

Abacus Primary School

Newsletter 516 26 / 1 / 24



Introducing our new School Council; Amelia, Amelia, Leonardo, Teddy, Savannah, Stanley, Amal, Isabelle, Darcey, Eloise, Ava and Monet.

We had our first meeting this week and the excitement and enthusiasm around the table was infectious. This year the council members will not just be attending meetings, they will also be working with classmates to lead meetings as part of our work with the Smart Schools council.



Next week we are on Week 3 of our menu.

One of the things that we have always been extremely proud of here at Abacus Primary School is our parent partnerships and how we build relations with our families. I feel really sad to be writing this but a small, yet growing number of parents/carers behaviour and or communication towards some of the staff, is unacceptable and is not only creating a significant increase in workload but also causing distress.

Some examples of this are:

- The tone and timing of emails and Tapestry. Emails and Tapestry sent at the weekend or late at night can cause distress and do not allow staff members to 'switch off.' In addition to this, the tone of the messages, on occasion, have been demanding and quite frankly rude and disrespectful.
- Staff members have been spoken to rudely and abruptly both in person, on the telephone and through texts and this is not acceptable. Whilst we understand some messages shared can be quite challenging, members of staff are only following procedures the governors and myself see fit to implement.
- Expectations that messages will be responded to almost immediately.

Staff at Abacus Primary School are one of the most hardworking teams that I have ever worked with, they all go above and beyond to provide the best possible experiences and education for your children. Many of these, including school trips, parent meetings, clubs, residential and the list could go on, often fall outside of their directed hours yet they still continue to plan and offer these.

As Headteacher, I have a duty of care for all staff members' wellbeing and it concerns me greatly to see so many of our wonderful teachers, support staff, office staff and senior leaders unhappy and upset by the demands of some parents. If the conduct of a small minority of parents/carers does not improve then I will, with the support of governors, have no choice but to deal with those responsible, this could include warning letters being issued as well as banning parents from our school site.

The school office is open from 8am and 4pm (4.30pm on a Wednesday) communications received outside of these times will not be seen or responded to until the next working day.

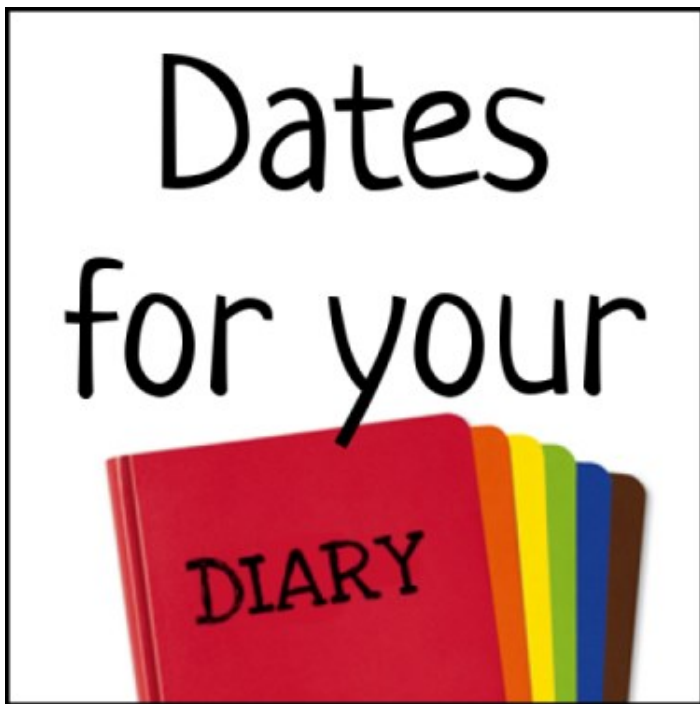


We are delighted to be supporting the NSPCC by taking part in Number Day on **Friday 2 February 2024**. We are having a non-uniform day to help raise money for the NSPCC, we are asking for donations and we'd love everyone in the school to take part in this special event .

Optional: Pupils could choose to wear an item of clothing with a number on it or get even more creative by dressing in a Maths or numbers theme.

We're really looking forward to all the fun of Number Day, and we really appreciate your support. All the money we raise at Abacus Primary School will make an enormous difference to children today and help the NSPCC be there for children tomorrow. Donations will be via ParentPay

<https://app.parentpay.com/ParentPayShop/Foc/Default.aspx?shopid=3637> we will also text this link out to everyone.



Year 6 SATS meeting—Tuesday

13th February 2024 9am

Miss Mitchell will be leading a session for the parents of Year 6 children to talk through the organisation for SATS week. This session will take place on **Tuesday 13th February 2024 at 9am** in the large hall.

