

Abacus Primary School



Newsletter 497

21 / 7 / 23



As we come to the end of another academic year, we say 'Goodbye and Good Luck' to all our year six children and 34 families, some of which have been part of our school community for over 17 years. The children move on to continue their learning journeys at eight different schools from September. We wish you all every happiness for the future and we cannot wait to hear about your future achievements.

We say Goodbye and Good luck to Scarlett and her family, Jack A and his family, Harley B1 and his family, Alisa and her family, Luke and his family, Betsy and her family, Benjamin and his family, Willow B and her family, Grace B and her family, Zachary and his family, Archie and his family, Orla and her family, Bella C and her family, Laila and her family, Jessica and her family, Aimee and her family, Erin and her family, Joseph and his family, Katie and her family, Freddie and his family, Jake H and his family, Aizah and her family, Chyler and her family, Willow K and her family, Ethan and his family, Chloe and her family, Donovan and his family, Harry and his family, Liam and his family, Ella and her family, Mason and his family, Grace S and her family, Rosie and her family and Elicia and her family.



After the summer break we will return on
WEEK 2 of our Summer menu.

This week we welcomed Miss Bradley back from maternity leave. We would like to wish Mrs Morl and Mrs Kirchel a very happy retirement and thank them both for everything that they have contributed to our school during their time here and we wish Miss Hodkin the best wedding day ever.



I would like to take this opportunity to thank the amazing team that we have here at Abacus. It's been another amazing year filled with lots of fun, memories and with many highlights. Thank you to our great FAPS committee for their efforts in planning and organising a range of events, with many more already in the calendar and thanks to our Governing Body. Lastly, thank you to you all for your support and feedback this year.

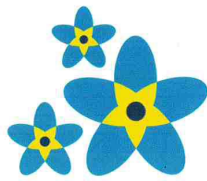
On behalf of all the staff here at Abacus Primary School we would like to thank you for all your kind words, gifts, cards and hugs... they are all very much appreciated. We would like to wish you all a wonderful summer break and we look forward to another action packed year starting on Wednesday 6th September 2023.

If you are planning to have your child's ears pierced over the summer break, please ensure this is at the beginning of the holidays. Health and Safety regulations require that earrings are removed (not taped up) for PE lessons. It is usually advised that earrings cannot be removed until 6 weeks after then have been pierced.

If earrings are not able to be removed then children will not be able to take part in the physical part of the PE lesson.

A yellow sticky note with the text "PLEASE NOTE..." written on it. The word "PLEASE" is in black, and "NOTE..." is in red. A red underline is drawn under the word "NOTE".

PLEASE
NOTE...



Working to become
**Dementia
Friendly**
2023



This is to certify that

ABACUS Primary School - Wickford, Essex

has committed to taking action to work to become dementia-friendly to help improve the lives of people affected by dementia in our community.

Colleen Mortensen

Signed:

Colleen Mortensen

Representing:

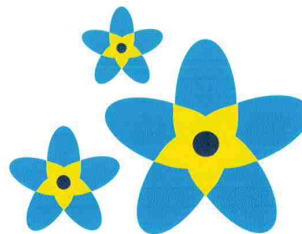
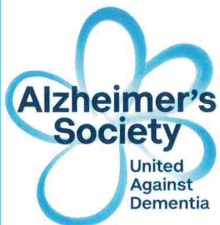
Basildon Dementia Action Alliance

Date:

Feb 2023

Review date:

March 2024



What a pleasure it was to accompany Year 5 who visited Silvana Court on Monday to sing a selection of their Young Voices songs. Three of the residents at Silvana Court had a wish to hear a live choir sing, Year 5 all sang with confidence and enthusiasm and made not just the three residents, but many more of the residents very happy.

Whilst we were there, Colleen Mortensen from Basildon Council came along to present our school with the Dementia Friendly award.



Spa Day



What a busy day Foundation had on Tuesday in preparation for their graduation on Wednesday!

Lots of you have already visited the Herd in the City trail and found Elizabeth. Please keep the photos coming over the summer break.



If you are looking for something different to do during the summer break, Chelmsford Museum has a number of History events taking place, all with free entry. Copy and paste the link to see what other events are planned.

<https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/museums/whats-on/>



The Herd in the city trail is now open.

