

Abacus Primary School



28/2/25

**WELCOME
BACK**

We hope that you all had a wonderful half term break. It's been lovely listening to all the exciting recounts from the children this week. I'd like to say a big thank you and well done to the kitchen team for all their efforts this week, when we returned on Monday there was no gas in the kitchen, which has resulted in them using the small kitchen to cook this week. We appreciate your understanding with the menu changes and we hope that this will

all be rectified as soon as possible as we are excited to soon be launching our new menu.

Term dates for 2025/26 are now on our website, copy and paste the following link to access this: <https://www.abacusprimaryschool.co.uk/term-dates>

As part of our INSET training on Friday 14th February 2025, some staff took part in 'Asthma Friendly Schools' training delivered by an asthma nurse. We are currently working on a policy and will be using this training to bring our practice inline with the NHS recommending guidelines. This includes requesting Personal Asthma Action Plans for all children who have an asthma pump in school, along with requesting a spacer for all children to use when administering their pump. We will be sending out individual communications to children/families who currently use/have a pump at school.



Please keep an eye out for any menu change texts due to the problems we are currently experiencing in our kitchen.





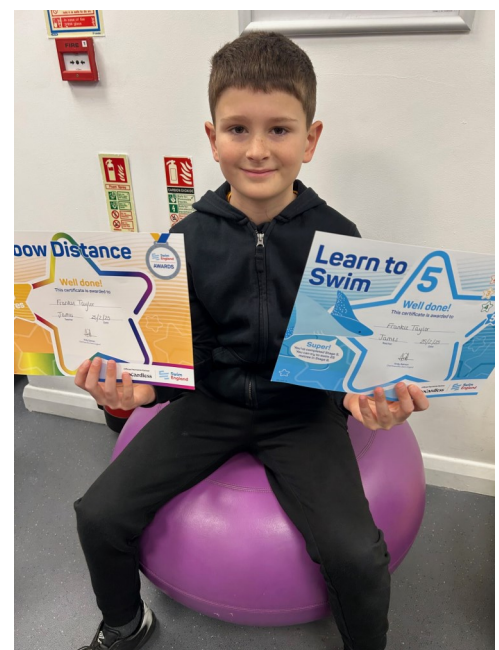
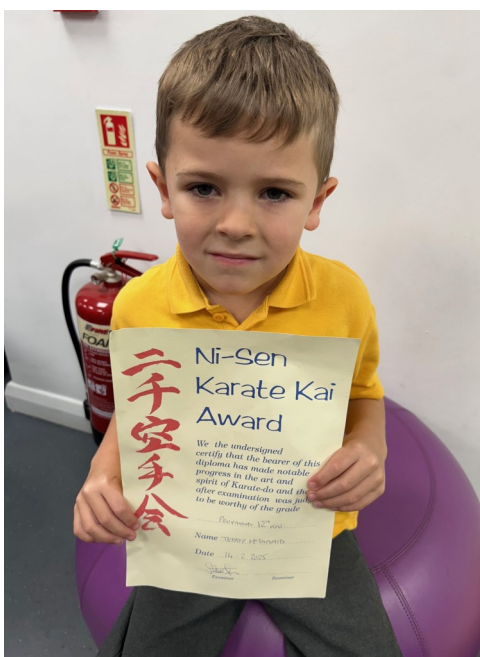
A huge well done to our Wellbeing ambassadors who have been busy completing and passing, with distinction, a ten module children's wellbeing course. The ambassadors will be using the knowledge and information gained from this course to deliver some KS1 and KS2 assemblies during the summer term and are also busy planning Abacus has got Talent and a Wellbeing festival.



Mrs Playle and I are very excited to be invited to a 'Waddle on Sea' event on this afternoon where we get to pick up our penguin!

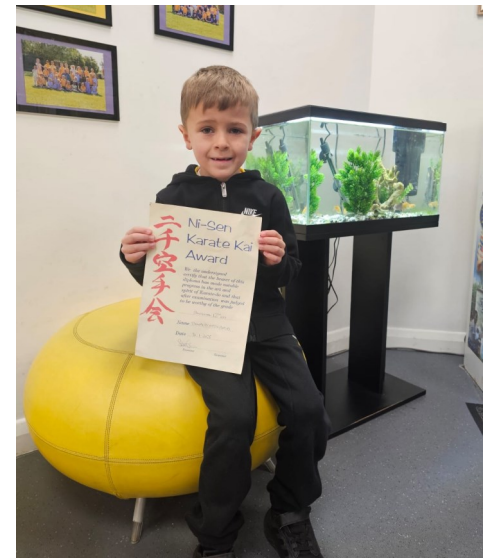
We are very excited to begin the transformation into Sophie Trendall's wonderful design. All children across the school will be involved in creating the design....watch this space.