Book look– Wednesday 14th

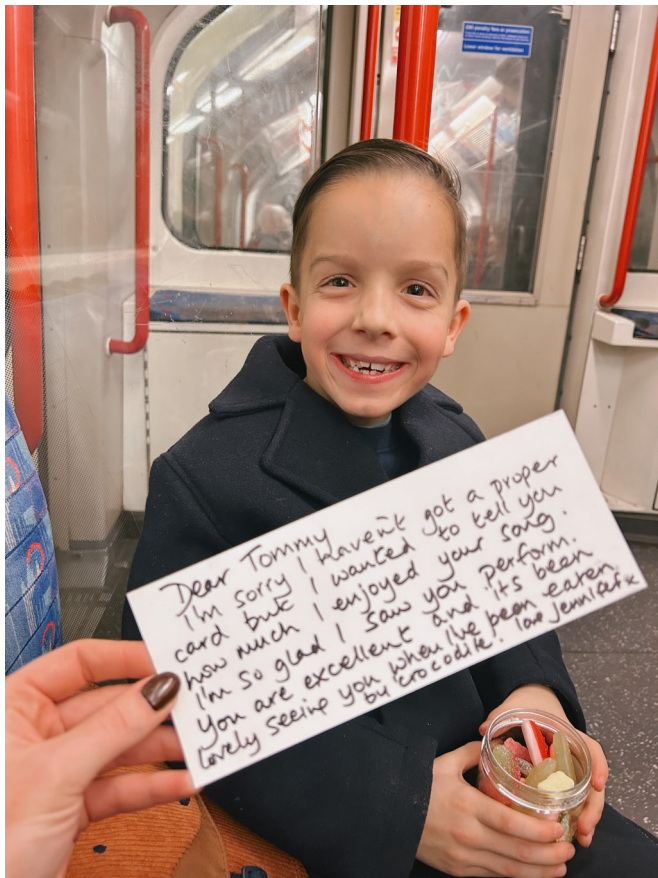
February 2024 3.15pm to
4.15pm

Parents are invited to come into school from 3.15 to 4.15pm on Wednesday 14th February 2024 to visit classrooms looking at work on display and in children's books.

To keep up to date with all the events which are taking place in school please visit the calendar page on our school website:

<https://www.abacusprimaryschool.co.uk/school-calendar>

LET'S CELEBRATE!



Well done to Tommy who received a letter from Jennifer Saunders after performing with her in the Peter Pan Pantomime in London over Christmas and the New Year.



Well done to Teddy who performed in the Pantomime Peter Pan, at The Cliffs Pavilion as Michael Darling.



Well done to Seb and Charlie for their achievements in football.



NEXT WEEK

SEND



Coffee Morning

Our next SEND coffee morning is taking place on **Monday 29th January 2024 from 10am.** Essex Family Forum will be in school to talk about how they can support families of children with SEND.

<https://essexfamilyforum.org/>

The forum is also part of a wider network of parent carer forums including the Eastern Region Parent Carer Forum and the National Network of Parent Carer Forums. For more information on the group and what they can help with, you can watch a video on Essex County Council's YouTube channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UNgyAxCP-hA&t=481s>

Please let the office know if you will be attending.

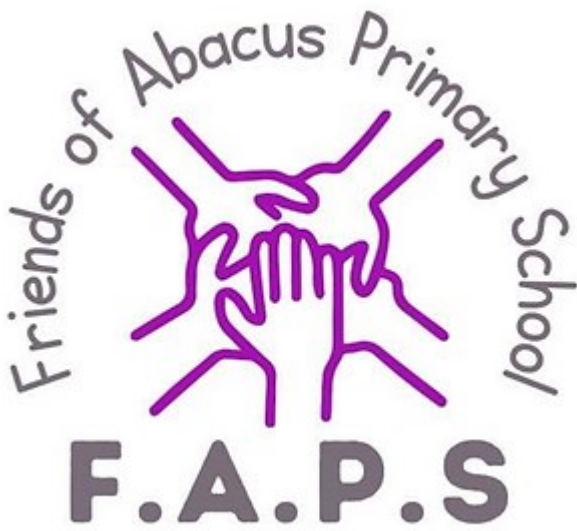


We love to read!



Well done to Jorgie, Danny, Lauren, Ethan, Dulcie and Monet for all their enthusiasm at Silvana Court on Monday afternoon.





Wristbands are still available from the school office for Adventure Island.

MOVIE NIGHT

FAPS will be hosting two Movie Nights; KS1 will be on Wednesday 31/1/24 and KS2 on Friday 2/2/24.

Tickets cost £5/child and will include a snack and drink.

Please book your child's place through our website www.pta-events.com/faps-abacus

Both events are live on there, so please make sure you select the correct one!

