

# ACHIEVE

The magazine of Pontefract Academies Trust

Issue 04 • Summer 2021

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**PONTEFRACT**  
ACADEMIES TRUST

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**PONTEFRACT**  
ACADEMIES TRUST

# WELCOME FROM OUR CEO

Welcome to the Summer edition of the Achieve magazine, in which we celebrate the last term of this academic year across our hub of schools.

What a year it has been! A year that has seen such uncertainty and swift response to ever-changing national guidance, as we have gone through the successive lockdowns and a significant disruption caused by Covid-19. However, it has also been a year of success and collaboration; working closely together as a group of schools serving the Pontefract area which has made us stronger.

It is worth reflecting upon the challenges we have all faced and, in particular, those faced by our children and young people. The resilience they have shown has been outstanding and I am confident that the strategies we have put in place across the Trust to enable catch-up will ensure they are not disadvantaged in the longer term by the effect of the last sixteen months.

I feel very proud that we have refused to be worn down by the pandemic. Our highly talented and resourceful staff have embraced the situation, and shown up so well with pure determination to ensure our students are at the centre of their daily work.

Our staff and students have raised impressive sums of money for charity and given their time and talent to support our community generously. For this, I am considerably proud. Thank you, as always, to the parents, carers and community for your support as we have navigated this turbulent year.

I hope that you enjoy reading this edition of Achieve and that you can take the summer holidays to rest, ready for the opportunities the new academic year will bring.



**Julian Appleyard OBE**  
Chief Executive Officer

# ABOUT US

## Mission

Running top-quality, high-achieving schools that give our children and young people the chance in life they deserve.

## Vision

Where every child and young person makes outstanding progress.

## Core Values and Guiding Principles

### Achievement without excuses

We have an unwavering focus on achievement. This is paramount so that all of our children and young people enjoy greater life chances. We take responsibility for ensuring that they succeed. We own our own performance and do not rest on our laurels or seek to blame others.

### Our people matter

We know that our people make a difference to the lives of our 3-16 year olds. We want to make our schools places where great teachers want to teach, lead and build a career. Investment in the recruitment, development and retention of the best people is a top priority. We aim to provide professional working environments, where our people have the support and the tools to do a great job, and push our children and young people to scale new heights in a safe and secure environment.

### Excellence as standard

We set high standards. "Good enough" is simply not. We do not accept second best from our pupils or ourselves. The Trust aims to be a highly reliable school improvement organisation that is disciplined in its approach to improving performance. A Trust with clear plans and, simple and precisely executed systems that not only develops and sustains excellent performance but never stifles individual flair.

### Pupils come first

Our schools are run for the benefit of children and young people, not the ease of adults. Their achievement comes first and staff in schools and the central trust office work to this end. The Trust aims to keep low priority tasks away from front line teachers and leaders so that they can focus explicitly on our core business of teaching and learning.

### Stronger as one

We take collective responsibility for each other and the results of all of our children and young people. We enjoy sharing our success as a Trust, while recognising the strengths of individuals and each school. To this end, collective accountability is rooted in a "if one fails we all fail" mentality. As a family of schools, we collaborate with each other, challenge each other and share best practice. We do not let competition get in the way of our desire to get the best outcomes for all.

# OUR SCHOOLS



**CARLETON PARK**

JUNIOR & INFANT SCHOOL



**DE LACY  
PONTEFRACT**

PRIMARY SCHOOL



**HALFPENNY LANE**

JUNIOR, INFANT &  
NURSERY SCHOOL



**LARKS HILL**

JUNIOR & INFANT SCHOOL



**ORCHARD HEAD**

JUNIOR, INFANT &  
NURSERY SCHOOL



**THE ROOKERIES  
CARLETON**

JUNIOR, INFANT &  
NURSERY SCHOOL



**THE KING'S  
SCHOOL**



**CARLETON  
HIGH SCHOOL**



# SPOTLIGHT

## Reading at Pontefract Academies Trust

The ability to effectively read is fundamental to success both academically and personally. Reading is needed to master all subjects and therefore is the most important skill we teach.

The link between reading and attainment is profound; in short, if you are a good reader you tend to meet and exceed age related expectations. Reading should promote thinking and linking; we do not want our pupils to just read the lines but read between and beyond the lines!