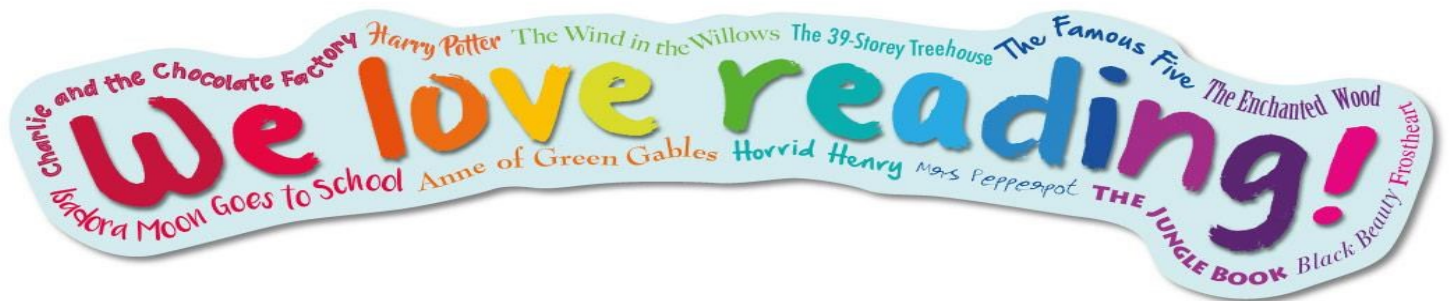
LET'S CELEBRATE!



A huge well done to everyone this

week





Well done to Year 3 who attended Book Club at Silvana Court on Monday afternoon. The resident friends were so impressed with their reading and enthusiasm to reading. The children showed empathy when listening to the residents recalling stories about their own childhoods.

School Governors



We currently have a parent governor vacancy, if you would like to know more about the role copy and paste the link:

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/becoming-school-governor>

If you are interested in this role please write a letter of interest and hand it in to the the school office.



AUTISM REALITY EXPERIENCE

HELPING TO UNDERSTAND THE MANY SIDES OF THE AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

BY

training2care

Date the training will take place:

Monday 24th March 2025
from 9am to midday

Spaces can be booked via the school office

The Autism Reality **Experience** is an innovative and inspirational training session...

...designed to give participants a virtual experience of living with autism. This is a very practical, hands-on experience that give participants a greater insight into autism and helps us see the world from an autistic person's perspective. Suitable for all professionals, from people working across all sectors, including family members, or informal carers who want to have a better understanding of autism.



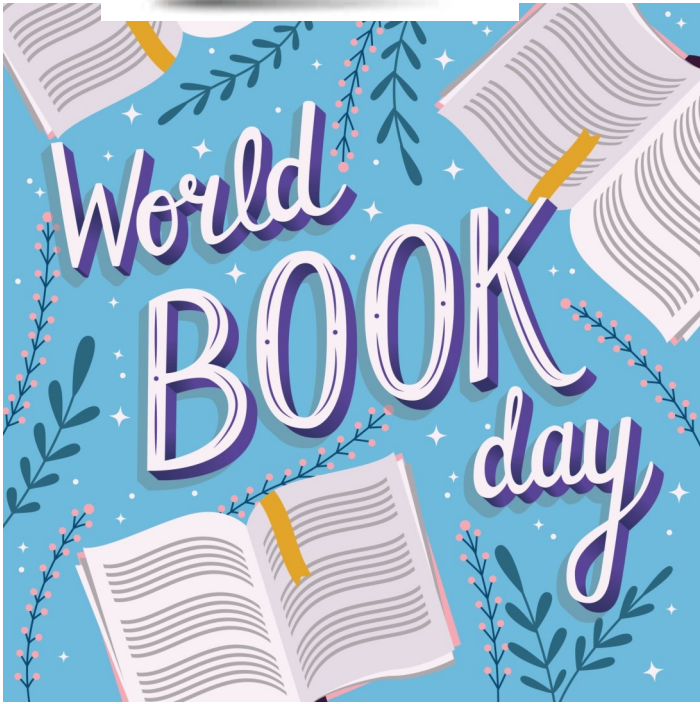
Amazing Art!







