

Abacus Primary School

Newsletter 549

29 / 11 / 24



It's been another busy week here at Abacus. Thank you to everyone who came along and supported our Christmas Fayre event on Wednesday afternoon, thankfully the rain stopped but it definitely felt Christmassy with the drop in temperature. It was lovely to see so many of our school community attend, we really appreciate your support. The raffle will be running throughout the rest of this term until Monday 15th December 2024. The raffle will be drawn, by our Young Leaders in their club on Tuesday 17th December 2024. Tickets can be purchased from the School Office. A percentage of money taken will be given to Silvana Court as a Christmas treat towards their Wellbeing Fund.

Next week, on Tuesday 3rd December 2024 from 10-1pm, we have The Autism Reality bus visiting our school. The experience lasts for 15 minutes and two people can attend each session. The experience is designed to give participants a virtual experience of living with autism. This is a very practical, hands-on experience that will give you a greater insight into autism and help you see the world from an autistic person's perspective. You can book your space at the School Office.



Next week we will be on WEEK 3 of our school menu, which you can view on our website.





Christmas Fayre 2024

What a fantastic event for our school community



PIC·COLLAGE





LET'S CELEBRATE!

Lots to celebrate this week for Buddy, Orla, Sonny, Muhariba, Theo, Kayla, Samuel and Teddy.



Sportshall Success

On the 26th November 2024, our 5/6 Athletics squad competed in the Wickford School's Sportshall Athletics Competition against 3 other schools from Wickford as part of the School Games.

They all put into practice their training as they competed in their field (jumping and throwing) and track (running) events.

There was some fantastic individual results in the field events and in the track events teamwork brought home some great victories. This all resulted in them coming 1st overall and they will now represent Wickford in the Area Final on the 10th December 2024—



Boccia, Kurling & Sitting Volleyball

On the 27th November 2024, 6 children from KS2 took part in a competition with other schools from Wickford, Billericay and South Woodham Ferrers.

They played 3 sports—Boccia, New Age Kurling and Sitting Volleyball. Boccia is a precision ball sport similar to bowls; New Age Kurling is adapted from the Olympic sport but played in a sports hall rather than ice and Sitting Volleyball is played from a seated position.

The children have been training for the events and it all paid off as they came 1st in Boccia—what an achievement—and have qualified for the Boccia County Final.





Friday 13th December 2024

We have arranged for a Pantomime to come and visit our school. This will take place on Friday 13th December 2024, which is also Christmas Jumper Day.

Children will be allowed to bring in snacks to enjoy whilst they watch the Pantomime.

The school will be funding this experience.

CHRISTMAS JUMPER Day



Christmas lunches

Our Christmas lunches are taking place on:

Foundation/Year 1 and Year 2— Tuesday 17th December 2024

Years 3,4,5 and 6—Wednesday 18th December 2024

Please see menus on the following pages.



Foundation/KS1 Christmas Meal

Tuesday 17th December

Red Band – Turkey, Chipolata, Stuffing, Roast Potatoes, Carrots, Peas & Sweetcorn

Green Band – Cheese & Onion Yorkshire Puddings, Vegetarian Sausage, Roast Potatoes, Carrots, Peas & Sweetcorn

Christmas Tree Ice Cream or Cookie

Wednesday 18th December

(As KS2 are having their Christmas lunch on this day) the menu options for Foundation/KS1 will be