### The Larks Hill Little Library Is Launched To Inspire The Local Community To Love Books

A group of Year 6 pupils at Larks Hill Junior & Infant School, who are avid book worms, have worked together with their teacher to create a unique book offering for their local community in Pontefract.

The ten children, who formed a book club back in September have been meeting once every two weeks to share their passion and knowledge of reading. Since then, they have been thinking of ideas of how they could spread their passion into the local community.

With the help of Heather Howard, Year 6 teacher at the school, they have created the Larks Hill Little Library with an upcycled wardrobe, which is now situated outside of the school gates and packed full of books, in the hope that anyone passing by will take a book and maybe even leave a book.

Heather Howard said: "The library itself very much reminds me of The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. The idea is that you open the door and you're flooded with thoughts and feelings around reading. Reading is a personal passion of mine that I have introduced to my class but it's also what underpins everything we do within our Trust. From an educational perspective we believe that reading is the gateway to everything! The children are so excited to see the library in use."

Banks Avenue Little Free Library in Pontefract were the first to visit the Larks Hill Little Library and donate a range of much loved children's books.

### Children's Author and Poet, Conrad Burdekin to be the Patron of Reading for Pontefract Academies Trust

Our Trust has enlisted the support of Yorkshire born author and poet Conrad Burdekin to be our Patron of Reading.

More than 3900 children in Pontefract will benefit from this appointment and are all very excited about his upcoming interactive workshops that will be taking place in all Pontefract Academies Trust primary schools over the coming year to inspire and encourage their love of reading.

Conrad has written four books of children's poetry, a picture book and many short stories which he shares and discusses in his school workshops. To date Conrad has visited more than 200 schools across the UK and when asked who inspired him to love books and writing he credited Roald Dahl, Enid Blyton and his wonderful Year 4 teacher, Mrs Johnson.

Tom Fay, Director of Primary Education at Pontefract Academies Trust said: "To have a love of reading from an early age is wonderful and as a Trust we're keen to embrace and encourage this as much as we possibly can. From an educational perspective we believe that reading is the gateway to everything! Having Conrad as part of our extended team to inspire future generations to enjoy reading and writing is fantastic. We're looking forward to working with him and enjoying his workshops."

### A Library With a Difference

We are delighted to announce that the De Lacy Book Vending Machine is now live at De Lacy Pontefract Primary School.

This initiative is in place to encourage the pupils to read at home to be entered into a raffle to get their chance to pick a book from the vending machine.

The children at the school are all super excited and cannot wait for the first person to get their book! It is such a fantastic way to make reading accessible and fun.





# FUNDRAISING

## Students Support Local Hospice Garden Party



The King's School, Carleton High School and Larks Hill Junior & Infant School supported The Prince of Wales Hospice garden party in June. The day was fun-filled and attracted many of the local community. The King's School band performed alongside Larks Hill's Year 6 class, who had learnt songs and dance moves for their showcase. Carleton High School students came as volunteers and were extremely helpful throughout the day carrying out various tasks. It was an honour to be part of this great local event for such a worthwhile cause.

Jill Kirkham, Fundraising Manager at The Prince of Wales Hospice said: "I just want to say a huge thank you to the staff and pupils for their outstanding contribution to our garden party. The pupils who performed for our visitors were so talented and the volunteers were exceptionally polite to anybody they spoke to, a real credit to your schools. It was an absolute pleasure to have had them on board and I am delighted to announce we have nominated them for a Mayors Award."



## Fundraising With a Splash of Colour



Students at Carleton High School took part in their annual Colour Run event to fundraise for the Motor Neurone Disease Association. This is the second year the school have run the event and they raised a staggering £4,400!

Local legend Rob Burrow, Leeds Rhinos player Luke Gale and Castleford Tigers player Jesse Sene Lefao all sent a special good luck message to the students prior to the event starting. Former England and Leeds Rhinos player Keith Senior and Castleford Tigers star Chev Walker attended the event and set the students off running.

It was a fantastic afternoon with students and staff covered in paint, as they ran the course. Well done to everyone involved.



## Fundraising Fun Run



Year 8's at The King's School enjoyed an obstacle-based fun run around the school field to raise money for the Motor Neurone Disease Association. The run which tested speed, agility and motivation was organised by the PE department.

