

Abacus Primary School

Newsletter 434

21/1/22



We've had another busy week this week at Abacus and it's wonderful to have some normal activities back again! It's been great for the children to be able to take part in sporting events once again and we were so proud of the children's individual and team efforts at the swimming gala last week. This week we hosted the Sportshall Athletic event with four schools from across Wickford. See the Sports News page for more details of these events.

A special "Well done" to Annabella, Amelie and Libby in White Class for their honesty when finding some money on the playground and handing it in.



The school office have received calls from residents this week about the parking around the school. Please consider others when parking.

Also, please can we remind all parents that parking in our car park is for staff only this includes school drop off and pick up times.

Due to being unwell, there are a few parents who have been given permission to drop children off here but other than these parents no one else should be using the staff car park.

**STAFF
PARKING
ONLY**

WEEK 1

Next week we will be on Week 1 of our menu



**WHAT'S
FOR
LUNCH?**

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50 children from years 3 – 6 train before school on a Tuesday morning.

It's been very cold and muddy but that is all part of Cross Country training.

We have started training for the Wickford Cross Country Competition in February.

Year 3 & 4 are working towards running a distance of 1000 meters.
Year 5 & 6 will run a total of 1500 meters.



Cross Country Club

We have been working on our stamina and being able to run at a steady pace.



Sportshall Success

On the 18th January 2022, our team of athletes from Years 5 and 6 finally got to compete in the Wickford School's Sportshall Athletics Competition after it had been postponed twice before Christmas.

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

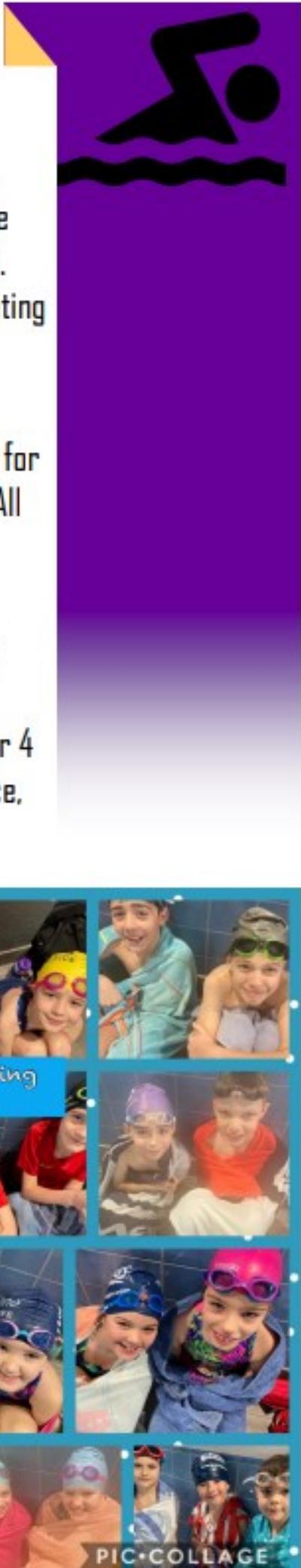
There was great team spirit and support within the team as well as towards other schools.

They all performed exceptionally well and were rewarded with 1st place. They will now go on to represent Wickford in the partnership final on the 3rd February 2022 joining the best schools from Billericay and South Woodham Ferrers.

Good Luck Team Abacus!



Swimming Gala



On the 14th January 2022, 30 children from KS2 took part in the 7th Wickford Schools Swimming Gala at Wickford Swimming Pool. This was the 2nd day of the Gala with 6 Wickford Schools competing in total.

There were individual races for each year group—Front crawl, Breast Stroke, Back Stroke and an additional race for Year 5/6 for the Butterfly Stroke. These were then followed by relay races. All races were timed and then compared over the 2 days to place swimmers.

Great team spirit and support was shown by the squad and each child put in a great performance. A special mention to Harley, Pearce and Lewis who did an extra race each to support the Year 4 boy's team. Also to Keira and Leon who took on the Butterfly race, which is a hard stroke to master.

We came 3rd place overall and all the children should be extremely proud of themselves as for some this was their first time competing in a gala which is very different to swimming lessons.



White Rose Maths, a programme which is a foundation for our Maths curriculum at Abacus, has re-

leased a free app called 1 Minute Maths. This app helps children practise addition, subtraction and subitising (recognising the number of objects in a small group without the need to count them e.g. dice spots). It is aimed for children at KS1 but can be used by any age for practising rapid recall of number facts.

