story maps before moving on to writing activities themselves.



We teach a cursive handwriting style right from Foundation Stage.

Reading is very important, with children being taught to read a variety of texts with fluency, for both enjoyment and information. We encourage children to speak clearly and fluently and to listen attentively with understanding. Each classroom has a designated reading area, where children can enjoy reading books.



We also use Accelerated Reader for children in Year 2 and above which has a fantastic range of resources including lots of quizzes to help develop children's reading comprehension skills too. We purchased a vending machine that is filled with books that the children love, every child that achieves 100% on their Accelerated Reader quiz puts their name on the reading wall. Once a week names are randomly drawn and those children receive a golden token for the vending machine.

Where possible, we use ICT to support the teaching of literacy and plan opportunities for children to share their skills across the school, including shared reading and presenting in assemblies. Our school library is equipped with a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts, which will cater for everyone's interests.



Science (knowledge and understanding of the world)

We believe that Science should stimulate and excite pupils. There are many fun activities to do in Science, such as circuit making, planning and conducting exciting experiments and making practical predictions.



Through first hand experiences the children will develop knowledge, skills and understanding about events in the world around them. We aim to provide opportunities to prepare pupils for life in an increasingly scientific and technological world.

We also plan a 'Science Week' during the school year, where children can enjoy a number of 'hands on' learning opportunities.

I.C.T. (Information Communication Technology)

I.C.T. supports learning across the whole of the school curriculum. Children will use a variety of tools to prepare them for an ever changing technological world. Children will also be using interactive whiteboards as part of their everyday learning.

The school is well resourced, with a technology area which provides access to the Internet and a wide range of software, including Microsoft Office. Children are made aware of E-safety and are supervised when using the schools wide range of technology and all computers block unwanted websites. Teachers use interactive whiteboards regularly in class to aid the delivery of lessons.



Information Technology is an integral part of learning in all areas of the curriculum and provides children with the skills they will need for the future. During their time at Abacus, children are given the opportunity to use a variety of hardware such as video cameras, digital cameras, remote controlled toys and laptops, to name a few. Classes use the laptops and their wireless internet capabilities on a regular basis to support research for other subjects, such as Literacy and Numeracy. All classes have access to iPads and laptops. We have invested in mobile technology to ensure that ICT becomes an integrated part of our curriculum.

R.E. (Religious Education)

We believe that that the spiritual, moral and cultural development of a child is highly important. We seek to make pupils aware of the religions of world, through the exploration of their own experiences and discussions.

It is our goal to widen pupil's experience while developing attitudes of respect for themselves, others and the environment.

Children will be taught about world religions, their beliefs and symbols. The school's Religious Education policy is in accordance with the Local Education Authority agreed syllabus and an integrated part of our thematic work.

Assemblies are considered a shared experience, and seen as an important part of the day. Worship is expressed through planned themes and stories. Assembly also provides the opportunity to celebrate birthdays, special occasions and recognise individual achievement.



Outside speakers are also invited into school. Parents who wish their children to be withdrawn from assemblies and Religious Education should contact the Head Teacher.

P. E. (Physical Education)

At Abacus Primary School we promote positive attitudes to an active and healthy lifestyle. We try to achieve this by giving children the opportunities to try a variety of sports, gymnastics and dance activities, linking this to developing teamwork.



We also encourage everyone to take part in the Daily Mile (or daily walk) to promote fitness as well as to provide a more relaxed and social opportunity to break up the working day for the children. This will enable them to enjoy their leisure time more fully in the future.

We work collaboratively with our School Partnership and work closely with our school

sports co-ordinator to provide our children with as many opportunities as possible to try new sports. Throughout the year, our children take part in a number of sporting events, some competitive and some for fun. Our sports day allows for our children to take part in some competitive sports races and we celebrate achievements of all, both inside and outside of school.

History

Through History we teach the children to explore their past and how it influences the present. Children study certain periods of History such as Ancient Civilisations, British and European History as well as World History. Children will be encouraged to develop their research skills using a variety of resources and artefacts, including educational visits and visitors into school. Our thematic approach captures children's interests with History and provides them with opportunities to look at different versions of the same event and write recounts.



What a great day Year 3 had on Tuesday 5th November at Hadleigh Park. The children took part in five activities throughout the day including an archaeological dig, pottery and Warrior school. As you can see from their comments, they had a great day!

"We were archeologists and found a skull, chain mail, pottery and an arrow head from a spear."

"We saw an Iron Age roundhouse and saw how it was different to our homes."

"At warrior school, we learnt to use Stone Age slings and Iron Age Swords and shields"

"I enjoyed fighting with fake swords & shields."

"At our school trip, we went in the round house. We were archeologists, made pottery, went to battle and used sling shots."

"My favourite part of the trip was learning about the things they used and how they lived life with my friends.....it was great!"

Geography

Geography enables children to learn about their surroundings, locality and their country as well as continents such as Europe, Asia and the World whilst at the same time discussing and learning about how different societies and culture affect the world around them.

We plan to teach children about the world around them, covering current affair issues and life skills e.g. map reading.

D.T. (Design and Technology)

Through design and technology, we give the children opportunities to explore and develop their ideas through designing, making and testing various objects using a variety of materials. We encourage children to use a range of tools and materials.