Thursday 6th March 2025

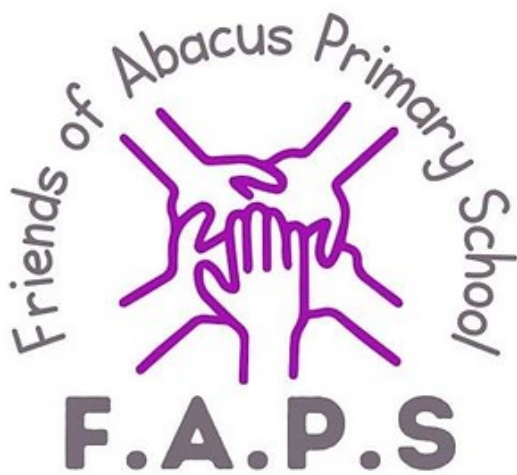


We are really excited about World Book Day next Thursday. This year, we are inviting children to come to school dressed as **their favourite Roald Dahl book character**. There are a wealth of characters from his books to choose from. Please do not feel you need to go and buy an outfit, this can be made by using normal clothes e.g. Danny the Champion of the World or George's Marvellous Medicine.

Please remember this is not compulsory and if children do not want to dress up then they can come to school in their school uniform.

Thank you to FAPS for their amazing efforts with the Abacus Wonka bars. The children have loved coming in sharing their golden tickets.

ABACUS
BAR



This year, FAPS will be doing something a little different to help you and your children celebrate Mother's Day.

We want to keep the gift a surprise, but the children will be making something AMAZING!

This will be happening on 20th and 21st March throughout the day.

Gifts cost £5 each, and could be for Mothers, Grandmothers, Stepmothers or anyone else you'd like to celebrate!

If you would like your child to participate, please use our online booking system at

<https://www.pta-events.co.uk/faps-abacus> - the sale will be open from 10th February and will close on 7th March – **please note, no further orders will be possible after this date.**

If you have more than 1 child at school, and would like them all to participate, you will need to make this clear when ordering, please.

When you select the quantity, please enter the total amount of gifts you'd like from all children.

At the checkout stage, you'll need to enter the **child's full name and current class** for each gift – please see below example:



Netball League round 3

On the 13th February 2025, our Netball team took part in the third and final round of the Wickford School's Netball League Tournament which is part of the School Games initiative with 2 other Wickford Schools.

They won their first game and then lost their second but scored 7 goals altogether. They finished 2nd overall in the league and will now go on to represent Wickford in the area final against schools from Billericay, South Woodham and Maldon in April. We wish them luck.

Thank you again to the family members who transported the children and cheered them on and to Jo from Flames Netball Club for coaching the team.



Swimming Gala Results

The results from the Swimming Gala's last week have now been collated and it was a very close competition across the 2 days.

Our 5/6 team finished joint 1st overall and our 3/4 team joint 2nd so both teams have qualified for the area final against schools from Billericay, South Woodham and Maldon in June.

Again, well done to all the children who took part we are very proud of you all.





On the 7th February 2025, children from Year 3 took part in a Buddy Boot Camp Session. The weather was horrible but that didn't stop the children getting involved.

BUDDY BOOT CAMP



The children worked well as a team, communicating and listening to each other. They had to be strong and work together to lift the tyres and travel with it to the next cone! Great fun! Well done Year 3!



House Points

			
St George's Day	St David's Day	Happy St Patrick's Day!	St Andrew's Day
3514	2616	3362	3405

EPINS Project

Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools

This series of jointly run sessions for schools and parents/carers will explore nurturing the unique strengths of neurodiverse children and young people and provide advice and guidance on how to support them with the challenges they face. They aim to promote the use of consistent approaches from home and school. This is to ensure neurodiverse children are happy, healthy, supported and ready to learn and able to engage in the classroom. Any parent or carer is welcome to join regardless of whether their child has a neurodiverse diagnosis.

The recorded content of these sessions has been developed by the Psychology in Schools Team, Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust, and will be facilitated by the EPINS Neurodiversity Inclusion Facilitators, part of Essex Child & Family Wellbeing Services.

BOOKING INSTRUCTIONS
To book your free place

Session 1: Neurodevelopmental Diversity: What Every School and Parent Needs to Know

Tuesday 11th March, 7pm, MS Teams

Session 2: Learning and Executive Functioning

How Parents and School Staff can work together to support neurodivergent children

Wednesday 19th March, 7pm, MS Teams

Session 3: Emotional Regulation

How to support Neurodivergent children with emotional processing and anxiety (including how sensory differences may impact in this area)

Thursday 27th March, 7pm, MS Teams



EPINS Project

Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools

Session 1

Neurodevelopmental Neurodiversity: What Every School and Parent Needs to Know Workshop

What is neurodiversity? What is autism, ADHD and learning disability? Does a child need a diagnosis to get support? This introductory workshop will answer these questions and introduce where schools and parents/carers can find advice and guidance for supporting their neurodiverse children and young people.

When & Where?

Tuesday 11th March, 7pm, MS Teams

How do I book my place?

