

Abacus Primary School

28/3/25



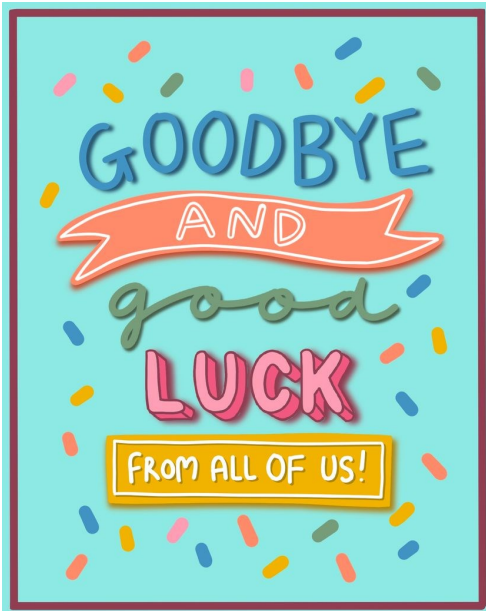
Thank you to FAPS for all their efforts with the Mother's day gifts this year...we hope you enjoy receiving these gifts on Sunday.

On Tuesday afternoon Caleb from Gold Class joined me for the afternoon as his mini Headteacher prize from his Abacus bar. As part

*Nice Work
Great Job
Well Done*



of his duties he helped me to write this newsletter...thank you Caleb.



Mrs Head leaves us at the end of this term. She has relocated recently and the distance is too far for her to travel. We wish her and her family all the very best for the future.

Mrs Bragg joins our teaching team. She will be in school next week to meet the classes that she will be teaching and getting to know the school a little more before taking up her post from after the Easter break.

Next week we will be on



WEEK 1





What a pleasure it was on Wednesday to hear Year 5 sing with such enthusiasm and enjoyment. Thank you to all the family members who came along to support the children, you could see just how much they enjoyed seeing you there. We are all so pleased that you enjoyed the performance and we loved sharing your feedback with the children. A big THANK YOU to the Year 5 team for preparing the children for their moment to shine!

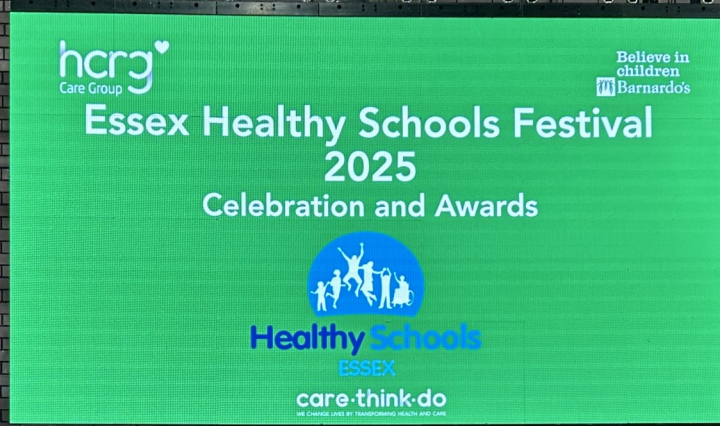


**WE WANT YOUR
FEEDBACK!**

We introduced Padlet this year as a way to keep you as parents informed about your children's learning and our curriculum. We're interested to find out how many parents are accessing this and whether it is having the desired impact.

Please can you let your children's class teacher know if you are accessing it or send us a text. We will use this information to decide whether we will continue with Padlet. Many thanks

