

Abacus Primary School

Newsletter 368

5/06/2020



I write this newsletter as a very proud Headteacher. It has been wonderful to welcome some more children back into school as part of the governments wider opening plan. We have welcomed 80 children through the doors this week. I cannot explain how proud I am of all the children that returned. They were all so excited and I am sure their smiles lit up the whole of Wickford. Opening the school for more pupils has been an anxious and challenging time for everyone. We have tried our very best to keep the school and classroom as 'normal' as possible but also ensure safety measures are adhered to.

I would like to personally thank each and every member of our Abacus school team for all their efforts this week in preparing and organising the classrooms and showing the children positivity upon their return. Lots of effort has gone on behind the scenes and we really would not have achieved everything this week without working as a team.

Thank you to all the families for your appreciation and feedback on how we have made the school safer for the children.

As part of the planning stage for the wider opening Mrs Lewis and I carried out a risk assessment across the whole school. As a result of this risk assessment our current plan will be running for three weeks so during this time we cannot accept any more pupils in to school. All the staff and children are working in bubbles and bubbles need to remain constant to ensure the health and safety of everyone in that bubble. We will only allow 8 children to be in each class at one time, to ensure social distancing and safety measures can be followed. This is why we cannot accept additional children at this time.

We will continue to try our very best to continue engaging with the whole school community. Now staff have returned to school it may mean that class emails are not answered as quickly as they previously were, but they will be answered. We will continue to plan and offer home learning opportunities, which will continue to be uploaded to our home learning page on our school website (www.abacusprimaryschool.co.uk) If you need to contact the school, our school office is open each day until 4pm.

Due to changes to some of the Governments restrictions, I am aware that some keyworker parents have now been asked to return to work and so may now need their children to attend school. This provision is only available for children of parents who are keyworkers and have no alternate childcare option. We will need at least one weeks notice before any keyworker children to return to school, to ensure we have enough space and staff available.

As a school, we thank you all for your understanding and support as we continue to do our best at this challenging time.

Mrs Blakeley



What parents need to know about INSTAGRAM

Instagram is a hugely popular social networking app with over 1 billion users worldwide. The app, which is accessible on iOS and Android devices, allows users to upload images and videos to their feed, create interactive 'stories', exchange private messages or search, explore and follow other accounts they like. Images and videos can be transformed with an array of filters to edit the shot before sharing and anyone with an account can see others' online 'galleries' if their account is not private. To make posts easier to find, users can include searchable hashtags and captions to their uploads. That's why we've created this guide to help parents and carers understand exactly what Instagram is about.

AGE RESTRICTION
13+
Requires the user to be at least 13 to create an account

LOCATION

#HASHTAG

HOOKED ON SCROLLING

Many social media platforms, Instagram included, have been designed in a way to keep us engaged on them for as long as possible. Behavioural economist, Nir Eyal, calls this the 'Hook Model' and the Instagram feed is a great example of this. Children and adults may find themselves scrolling to try and get a dopamine release. Scrolling may become addictive and it can be difficult to stop until children find that 'something' they are looking for, quickly losing track of time as they get deeper into their Instagram feed.

SLIDING INTO DMS

Direct messages (or DMs) on Instagram allow users to share posts, images, videos, voice messages and calls between each other privately (in a private group). Even if your child's account is set to private, anybody has the option to message them and send them content. If the person is not on your child's friends list, the message will still be sent to their inbox but the user has to accept their request to see the message.

INFLUENCER CULTURE

Influencers are sometimes paid thousands of pounds to promote a product, service, app and much more on social media. When celebrities or influencers post such an advert, they should add a disclaimer somewhere in the post which states that they have been paid for it. Commonly, this is well-hidden in the hashtags or in the comments of their post, making it unclear that their photo/video is actually an advert. This can be very misleading to young people who may be influenced into buying/wasting something promoted by somebody they admire, creating a false sense of reality and potentially affecting their mental health and wellbeing.

IMPACT ON WELLBEING

In a report by the NSPCC, Instagram was ranked the worst for young people's mental health. Using filters on photos on Instagram can set unrealistic expectations and create feelings of inadequacy. Children may strive for more 'likes' by using aesthetically edited photos. Judging themselves against other users on the app might threaten their confidence or self-worth. In early 2019, Instagram banned images of self-harm and suicide, following the suicide of 14-year-old Molly Russell, who had reportedly been looking at such material on the platform. They since extended the ban to include drawings, cartoons and memes.