Letters with more information will be text out and can be found on the website on our FAPS page:

www.abacusprimaryschool.co.uk/faps



You should have all received a leaflet about the Bag 2 School scheme. Filled bags can be dropped off at the school office from **3.15pm Friday 26/1/24** up until **8am on 30/1/24** when they will be collected.





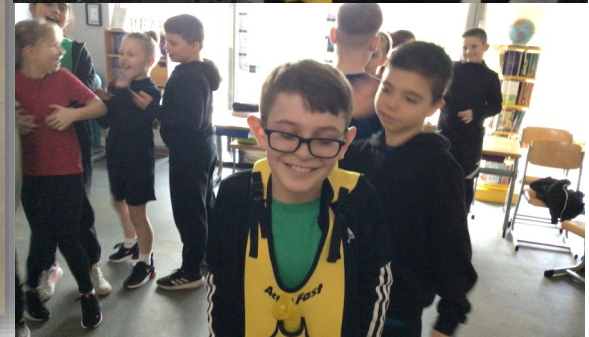
On Monday 22nd January, Year 6 visited Chelmsford County Court and Chelmsford Cathedral. As you can see from the photos, they had a great time when they took on the roles of the court. They had to try a case that involved harassment, which involved posting abusive and threatening messages.





Our Wellbeing Ambassadors have been leading an activity during the midday breaks focused on peoples wishes for 2024. These have all been made into a 'Wish Wreath'.





Year Five had a busy day on Monday when they took part in a First Aid workshop. They learnt how to carry out basic first aid including burns, scalds, cuts, bleeds, choking, asthma attacks or allergic reactions. They learnt that if someone has experienced a head injury, they should not be moved.

The workshop also included when it is appropriate to use first aid and the importance of seeking adult help, the importance of remaining calm in an emergency and providing clear information about what has happened to an adult or the emergency services.



Our Curriculum



<p>Early Years FOUNDATION Stage</p>	<p>Let's all sing it together. 5 little speckled frogs, sat on a speckled log... I am sure the children are singing this at home. This is our song linked to our Maths and how to make 5. In drawing club our book is 'Handa's Hen', which we have enjoyed finding out all about animals and making our own lift the flap picture. Our Art is inspired by Steven Brown's colourful 'Mccoo'. Another busy week. Don't forget we need our milk cartons for next week's challenge!</p>
<p>Year 1</p>	<p>This week we have been working hard as always. In English we have been writing facts about pandas. Ask us what we learnt. In Maths we learnt about doubling and number bonds to 20. In PSHE we have focused on personal hygiene, especially how to keep our teeth healthy. PE has been fun too as we are getting better at ball control, dribbling and passing the ball to each other. In History we looked at toys from the past that are still around today. Did you know Meccano is 126 years old?</p>
<p>Year 2</p>	<p>In Year 2 this week we have been making equal groups in Maths which has been our introduction to the multiplication symbol. We have learned about multiplication just being repeated addition and have been exploring how we can write the same problem using both symbols; e.g. $3 + 3 + 3 + 3 = 12$, $3 \times 4 = 12$. We are all very keen to keep practising TTRS so please let us know if you are having trouble logging on at home and we can help you. In English we wrote some fantastic finding tales about where we went on our 'Bubble Journeys' - we can't wait for you to come and see our writing in our English books. In Science, we are continuing to learn more about the properties of different materials. We also had great fun in Art with our 'observational drawing' of our favourite toys and in PSHE we have been learning about why we need jobs and the importance of saving money.</p>
<p>Year 3</p>	<p>In maths, we have been dividing numbers where exchanging is required as well as dividing numbers with remainders. We have also been looking at scaling e.g. What is 3 times as many as 8? In English, the children invented their own journey tale story. In R.E, we have discussed how philosophy and religions help people to make moral decisions. In Science, we wrote up results from our science experiment which was to see how friction of different surfaces impacted on the way things travelled across them. In art. We created more structures with materials which involved sticking, folding and twisting materials.</p>
<p>Year 4</p>	<p>Art: This week we have been exploring paint and being creative in different ways using a variety of materials and implements. Reading: We have been reading the classic novel, 'The Wind in the Willows' answering the questions from the text. Spellings: Learning the words ending '-ous' with 'ge' root words. Maths: We have been multiplying 3-digit numbers by a 1-digit number. We have then progressed onto dividing 2 and 3-digit numbers by 1 digit numbers. Geography: The children enjoy reading maps and looking at continents, then focusing on Wickford and the local area. Ask your child about a 6 figure grid reference.</p>
<p>Year 5</p>	<p>We had an exciting start to the week with First Aid training. We all learnt lots and now feel confident to be able to help someone if we need to. In Maths we have continued our fractions unit. We have been learning how to subtract fractions from a mixed number. It was tricky to start but we have worked really hard and our teachers are super proud of how far we have come along since the beginning of term. In English we created a box plan of a diary entry based on a day in the life of a Victorian child. We are at the invention stage of our writing and have come up with some really great ideas. We have used some strong emotive language. In PE we worked on our rolls. Mrs Playle was very impressed at how many we were able to do already.</p>
<p>Year 6</p>	<p>Year 6 had a brilliant start to the week with our school trip on Monday. It was fascinating to visit Chelmsford County Court and learn all about our justice system. We met judges and a clerk and were able to ask lots of questions about their jobs. We then role-played a real-life court case based on online harassment. Our jury decided that the defendant was guilty; in the real case she had changed her plea to guilty halfway through. It was also great fun to try on the robes and wigs! This week, we started a new RE unit, considering whether the Christian creation story and the Big Bang Theory complement or contradict each other. We've had lots of interesting discussion and have come up with more questions than answers!</p>

