

Abacus Primary School

Newsletter 423

21 / 10 / 21



Year 3 visited Barleylands

What a great time Year 3 had on Monday at Barleylands Farm as part of their Stone Age to Iron Age Topic. The children took part in a number of activities throughout the day linked to their history topic, including making stew and bread and looking at the similarities and differences between now and then. Thank you to the parents who came along to help on this trip.

After half term, we will be on Week 2 of our menu.

WEEK 2



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What a busy half term we have had and I cannot believe that we have reached half term already (although I think we are all ready for a rest). It's been a wonderful start to the academic year with many more 'normal' activities recommencing: school clubs, school trips, sports events and I am delighted that Year 6 got to take part in their residential trip. Thank you to the whole school community for their continued support and to the whole school team for planning so many wonderful learning opportunities for the children.

We hope that you all have a great half term break, hopefully the weather will be kind to us all.

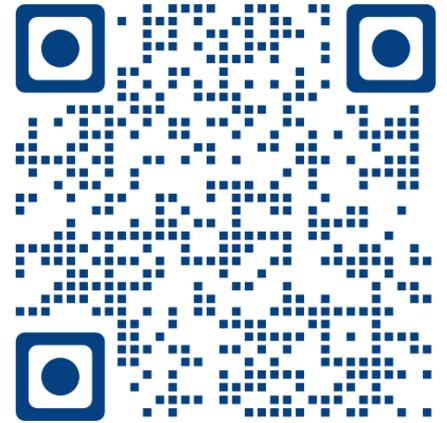
We hope that you all have a great half term break, hopefully the weather will be kind to us all.

Mrs Mould leaves us today. She will be greatly missed and has worked in our school for 9 years. We wish her all the very best as she starts her new role with the NHS and thank her for all her commitment to our school over the years. Mrs Taucher will begin in Green class after half term and Mrs Cox will be joining Gold class as their LSA after the break.

In our whole school assembly this week, we set children the challenge to be an inventor. They were all shown a



video (you can view this by scanning the QR code), the only criteria for the invention is that it needs to be something that we can use in school. Children have until the end of November to enter. There will be



a prize for the most inventive and the top 10 entries will be displayed on the Little Inventors website. Copies of the plan can be downloaded from our website or collected from school. I can't wait to see your ideas— I know you'll have lots.

Mrs Blakeley

My invention! 1. Use a black pen, DRAW BIG, add colour and labels.

Little Inventors

Date _____ Age _____
First name _____
School _____
My invention is called _____

2. Explain your invention!
What is it? How does it work? Who is it for?

Upload your idea at littleinventors.org to get feedback and a chance for it to be made real!



What a fabulous time we had in our Poetry Slams on Wednesday. A huge thank you to Sue and Caroline from Silvana Court

who came along as our judges. Sue, the Manager of Silvana Court, writes poetry and wrote and performed two poems to our children to open the Poetry Slams. Miss Maskell, our Poetry leader was blown away by the standard of the poems and it was great to see how each class had linked their poem to their class topic.

All the children should be proud of their efforts. Silver class won the KS2 Slam and Red Class won the KS1 Slam.



Dodgeball Competition

On the 19th October 21, our 5/6 Dodgeball team represented the school at a competition against Oakfield School. For some of the team it was their first time competing in a school event.

First, the children took part in some activities to practise the skills needed before playing 3 games. They were unfortunate not to win but there was definite improvement as the games went on. There was even some time at the end for Abacus to have a Year 6 v Year 5 tournament.

After 3 very close games, Year 5 were the champions winning 2 out of the 3.

The children will now go on to represent Wickford in our Partnership final in November. Thank you to Beauchamps High School for providing the venue and parents for transporting the children.





What a pleasure it was to watch the Year 2 Harvest celebration on Tuesday and Wednesday this week. Each child spoke with confidence and sang with enjoyment. Thank you so much to the family members who came along to support these performances, you can see how much the children love to have you there and it was great to have parents and family members back in school. Thank you for all the food donations from across the school, these will make a huge difference to our local community.