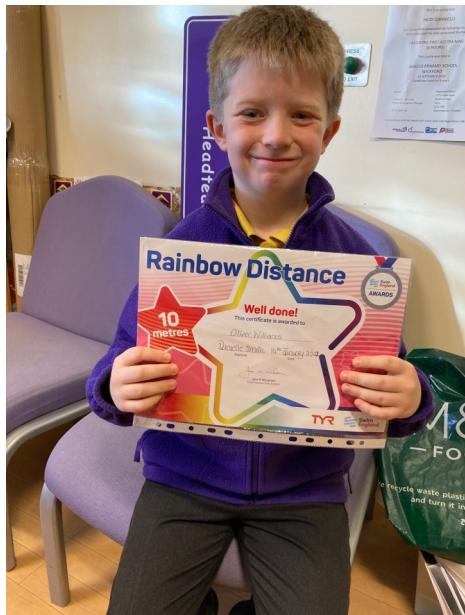
Find out more here: <https://whiterosemaths.com/resources/1-minute-maths>

Miss Hodkin- Maths Lead



It

LET'S CELEBRATE!



Well done to Oliver for his swimming success this week.



St George's Day	St David's Day	Happy St Patrick's Day!	St Andrew's Day
132	212	128	137

St David's house are our house point winners this week! Well done to everyone and keep up the great work!

Our Curriculum



Early Years Foundation Stage	<p>In Foundation this week has all been about the number 5. How do you make 5, what numbers can you use? We have learnt so many sounds now, we looked at the alphabet and had to match the capital letters and lower-case letters. Ask us if we can see capital letters on our food at home. Of course the favourite activity of the week, was working together, using lots of boxes and tubes to make a Ask us what we made and how we enjoyed using it in the class. Can we remember any of the key words?</p>
Year 1	<p>This week we read The Tiger Who Came to Tea and we're convinced it was the tiger that made all the mess last week. Maybe he was still hungry? In English we have used the story to help us write about a different animal that came to tea and have proudly displayed it on our Writing Wall. In Maths we have focused on subtraction and the different ways to explore subtraction sentences. Did you know some people don't use the word subtraction. Ask us what they might say instead. Art was lots of fun this week as we explored different shades of colour and recreated a cheeky painting by Louis Wain, linked to our Paws and Claws topic. Bet you can't guess what we painted.</p>
Year 2	<p>In Y2 this week we have been solving calculations and problems involving the 2x table. Please make sure we are using Times Tables Rockstars as we need to improve our speedy recall of familiar tables. In English, we have written our own finding tales and have been trying hard to include a range of openers and expanded noun phrases in our paragraphs to make them more interesting! We have been learning the "sounds like /l/ looks like -il" spelling and practising apostrophes for omission and possession in GPS. We have been super busy in topic too, learning about how people earn money in PSHE, identifying the properties of materials in Science and comparing weather patterns in Wickford and Kingston, Jamaica. See if we can tell you the difference between weather and climate! (For bonus points - see if we can tell you how many years' worth of weather records determine a location's climate?)</p>
Year 3	<p>Year 3 have enjoyed a week of Geography learning about our new Topic 'Blue Planet.' We have used our map skills to locate the rivers of the UK and the world. We also identified the cities and countries of the UK. In maths, we have been dividing a 2 digit number by a 1 digit number including exchanging. We have enjoyed reading the book 'Flotsam' and started to plan our own journey tale that we will be writing up next week!</p>
Year 4	<p>We have been beginning to learn about Hinduism for RE. We have been learning about the different Gods and Goddesses and about their character and appearance; we then created our own God/Goddess linking to our own character and appearance. What God/Goddess did your child draw? In Reading, we have been looking at different styles of poetry and focused on the vocabulary of 'The Shadow' by Robert Louis Stevenson. We were excited for the start of our swimming lessons this week. In Music, we have learnt to recognise the different notes for the strings on a Ukulele. We used a rhyme to help us remember 'Good Children Eat Apples'.</p>
Year 5	<p>This week in Year 5 we have been writing our own narratives based on the book Street Child that we have been reading. In Maths, we have moved on to look at division and have enjoyed taking part in a volcano Maths problem. In History, we have been continuing to learn about the inventions that were invented during the Victorian period. Ask your child about the invention that they have particularly enjoyed finding out about. In Computing, we have been looking at the effectiveness of a website by seeing why they are appealing to viewers. In PE, we have been practicing our shoulder and chest passes by concentrating on our foot skills.</p>
Year 6	<p>This week, in Science, we have carried out some investigations in order to learn about natural selection. We pretended to be birds catching 'worms' on the school field and noticed that the brighter coloured worms were far easier to spot. This meant that they were not best suited to the environment and therefore their population would decrease more quickly than those that were better camouflaged. Ask us about the peppered moths, which are another example of natural selection, made famous during the Victorian time period. In PSHE, we have been talking about the positive and negative effects of social media and how we can assess which online materials are reliable. We are still enjoying our class book 'Darwin's Dragons', which is full of suspense and tension - we can't wait to find out what will happen next!</p>