There is an app that you can download to help you follow the trail. For more information copy and paste the link below:

<https://www.herdinthe.city/>

We'd love to see photos of you with our elephant 'Elizabeth.'



LET'S CELEBRATE!



Well done to Bertie, Louie, Pearce, Eliza and Albie for their achievements in swimming, triathlons and trampolining. We're so proud of you all.

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 apps which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

W APP

AGE RESTRICTION
12+

on the App Store:
'Everyone' on Google Play

Developed in Germany, this social networking app is called 'W App' in the Apple Store and Google Play but is also branded as 'Slay' in some territories. Aimed primarily at teens and marketed as a 'zero-negativity' zone, it asks users to connect with others from their school. They are then asked a positive question (such as "Who is the nicest person?") and shown four people from their school to choose from. All users from a school can appear in the poll: not just those a child is friends with. The app is mainly anonymous – but does offer clues to reveal who selected you for each question.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

FAKE ACCOUNTS

There is no verification when signing up to W App. Once someone joins, they can see all users at their school and add them if they wish. Users provide their name, gender, school and grade – but are also able to change these (aside from their name) as often as they like. This concerned our expert: predators could potentially keep attempting to build connections with children at different schools.

PROFILE OVERSHARING

Young people tend to have multiple social media accounts, so it's vital their identity is protected online. By default, W App shares someone's school and grade, while users choose whether to share their full name, photo and other social accounts. Most people appear to select this – making it easier for someone to build up a picture of who they are, what they enjoy and where they go to school.

SPAMMING CONTACTS

The app's activity feed notifies a user when they have been put forward for a poll. They're then given the option to reveal the initial of the person who nominated them, by inviting a friend to join the app. The friend doesn't have to sign up, but they will receive a 'get the app now' text, followed by a link. This process could result in texts being continually sent to a child's contacts.

CATFISHING RISKS

As well as invented fake accounts, users could also sign up and pretend to be someone else from their school. By joining under another person's name (possibly with their photo), they can take part in polls while masquerading as that other person. Some polls hint at an attraction or crush, which – if deliberately misused by imposters – could result in misunderstandings and embarrassment for teens.

SUBSCRIPTION COSTS

W App is free to download and use, but there is also a 'gold membership' package (costing £4.99 per week) available. Subscribing allows users to reveal the names of people who selected them in polls (slightly defeating the point of it being an anonymous app), gives unlimited hints and offers exclusive play modes – all of which may tempt a curious young user into spending their money.

REPEATED USE

Like most other social media platforms, W App wants users to log in regularly. Every time someone completes a set of 12 polls, they earn virtual coins. These can be cashed in for perks such as being included in random polls (so that more users will see them) or adding their name to their crush's poll. This may not seem much of an incentive currently, but that may alter as the app evolves.

Advice for Parents & Carers

DISCUSS FRIEND REQUESTS

Talk to your child about the risk of sharing their other social accounts, especially on anonymous platforms where there is no verification – so a user could be anyone. If someone they don't normally talk to at school approaches your child via W App and suggests connecting on TikTok, Snapchat or Instagram, emphasise that it's safest to confirm it with that person face to face before accepting or replying.

PROTECT PERSONAL INFORMATION

It's crucial that trusted adults regularly remind children about the importance of not sharing too much of their personal information online (and demonstrate it on their own social accounts, where possible). W App automatically displays the user's school on their profile – but if your child does want to use the app, you can advise them to only enter their first name and not to upload an image of their face.

BE MINDFUL OF REJECTION

The polls in W App are designed to be complimentary rather than negative. However, never being nominated or picked by their peers could leave a child – especially a status-conscious teen – feeling ignored and isolated. If you think that W App is having this effect on your child, it might be time for a supportive reminder that social media doesn't reflect someone's true worth or popularity.

DO SOME 'APP ADMIN'

Before letting your child download W App, you may want to (via their device's settings) disable the option to make in-app purchases: £4.99 per week for the subscription can soon mount up. Likewise, if a friend's use of W App is causing your child to be inundated with texts inviting them to sign up too, you could suggest asking that friend to stop selecting your child's name from their contacts list.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



#WakeUpWednesday

Source: <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/w-app-anonymous-polls/id1645858841> | <https://www.slay.co.uk/>
<https://techrunch.com/2023/01/19/german-teens-went-crazy-for-this-compliments-app-and-now-vas-are-backing-its-next-phase/>