

Abacus Primary School

Newsletter 509

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WELL DONE!



Thanks to everyone who came along and supported our Christmas Fayre on Wednesday afternoon. A big well done to staff and children for their creativity in creating the crafts and Christmas items. Gonks have become a bit of an Abacus Christmas Fayre tradition over the last couple of years and they are usually the first item to sell out. Year 3 have been busy working on this over the last few weeks and each and everyone of them has been made with lots of love. This year they have a few left, so if you would like to purchase one please pop and see Lilac or Green class (or our school office) to purchase one for £5 .



Thanks also to our Abacus Allstars, who performed fantastically well. And to FAPS for supporting us at this event.



Next week we are on WEEK 2 of our new menu.

Please see changes further on.

RESPECT OUR NEIGHBOURS

DON'T BLOCK DRIVEWAYS

We have received a number of phone calls and emails over the last couple of weeks from local residents regarding parking at drop off and pick up times. Concerns have been raised around blocking driveways and how dangerously parents have parked.

Parents have also raised concerns about parents who park on the pavement and in front of our school gates.

Please can we ask that you do consider others when parking and that you do not obstruct driveways or park in front of our school gates.

We would appreciate everyone's support with this matter.



We are really looking forward to watching Foundation and Year One in their performances next week. They have all worked so hard to learn their lines and songs. To ensure all children can be heard and they all have their 'time to shine' younger siblings and babies are not permitted to these performances. These performances are taking place on:

Wednesday 6th December 2023–9.30am Year One performance

2.15pm Foundation performance

Thursday 7th December 2023–9.30am Foundation performance

2.15pm Year One performance

Please remember your ticket to enable you to attend the plays. Each ticket allows one adult to the performance.

THIS WEEK'S MENU

Please see the menu below for next weeks menu changes, this affects Monday and Thursday.

Monday: Red band - Cheesy pasta bolognaise

Thursday: Red band - Sausage baguette
 Green band - Veggie sausage baguette
 Purple band - Cheese roll

Week 2	Red Band	Green Band	Yellow Band	Purple Band	Dessert
Monday	Cheesy Pasta Bolognaise Garlic Bread GF, DF, EF	Quorn Bolognaise Garlic Bread GF, DF	Jacket Potato with Filling	Egg & Crispy Bacon Baguette GF, DF	Peaches & Cream or Fresh Fruit
Tuesday	All Day Breakfast Sausage, Bacon, Hash Brown & Beans GF, DF, EF	Vegetarian All Day Breakfast, Sausage, Mushroom, Hash Brown & Beans DF, EF	Jacket Potato with Filling	Ham Sandwich Crisps GF, DF, EF	Chocolate Crispy Cake or Fresh Fruit
Wednesday	Roast Chicken, Roast Potatoes, Vegetables & Yorkshire Pudding GF, DF, EF	Roasted Quorn, Roast Potatoes, Vegetables & Yorkshire Pudding GF, DF, EF	Jacket Potato with Filling	Bacon, Lettuce & Tomato (BLT) Sandwich GF, DF, EF	Yoghurt or Fresh Fruit
Thursday	Sausage Baguette GF, DF, EF	Veggie Sausage Baguette DF, EF	Jacket Potato with Filling	Cheese Roll GF, DF, EF	Lemon Drizzle Cake or Fresh Fruit
Friday	Jumbo Fish Fingers, Chips & Peas GF, DF, EF	Cheese & Onion Pastry, Chips & Peas EF	Jacket Potato with Filling	Tomato Pasta Pot GF, DF, EF	Cookie or Fresh Fruit



On Friday 8th December 2023 we invite children to wear a Christmas jumper, t-shirt, dress, hair accessories or hat for 'Save the Children Christmas Jumper Day'. All donations will go directly to the charity. Please send donations via Parent Pay, we will send out the link for you to pay on text.



This year we are hoping to be able to present all of the 86 residents at Silvana Court with a Christmas gift to open on Christmas day.

If you would like to help us by donating a Christmas gift of either tins of biscuits or chocolates, we have set up a box in the entrance hall for you to leave your donations in.

Sportshall Success



On the 30th November 2023, our team of athletes from Years 5 and 6 got to compete in the Wickford School's Sportshall Athletics Competition against 3 other schools from Wickford.