The students loved doing something different during their PE lesson and raising money for a great cause. Well done to everyone who took part.



# FUNDRAISING

## Our Primary School Superheroes

Over 1,700 pupils across our six primary schools, put on their capes and masks and each ran a mile to raise money for The Prince of Wales Hospice in Pontefract. The Superhero Sprint idea was born from wanting to celebrate all those that have shown themselves as heroes over the past 18 months. The hospice provided every child with a cape and a fundraising pack that was full of creative activities for them to enjoy and learn about how their kind donations can help others.

One of the pupils from De Lacy Primary School who took part said: "It's been a really fun day. We all dressed up as our favourite superheroes, I was a teacher, and we took part in a mile long assault course. The course was made to test our agility, accuracy, stamina, speed, and power. I hope that we have helped lots of people."

Every primary school put their own twist on the Superhero Sprint. Carleton Park Junior and Infant School coloured in their masks for extra power, Halfpenny Lane and Orchard Head Junior, Infant and Nursery Schools did their sprint as part of their daily mile and The Rookeries Junior, Infant and Nursery School had a very special guest. Castleford Tigers mascot JT surprised the children at The Rookeries and joined in races with the Year 2, 4 and 6 pupils.

This was a fantastic event to be involved in and we would like to thank The Prince of Wales Hospice for giving us the opportunity.



## Four Young Superheroes Superb Mountain Climb



Four pupils from Halfpenny Lane Junior, Infant and Nursery School have shown bravery and resilience by climbing Pen-y-ghent, which is 2,277ft, to raise money for The Prince of Wales Hospice in memory of their Auntie Kate.

Jack, Harry, Ella and Izzy raised over £2,000 for the local hospice that cared for their Auntie when she was diagnosed with cancer. Jack said: "The hospice looked after my Auntie Kate when she was really poorly, so we wanted to do something for them. We wanted to do something to say thank you".

The children are not strangers to mountains and fundraising. A few years ago, they all climbed Causey Pike (2,090ft) in the Lake District and raised over £1,000 for Cancer Research UK. Izzy said: "Fundraising for different charities is really important, we donate some of our pocket money every month to Water Aid".

The children enjoyed all the sweets they were allowed to consume whilst climbing and said that the best part was reaching the top and knowing they had raised lots of money. Harry said: "The climb was really fun. There were lots of rocky parts and it was really cold at the top, but we kept warm by wearing the superhero mask and cape that we got from school".

Hayley McNeill, Headteacher at Halfpenny Lane Junior, Infant and Nursery School, said: "We are so extremely proud of our real-life superheroes! They have accomplished something that most adults would find difficult. The grit and determination shown from them is fantastic and all for a great cause. Well done children, as a school and Trust we think you're all inspirational".



## Pounding The Pavements For 100 Miles

Seven-year-old George from Carleton Park Junior & Infant School was inspired by the children's book, One Hundred Steps: The Story of Captain Sir Tom Moore. George set out to raise £200 but ended up raising over £1,500 by walking 100 miles around his estate.

George who wants to be a scientist when he grows up said that the best part of the challenge was being with his friends who sometimes joined him after school to walk the 1 hour 30-minute lap around his estate. He said: "The hardest part was doing 5 miles in one go, that made me really tired. I walked in rain and sunshine, I just used to think, if Sir Tom can do it then so can I. Well done George from everyone at your school and Trust.





