

# Abacus Primary School

## Newsletter 384

### 6/11/2020



I hope that you all had a lovely half term break and managed to spend some time together as a family. The children have all come back ready to learn and there's been a number of exciting opportunities offered across the curriculum this week:

Years 5 and 6 took part in a VR workshop on Wednesday.

Year 4 began their Play Leader training on Thursday afternoon with Mrs Ford, our schools sports coordinator.



#### CORONAVIRUS

BBC NEWS

England-wide restrictions from 5 November



Pubs and restaurants closed but takeaways permitted



Stay home – only leave for specific reasons including education and work



Non-essential shops, leisure and entertainment venues closed



Schools, universities and colleges remain open



No households mixing indoors, or in private gardens, unless in your support bubble



Outdoor recreation encouraged, you can meet one person outside your household

I apologise for having to close the school on Tuesday. I never make decisions like this lightly but we had no hot water or heating in school and the engineer was not able to fix it until well into the school day. Thank you for your support in collecting your children so quickly.

Yesterday England began the second lockdown of 2020, although this time it will be slightly different to the last lockdown as schools will remain open.

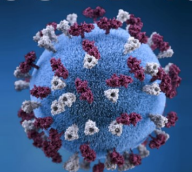
In order to keep our whole school community safe, we must ensure that we follow the new restrictions.

A few parents have asked why we are not asking parents to wear masks on the school site. The wearing of masks on playgrounds are not mandatory. We do ask that parents wear one when they enter the school building as we feel the risks increase in an enclosed space. Whilst we will not be enforcing the wearing of masks on the school playground (unless instructed to by the Local Authority) we will respect any parent who feels safer wearing a mask.

We have also been asked whether we will be installing a one way system at drop offs and pick ups. We feel that our three entrances provide a wider space for parents to enter and exit the school site, so we will be continuing to use all three entrances/exits, but we will continue to review this.

In line with the Track and Trace guidelines, we cannot stress the importance of families informing us of any family members going for a test. Children should not be in school if a family member is being tested, until a negative result is received. It is vital to limit the spread of the virus that we all follow this guidance.

COVID-19



TRACK & TRACE

To minimise the number of people on our site at one time, we will be continuing to enforce that only one adult can enter the school site, per family, at one time. Can we also ask that you leave the site as soon as you have collected your children. In normal circumstances we love to see families enjoying our outdoor areas at the end of the school day, but our staggered starts and finishes will only work if people follow these rules.

The safety of our whole school community must always remain our priority, so please respect staff members by standing back from the classroom doors. If you have an urgent message for staff then please use the school text system or leave a message by contacting the school office on 01268 571018.



We apologise for some of the recent menu changes. Our school cook has been unwell and we are also struggling with some supplies at the moment. Our kitchen staff continue to try their best to provide meals for the children across the school. We are constantly reviewing our menu and seeing what other options we can add and offer.

#### **Next week's changes:**

**Monday's choice will now be Chicken Nugget Wrap, Vegetable Nugget Wrap or Ham Sandwich.**

If you feel that your child might be entitled to Free School Meals, please visit the Essex County Council website page on [www.essex.gov.uk/educationawards](http://www.essex.gov.uk/educationawards) or telephone them on 0345 603 2200.

Could your child be entitled to a  
**FREE** school meal?



We are really looking forward to next Wednesday and Thursday where all the children across the school will have the opportunity to take part in an African drumming workshop. These will take place across the two days to ensure all children have a go. We will be adding photos and videos to our website so that you can share some of the experience. Thank you to all the families who have already paid for these workshops. £4.00 per child has been added to your child's ParentPay account. We would appreciate it if all payments could be made by Monday 9th November 2020.