LIVE STREAMING TO STRANGERS

Live streaming on Instagram allows users to connect with friends and followers in real-time and comment on videos during broadcast. If your child's account is private, only their approved followers can see their story. It's important to note they may have accepted a friend request from someone they don't know, which means they could be live streaming to strangers. Children also risk sharing content they later regret, which could be re-shared online for years to come. Public accounts allow anybody to view, so we suggest your child blocks followers they don't know. In early 2019, data gathered by the NSPCC found that sex offenders were grooming children on Instagram more than on any other online platform.

IN-APP PAYMENTS

Instagram allows payments for products directly through the app. It operates under the same rules as Facebook Payments, which state that if you are under the age of 18, you can only use this feature with the involvement of a parent or guardian.

EXPOSING LOCATION

Public locations can be added to a user's photos/videos and also to their stories. While this may seem like a good idea at the time, it can expose the location of your child. This is particularly more of a risk if it is on their story, as it is real time. A photo which includes landmarks in the area, their school uniform, street name, house and even tagging in the location of the photo uploaded to Instagram can expose the child's location, making it easy to locate them. If their account is public, anyone can access their account and see their location.

HIJACKED HASHTAGS

Hashtags are an integral part of how Instagram works, but they can come with risks. One person may use a seemingly innocent hashtag with one particular thing in mind, and before you know it hundreds of people could be using the same hashtag for something inappropriate or dangerous that your child shouldn't be exposed to.

IGTV

Instagram TV (IGTV) works similar to YouTube. Users can watch videos from favourite accounts on the platform or create their own channel and post their own videos. It's important to note anyone can create an Instagram TV channel and doesn't have to be friends with a person to follow an account and watch their videos. In 2018 Instagram apologised and removed some of its TV content which featured sexually suggestive imagery of children. As the feature may encourage spending more time using the app, it's important to set time limits to avoid children's sleep or education being disturbed.

@MENTION

Top Tips for Parents & Carers

RESTRICT DIRECT MESSAGES

If your child receives a message from somebody they do not know, encourage them not to accept their message request and 'block' the person; this is the only way to stop them messaging your child again. Children can also 'tap and hold' the individual message to report it directly to Instagram as well as reporting the account itself.

LOOK OUT FOR #ADS

In 2019, the UK's Competition and Markets Authority launched an investigation into celebrities who were posting adverts on social media and not declaring that they were paid for influencers must clearly state that they have been paid for their posts, for example using a hashtag like #ad or #sponsored. Teach your child to look out for the signs of a paid post/advert and discuss with them that not everything they see from celebrities is their personal choice and opinion.

MANAGE NEGATIVE INTERACTIONS

If your child is receiving unwanted or negative comments, they can block that account so that they can't interact with them. This stops them seeing and commenting on their posts, stories and live broadcasts. In addition, your child can instantly delete unwanted comments from their posts, turn them off completely and control who can tag and mention them in comments, captions or stories, from everyone, only people they follow, or no one at all.

MANAGE DIGITAL WELLBEING

Instagram now has an in-built activity dashboard that allows users to monitor and control how much time they spend on the app. Users can add a 'daily reminder' to set a limit on how much time they want to spend on Instagram, prompting them to consider if it's been too long. In addition, once users have caught up with all their posts since they last logged on, they'll receive a 'You've completely caught up' message. Both features can help you have a conversation with your child about how much time they are spending on the app and to set healthy time limits.

PROTECT PERSONAL INFORMATION

Your child may unknowingly give away personal information on their profile or in their live streams. Talk to them about what their personal information is and make sure that they do not disclose anything, including their location, to anyone during a livestream, comment, direct message or any other tool for communication on the platform, even to their friends.

USE A PRIVATE ACCOUNT

By default, any image or video your child uploads to Instagram is visible to anyone. A private account means that you have to approve a request if somebody wants to follow you and only people you approve will see your posts and videos. Children should also use a secure password and enable a two-factor authentication to add an extra layer of security to their account.