They all put into practice their training as they competed in their field (jumping and throwing) and track (running) events.

There was some fantastic individual results in the field events and in the track events teamwork brought home some great victories. This all resulted in us winning the event overall and we will now go on to represent Wickford in the partnership final in February.

Thank you as always to family member who transported the children to the event .



Panathlon challenge

On the 21st November 2023, children from KS1 and KS2 took part in a Panathlon challenge with other schools from Wickford, Billericay and South Woodham.

They all had a great time trying out the different activities which involved: throwing at a target, ball control and working as a team.

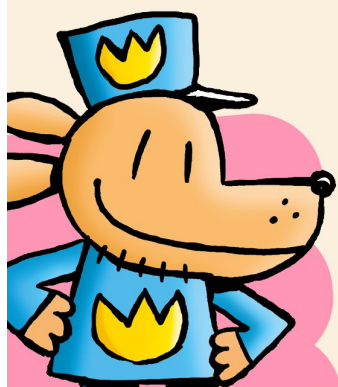
We had some very proud children when they came back to school with their participation medals.



We love to read!



Year 2 had a lovely time at Silvana Court on Monday afternoon making gingerbread houses with our resi-



 SCHOLASTIC  TRAVELLING BOOKS

COME TO 
the BOOK FAIR!

AND EARN FREE BOOKS FOR OUR SCHOOL



Reminder that today is the last day for our school book fair!

We will be selling them in the large hall from 3.15-3.45pm after school if you would like to come and have a look or you can still pay online at:

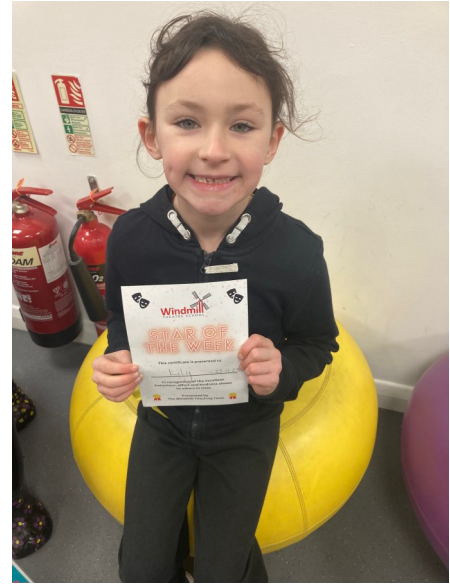
<https://bookfairs.scholastic.co.uk/travelling-books/pay>

The online payment system will be available until 9pm tonight (1/12/23)

Pay the total amount for your books then email admin@abacus.essex.sch.uk with **Book Fair** in the subject line and the following information: **your child's name, their class, the books you have ordered and the payment reference number.**

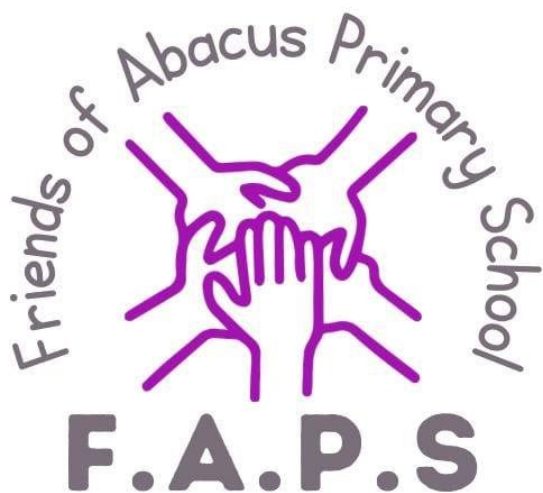
Without this information, we will be unable to ensure the correct books are given to your child.

LET'S CELEBRATE!



So much to celebrate this week. Well done to Kayla, Lara-Jo, Lily, Harry, Teddy and Ryan.





ABACUS
PRIMARY SCHOOL
PRESENTS...

THE SOUTHEND SORCERERS SOCIETY



You can book your tickets here: <https://www.pta-events.co.uk/faps-abacus/>

Or scan the QR code shown.



