

Abacus Primary School

Newsletter 502

6 / 10 / 23

When the circus came to Abacus...



What an amazing day we had on Thursday. We began with an assembly to launch the day where there were lots of oohs and ahhs as Mike and Harry captivated the audience with their juggling skills. All of the children had the opportunity to take part in a circus skills workshop throughout the day (photos will be added to the school gallery soon). There was much excitement as 12 vans arrived during playtime which contained the big top. What a great evening we had, thank you to everyone who came along and supported the event, we are so pleased that you enjoyed yourself. It was great to see the children so engaged and excited. A huge thank you to our amazing FAPS committee who have spent many hours planning this event and to the staff members who helped last night.

Next week, we will be on

WEEK 1 of our Summer menu.

Due to staff shortages there will be some changes to the menu...please see the next page.





Please note the changes for next weeks dinners that have been highlighted on the menu below.

This only affects Tuesday's dessert and Wednesday's red band option.

Abacus Primary School Menu

Week 1	Red Band	Green Band	Yellow Band (DF)(GF)(EF)	Purple Band	Dessert
Monday	Chicken Korma, Rice & Naan Bread GF, DF, EF	Sweet Potato Korma, Rice & Naan Bread GF, DF, EF	Jacket Potato with Filling	Chicken Nugget Wrap DF, EF	Fruit Cocktail or Fresh Fruit
Tuesday	Meat Feast Pizza Spaghetti Hoops GF, DF, EF	Cheese & Tomato Pizza Spaghetti Hoops GF, DF, EF	Jacket Potato with Filling	Ham Sandwich & Crisps GF, EF, DF	Sponge or Fresh Fruit
Wednesday	Roast Chicken , Roast Potatoes, Vegetables & Yorkshire Pudding GF, DF, EF	Roasted Vegetable & Cheese Burrito Vegetables GF, EF	Jacket Potato with Filling	Cheese Roll & Crisps GF, EF	Yoghurt or Fresh Fruit
Thursday	Meatballs in Tomato Sauce with Pasta GF, DF, EF	Tomato & Basil Pasta Garlic Bread GF, DF, EF	Jacket Potato with Filling	Tuna & Cucumber Baguette GF, DF, EF	Chocolate Iced Sponge 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



FAPS 'Christmas Card Project'

FAPS have organised for us to take part in the 'Christmas Card Project' again this year! Your children have the opportunity to design their own Christmas cards at home which can then be ordered and made into your own unique Christmas cards.



Please note the following when designing your cards:

Designs to be made at home on A4 paper.

Do not write child's name or class on them.

Must be handed to class teacher by 16th October.

Order forms will be sent back week commencing 31st October.

Orders must be placed by 8th November for the school to earn the commission.

Please visit www.abacusprimaryschool.co.uk/faps (copy link) for instructions for the project. A link will also be sent via text for you.

We hope your children enjoy designing these and we look forward to seeing all their hard work!

On Tuesday 10th October 2023, it's World Mental Health Day.

We invite children to wear yellow (school or PE top is fine). Throughout the week we will be completing activities around wellbeing and mental health.



Well done to Yaqub, Mae, Caitlin, James, Lucas and Henry from Year 4 who made our resident friends at Silvana court so happy on Monday afternoon.

LET'S CELEBRATE!



Well done to Lewis, Abella and Louie for their achievements outside of school.



We are looking for a catering manager to join our hardworking school kitchen team.



This position is for Catering Manager for 32.5 hours per week Monday to Friday - 8am to 3pm.

If you'd like to know more information please contact the school office on 01268 571018.

sports news

Boy's Football Tournament



On Thursday the 5th October 2023, our boy's football team played in their first league tournament with 6 other Wickford schools.

There was a definite improvement in the team as the tournament went on after losing their first 2 games 1-0, they went on to draw a game then win 3, scoring 5 goals altogether. The boy's played well as a team and showed great sportsmanship.

They finished 4th overall out of the 7 schools and have lots to build on for the next 2 tournaments.

Thank you to the family members who game along and supported the team and Clive from Wickford Town Football Club who has been coaching them.





NEW INTAKE SCHOOL TOURS

Our school is holding tours for prospective parents on the following dates:

TUESDAY 31ST OCTOBER

THURSDAY 23RD NOVEMBER

MONDAY 8TH JANUARY

We are holding 3 sessions on each of the above dates:

9.30am, 10.45am & 1.30pm

The tours will last for approximately 45 minutes and begin with a presentation sharing key information about our school, followed by a tour led by our "experts" in Year 6.

Please contact our school office on 01268 571018 to book a tour.

Tours are by appointment only

We look forward to meeting you all!