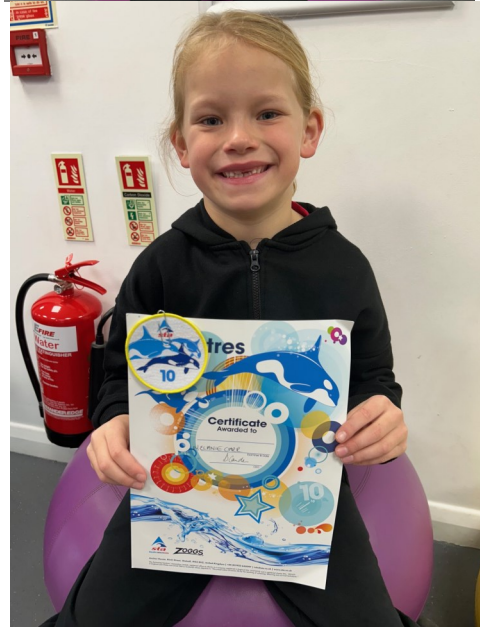
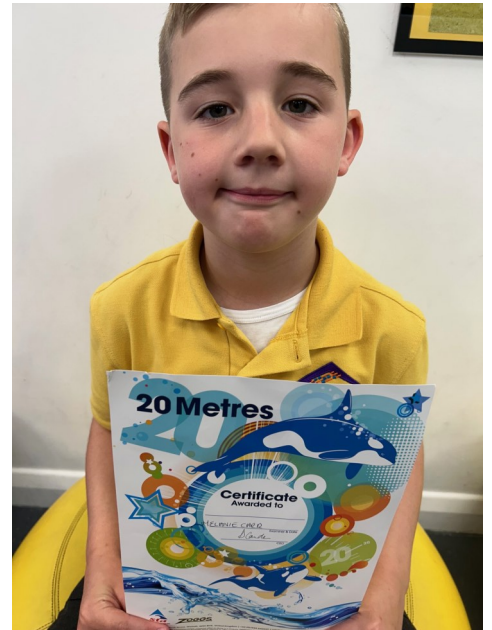
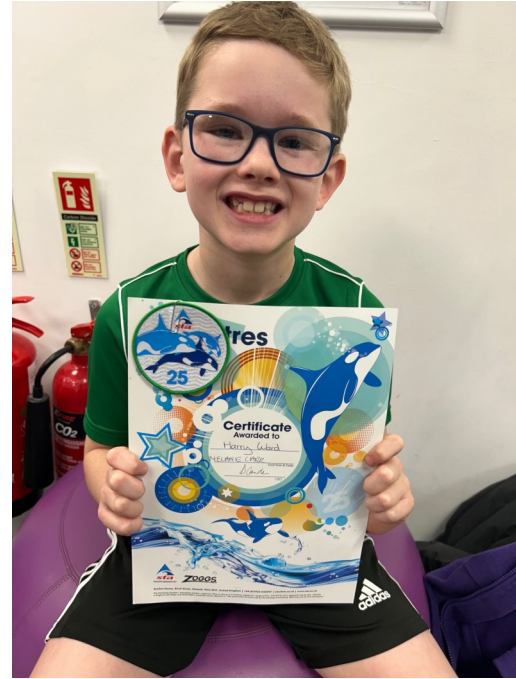




What a pleasure it was to accompany our Wellbeing Ambassadors (and honorary Ambassador Lewis) to the Health Schools festival on Thursday at The Brentwood Centre, where we were awarded three awards: Pupil Voice, Best Practice Award in Physical Activity and Physical Activity award.



LET'S CELEBRATE!



What a busy week for out of school achievements. Look at those proud smiles. Well done to Mae, Layla, Harry, Leah, Grace, Lewis and Arielle.



Girls 2nd Football Festival

On the 25th March, our 5/6 Girl's Football Team played in their 2nd football tournament with 5 other Wickford Schools as part of the School Games Programme.

There was so much improvement from the last round and this time the girls drew 4 of their matches 0-0 and only lost one game. They all said how much fun they'd had—what more can you ask for?

Thank you again to former pupils Cameron and Gracie who came along and refereed as without them the games wouldn't have been played.

Thank you also to the parents for their support in transporting the children and cheering them on and to Wickford Town FC for coaching the girls and providing the venue.



Boy's Football Tournament 2



On the 27th March, our Boy's Football Team played in their 2nd football tournament with 6 other Wickford Schools as part of the School Games Programme after the previous tournament had been postponed due to the wet weather.

There was a marked improvement from the last tournament especially defensively as they didn't concede any goals. They played 6 matches, winning 2 and drawing 4 which meant they finished in 2nd place. This puts them in joint 3rd place in the league overall with one more round to play next week.



Thank you to the family members for their support in transporting the children and cheering them on and to Wickford Town FC for coaching the boys and providing the venue.



 	 	 	 
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VE DAY

CELEBRATIONS

On Thursday 8th May we will be celebrating VE day 80 years on. We will be remembering the sacrifice of people during World War II and the relief that war had ended.

We will be inviting to children to wear red, white and/or blue to remember this event and will be inviting children to enjoy fish and chips in the great outdoors (weather permitting).

If you and your family have any family stories or pictures from the time, please could you email a copy to the school office or speak to myself about it. I would love to include this in our celebration to link this event to our school community.

