

Abacus Primary School News

Newsletter 351

10/01/20



HAPPY NEW YEAR 2020!

We'd like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy New Year and welcome you all back to a brand new term. The children have all come back enthused and

ready to learn. We had a welcome back assembly on Monday morning where the children spoke about their Christmas adventures and how they celebrated bringing in the New Year. We spoke about our wishes for 2020 and children have had the opportunity this week to write a wish for our wish tree.

Next week, we look forward to Silver classes assembly on Wednesday at 2.45pm.

Alone we can do so little;



together we can do so much.

FAPS (Friends of Abacus Primary School) would like to invite you all (parents only) to a cheese and wine meeting on **Wednesday 12th February 2020** from 7pm, to share ideas, new and old, for FAPS events for the rest of this academic year. We'd love to see as many of you as possible attend to continue their great work. Current members would love to see some new members join the committee to bring along some fresh, fundraising ideas.

Next week we will be on **WEEK 2** of our school menu





Save the date!

There will be a meeting for Year 4 parents and children at Wat Tyler on Thursday 23rd January 2020 at 4.15pm. This will be held at The Wat Tyler

centre by the residential staff.

This will be the only opportunity that parents and children will have to visit the centre prior to the residential visit.



Please can we ask that you consider others when parking your car at school drop off and pick up times.

The Welfare and Safety of our children is our priority so please ensure you are checking your mirrors when reversing and parking.

Please also remember that the school car park is for STAFF only at all times, this does include dropping off for clubs as well.

Your support would be very much appreciated with these matters.



Parking for staff only



On Wednesday this week, Children and parents in Foundation and Year 5 took part in a road safety session led by the Safer Essex Roads Partnership education team. The session started with a presentation before the children went out for a walk around the local area. Thank you to the parents that came along to support these events.





At National Online Safety we believe in empower... but online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one platform of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

TikTok is a video-sharing social media app available on iOS and Android which lets users create, share, and view user created videos much in a similar manner to Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat. It's main draw, however, is that users can record and upload bite-sized looping videos of themselves lip-syncing and dancing to popular music or soundbites, often for comedic effect, which can then be further enhanced with filters, emojis and stickers. TikTok has been designed with the young user in mind and has a very addictive appeal. At the beginning of 2019 it skyrocketed in popularity to become the iOS store's most downloaded app with over 33 million downloads. Estimates suggest that it now has anything between 500 million and over 1 billion monthly active users worldwide.

12+

What parents need to know about

TIKTOK

MATURE CONTENT

On the iOS store, TikTok is listed as 12+. On the Google Play Store it is rated as 'Parental guidance recommended'. When signing up for the app, it's possible to be asked your age without any form of verification. As children scroll through their feed, most of the videos they're likely to come across are lighthearted or funny takes on dance routines which are designed to make people laugh. However there has been a slew of videos which have been reported for featuring drug and alcohol abuse, self-harm and sexual content, including young teens dressing overtly sexually and behaving suggestively. Given the deluge of material uploaded to TikTok every day, it's impossible to moderate everything and it can be quite common to come across explicit content on the 'for your feed' when logging into the platform.

INAPPROPRIATE MUSIC

TikTok revolves around creating music videos through lip-syncing and dancing. Inevitably, some of the music featured by users will contain explicit or suggestive lyrics. Given the understandably young user base, there is a risk that children may seek to imitate the explicit language they hear or the suggestive actions they see when viewing others user's videos on the app.

TIKTOK FAME

TikTok is very image focused and there is a notable preoccupation with appearing cool and attractive. Many teenagers now attempt to go viral and become what's known as 'TikTok famous'. TikTok (and its predecessor musical.ly) has spawned its own celebrities - social media stars Loren Gray and Jacob Sartorius have been catapulted to fame through their initial exposure on the app. Obviously, most budding influencers looking to become the next big thing will be disappointed, but this may have the knock-on effect of making them go to more and more drastic lengths to get noticed.

ONLINE PREDATORS

As a social network, TikTok makes it easy to connect with other users. This includes the ability to comment on and react to other user's videos, follow their profile and download their content. Be aware that by default, any user can comment on your child's video if their account is set to public. Most interactions are harmless enough but as an app, TikTok is prone to predators because of the abundance of younger users.

ADDICTIVE NATURE

Social media is designed to be addictive and TikTok is no different. It can be fun and hugely entertaining. However, it's also because of this that it can be hard to put down. In addition to the short, punchy nature of the looping video format, the app's ability to keep you guessing what will come on screen next makes it easy to turn a five minute visit into 45 minute visit.

