

Abacus Primary School

Newsletter 377

11/09/2020



I want to start this weeks newsletter saying a HUGE WELL DONE to the children, staff and to you all as parents.

Over the last 7 days we have welcomed back 330 pupils to school, this is a huge challenge every September but due to Covid-19 and current Government restrictions this year has given a few extra challenges, but we have achieved this by working together as a whole school community.

I cannot tell you all how proud we all are of your children. They have run up the paths on their first mornings, squealed with excitement as their classroom doors have opened and left at the end of the days greeting you as parents, with smiles on their faces. I have heard numerous comments around having their "best day ever", "Year 2 is awesome", "I can't wait until tomorrow and I love my new class."

Thank you for all your support since our return. I know that some of the new measures are going to take us a little time to get used to and for some entering our site each morning, seeing the sheer volume of people can be quite overpowering, but we must continue to work together to keep us all as safe as possible.

Please ensure social distancing when entering our site and remember that you can use all the outdoor space, top playground, Tellytubby land and the field areas to collect your children. We have three entrances to our site which will remain open at all drop offs and picks ups. We are currently researching some matting for our field area, in preparation for any changes in weather, so that we can keep this entrance/exit available.

Please remember that children in Years 3,4,5 and 6 can arrive at school from 8.30am to 8.45am and children in Years 1 and 2 can arrive at school between 8.45am and 9am.



- For our staggered starts and finishes to work, we need families to arrive at school just before their children's start times and to leave the site as soon as you have dropped your children off at class or collected your children.
- To limit the amount of people on our school site at any one time, we can only allow one parent to drop off and collect.
- We value home/school partnerships and we recognise that as parents you want to get to know your child's teacher and pass on information but due to the current restrictions we cannot hold daily conversations at the door at drop off and pick up times, our staff's safety is important so we are therefore asking that all parents stand back from the classroom doors to allow children to enter their classrooms easily. This does not mean that you cannot communicate with class teachers, it just means that we need to think of safer ways for this to happen. So at this time we are asking that you call the school office on 01268 571018, use the school text system or send an email to the school office admin@abacus.essex.sch.uk Our office team will pass on any messages to our teaching staff and staff will return calls if necessary.
- Should your child become unwell with a temperature, persistent cough or any other symptoms associated with coronavirus, please **do not send them to school**. If you are unsure if they are presenting symptoms seek medical advice by calling 111 and where symptoms are present please sign your child up to have a test. Where children have been tested they should not attend school until they have received their negative result.
- Please can we ask that you do not add posts to social media about your child/ children being unwell, this information is confidential and can cause unnecessary anxiety amongst everyone.



Contact Us

Should you need to contact the school over the weekend to inform us of any test results or illness, please can we ask that you use the school text system (07786 201172) This will be checked throughout the weekend period regularly. It is important that we are made aware of any positive test results or possible Covid illness as soon as possible, so that we can prevent any further infection.

Facebook is playing up at the moment, so please do not rely on the messenger function to communicate with us at the present time.

Our Curriculum

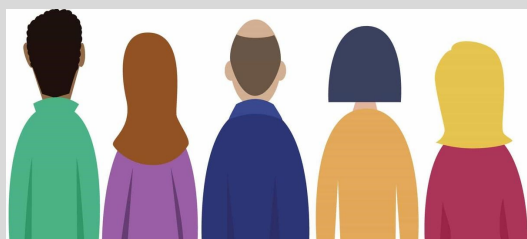
Our Curriculum Drivers



As part of our school development, we spent a lot of time before lockdown working on what we will refer to as 'curriculum drivers'. These four drivers were decided by our staff based on what we believe to be the most pertinent factors that affect our pupils and their learning, and therefore influence our planning and curriculum development. These drivers are the backbone of our curriculum, and will be woven throughout our planning. Our intent is for these drivers to be clear and impactful for all; we want our children to be aware of these drivers and to be able to recognise when these are being used throughout the school day (age dependent!). As we will be referring to and promoting these drivers in our classrooms, we thought we would keep you informed! Please refer to our school website for further information.

Since the children have returned to school we have been delivering our curriculum through a whole school topic centred around the story 'Here We Are' by Oliver Jeffers.

Your children may have been coming home sharing facts with you about our world. A fact shared with me by Year 3 this week is that a disposable face mask can stay in the ocean for 450 years before it starts breaking down!