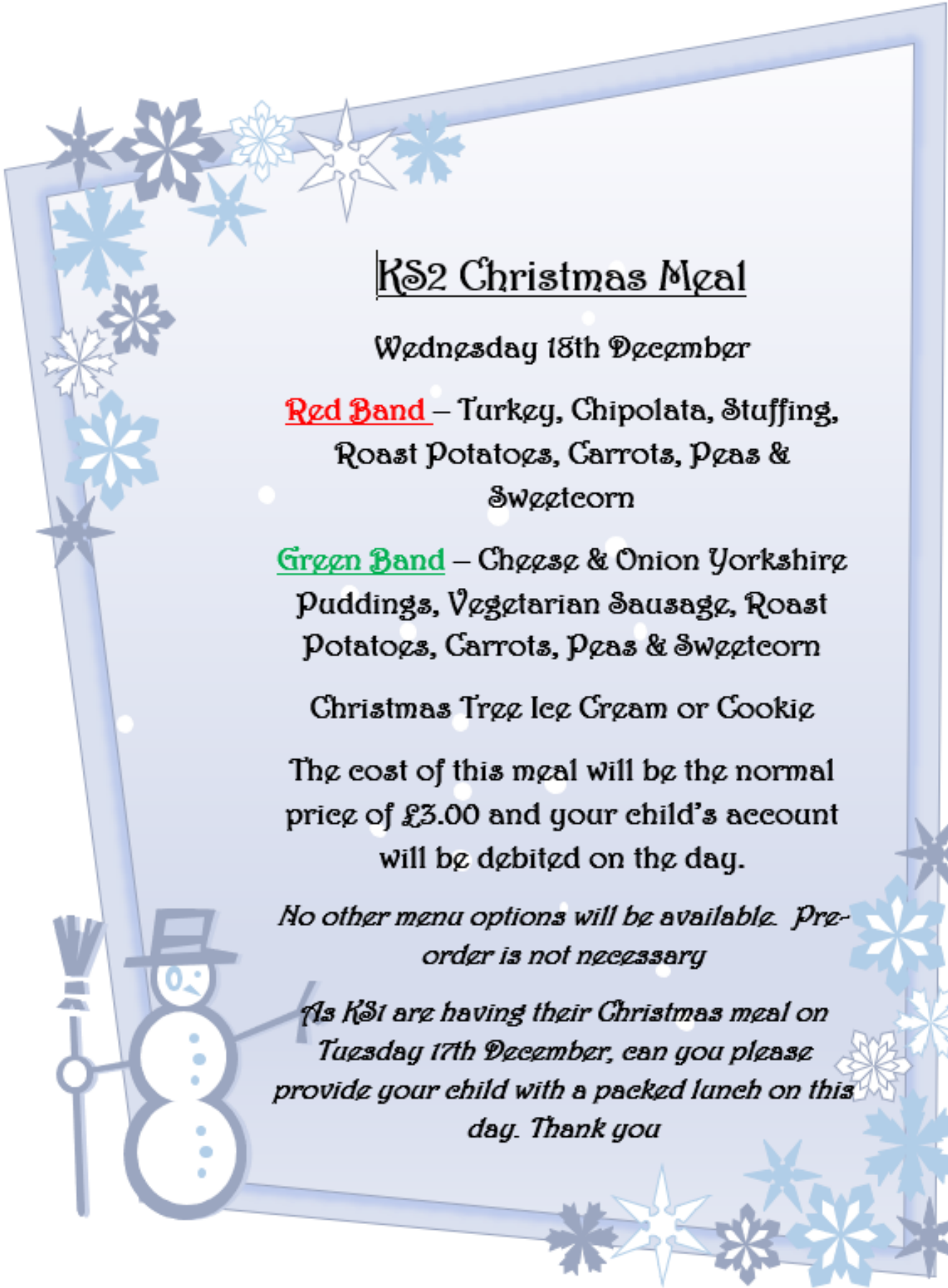
Cheese Roll or

Ham Roll with Crisps & Fruit

No other menu options will be available on both days.

Pre-order is not necessary





KS2 Christmas Meal

Wednesday 18th December

Red Band – Turkey, Chipolata, Stuffing,
Roast Potatoes, Carrots, Peas &
Sweetcorn


Green Band – Cheese & Onion Yorkshire
Puddings, Vegetarian Sausage, Roast
Potatoes, Carrots, Peas & Sweetcorn

Christmas Tree Ice Cream or Cookie

The cost of this meal will be the normal
price of £3.00 and your child's account
will be debited on the day.

*No other menu options will be available. Pre-
order is not necessary*

*As KS1 are having their Christmas meal on
Tuesday 17th December, can you please
provide your child with a packed lunch on this
day. Thank you*



Essex

ACTIVate

**Free holiday clubs, fun activities and food
across Essex and Thurrock!**

- ✓ Specialist SEND, mental wellbeing and youth clubs
- ✓ Sports and games, arts and crafts, cooking and so much more!
- ✓ Nutritious snacks and tasty meals
- ✓ Run by qualified, local club providers
- ✓ Family support, resources and guidance
- ✓ Discretionary paid and paid for spaces

WHAT IS ESSEX ACTIVATE?

Essex ActivAte is the name for the exciting activity clubs run by Active Essex! During school holidays, local club providers across the county deliver free holiday clubs and fun activities to get eligible primary and secondary children active, as well as support young people to make friendships and learn new skills, helping to enhance their wellbeing.

Please only book your child/ren a space at an Essex ActivAte club if they will attend. If they are booked on and do not attend, other children may miss out on this beneficial opportunity across the holidays.



Turn this flyer over
to read more on how
to book a space!

SCAN ME



www.activeessex.org



@EssexActivAte

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

SNAPCHAT

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

SNAP STREAK

97

DAYS

Snapchat is a messaging app which allows users to send images, videos and texts to others. Its best-known feature is that anything sent 'disappears' 24 hours after it's been viewed; however, users are known to take screenshots or use another device to obtain a photo of their screen. In 2023, Snapchat added a chatbot function called 'My AI'.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

My AI is Snapchat's new chatbot, which replies to questions in a human-like manner. However, the software is still in its infancy and has significant drawbacks, such as biased, incorrect or misleading responses. There have already been numerous reports of young users turning to AI for medical help and diagnoses, which could be inaccurate and therefore potentially dangerous.