Our Curriculum



<p>Early Years FOUNDATION Stage</p>	<p>Roll up, roll up for the circus is in town. We enjoyed a brilliant day on Thursday learning our circus skills and juggling. We were fascinated by the big top arriving on the field and being put up. We also met Geraldine and Dave, have we told you about them? they are helping us with our phonics and introduced us to some rhymes. Ask us if we can tell you about the strawberry or apple. We took part in our first art lesson this week, which each year always starts with a self portrait. We looked closely in the mirror to see our faces and drew them in our sketch books. Very exciting. Cooking this week was circus themed, making a you will have to ask us what we made!</p>
<p>Year 1</p>	<p>Year 1 have been super excited with the arrival of the circus but nothing beats the arrival of a dragon that was caught on camera. We had to write instructions on how to trap a dragon, luckily Mrs Blakeley now has them and will make sure the dragon goes back to Madam Dragon. Ask us who that is. In Maths we have been learning the difference between a number track and number line and comparing amounts using mathematical symbols. Art was super fun and messy too as we created our own piece of artwork based on an artist called Jasper Johns. Always busy in Year 1!</p>
<p>Year 2</p>	<p>This week in Year 2 we have been writing shape poems about fire. We have tried to include some higher level vocabulary and similes in our work to make it more interesting for the reader. In Maths we have been estimating where numbers should go on a number line to 100 by working out which multiples of 10 the number is between. We have also been comparing numbers. In Science we have been looking at the needs of animals to survive. Ask us what the 4 things are? We have been learning that 'g' makes a 'j' sound in spelling and about co-ordinating conjunctions in GPS. What a busy week!</p>
<p>Year 3</p>	<p>In Year 3 this week we have been busy collecting vocabulary and writing poetry about woolly mammoths! We have started our new unit on addition and subtraction in Maths, thinking about number bonds and adding and subtracting ones and tens. In GPS we have revised using commas in lists and we have enjoyed reading poetry in guided reading. Our spelling rule this week is 'sure' at the end of words, making the /zh/ sound. This is list 4 on Spelling Shed if you are using the app. We have discussed commitment ceremonies in RE and learnt about ways that Christians demonstrate commitment to their faith, and we have learnt about layers of rocks and soils in Science. Please remember to listen to children read at least 3x a week and sign their diaries. TTRS is still in use too – children's logins are in their diaries for your reference.</p>
<p>Year 4</p>	<p>The weeks seem to be flying by and we are onto our next genre for English. The book we are reading is 'Voices in the Park'. The children are really enjoying learning about the book and have identified many features of story writing. We have also started our topic on the Rainforests. Did you know that more than half of the world's species of plants and animals are found in the rainforest! The children have worked really hard on their number knowledge in Maths by rounding by 10, 100, 1000. They have been polishing up their place value as well as their Roman Numerals. In Music we have listened to another ABBA song, 'Waterloo' and have been playing the Glockenspiels. We have also had so much fun when the circus came to Abacus!</p>
<p>Year 5</p>	<p>This week in Year 5 we have written our own narrative based on our class book Kensuke's Kingdom. In Maths we have started to use a written method to add 2 4-digit numbers. In geography this week we have been learning about the Himalayan Mountain Range in Asia and created an information page. Did you know they use yak dung made into patties and dried as a fuel for their fires? We all had fun on Thursday developing our circus skills.</p>
<p>Year 6</p>	<p>This week we have been learning about biographies in English, focusing on the use of colons and semi-colons. We have completed some short-burst writing about David Attenborough and have made notes about Hercules' life ready for when we are back from residential. In Maths, we have been practising short division and learning how to divide using factors. Please remind us to practise our times tables and divisions facts as this will really help our understanding. In Science we have continued learning about light and have discovered ways to make a pencil 'bend' or to 'pour' light, all linked to refraction. We can't wait for our PGL trip next week! Please check the link on the website for all key information.</p>

Below is a Focus on ASD and co-occurring conditions (comorbidities)



Sometimes people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder may also have other conditions that go alongside. These are known as co-morbid conditions. The list below is not exhaustive, but some examples are:

ADHD

A large percentage of people with ASD are also affected by ADHD or ADD this equates to 50-70% of the ASD popula-



Learning difficulties including dyslexia

Some autistic people may also have a learning disability, which can affect some aspects of their education and their life.



Anxiety

30% of the ASD population is affected vs 10% of the general population.



Hypermobility

Is also more common amongst the ASD population and may result in difficulties with fine and gross motor skills.



Sleep disorders

Between 50% to 80% of children with autism have a sleep disorder. Problems include difficulty falling asleep, frequent, and prolonged waking, or extremely early rising.



Allergies

Allergic disorders are significantly more common in people with ASD from all age groups with a significant increase in all varieties of allergic disorder including asthma and atopic conditions. Allergic conditions can affect behaviour and there is a correlation between the severity of allergies and the severity of autism.