# NEWS



## Pontefract Wildcats Donate Brand New Kit To Local School

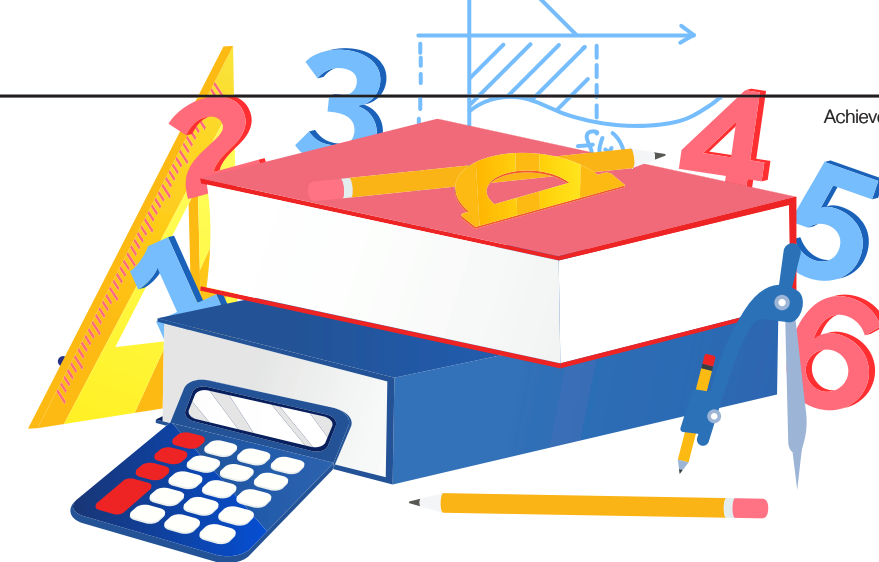
Carleton Park Junior & Infant School have kindly been donated a brand new Nike football kit from local girls football club, Pontefract Wildcats. The kit which proudly showcases the school crest and the Wildcats logo will be worn for all football fixtures at the school moving forwards, including the internal PAT games which links in with the Wakefield School Games. Joe Ayre, Headteacher said:

"We are extremely grateful for this very kind donation. We have a few girls within our school and Trust who play for Pontefract Wildcats so it's been brilliant to create a more formal connection and relationship with our local girls club. We are also very passionate within our school to ensure football becomes more inclusive."

David Littlewood, Pontefract Wildcats Secretary said: "Pontefract Wildcats are delighted to have been able to donate a full football kit to a school within our area. It's important for us to give back to our community. We can't wait to see the girls playing in the kit and hope it's a great addition to the school."

Pontefract Wildcats Girls F.C provides footballing opportunities to girls in and around the Pontefract area. Established in 2017 with just 1 team, the club now boasts 6 teams for this coming season as well as a 'Tots' training session for under 6's and a new Coaching Academy session for those girls looking to take their development to the next level. The club have also formed a partnership with Carleton High School to offer leadership opportunities to their students. For anyone interested in joining please contact the club at [pwildcatsgfc@gmail.com](mailto:pwildcatsgfc@gmail.com).

## Sumdog Success



It's almost like countdown for children! Sumdog math's contest took place between 11th-17th June across all six of our Trust primary schools. 53 classes entered, and each child had up to 1,000 questions to answer throughout the week. In total, 222,181 questions were answered during the competition and average scores for each class were calculated and published on live leader boards. By midweek, the competition was open to anyone with classes from De Lacy, Larks Hill and Orchard Head all taking the top spot at some stage.

The Rookeries Carleton Junior, Infant and Nursery School Year 6 class eventually won the contest, achieving an average score of 736 correct answers per pupil. The pupils were delighted to receive their trophy from Sumdog, which is now taking pride of place in their classroom. Congratulations Year 6!



## Cooking Up a Storm

Classroom Kitchen is an initiative that helps primary schools turn their classrooms into a kitchen with outstanding cooking and nutrition lessons. Being able to cook is an important life-skill that we want to give children the chance to have. Additionally, it is fun and gives our children a chance to be creative. Our Trust schools have had some great success in the Classroom Kitchen Virtual Cook-off this year.

Children from Key Stage 1 and Lower Key Stage 2 at Orchard Head Junior, Infant and Nursery School made it through to the Grand Final in their age group with various dishes including an Indian takeaway.

Year 5 at Carleton Park Junior and Infant School created some technically challenging meals and came 4th in the Grand Final for their age group. Finally, Year 6 pupils at Larks Hill Junior and Infant School won their Key Stage final with a fairy-tale themed Mad-hatters Magical Menu.

The cook-off gave many of our pupils the chance to showcase skills they wouldn't normally get the chance to, and they all enjoyed working together as a team. Great work everyone!



# NEWS

## Deaf Awareness Week is Celebrated in Pontefract Primary School

Children at The Rookeries Carleton, Junior, Infant & Nursery School, celebrated Deaf Awareness Week this term. They focused on what it means to be deaf and explored the differences encountered by deaf people. The Rookeries are proud that their school is home to the Deaf and Hearing Impaired Resource, which is a Wakefield Local Authority provision that provides access to the curriculum for deaf pupils.