PREDATORS AND SCAMS

Predators can exploit Snapchat's disappearing messages by, for example, telling a user they have naked photos of them and will post them unless they're paid. Snapchat's own research found that 65% of teenagers had experienced this – on this app or others. This likely isn't helped by 'SnapMaps' – a feature which highlights your exact position in real-time. This is meant to help friends keep track of each other, but could be used for more sinister reasons.

MY EYES ONLY

Snapchat has a hidden photo vault called 'My Eyes Only'. Teens can conceal sensitive photos and videos from parents and carers in this folder, which is protected by a PIN. You can check for this by clicking on the icon which looks like two playing cards. This takes you to the 'Memories' folder which stores photos, stories and the My Eyes Only folder.

SCREEN TIME ADDICTION

Snapchat prioritises user engagement, with features like streaks (messaging the same person every day to build up a high score). The app also has sections called 'Discover' and 'Spotlight', which show tailored content to each user. However, this could also be seen as an attempt to hook users into watching videos endlessly. Furthermore, constant notifications can lure people into using the app.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some content on Snapchat simply isn't suitable for children. The hashtags used to group content are determined by the poster, so even an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's 'disappearing messages' feature also makes it easy for young people to share explicit images on impulse – so sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat.

ONLINE PRESSURES

Although many of Snapchat's filters are designed to entertain or amuse, the 'beautify' effects on photos can set unrealistic body image expectations – creating feelings of inadequacy in younger users. Snapchat now also has 'priority' notifications (which still get displayed even if a device is in 'do not disturb' mode), increasing the pressure on users to log back in and interact.

Advice for Parents & Educators

UTILISE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Snapchat's 'Family Centre' lets you view the details of the child's account, their friends list and who they've spoken to in the last week – and report any concerns. You must invite a child to the Family Centre for them to join. To keep the child's location hidden on the app, go into settings and turn on 'Ghost Mode' and 'Hide live location', and ensure they know not to share their location with anyone.

BLOCK AND REPORT

If a stranger does connect with a child on Snapchat and begins to make them feel uncomfortable through bullying, pressure to send explicit images or by sending sexual images to them, the child can tap the three dots on that person's profile and report or block them. There are options to state why they're reporting that user – such as annoying or malicious messages, spam or masquerading as someone else.

FAMILIARISE YOURSELF

Before you allow a child to download Snapchat, download it yourself and familiarise yourself with the app. Snapchat has produced a parents' guide to the app to help you understand how it works and any protections they have in place. A link for this can be found in the sources below.

ENCOURAGE OPEN DISCUSSIONS

Snapchat's risks can be easier to handle if you nurture an open dialogue. For example, discuss My AI's responses to questions and how reliable they are. Talk about scams and blackmail before letting children sign up. If they're lured into a scam, encourage them to tell you immediately. Talk openly and non-judgmentally about sexting, emphasising its inherent risks. Furthermore, explain how popular 'challenges' on the platform can have harmful consequences.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/snapchat-2023>

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FAPS and Moji will be hosting a Christmas Disco on Thursday 12th December full of dancing, games and fun!

3 separate events will be held, as follows:

Foundation 2pm-3.15pm – Cost per child £3

Children to come to school that day dressed for the disco. Those not attending will watch a video in their classroom. All children to be collected at 3.15pm, as usual.

Year 1 & 2 3.30pm-5pm – Cost per child £5

Children to bring party clothes to change into in the classroom at 3.15pm and be escorted to the party by class teacher/FAPS. Those not attending to be collected from classroom doors at 3.15pm as usual.

KS2 5.15pm-6.45pm – Cost per child £5

Children to be collected at 3.15pm to get changed at home and come back for 5.15pm.

Spaces are bookable through our website www.pta-events.co.uk/faps-abacus. Please make sure you use your child's full name and current class when booking and that you select the correct event.

Included in the ticket price will be all the entertainment, plus a drink and snack.

We will also have various glow stick items and tuck available to buy – please send your child with no more than £5 cash for this.

Bookings will be open from today until 6th December – please note, we will not be able to add any children in after this date.

If you have any questions, please contact faps@abacus.essex.sch.uk



YOUR SCHOOL NEEDS YOU



Would you like the opportunity to speak about how your child's school can improve inclusion for it's neurodivergent pupils?

Join us at a 'cuppa and chat' hosted by Essex Family Forum as part of the PINS project.

(find out more [HERE](#))

Your school are committed to working with EFF to hear your voice and want you to speak openly with EFF about how the school can improve.



The next meeting is-

Wednesday 15th January 2025 at 9am