**Food
Collection**



LET'S CELEBRATE!



Well done to Myles and James for receiving Man of the Match trophies this week.



St George's House are top of the leader board this week, well done to you all!

House Points

			
			
	<p>268</p>	<p>224</p>	<p>195</p>

Our Curriculum



Early Years Foundation Stage

What a busy end to our first half term in school. We have taken part in our first poetry slam and harvest hunt. We learnt a new word in Maths- Capacity- Ask us if we can remember what it means! We have continued to enjoy the story of Gerald the giraffe in "Giraffes Can't Dance". We have been thinking about how we might not always be confident in everything, but we can always have a go. Of course, we are looking forward to a well earned half term break

Year 1

Who would have thought it was the last week of term, we have been just as busy as always in Year 1. This week we have learnt to write number sentences as Fact Families. In English we have been trying really hard to use capital letters in our sentences. In Science we learnt about the things that plants need to grow, in Computing how to stay safe online and then not forgetting Music. We listened to different types of music and talked about how they made us feel. What is your favourite type of music?

Year 2

In Year 2, we finished off our diary writing in English with some imaginative writing from the perspective of Thomas Farynor the baker. Ask us what we wrote about Thomas' day! In Maths we have been working on adding and subtracting single digit numbers from two digit numbers, by bridging ten. Please practise number bonds to ten and twenty at home We enjoyed our Science discussions this week, where we learned about personal hygiene and keeping ourselves clean. We had a fun PE session to round off our unit on sending and receiving, where we played with footballs and had a mini match on the 3G pitch. Year 2 also really enjoyed sharing our harvest performances with you this week – thank you so much for coming to watch!

Year 3

On Monday we had a great time on our school trip to Barleylands. We learned about what people in the Stone Age might have eaten, we made our own Stone Age stew, did our own cave drawings and even had a chance to feed the animals on the farm. In English we have completed our instructions and in Maths we have practiced some more adding and subtracting using all sorts of methods; numberlines, base ten and the formal written method too! We have been on a virtual trip to the London Museum where we have helped to solve a crime – the evil fossil hunter had stolen the precious archaeopteryx fossil but we solved the clues with our amazing fossil knowledge – and finished our week with a Year 3 Obstacle challenge.

Year 4

In Geography, we have been developing our debating skills with a focus on deforestation. This lesson encouraged the children to give evidence and clear explanations for their opinions. What is your child's view on deforestation? In Maths, we have been learning to subtract numbers using a formal written method. In Reading, we have continued to enjoy the book 'The Magic Faraway Tree' and have been using the text to support our inferences. For the school poetry slam, we wrote a poem about the rainforest that we performed to the rest of key stage 2; writing the poem gave us an opportunity to reflect on our learning so far.

Year 5

This week in Year 5 we have started a new Science unit all about Space. Did you know a day on Venus is longer than its year! In Maths, we have been looking at addition and subtraction. In English, we have been writing persuasive arguments. In P.E. we carried out an Intrasport competition. It has been a very busy 4 days!

Year 6

We have had a brilliant week in Year 6. We made and evaluated a delicious Greek Feast at the beginning of the week including sesame bagels, meatballs, halloumi, houmous flatbreads and a berry and Greek yoghurt tart. Everything was delicious! On Wednesday, we had our Greek Day - everyone looked fantastic in their costumes. We performed our Ancient Greek themed poems in the Poetry Slam - a huge well done to Silver class for winning the KS2 round. Later, we did some Art based on Greek pottery and then competed in our own Olympic games in the afternoon. Ask us about the characteristics of the city-states we were a part of. What a busy week!

e-Safety

for parents and carers

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

What Parents and Carers Need to Know about SOCIAL BOTS

WHAT ARE SOCIAL BOTS?

Bots are computer-generated accounts which sit on social media, masquerading as humans. While many are harmless or even have good intentions, others are designed to extort, sell products, spread propaganda or bully human users. Bots – short for ‘robots’, of course – are often confused with state-funded troll accounts; the two can be difficult to tell apart. However, if the results are the same, then both should be treated similarly.