SCAN FOR TICKETS



SATURDAY
DECEMBER 9TH
7PM- 9:30PM

doors open
at 6:15pm

£8PP

SUITABLE FOR SCHOOL AGE +



Bag2School is a **free eco-friendly fundraising scheme** that helps schools, businesses, community groups, local councils, and charities **raise funds through textile recycling** as well as spreading textile recycling awareness.

We will be taking part in this scheme after Christmas...more details to follow.

FLU VACCINE CATCH-UP CLINICS

Time is running out to vaccinate your child with this season's flu nasal spray*.

The flu vaccine reduces the risk of serious illness and will top up their protection even if they've been vaccinated before.

Drop into one of our catch-up clinics for primary and secondary aged children and those eligible for a COVID-19 vaccination:

2 December, 9 December

8.30am – 1.50pm

Vaccination Centre, The Lodge, Runwell, SS11 7XX

No booking required. Just walk in.

Booked appointments only on:

16, December

8.30am – 3.50pm

Vaccination Centre, The Lodge, Runwell,
SS11 7XX

Ring 0300 790 0597 to book.

***flu injection is offered as an alternative to the nasal spray**

#DOYOURBITESSEX



Below is a Focus on PDA (Demand Avoidance) from the PDA society

What is demand avoidance?

- Not being able to do certain things at certain times
- Things we do to avoid demands
- Natural human trait
- Many possible reasons for more 'significant' demand avoidance
- A PDA profile isn't **always** the best explanation



Key features of a PDA profile

- resisting and avoiding the **ordinary** demands of life
- using **social** strategies as part of avoidance
- **appearing sociable**, but lacking some understanding
- experiencing **intense emotions** & mood swings
- appearing comfortable in **role play & pretence**
- focusing intently, often on other people
- a need for **control**, often an **automatic threat/anxiety** response
- a tendency not to respond to **conventional** approaches



Other ASD Profiles

Differences/difficulties

PDA Profile



Emerging clinical & research themes

- **Intolerance of uncertainty & hierarchy** of demand avoidance approaches (University of Newcastle 2016)
- **Speech & language:** differences between expressive & receptive language; slower processing time (Christie 2015)
- **ADOS score** differences in PDA children (Ludy Eaton and Kayla Weaver Good Autism Practice Oct 2020)
- Differences in **developmental history** themes:
 - elaborate excuses
 - sabotaging things that want to do
 - extreme aggression (seeming to result from loss of control)
 - ineffectiveness of traditional reward & consequence-based parenting (Ludy Eaton and Kayla Weaver Good Autism Practice Oct 2020)