IN-APP PURCHASES

Aside from the content, there's also the option to purchase in-app extras called 'TikTok coins'. Prices range from £0.99 for 100 coins to an eye-watering £93.99 for 10,000 coins. TikTok coins are used to purchase different emojis to reward content creators that a user finds funny or entertaining. In the iOS version of the app you can disable the option to buy TikTok coins but this sadly doesn't seem to be a feature in the Android version.

Safety Tips for Parents

TALK ABOUT ONLINE DANGERS

Assuming your child is above the age limit to use the app, make sure you also take the time to talk to them about what they are seeing on the app. Have a dialogue, get them to give you their opinion on what is appropriate and model the correct behaviour for them. Go over why they shouldn't give out private info, passwords and be positive and understanding of them. In the long run, getting them to think critically about what they're seeing goes a long way to keeping them social media savvy.

USE PRIVACY SETTINGS

Undoubtedly, the easiest way to safeguard your child on TikTok is to make sure their account is set to private. This means only those users your child approves can view, like, and follow their content. Setting the account to private may clash with your child's goal of social media superstardom, but it will keep their account secure from strangers. This setting can be enabled under the privacy and safety menu by pressing the others in the 'me' tab of the app. To be extra safe, there are additional controls available to toggle such as who can send comments and messages, among other options.

ENABLE RESTRICTED MODE

In the digital wellbeing section there's the ability to turn on restricted mode using a PIN. Restricted mode filters out content that is not age appropriate although it should be noted that this isn't always 100% fool proof. When enabling restricted mode, parents should still be vigilant to what their child is watching and take note that the algorithm moderating content is not infallible.

EXPLORE AND LEARN YOURSELF

Understanding and learning the app yourself is a great way to get to grips with TikTok. You could then even use the app with your child and watch some videos with them. If you are the parent of a teen, even if it does not make you a pro, being a parent who is what they're viewing and sharing. That said, it's a brilliant chance to turn it into a bonding opportunity with your child also. You could even watch your inner performer and make videos with them while (more importantly) keeping them safe online.

LEARN HOW TO REPORT AND BLOCK INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

With the proper privacy settings in place, TikTok can be a safe space for your child to express themselves. However, just in case something does manage to slip through, make sure your child knows how to recognise and report content that isn't appropriate and get them to come to you about what they have seen. TikTok allows users to report offenders and comments within the app. You can also block individual users by going on their profile.

MODERATE SCREEN TIME

As entertaining as TikTok is, you can help your child moderate their time on the app by making use of the digital wellbeing section. Under the screen time management option, you can limit the daily allowed time on the app in increments ranging from 40 to 120 minutes. You can also lock this preference behind a PIN number which has to be inputted in order to them exceed the daily time limit. This way your child can get their daily dose of memes without wasting away the day.

Meet our expert

Pete Radh is a writer with over 30+ years in research and analysis. Working within a specialist area for West Yorkshire Police, Pete has contributed work which has been pivotal in successfully winning high profile cases in court as well as writing as a subject matter expert for industry handbooks.

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The Sun newspaper is giving away a free box of books containing more than 100 titles, worth £600, to each school that registers for their 'Books For Schools' campaign. In order to receive the books, we need to collect 3,500 tokens, which will be available in each newspaper between 23rd November and 18th January. Please support us by cutting out the tokens and placing them in the box at the office. Thank you!

Friday 7th February 2020

On Friday 7th February 2020, we will be taking part in the NSPCC Number day as part of our Maths week. We are inviting children to come to school in their 'Maths outfits' this could be dressed as a calculator, a famous Mathematician or T-shirts with numbers on. We will be holding a cake sale during the week and all donations raised will be donated to the NSPCC.



Spotlight on our Curriculum



Monday morning started like any day, then we got back from assembly and found a flying saucer had arrived, hanging from the roof in the Foundation playground. On Tuesday the cameras were checked and we saw a spaceship arrive in the playground. We have written to Year 5&6 to see if they can help us find out what happened.



We started the spring term by being detectives to find out what made the mess in our library. Miss Mitchell was most upset to see empty water bottles, biscuit crumbs and paw prints! We think it was the tiger that came to tea.



This week we have begun our topic of "It's a wonderful world." We have learnt about the 7 continents and used atlases to find the UK and some other countries. We have been learning about money in Maths and started journey stories in English.



This week we have started our water topic. We experimented with different water tricks such as making a lava lamp and walking water. In Art, we created colour wheels to investigate complimentary colours.



This week we started our new topic "Our UK." We started looking at the countries and capital cities. In DT, we started to look at seasonal food in the UK. We are looking forward to starting cooking.



Year 5/6 have been very excited to start the Spring term. We have started looking at maps and atlases to gain a better understanding of the world. Year 5 had a session on Road Safety to ensure they stay safe and in P.E. we have been relaxing doing Yoga.

Now that the colder weather has arrived, please can all children ensure they have an outdoor P.E kit in school.