FILTER INAPPROPRIATE COMMENTS

Instagram has an 'anti-bullying' filter, which hides comments relating to a person's appearance or character, as well as threats to a person's wellbeing or health. The filter will also alert Instagram to repeated problems so that they can take action against the user if necessary. This is an automatic filter, which should always be enabled. Children can also report abusive behaviour or inappropriate/offensive material directly to Instagram from the app. This includes posts, comments and accounts.

TURN OFF SHARING

Even though this feature will not stop people from taking screenshots, it will stop others being able to directly share photos and videos from a story as a message to another user. This feature can be turned off in the settings. We also recommend turning off the feature which automatically shares photos and videos from a story to a Facebook account.

REMOVE PAYMENT METHODS

If you are happy for your child to have a card associated with their Instagram account, we suggest adding a PIN which needs to be entered before making a payment; this will also help prevent unauthorised purchases. This can be added in the payment settings tab.

DON'T FORGET TO BE VIGILANT & TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT THEIR ONLINE ACTIVITIES!

Meet our expert

Parveen Khan is a social media expert and digital media consultant who is passionate about improving digital literacy for parents and children. She has extensive experience of working in the social media arena and is the founder of Kids N Clicks, a web resource helping parents and children thrive in a digital world.



National Online Safety

#WakeUpWednesday

www.nationalonlinesafety.com Twitter - @natonlinesafety Facebook - /NationalOnlineSafety Instagram - @nationalonlinesafety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 03.06.2020



I hope you have enjoyed watching the class challenges that children in Years 1-6 have taken part in over the past few weeks. Children in Foundation are taking part in their own weekly challenges which

are being shared on their own communication tool called Tapestry. It's been wonderful to not just watch the challenges but also see everyone and for the children to see their class mates. I have shown some of the challenges to the keyworker children in school and it's wonderful to hear their excitement when they see friends from their classes. Thank you to the staff who have coordinated these.

At the moment Facebook is not allowing me to post videos to our school page, so I have been posting the challenges on our website challenge page. <https://www.abacusprimaryschool.co.uk/challenges>



I am delighted to share the news with you that Mrs Head is expecting her first child in October and will begin her Maternity leave at the end of September.

I am sure you will join me in wishing Mr and Mrs Head all the very best for the future.



INSET Days

The school term dates for 2020/2021 has now been added to our school website.

Wednesday 2/9/2020

Friday 23/10/2020

Monday 4/1/2021

Monday 22/2/2021

During this period, there will be a number of new “rules” that pupils will be expected to follow, and they will be given clear information about new procedures.

Pupils will be asked to follow new procedures in relation to:

- arriving at school and leaving at the end of the day
- following instructions on who they can socialise with at school – children will be expected to stay strictly within the group they are allocated to, and not spend time with anyone from another group
- moving around the school as per specific instructions (for example, one-way systems, out of bounds areas, queuing)
- following school instructions on hygiene, such as handwashing and sanitising
- expectations about sneezing, coughing, tissues and disposal and avoiding touching their mouth, nose and eyes with hands
- telling an adult if they are experiencing symptoms of coronavirus or feeling poorly
- following new rules about sharing any equipment or other items including drinking bottles
- new expectations about breaks or play times, including where children may or may not play
- new rules about lunchtimes in school

Essex County Council School Term and Holiday Dates for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools - Academic Year 2020-2021

September 2020							October 2020							November 2020							December 2020											
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May 2021							June 2021							July 2021							August 2021											
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28	29	30	31				28	29	30					28	29	30	31				23	24	25	26	27	28	29					
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= Schooldays & Weekends
 = School holidays
 = Bank holidays
 = Inset Days

In addition, schools allocate five non-pupil days out of the school days indicated, or the equivalent in disaggregated twilight sessions.

Autumn Term:	Wednesday 2 September 2020 – Friday 18 December 2020 Half Term 26 October – 30 October	73 days
Spring Term:	Monday 4 January 2021 – Friday 26 March 2021 Half Term 15 February - 19 February	55 days
Summer Term:	Monday 12 April 2021 – Wednesday 21 July 2021 Half Term 31 May – 4 June, and May Bank Holiday, 3 May	67 days
		195 days

We thank you for your support during this time.

Please note: The above dates may vary for individual schools, especially Foundation, Voluntary Aided schools and Academies. You are strongly advised to check with your child's school before making any holiday or other commitments.