Deaf Awareness Week is a unique campaign in that so many different organisations participate, each able to promote their own work within the broad spectrum of deafness. The focus for the week this year was “coming through it together”.

The Rookeries were lucky enough to hear from a special guest, Gerry Hughes, who became the first deaf sailor to solo circumnavigate the world. The children studied Gerry’s achievements and watched his documentary, Silent Odyssey, as part of their learning. Each class then received a virtual visit from Gerry and had the chance to ask him questions.

Gerry Hughes said: “I thoroughly enjoyed my time meeting the children as part of their Deaf Awareness Week activities. I was impressed by all the children. They asked me detailed questions that made me really think about the challenges I faced. I hope that my story shows them that, like me, they can achieve their dreams and ambitions.”

Richard Grogan, Headteacher at The Rookeries said: “We believe that the Rookeries Deaf Resource in our school provides a nurturing environment, which encourages all children to develop and grow into confident and independent young people. We have a highly qualified team who are committed to ensuring that our pupils are fully included in school life; educationally, socially and emotionally. The teaching and support that pupils receive is tailored to their individual needs to give them the very best chance to fulfil their potential. We have had a fantastic week celebrating Deaf Awareness Week and it was great to hear the challenges and difficulties Gerry has had to overcome on his amazing journey. It was a truly inspiring session to see what can be achieved through determination and courage”.

## Motivational Speaker Inspires Carleton High School Students

Year 10 students at Carleton High School have been enjoying small group and 1-1 sessions with the UK’s number one school motivational speaker, Cameron Parker. Cameron who has worked alongside organisations such as Virgin Media and the NHS has been delivering sessions to students from his “Power Program”.

Cameron’s aim is to improve the student’s self-esteem and support them with creating direction in their lives and improving their future ambitions. This project is designed to be tailored to the students’ specific needs and so far, is proving very successful with the students engaging and contributing well.

The Year 10 students will continue to work in their groups with Cameron as they move into Year 11, and he will help guide and support them with exam preparation and how they can support themselves further in their GCSE year. He will also provide support for college, and planning their next steps after they have finished school.

We are really excited to be working more with Cameron as the students are thoroughly enjoying the sessions and we look forward to seeing them continue to thrive.

## Goodbye Year 11

This term we said goodbye to our Year 11 students at Carleton High School and The King’s School. Both schools gave the students a fantastic send off to their next stage in life. We just want to take this opportunity to say thank you for your dedication, motivation, and resilience over what has been a turbulent 18 months in your secondary school years. We wish you the best of luck in whatever your future holds. Remember to keep in touch!





# NEWS



## Local 12 Year Old Selected To Represent Great Britain In World Championships

Ryan Bradley, who is in Year 7 at The King's School, was successfully selected to represent Great Britain along with his team-mate at the Acrobatic Gymnastics World Championships in Geneva in June.

The 2021 Acrobatic Gymnastic World Championships was the 27th edition of the acrobatic gymnastics competition. It was originally scheduled to take place in Geneva, Switzerland from May 29 to May 31 2020. However due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was postponed to this year.

Ryan only started gymnastics 3 and a half years ago, but has already travelled to various countries competing and made friends with gymnasts from other clubs across the world.

Ryan and his team did an incredible job and came 4th, they just missed out on a medal by 0.15 points. An incredible achievement to be 4th in the whole world. Well done Ryan, you should be so proud!

Ryan said: "It was really exciting to be selected for the World Championships. I felt like all of our hard work had finally paid off and it felt surreal that I represented Great Britain. It was a such a great experience and I'm proud of us coming 4th. I am so grateful to my coaches for all of their support. Gymnastics has helped develop me as a person and it's teaching me skills and behaviours that will stay with me for life."

Dominic Pinto, Headteacher at the King's School said: "I am thrilled that Ryan was selected to represent Great Britain. It's an unbelievable achievement for someone of his age and he should be so proud of himself. Our school was rooting for him and his team mates. Ryan is an all-round fantastic student and deserves to go far in his chosen career path."