Mrs Bright - History Leader



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about BLUESKY

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

With an App Store rating of 17+ & Google Play rating Mature

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

While Bluesky has been around since 2019, it's suddenly taken off in a big way thanks to a significant exodus from X (formerly Twitter). Indeed, it looks and behaves a lot like Twitter before Elon Musk bought the platform. Bluesky has been touted in recent months as a safer, more open-minded alternative to X – but like any social media site, it still has its share of risks.

NO PRIVATE ACCOUNTS

While most social networks allow accounts to be private, at the time of writing, all Bluesky accounts must be public. The development team has indicated this might change in the future, but the app is built on a public-first protocol. If private accounts are ever introduced, it may only be in a limited way – such as through the implementation of group chats.

INTERACTIONS WITH STRANGERS

Every account being public means that anyone can be contacted by anyone else. While users don't have to respond and can easily block people and move on, it does mean that youngsters are at particular risk of being conned by scammers, messaged by predatory adults or exposed to others with ill intentions. These hazards can be compounded by the fact that Bluesky doesn't require its users to provide their real name.

TROLLING AND BULLYING

While Bluesky currently feels a lot friendlier than X seems to have become, its lack of private accounts means that there's nothing to stop users from trolling and cyberbullying younger people. While accounts can be blocked and reported, a persistent bully could simply create a new profile, potentially making their victims feel unsafe in continuing to use the app.

DANGEROUS MISINFORMATION

Established news organisations have fact-checking and editing processes, but social networks have no such controls and can often serve as breeding grounds for misinformation and disinformation. Bluesky will possibly be no different once it reaches a certain size, and children may not have the critical thinking skills to tell fact from fiction – or to discern an informative, honest user from a malicious one.

ADULT TARGET AUDIENCE

Bluesky isn't designed with children in mind, and there aren't many parental controls on the platform. In an interview with the BBC, Bluesky's CEO originally said that the app would only allow users aged 18 and above to sign up, but a spokesperson later clarified its age restriction as 13+. This could imply the app was originally meant for an adult audience and suggests that making the platform more child-friendly might not currently be a priority.

RAPID GROWTH

At the time of writing, Bluesky seems calm in comparison with other social networks where moderation is lax and the atmosphere toxic – but that's due at least in part to its smaller community. The app has recently been adding as many as a million users per day, and if that continues, there'll be more unpleasant users to handle, and moderators could struggle to maintain the pleasant environment Bluesky is currently known for.

Advice for Parents & Educators

USE THE ADULT CONTENT FILTER

Bluesky doesn't have much in the way of parental controls, but there are content filters which can hide sexual and graphic imagery. These are enabled by default for underage accounts but can be manually turned on in the 'Moderation' section of the app's settings. The 'advanced' Bluesky Moderation Service lets you restrict content even further, hiding – for example – self-harm content, extremist rhetoric, and even rude posts.

ENCOURAGE BLOCKING AND REPORTING

Another tool that Bluesky uses to ensure a decent experience is muting and blocking accounts. The former prevents you from seeing a specific user's content, while the latter stops them from seeing yours. If a child is encountering trolls or bullies on the platform, encourage them to use this function, while also reporting the offenders to help make the platform a nicer place for everyone.

LOOK OUT FOR FAKES

Impersonation is a problem on all social networks. While the consequences are usually benign, imposters sometimes attempt to scam or groom children by pretending to be a popular influencer or online personality. Bluesky is unique in that it can be connected to official domains, with users' handles linking to other sites; while this isn't widely used right now, it could be a reliable way to verify celebrities and public figures in future.

KEEP AN OPEN DIALOGUE

As with all social media platforms, moderation and content filters can only do so much; it's highly likely that a child will eventually face something unsavoury. For that reason, it's important to make sure that young people are aware of the risks and know how to handle the technology if anything they see on the app makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard, The Guardian and The New Statesman.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

PARENT INFORMATION SESSION



Calling all parents!

Would you like to find out more about our inclusive practice?

Our Good Practice Seekers would like to tell you more!

Date: Thursday April 3rd 2025 Time: 2.15pm



Our amazing Good Practice Seekers have been trained by Kieran Pearce of the Multi Schools council to spot inclusive practice to support children with SEND. They would love to tell

you more and share their findings with you! Please come along to our afternoon session to hear from the children themselves, ask questions and find out some of the brilliant things that happen at Abacus School everyday.