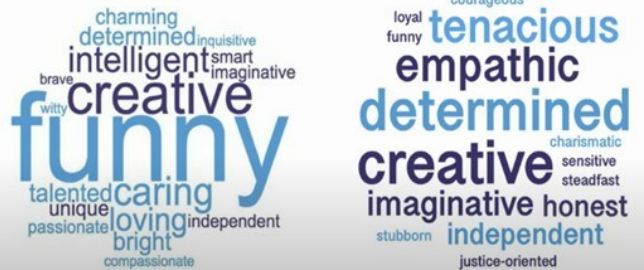


How PDA can feel

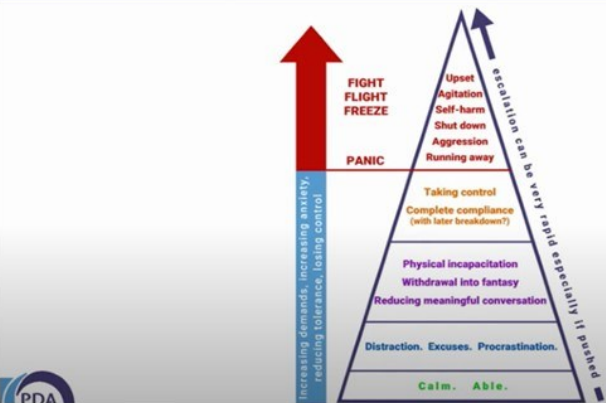
can't not won't

- I feel most anxious when I'm pressed to do something I feel I can't do, but when people around me don't understand what I mean when I say "I can't do that" I know how to do things, and I can do them sometimes, but most of the time I just can't. It starts with avoidance but if someone is insisting I go straight to panic. I go from being sort of OK to crashing down a hill. It's the most frustrating thing to have the functional capacity to understand what's happening but the functional ability just isn't there. It's the worst form of self-sabotage. - Isaac
- Although I'm acting angry what I'm feeling is terror, and afterwards I don't remember what I've done - Jack
- I describe the experience of being under a demand as being like claustrophobia. The anxiety keeps rising steadily until it becomes a non-negotiable panic-driven need to flee - Tony
- It's like you're gaming and you have the controller, and then sometimes someone yanks that controller away from you and you lose control and feel panicky - Mollie
- Demand avoidance makes it sound like I'm avoiding things on purpose, but I literally have no choice over it whatsoever. So I prefer to call it demand anxiety - Tally (from the book Can You See Me? - Scholastic)

Positive PDA



Demand avoidance in PDA



Helpful approaches

Conventional approaches are **ineffective**

Low arousal approaches are good starting points

A partnership based on trust, flexibility, collaboration, careful use of language and balancing of demands works best




<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=diHUmhPWXY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nWuEvGgnRME>

<https://www.pdasociety.org.uk/resources/resource-category/most-used/>

Our Curriculum



Early Years Foundation Stage

A busy week with lots of practising, learning lines and going on and off the stage. Our book in drawing club this week was a foundation favourite- 'The Snowman'. A beautiful story and we were inspired to draw our own Snowman. Can we tell you what we drew? Can we show you how we write our CVC words? We have enjoyed watching the story unfold and singing along to the music. We do love a song in Foundation!. In Maths we have been focussing on more or less. Our puppets have been trying to help us work out who has more or less. I am not sure we like it when we have less things...but certainly understand having more! We do like things to be fair. We enjoyed the preparations for our first Christmas Fair and the excitement of going to it after school.

Year 1

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas already in Year 1. We had great fun decorating our gingerbread men for the Christmas Fayre and putting the finishing touches to our Christmas Play. Can't wait for you to see it! In Phonics we have learnt more spellings from group 5 that 'look the same but sound different' Ask us which ones or have a look at the Yr1 webpage. In Maths we are exploring two-digit numbers and getting better at our number bonds to 10. In English we also wrote our own version of Rapunzel.

Year 2

What a lovely week we have had this week; we loved making our tree decorations for the Christmas Fayre on Wednesday, we have learned more of our 'Ho Ho Ho' song in music (including a rap part!) and have enjoyed learning about command sentences by looking at instructions for 'How to Make a Snowman' - we're starting to feel very festive! In Maths, we have been learning to subtract a two-digit number from another two-digit number when the ones cross the tens (e.g. 33-17). We have been thinking about this practically and have used Base 10 to help us swap one 10 for ten 1s. In science, we have learned about the life cycle of a frog and in art we have made some great pinch pots from clay.

Year 3

Year 3 have had a great week preparing for the Christmas fayre and adding the final touches to the gongs! (Thank you for buying them!) In English, we have just started writing up a fantasy story as a class. In Maths, we have been multiplying/dividing by 4 and 8. Practise at home on TTRS will help times table fluency. In PSHE, we have been learning about an important topic 'PANTS!' Ask your children what this stands for and why it is important to remember it.

Year 4

This week in Year 4 we have been continuing with our multiplication and division learning. The focus has been the 7's, 11's, 12's and the 0 and 1's. Quiz your child on their times table facts to help embed their learning. Spellings have been about words where 'ch' which makes the 'sh' sound. Some of our words of the week were chef, machine, chaperone and chute. In English, we have been recapping rhetorical questions and fronted adverbials. Then on Thursday we had to apply for a job in the North Pole. We had to use persuasive writing devices. The vacancies were toy maker, gift wrapper or reindeer carer. In D&T we have been creating our advent calendars, making sure the pictures line up with the doors. They were so much fun.

Year 5

This week in Year 5 we started looking at non chronological reports. We are going to create our own planets. Some of ideas are out of this world! In Grammar we started to learn all about using brackets to show parenthesis, it is easier than it sounds. In Maths we were multiplying and diving multiples of 10,100 and 1000. We are moving on to fractions next week. In DT we have continued being engineers and have designed products, some designed a set of earmuffs others a bookshelf and e even had a new radiator clothes dryer. We had to build, test and evaluate our products. We are all now design engineers. In computing we continued our Space Power-Points, we have now added images, transitions and animation to our presentations.