Digestive problems

Gastrointestinal (GI) disorders are common in individuals with ASD affecting 46% to 84% of the population. Common GI symptoms found in the ASD population include food intolerance and sensitivities, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, flatulence, chronic constipation and/or diarrhoea, gastroesophageal reflux, ulcers, colitis, inflammatory bowel disease, and/or failure to thrive.



Epilepsy

Epilepsy occurs at a much higher rate with 30% of the ASD population having a comorbid seizure disorder, compared to 6-7% of the general population, and 60% having an abnormal electroencephalogram (EEG).



Scoliosis

A higher percentage of people with ASD than the average population are affected by curvature of the spine to some degree.



For More Information



<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/autism/other-conditions/>

<https://autismspectrumnews.org/the-prevalence-of-comorbidities-in-autism-consideration-of-comorbidity-in-intervention-and-treatment-response/#:~:text=Individuals%20with%20ASD%20have%20a,10%25%20of%20the%20general%20popuhttps://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/related-conditions/related-conditions/all-audiences>

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/related-conditions/related-conditions/all-audiences>

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about AMONG US



A multiplayer 'social deduction' game set in outer space, Among Us enjoyed a surge in popularity in 2020, and has since maintained a dedicated fan-base (globally, around 60 million regular players each month) thanks to its unique nature, simple premise and ease of access across numerous platforms. The game's on-screen action revolves around danger, disguise and deception – and there are certain parallels to be drawn with some of the real-life risks that parents and carers of young Among Us players need to be aware of.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SENSITIVE PREMISE

In Among Us, up to three players are secretly assigned to be alien imposters, tasked with murdering their colleagues while the survivors try to unmask them. While the concept's not far removed from traditional games like Wink Murder or TV shows such as *The Traitors*, some parents may feel uncomfortable about their child playing a video game in which deception and killing are prioritised.

VIRTUAL VIOLENCE

The on-screen death of characters may be fundamental to the gameplay of Among Us, but the majority of the animations depicting this are deliberately cartoonish and only appear very briefly. However, it is worth bearing in mind that the game has a PEGI age rating of 7 – meaning that certain elements (however heavily stylised they may be) could still upset some younger players.

CHAT BETWEEN PLAYERS

With up to 15 people participating in each game online, a large part of Among Us' appeal is speculating with fellow players who the imposters might be and making accusations. This dialogue through the in-game text chat can occasionally become heated – and could, of course, involve your child being put into contact with people (including adults) who they don't know in real life.

GOING OFF PLATFORM

While Among Us provides basic ways to communicate, many gamers prefer to use external services such as Discord: a popular app which offers voice and video chat functions. These undeniably make cooperation easier, but also create a potential route for children to hear inappropriate language – or for strangers to message them privately in an environment which isn't regulated by the game itself.

IN-GAME PURCHASES

Among Us is free to download on mobile devices, and costs less than £5 to obtain on console and PC. A related longer-term pitfall, though, is that the game also includes options to pay for upgrades such as removing ads on the mobile version or adding cosmetic touches to characters (such as different costumes). It's certainly possible that a child could spend a significant sum without realising it.

Advice for Parents & Carers

CONSIDER SOFTER ALTERNATIVES

Although Among Us is hugely popular with young gamers, it's possible that some children might find the murder themes unsettling. If so, plenty of similar social deduction games are available (in both digital and traditional board game formats) which downplay the potentially grislier elements: some centre around undercover spies, for instance, and there's even a Marvel superhero-themed variant.

CHAT ABOUT CHATTING

You might feel it's prudent to talk to your child about the risks associated with voice chat while gaming, explaining in particular that strangers online aren't always who they claim to be. Keeping the conversation relaxed will reinforce your child's confidence that they can always come to you with any online concerns – not just about Among Us, but any potential future issues as well.

DISCUSS DISCORD

In general, Discord is an excellent app for keeping online communities together because of its use of dedicated individual servers, which allow comprehensive control over who can join – and who can't. Once you're familiar with the platform, you could set up a secure server for your child and their friends to communicate during games of Among Us, with no access for people they don't know.

AMONG US, AMONG FRIENDS

When your child and their friends get together, they can enjoy a private game of Among Us by choosing a 'local' lobby – that is, only people connected to the same WiFi (your home network, for example) can enter. This prevents any random online users – who may be total strangers – from joining and removes the need for voice chat, as the players are all physically in the same location.

STOP SURPRISE SPENDING

If you're concerned about the possibility of your child racking up an unexpected bill on Among Us' microtransactions, you could consider using a prepaid card with a set limit. Likewise, you could specify in the game's options that adult authorisation is required for every purchase – or you could make sure that no payment methods are enabled on the device that your child plays the game on.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Editor in Chief of gaming and esports site GGRecon and has worked in the gaming media for around four years. A regular visitor to the App Store to try out new tools, he's also a parent who understands the value of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his articles have been published on influential sites including IGN and TechRadar.



#WakeUpWednesday