PARENT MEETING

As part of our Risk Assessment we are currently having to limit the number of visitors that enter our school therefore we cannot hold our usual introduction evenings this September.

We recognise how important the information is for you all, so staff are putting together presentations which will be uploaded to our website for you to view.

We will send you all a text to let you know once your child's year group presentation has been uploaded and provide a link of where to find the presentation.

This term we will also not be able to hold Class assemblies, plays or parents evening, but we are thinking of different ways that we can hold some of these events or present this information.



I am sorry that some of you are a little disappointed with our limited menu at present. We are doing our absolute best to still be able to offer three choices a day, cater for all dietary requirements and ensure all children have time to eat their meal and have

a playtime with the new restrictions. Mrs Clark (our school cook) and I have met this week and we will be beginning to add some extra dishes to our menu from Monday 21st September 2020. Next week we will be on WEEK 1 of our menu. Our additions will include more hot meals including Fishy Friday.

The children have adapted fantastically well to our new lunchtime routines. Thank you to the whole midday team for making lunchtimes run so smoothly.



You have probably heard from the media the concern about the video on Tik Tok of a man who streamed his suicide.

Please ensure that you are monitoring your child's online activity and keeping a close eye on any online conversations to keep your child/ children safe at all times.

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

TIKTOK

AGE RESTRICTION 12+

What parents need to know about

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 set about your age without any form of verification. As children scroll through their feed, most of the videos they'll likely to come across are light-hearted 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 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 You' feed when logging into the platform.

INAPPROPRIATE MUSIC
TikTok revolves around creating music videos through lip-synching and dancing. Unfortunately, some of the music featured by users will contain explicit or suggestive lyrics. Given the undeniably young user base, there is a risk that children may look to imitate the explicit language they hear or the suggestive actions they see when viewing others' user 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 subculture - 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. The more 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 stranger users.

ADDICTIVE NATURE
Social media is designed to be addictive and TikTok is no different. It can be fun and hugely entertaining. However, it is also because of this that it can be hard to put down. In addition to the short, punchy nature of the looping videos 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 £95.99 for 10,000 coins. TikTok coins are used to purchase different assets 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 the risks of using it. The app, like any other social media platform, has its own set of dangers. It's important to make the correct balance between the positives and the dangers of the app. Do not let your child's online activity become a source of stress or anxiety. Talk to them about the risks of using the app and the importance of keeping their account private. Encourage them to think critically about what they see online and to report any suspicious activity to you.

USE PRIVACY SETTINGS
Understandably, the easiest way to safeguard your child on TikTok is to make sure their account is set to private. This means that only your child's approved followers can view their content. However, setting the account to private may clash with your child's goal of social media popularity. You will need to think about the account's privacy settings and the risks of making it public. 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.

ENABLE RESTRICTED MODE
In the digital world, there's no such thing as a free lunch. TikTok's 'Restricted Mode' is a feature that allows parents to restrict their child's access to certain content. It's a good idea to enable this feature, but it's important to note that it's not perfect. It's a good idea to enable this feature, but it's important to note that it's not perfect.

EXPLORE AND LEARN YOURSELF
Understanding and learning the app yourself is a great way to help your child. It's important to make sure your child knows how to use the app safely. It's important to make sure your child knows how to use the app safely.

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, it's important to make sure your child knows how to report and block inappropriate content. It's important to make sure your child knows how to report and block inappropriate content.

MODERATE SCREEN TIME
As entertaining as TikTok is, you can help your child by setting limits on their screen time. It's important to make sure your child knows how to report and block inappropriate content. It's important to make sure your child knows how to report and block inappropriate content.

Meet our expert
Pete Beale is a writer with over 10+ years in research and analysis. Working within a specialist area for West Yorkshire Police, Pete has contributed work which has been praised for successfully winning high profile cases in court as well as writing on a subject matter expert for industry handbooks.

***NEW FOR 2020* FAMILY SAFETY MODE**
TikTok Family Safety Mode offers parents to link their own TikTok account to their child's. It's a great way to monitor your child's digital footprint by giving you direct control over their safety settings and being able to see what they're posting. It's important to make sure your child knows how to report and block inappropriate content. It's important to make sure your child knows how to report and block inappropriate content.

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