## Castleford Tigers Player Inspires Local Children With Wellbeing Session

Professional Super League player and Castleford Tigers player, Pete Mata'utia, held a mindset and wellbeing talk and workshop with pupils from Orchard Head Junior, Infant and Nursery School this term. The session for the school, gave Pete the chance to pass on his knowledge and experience of growing up in a very humbling background.

Aside from playing in the Super League, Pete is extremely passionate about working with the youth of today and within the local community. He created age appropriate sessions and allowed the children to ask as many questions as they wanted about wellbeing but also his career.

Pete Mata'utia said: "As well as being a coach, motivational speaker and positive mindset influencer, I believe, especially after what the children have been through over this past year, that I can use my knowledge to have a very positive impact on the pupils mental health, wellbeing and mindset re-focus. It was very encouraging to be welcomed at the school and the children were fantastic."

Joe Mitchell, Headteacher at Orchard Head Junior, Infant and Nursery School said: "We feel extremely lucky to have been offered the opportunity to have a well known Castleford Tigers player in our school, speaking to the children about a very current topic following on from Mental Health Awareness Week. The children worked hard to prepare their questions and enjoyed listening to the way Pete gave such positive responses. There was certainly a buzz around school after the sessions."





# PEOPLE

## Getting To Know Us

In this edition of our magazine, we are speaking to Tim Craven, School Performance Review Board Member (SPRB). SPRB's provide independent challenge to the school leadership, primarily in respect of pupil performance, the quality of the school experience and execution of the school improvement plan. They also work in partnership with the Trust and school leadership to ensure an active, high quality and effective programme of stakeholders and community engagement is delivered

### How long have you been a SPRB member?

I have been a SPRB member for Pontefract Academies Trust for 4 years now. I was previously a governor at another school, but it is great to be making a difference to schools in the area I'm from.

### What do you enjoy most about being a SPRB member?

I'm from Pontefract, I went to school in Pontefract, and I live in Pontefract so it's brilliant to be part of the community in this way. My aim is for my input to make a difference to young peoples lives and make Pontefract an even better place to live. I want to maximise young people's potential.

### Tell us about the journey you've been on with the Trust?

Having eight schools' part of Pontefract Academies Trust is great. As a SPRB member we work across two schools which allows for collaboration to make sure everything we do is the best it can be. The Trust has changed considerably over the last 3 or 4 years and the positive outcomes speak for themselves. Every school within the Trust can share ideas and work together rather than in silo, it is extremely beneficial.



**Tim Craven**  
SPRB Member

### Does being a SPRB member help you gain new skills?

It has helped me gain new skills but also enhance my current skillset. I am currently the Chair and that is a great role for me as it has thrown me out of my comfort zone. It is enjoyable and interesting and helps me broaden my knowledge about education.

### What are your responsibilities as a SPRB member?

As a SPRB member I have an input into the school's targets, review performance against these targets and ensure academic achievement. I attend 4 meetings a year but I am on hand throughout the year should the school need me.

### What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

I play football locally, but I enjoy all sport. I used to be a keen runner and have ran various marathons before. I am also a Featherstone Rovers fan.

## Be part of shaping the future of Pontefract Academies Trust

As a Trust we are always keen to welcome School Performance Review Board ('SPRB') members who are committed and passionate about the local community, as well as the children and young people in our area. Most of our members have links with the local community, some live and work in Pontefract.

At Pontefract Academies Trust we are looking to include and involve people from a variety of backgrounds and different ages and cultures. We aim to attract individuals from various job roles and levels, with experience and expertise in financial or legal practice, business management, marketing, social work and charity work. For more information on how to become a SPRB member please visit [pontefractacademiestrust.org.uk/become-a-governor](https://pontefractacademiestrust.org.uk/become-a-governor)

## Goodbye To Jenny

Staff at Orchard Head Junior, Infant & Nursery School would like to say goodbye and thank you to Jenny. Jenny has worked at Orchard Head for over 30 years and is now retiring. Jenny is a kind, caring and bubbly member of the team who is dedicated to the children of Orchard Head and always has their best interests at heart. Jenny will be missed by the school and its community. We hope that she enjoys retired life and we wish her lots of luck for the future.







8 schools  

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**ONE TRUST**

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