KNOWING THE RISKS

ASTROTURFING

Propaganda and conspiracy theories are usually niche interests on social media. But with an army of thousands of bots amplifying posts through retweets and shares, people can make their messages travel further and appear to reflect mainstream opinion. Known as ‘astroturfing’, this can make children more susceptible to questionable beliefs.

CYBERBULLYING

Bots can be set to hunt for certain search terms or opinions and then automatically reply aggressively to anybody who uses them in a message. This means that if your child posts something that whoever programmed the bot doesn't like, they may be deluged with angry messages from fake accounts – which can be overwhelming and comparable to cyberbullying.

EXTORTION

Criminals use bots to trap users into sextortion or online blackmail scams. The bot cultivates a flirtatious online relationship with the victim, then persuades them into a video chat during which they are tricked into posing inappropriately or carrying out a sexual act. This footage is recorded, and threats are then made to release it to the victim's friends and family unless money is paid.

SHADY SELLING

Bots are often used for illicit advertising – that is, they spam social media platforms with links to commercial websites. Additionally, some unscrupulous influencers have been found to use bots to artificially inflate their number of followers and the engagement with their account – making them seem more popular and therefore able to charge companies more to work with them.

SPOTTING THE SIGNS ...

BEWARE PROLIFIC POSTING

Bots post a superhuman amount of content. A visit to their profile usually proves they're responding to people far faster than a human could. Check their join date and number of followers. If the account has been around for ages and still doesn't have any friends, it probably isn't a real person. A brand-new page is also a red flag.

NOTICE ODD USERNAMES

Finding a social media username that isn't taken can be difficult. People often end up with their name and some numbers – but not the way bots do it. A username like johnsmith5273 is either a sign of a random number generator or a site offering an unwieldy alternative because the preferred name is taken, which isn't something most humans would accept.

VERIFY PROFILE PICS

Check a user's authenticity by investigating their profile picture: bots obviously don't have faces, so they tend to skim publicly available to try to fool people. Put suspicious pics through a reverse-image search like TinEye – you might find they actually belong to someone else or are stock images.

CHECK THE CONTENT

Bots can't think for themselves and usually just exist to amplify somebody else's message. Try copying and pasting the text into the search function on Twitter, for example, and see if it's being said anywhere else. If a lot of similar-looking accounts are saying the same thing, you're probably looking at a bot army.

Advice for Parents & Carers

SPOT THE BOTS

Forewarned is forearmed, so if your children aren't that familiar with the world of bots yet, explain what to look for using the tips in this guide. At the moment, most bots still aren't that sophisticated – so finding accounts which are designed purely to troll people or spread misinformation isn't hugely difficult, even for an untrained eye.

BLOCK AND MOVE ON

Your child isn't obliged to be friends with anyone online, bot or not. Pretty much every social media app has a block button, and you should encourage your child to use it whenever something or someone is making their digital lives less than pleasant. If everyone blocked malicious bots rather than engaging them, they wouldn't pose a problem.

BE SUSPICIOUS

While many people have made lifelong friends over the internet, it's important not to be too trusting. Random strangers adding you on Facebook could well be bots, so do some background checks: do they have any mutual friends? Is it a new account? Even if everything seems fine, encourage your child to be cautious: warn them of potential risks.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist and the former deputy editor of technology and internet culture website *Alphr*. Now freelance, he has contributed articles to publications including the *New Statesman*, *CNET*, the *Evening Standard*, *Wired*, *Rock Paper Shotgun*, *Gizmodo*, *Pocket Gamer*, *Stuff*, *T3*, *PC Pro*, *Macworld*, *TechRadar* and *Trusted Reviews*.



SOURCES: <https://www.computing.co.uk/feature/3085226/the-positive-case-for-twitter-bots/> | <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/18/world/europe/russia-troll-factory.html> | <https://truepublica.org.uk/united-kingdom/propaganda-automated-bots-defending-the-government/> | <https://www.bbc.co.uk/radio/presenters/james-obrien/what-are-the-twitter-users-with-eight-numbers/>



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