Please fill out this form
<https://forms.office.com/e/wK9hNXRnab>

EPINS Online Workshops in partnership with Psychology In Schools



EPINS Project

Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools

Session 3

Emotional Regulation:

How to Support Neurodivergent Children with Emotional Processing and Anxiety. This will include information on how sensory differences may impact this area.

This workshop will explore why neurodiverse children may develop difficulties with their emotions, including anxiety and low mood, and how schools and parents/carers can support neurodiverse children and young people with managing their big feelings.

When & Where?

Thursday 27th March, 7pm, MS Teams

How do I book my place?

Please fill out this form
<https://forms.office.com/e/wK9hNXRnab>

EPINS Online Workshops in partnership with Psychology In Schools



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MARVEL RIVALS

AGE RESTRICTION
PEGI
12

ESRB advise nobody under the age of 13 should play

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Marvel Rivals launched in December 2024 and amassed a player count of nearly 150,000 in mere weeks. This player versus player (PvP) shooter packs in a host of recognisable comic-book characters, pitting two teams of six against each other. Despite the game's cartoonish nature, there are several potential risks for parents and educators to be aware of.

IN-GAME CHAT

Voice chat allows players to speak to teammates and opponents within the game, but in a competitive environment, some conversations can become unpleasant. Text chat is equally prominent among those playing on PC and will be shown on the side of the screen. Moderation on chats is relatively lax, so it's important to recognise that potentially inappropriate messages could arrive at any time.

IN-GAME PURCHASES

While Marvel Rivals is free, there is an in-game store, selling character skins from recognisable movies and comic-book titles. Each season also includes a £10 Battle Pass (much like those seen in Fortnite and Call of Duty), offering a series of exclusive cosmetic items. These passes don't expire – but they can't be purchased once the next season rolls around, creating a fear of missing out.

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

With such a huge player base, it's impossible to predict whom your child will be teaming up with or playing against. They're virtually certain to run into strangers through voice and text chat, for starters. Most of these people will just be ordinary gamers enjoying the action, but there is the risk of some users behaving inappropriately with younger players – either intentionally, or because they don't realise that they're speaking to a child.

VIOLENT CONTENT

There's no gore in Marvel Rivals, and the violence depicted is comparatively cartoonish – but the playable characters available vary between more traditional superheroes and supervillains, and figures like Black Widow and The Punisher, who use more realistic firearms. Given the game's nature as a shooter, this may make some parents and carers uncomfortable as some players will be firing these weapons at each other.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

The game includes some innuendos and mature themes in the dialogue, which could expose youngsters to content unsuitable for their age, detracting from a safe and family-friendly gaming experience. As we mentioned previously, the content of the in-game chat could also be age-inappropriate, ranging from swearing to mature themes to potentially harmful content.

FAMILIAR CHARACTERS

The inclusion of iconic characters might make Marvel Rivals appear more approachable than other games in the genre, with recognisable heroes and villains like Spider-Man and Venom. This could lead to more interest from younger players, increasing the likelihood of children playing the game without properly understanding the risks.

Advice for Parents & Educators

FOLLOW ESRB RATINGS

The ESRB rating for Marvel Rivals says the game shouldn't be played by anyone under 13. Most children of that age will be able to appreciate the moral compass of the roster of characters (people can play as Hela, the Goddess of Death, for example), while also ensuring that the violence, however cartoonish, won't overwhelm them.



FAMILIARISE YOURSELF

The game's inclusion of fan-favourite characters like Iron Man and the Hulk, plus its increasing popularity, means that younger Marvel fans will likely be eager to see what the fuss is about. Since it's free, consider playing Marvel Rivals yourself to gauge how you feel about a child playing it. Alternatively, you could let them play against the game's AI in Practice Mode, until they're old enough to compete online.

MONITOR OR TURN OFF CHAT

Voice and text chat can both be adjusted within the in-game settings. If you're particularly concerned about exposing children and young people to them, however, you can disable both forms of chat in the game's settings. If a child wants to play alongside friends, remind them that they can use their console's party chat feature or host a call on a third-party service like Discord.



DISCONNECT PAYMENT OPTIONS

Parents should ensure that no payment options – such as debit cards – are linked to the game, to prevent unauthorised purchases and charges. Children can be tempted by enticing in-game offers without fully understanding the costs. Removing payment methods avoids impulsive in-game spending and instils a sense of financial awareness, teaching young people to be careful with their money.



Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Games Editor at the Daily Star and has been working in the gaming and tech industry for five years. A regular visitor to the App Store to try out new tools, he's also a parent and therefore understands the importance of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, he has been published on sites including IGN, TechRadar and plenty more.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College