Lots of prizes to be won!

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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about HORROR GAMES

Horror video games come in a such a variety that the genre can hard to define. The overlapping element is that these games are designed to scare or unsettle the player through gameplay, atmosphere, story, music, setting and 'jump scares'. The most common sub-genres are survival horror, action horror, psychological horror, jump-scare horror and reverse horror. These games originate from a range of developers, including smaller indie studios which release download-only titles (that is, they aren't physically sold in shops) and therefore aren't subject to age ratings.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

ADULT THEMES

Horror games are typically made with adults in mind, which means by definition that they often feature adult themes. *Outlast*, for instance, is a popular horror game series including material such as nudity and extreme sadistic violence. Other games, like *Five Nights at Freddy's* and its sequels, have a back-story that doesn't actually appear on screen but still hints at explicit adult themes.

VIOLENT CONTENT

Not all horror games contain graphic violence (titles like *Five Nights at Freddy's* and *Phasmophobia* prefer a spookier, suspenseful aesthetic) but many do portray extreme brutality very realistically. Until *Dawn* and the hugely popular *Resident Evil* and *Outlast* franchises, for instance, feature incredibly graphic violence. The safest course of action is to thoroughly research a game in advance.

ONLINE INTERACTION

Some horror games are played cooperatively with others online. *Phasmophobia* is one of the most popular titles in this category, and while it doesn't feature an excessive amount of gore, it does place a strong emphasis on online interaction – often with strangers. *Dead by Daylight* is another game in which frequent and prolonged online communication with other players is an advantage.



Advice for Parents & Carers

BEWARE OF JUMP SCARES

Jump scares in video games are often no worse than they are in movies. If a young person doesn't cope well with being suddenly startled by something in a film or on TV, they probably won't be able to handle horror games featuring jump scares. Some games (such as *Five Nights at Freddy's*) are built entirely around this technique and aren't suitable for younger children or those who are easily frightened.

ENCOURAGE BREAKS

It's easy to lose track of time when gaming, and horror games are no exception. A short break every hour or so is important to rest the eyes and relieve the posture – especially if traumatic situations in the game have built up tension and stress. For horror gamers, breaks also give the added benefit of feeling more relaxed afterwards, which can mean a scarier gaming session when they resume!

RESEARCH THE GAME

It's best to look into a horror game thoroughly if your child expresses an interest in playing it. Many indie horror titles are download only and therefore aren't required to come with an age rating – so you'll need to do some background reading and judge the game's content for yourself. Check out the game's web pages, read any wikis about it (including fan ones) and watch videos of the gameplay.

IF IN DOUBT, SWAP IT OUT

If your child finds a horror game to play, but after doing some research you decide it doesn't look like the right one for them, swap it out! There are a lot of horror titles to choose from, and some will be more appropriate than others. Work together with your child to find a suitable game for them. Remember, horror games don't have to be gore-spattered and graphic to be enjoyably scary!

STAY RECEPTIVE

Maintaining good communication with your child is vital for safe gaming. If they see something in a horror game that disturbs them in ways they didn't expect, then they should feel comfortable opening up to you about it. Try not to simply laugh it off or make light of it, and always make time to listen. It's a useful reminder that they can talk to you about any type of problem they have in the future.

Meet Our Expert

Clare Godwin (a.k.a. Lunawolf) has worked as an editor and journalist in the gaming industry since 2015, providing websites with event coverage, reviews and gaming guides. She is the owner of Lunawolf Gaming and is currently working on various gaming-related projects including game development and writing non-fiction books.



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