Year 6

Year 6 have had another busy week! We really enjoyed preparing for the Christmas Fayre and both classes had great success with their stalls, totalling takings of £202! In Maths we have been finding fractions of amounts and it was good fun taking part in the chocolate challenge. Ask us to tell you where we sat and why! In Geography we have been learning all about the UK, ensuring we can name the countries, capitals and surrounding seas, as well as some of the human and physical features. In English we have started writing a descriptive narrative about Jake's capture of a banshee focussing on making specific vocabulary choices.



At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many issues which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit nationalcollege.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

What Schools Need to Know about THE ONLINE SAFETY ACT

The Online Safety Act was passed into UK law in October 2023, with the aim of establishing major new layers of protection for children when they're online. The government has pledged "a zero-tolerance approach to protecting children from online harm" – and the act certainly includes more powerful legislation which should help to safeguard young people in the digital world. Our guide summarises the key points for schools ...

WHAT THE ACT WILL DO

HARMFUL CONTENT

Social media sites must rapidly remove illegal and/or harmful content such as bullying or harassing comments; pornography; and content that supports extremist activity or encourages or depicts violence, suicide, self harm or eating disorders. If they fail to do so, they can be fined up to 10% of their global revenue while their executives may even face jail time.

ANIMAL CRUELTY

Content featuring cruelty to animals is now prohibited, even if it originates from abroad (where the law may be different). Again, it is the platform's responsibility to remove this.

MORE TRANSPARENCY

Sites must be transparent about the hazards that any children using them could encounter – by publishing risk assessments for their platforms, for instance.

HOSTING MISLEADING ADVERTS

Scams and fraudulent adverts must be blocked or removed, or the hosting companies are liable to be fined.

NON-CONSENSUAL SHARING

It's now easier to convict online abusers or people who share intimate images without consent, while legislation on the criminality of deepfakes has been clarified. The new laws also relate to any individuals who even threaten to share such images. This should help to protect women and girls in particular online.

REPORTING AND FILTERING

Sites should have easy reporting mechanisms for children (or their parents and carers) to flag up problems quickly. They must also provide options to filter out unwanted content.

AGE-RESTRICTED MATERIAL

Sites must prevent children from accessing age-inappropriate material. This includes enforcing age limits and implementing robust age verification.

What this means for you

The act has some specific implications for schools: it's essential that leaders understand the new legislation's scope and limitations. The act is certainly a positive step, but as artificial intelligence and other advances in tech continue to produce new challenges, schools will still need to remain extremely vigilant.

KNOW WHERE TO GET HELP

Look out for the Code of Conduct that Ofcom is creating in response to the Online Safety Act. Note that the new legislation doesn't mean an instant change: many of its elements will only come into force at the end of 2023. An Ofcom consultation on 'protecting people from illegal harms online' will be running until February 2024.

REMEMBER THE ESSENTIALS

Remain mindful of your organisation's own online activities: the legal duty for schools to maintain appropriate software monitoring and filtering, for example, will not change.

WATCH FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

There are some issues on which the legislation remains less clear for now: whether it's possible for Ofcom to scan encrypted private messages (such as on WhatsApp) has yet to be resolved, for instance – making this an area where, for the moment, young people have less legal protection.

UNDERSTAND AND EXPLAIN

Staff should learn how to raise concerns with tech companies whose platforms contain anything upsetting or unpleasant. Students also need to be made aware of the newly strengthened laws relating to cyber-bullying, sexting or posting inappropriate content. Young people do make mistakes online – so the clearer their understanding of the possible consequences, the better.

ENGAGE WITH PARENTS

Schools should also explain to parents and carers the new possibilities that the Online Safety Act affords them in terms of protecting their children. Many parents may have previously felt that there was little they could do about changing online platforms' content; they now have a far greater level of support when complaining about a company or the behaviour of an individual.

Meet Our Expert

Luke Ramsden is Senior Deputy Headmaster and Director of Safeguarding for the St Benedict's family of schools. He is a regular speaker at conferences and writes in the TES (among other journals) on school leadership, pastoral care and safeguarding. In 2022, he was named Pastoral Leader of the Year at the National Awards for Pastoral Care in Education.