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about MYLOL

AGE RESTRICTION
13-19

MyLOL is a free social networking and dating site aimed at teens. Profiles can publicly display users' images and information, including sexual orientation and personal interests. The service bills itself as "the number one teen dating website in the world", claiming to have more than a million users globally. Despite its popularity, the MyLOL app is no longer available from Google Play or the App Store, although the site is still active. In some countries, police forces and schools have previously warned parents about "sinister predators" and "inappropriate activities" on the site.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

FLIMSY AGE GATES

Although MyLOL states it is exclusively aimed at users aged between 13 and 19, there is no credible age verification system to prevent a younger child – or an older adult – from signing up to the platform. Coupled with the fact that it's impossible to establish a user's true identity on MyLOL, this raises a serious concern that the site could be used for grooming.

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

MyLOL maintains that it monitors all uploaded images for nudity or sexual content. It also claims to be able to detect suspicious keywords. However, there have been numerous reports of explicit content being found on the platform, with users often posting provocative, semi-nude pictures of themselves and engaging in flirty or sexually explicit conversation.

POTENTIAL CYBER-BULLYING

MyLOL lets users 'vote' on other people based solely on their appearance, much in the same vein as the now-defunct site Hot or Not. This feature could easily lead to distress and bullying, especially if a young person's profile pics receive an unfavourable response. Various reviews of MyLOL have noted that bullying frequently becomes an issue in the platform's chat groups and private messages.

IN-APP SPENDING

MyLOL is free to join and use, but it also offers paid-for memberships. Users who have paid money get their profile promoted at the top of the site and in search results. They can also earn additional credits for increased engagement with the platform – such as sharing, replying to messages and voting. At the time of writing, the monthly membership fee was \$9.95 (just under £8).

DATA COLLECTION

According to its privacy policy, MyLOL collects user data including email addresses, contact details and interests. While the company says it is committed to protecting users' privacy, the small print states that information may be shared externally. MyLOL claims to follow procedures to keep data secure, but does not specify what these procedures are, or whether such information is encrypted.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

MyLOL makes it easy to connect with strangers. In fact, the site's rewards feature encourages users to send private messages to people they don't know. There have been several media stories of adults posing as teens on MyLOL to connect with minors, which could lead to extremely dangerous situations, such as a young person meeting up with someone who has been posing under a false identity.

Advice for Parents & Carers

DISCUSS ONLINE DATING

It's vital to talk to your child about the possible dangers of platforms like MyLOL – particularly the threat of online predators. Remind them of the risks of sharing intimate images and information with strangers and emphasise that most people don't realise they're being 'catfished' until it's too late – it really isn't wise for a young person to meet up with someone they've only spoken to online.

EXPLAIN PRIVACY RISKS

Before your child begins using a service such as MyLOL, it's important that they understand the potential pitfalls of giving out their personal data on this type of platform. Explain to them, for example, that they shouldn't divulge any personally identifying information to people who they don't know, as scammers can be quite convincing when attempting to steal someone's identity.

RESTRICT IN-APP SPENDING

If your child has access to a bank card or other payment method, they may be enticed into signing up for MyLOL's premium features. Having their profile boosted and receiving more attention could be especially tempting if their friends also use the site. You could consider altering their device's settings to disable internet purchases, or at the very least keeping an eye on their online spending.

SET UP LOCATION ALERTS

If you're worried that your child may be planning to meet up with someone they've met on MyLOL, you could consider utilising GPS or WiFi location tracking technology to follow their whereabouts in real time. You can even set up a virtual boundary or 'fence' and opt to receive an alert to your phone if your child enters or exits a specified area.

Meet Our Expert

Carly Page is an experienced technology journalist with a track record of more than 10 years in the industry. Previously the editor of tech tabloid *The Inquirer*, Carly is now a freelance technology journalist, editor and consultant.



The National College

NOS National Online Safety
#WakeUpWednesday