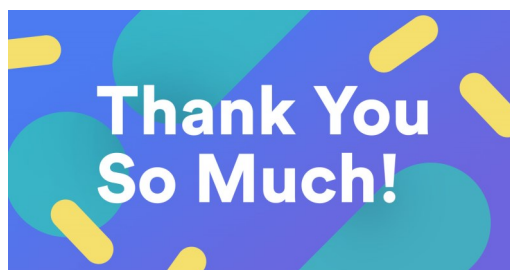


**BBC**  
**Children  
in Need**

November 2020						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

On Friday 13th November 2020 we are inviting children to come to school in non school uniform for a donation to Children in Need. Please do not feel that you need to go out and buy any logo merchandise but if you do already have some (previous years is fine too) then children can wear this too. This year the theme is 'Together we can change young lives'. All donations made will go directly to the charity.

**Friday 13th Nov 2020**



Our Abacus community never fails to amaze us! Thank you so much for all of your donations to our local food bank...the response has been brilliant. We

will continue to collect food until the end of November, so if you have got any spare tins in your cupboard or if you are able to add an extra item to your weekly shop, I am sure the residents of Wickford will be extremely grateful– thank you.

**food  
bank**



# Star of the Week!

Pink Class	Aaryan A
Blue Class	Daisy B
Red Class	Sienna M
Orange Class	Eloise B
Yellow Class	Harriet R
Turquoise Class	Imogen M
Green Class	Annabella D
Lilac Class	Oliver W
Black Class	Max R
White Class	Alex M
Gold Class	Chloe M
Purple Class	Sophie O
Silver Class	Ernest S



As there will be no parades on Remembrance Sunday this year, why not have a go at painting a poppy on a stone or pebble and leave them by the local church or local war memorials as a symbol of remembrance. We'd love to see any photos of your creations.



# Times Table Rock Stars

## 6/11/20



<b>Silver Class</b> 1st: Mcrae K 2nd: Ellie-Mae P 3rd: Keira N	<b>Purple Class</b> 1st: Dollie-Mae W 2nd: Stanley B 3rd: Miley M	<b>Gold Class</b> 1st: Michael B 2nd: Billy C 3rd: George P
<b>White Class</b> 1st: Harley B 2nd: Charlotte N 3rd: Emma T	<b>Black Class</b> 1st: Erin E 2nd: Chloe L 3rd: Donovan L	<b>Green Class</b> 1st: Jubril R 2nd: Lena V 3rd: Hannah F
<b>Lilac Class</b> 1st: Henry J 2nd: Jake S 3rd: Oscar T	Well done to everyone. The top child in each class will be entered into a draw to win a prize at the end of the term.	



St George's Day	St David's Day	Happy St Patrick's Day	St Andrew's Day

We have added a House Points page to our website (under the Pupils Tab.) This will be updated weekly with the running total for the school House Points, we hope the children will enjoy being able to see how their house is doing!

### THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION POPPY APPEAL

Thank you to all who have already bought poppies, we will continue to sell poppies in class next week.

Many  
Thanks







# Be smart on the internet



At National Online Safety we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information they need to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one game of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guides, hints and tips for adults.



## What parents & carers need to know about ...

# AMONG US

PEGI  
7

Among Us is one of the most popular games of 2020. A space-themed 'social deduction game' where 4-10 players take on the guise of Crewmates, who must complete various tasks around their spaceship, while randomly selected Imposters must try their hardest to sabotage the others' efforts. The Imposters have to remain undetected through rounds of voting to win. While Among Us is a largely safe game, it's still prudent to be aware of any potential risks young ones might encounter when playing.

### Inappropriate chat

While Among Us can be enjoyed locally via wi-fi, it is commonly played online. Between rounds, players come together to discuss who they think the Imposter is with a text chat, and it's here where children will come into contact with others. There is a profanity filter on the game as standard, but it can very easily be disabled and (like any unmoderated chat groups) children can be exposed to inappropriate, sexual or explicit language.

### In-game purchases

Among Us is currently available on both PC (via the gaming service Steam) and mobile devices. On the PC, the game costs a flat amount of £3.99 and has some in-game purchases, whereas the mobile version is free to play but contains adverts and in-game purchases. You can pay to remove the ads or purchase in-game cosmetic items. While these amounts are relatively low, there's still the possibility that young ones could accidentally spend lots of money on the game without realising it, as the process is complete in a couple of taps if a card is connected to your store account.