Art and Design

Art and Design stimulates creativity and imagination. It provides visual, tactile and sensory experiences and a special way of understanding and responding to the world. It enables children to communicate what they see, feel and think through the use of colour, texture, form pattern and different materials and processes. Children become involved in shaping their environments through art and design activities.



They learn to make informed judgements and aesthetic and practical decisions. They explore ideas and meanings through the work of artists and designers. Through learning about the roles and functions of art, they can explore the impact it has had on contemporary life and that of different times and cultures. The appreciation and enjoyment of the visual arts enriches all our lives.

Music/Performing Arts



At Abacus, we want to enable the children to develop a love of music. This will be taught by children experiencing creating and listening to music, singing, performing and expressing opinions. Children will use different instruments, resources and equipment and participate in workshops developing their exploration and awareness. They will learn about the history of music and that of different cultures today.



Year 5 attending Young Voices at the O2 in 2023



SMSC (Social Moral Spiritual and Cultural development)

At Abacus we aim to nurture pupils to develop into independent learners with an appreciation and awareness of their inner self, locality and others in the world around them.

To achieve this, we endeavour to give all pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives by becoming informed, active citizens. PSHE is central to the ethos at Abacus Primary School.



Pupils are encouraged to participate in a wide range of learning experiences, contributing fully to school life and the local community including fund raising for good causes such as Young Minds, Save the Children and Children in Need to name but a few. We have also formed close relationships within the community, in particular with a local residential home, Silvana Court. We regularly take small groups of children there to read to the residents and our school community donate gifts to them for Christmas.



We recognise the importance of the whole family and value the skills and contributions that they can make towards their children's learning experience.

Recreational times (playtimes, lunchtimes and snack times) are an important part of our day. We encourage children to sit together and socialise during these times.

Introduction to MFL (Modern Foreign Languages)

By introducing children to MFL we aim to open them up to a world of language, providing them with the opportunity to learn about different cultures and enabling them to communicate with others across the world.

Out of School Achievements

We are always interested to hear about our children's success in their out of school hobbies and clubs.

We celebrate these by adding their achievements to our weekly newsletter.



Inclusion (S.E.N.)

Here at Abacus Primary School, we pride ourselves on offering a fully inclusive environment and education, which allows all children to reach their potential. Our SENCo is Mrs Hunter. Schools have a

responsibility to provide a broad and balanced curriculum and the National Curriculum is a starting point for planning a curriculum that meets the specific needs of all pupils.

The school will aim to:

- Set suitable challenges for pupils
- Respond to pupil's diverse learning needs
- Ensure all pupils have access to the curriculum
- Whether a child is of exceptional ability or is experiencing learning difficulties, the teacher, in consultation with the Headteacher and teaching/support staff, will establish an appropriate learning programme.
- Parents are consulted at an early stage and encouraged to support their child. Good partnerships between the school and home are important to ensure that the child is successful.

We believe in early intervention and we try to identify these children as quickly as possible. We involve parents at all stages and we encourage parents to become involved in One Planning as much as possible.



If you have concerns, initially please speak to your child's teacher although they may refer you to our SENCO so you can have a more in-depth discussion in a confidential setting. Mrs Hunter also offers weekly SENCo Surgery slots that can be booked by any parent via the school office.

Please also see our SEN Board in the main entrance are where any local services or activities are publicised for everyone to see.

Pastoral Care and Behaviour

Our school is a caring community in which behaviour is based on mutual respect and consideration for others. There is a collective responsibility within the school towards all children. Each child is treated with respect, fairness and firmness in a caring environment throughout the school. The values, standards and attitudes of the school are made clear to the children, by example and discussion. Class rules are decided as a class early in September and shared with parents. As a school, we encourage positive behaviour and mutual respect.

Each child belongs to a team or house. Children are awarded points and these are collated weekly across the whole school. The winning team is rewarded at the end of each term and the overall winning team is rewarded at the end of each academic year. Each team has a captain and vice-captain. Each class has a positive behaviour system, which is embedded as part of their classroom routines. These are displayed within their class.



We have a team who focus on Wellbeing and run a number of small support groups throughout the school year to support children's confidence, self-esteem and friendship issues.



We run a number of clubs which support Mental Health and Wellbeing including Mindful Mondays, Wellbeing Wednesday and Feel Good Friday.

Nordic Walking is enjoyed on Tuesdays after school. We recognise the positive impact the outdoors can have on Mental Health and Wellbeing.

We have recently been awarded the Level 1 RHS gardening award and we are now working towards Level 2. This year we are taking part in the Schools in Bloom competition and Wickford in Bloom.

Child Protection

As a caring organisation with direct responsibility for children, our first concern must be your child's welfare in all its aspects. Therefore, there may be occasions when we have to consult other agencies even before we contact you, particularly in relation to child protection/abuse concerns. Should this be necessary, we want to reassure you that any concerns we have about your child will then be discussed with you after we have talked with the other agency. The procedures we have to follow (it is a statutory duty) have been laid down by the Essex Area Child Protection Committee.

If you would like to know more about this procedure, please speak to the Headteacher. The school's Child Protection policy is available for inspection.



Contact us:

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