### Risk of hacking

Among Us has been the target of hacking activity. Indeed, only recently the game's developer, InnerSloth, tweeted advice that users play private games or with people they trust, in response to hacking issues. As yet, there has been no breach in player accounts. However, if a big enough hack were to take place and player details were accessed, it could lead criminals to having access to credit card data and other personal credentials.

### Use of external apps

Many players use external apps like Discord to voice chat with each other while they're playing. The problem with this is that it is unregulated by the game. Usually on Discord, players will only talk to other people they know in private chats, but a stranger could add a child on an external app: pretending to be interested in playing Among Us with them, when in reality they could be attempting to bully, groom or extort.

### Mild violence

The art style of Among Us is cartoony but does contain some very mild violence. Imposters must kill off Crewmates one by one and can do this in a number of different ways. Some younger children might find this uncomfortable and could get scared or become upset when an Imposter is chasing them, or if they are the Imposter and are forced to kill. An age rating of PEGI 7 should help guide you in deciding if the game is appropriate or not.



## Safety tips

### Play with your children

Playing with your kids is one of the best ways to understand the game, and what makes it so popular. Among Us is free on mobile and is incredibly easy to pick up and play. It's also a great way to bond with your young ones - unless of course you're the Imposter or vote them out of the spaceship! You can do this by picking 'Local' on the main menu then 'Create Game'.

### Use private lobbies

Among Us uses private lobbies to let players keep track of who they're gaming with. Using a uniquely generated code that can be given to friends prior to a game starting, it gives parents peace of mind knowing who their kids are playing with. To get a game code, simply select 'Host', choose the game settings, press 'Confirm', then send the six-digit code at the bottom of the screen to friends to invite them.

### Deactivate credit cards

Having your credit card automatically paired with any online accounts that can be accessed by children is asking for trouble. A solution could be setting them up with their own account with no credit card attached. They can still ask you when they want to make a purchase, but it's totally up to you as and when that transaction happens.

### Use an alias

By default, your name on Among Us will be set to whatever name your device recognises you as. If this is your child's real name, you'll want to ensure they change it before hopping into a game. This is really easily done by clicking 'Online' on the main menu, then simply typing in a new name at the top of the screen.

### Talk about the risks

It's a good idea to talk to your child about the risks associated with online gaming, especially when there are chat options and an ability to communicate with others. Try to maintain an open dialogue with your child: talk about their experiences of the game and who they're playing with. This will help you to stay on top of how they're feeling and ensure they know they can come to you if ever they feel upset or uncomfortable about anything they've experienced.

### Meet our expert

Mark Foster has worked in the gaming industry for five years as a writer, editor and presenter. He is the current gaming editor of two of the biggest gaming news sites in the world, UNILAD Gaming and GAMINGible. Starting gaming from a young age with his siblings, he has a passion for understanding how games and tech work - but more importantly, how to make them safe and fun.



Sources: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.innersloth.spacemafia>





# Spotlight on our Curriculum



We have been learning about patterns in Maths. We also had great fun balancing, building and constructing.



It's been a bit of a mix and match this week....looking at number bonds, writing poems, learning about Guy Fawkes, creating work in the style of Picasso and even something about the Titanic! Wow...!!



We have done P.E. and focused on History. We've looked at Guy Fawkes and why he tried to blow up the Houses of Parliament. We've also looked at Remembrance Day.



In History we learnt about Skara Brae (a Neolithic village) and compared it to our modern day home. In Science we learnt about soil and what it is made of.



We have been working on + and - in Maths this week. In Science we have looked at Rainforest animals and the different states of matter. We have been reading The Kapok Tree in English and exploring persuasive letters.



This week we made our own Maya hot chocolate which included cinnamon and a pinch of cayenne pepper. Most of us liked it although it was a bit spicy for some! We also had a fantastic virtual trip to look at some Maya ruins with the VR headsets. It was amazing to be so close to all the different structures- it felt like we were flying at some points!