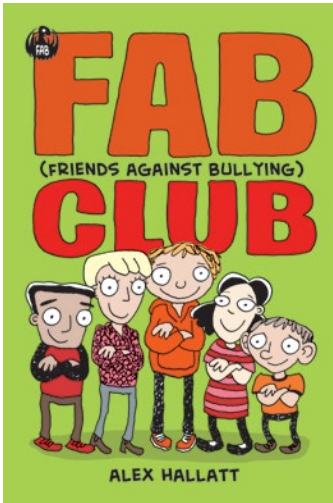
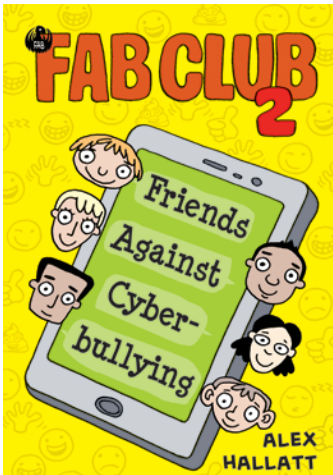


Previously, in FAB (Friends Against Bullying) Club...



Jake, Toby, Ravi, Ruth and Nancy formed a club to stand up to the bullies (Dave, Ivan and Trevor). ***Spoiler Alert!*** Trevor left the bullies to join the FAB club.



In *FAB Club 2* ***Spoiler Alert!***, Dave helps Trevor find out that Ivan is bullying kids via their phones. The friends work together to stop him.

FAB CLUB:



Ruth Wilkinson:

When she isn't with the FAB club, climbing trees or riding her bike, Ruth likes drawing.



Nancy Wong:

Nancy doesn't mind being known as a teacher's pet and loves studying, especially computers.



Toby Wilson:

Toby is the smallest member of FAB. When he's home alone, he likes making amazing buildings with his Lego.



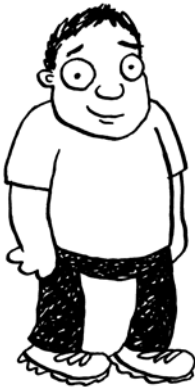
Jake Blake:

Jake has his own style and doesn't care about fashion or what other people think.



Ravi Gupta:

Ravi loves reading and works hard at school. Unlike Nancy, he tries not to draw attention to himself. He wishes everyone would play by the rules.



Trevor Skudder:

Trevor is big and strong, but doesn't like to fight. He used to be in Dave's gang, with Ivan. He loves cooking.

AND:



Ivan Carter:

Ivan used to be in Dave's gang and is jealous of the FAB Club.



Dave Howard:

Dave doesn't have a gang any more and regrets some of the things that happened when he did.

FAB CLUB 3

THE BIG MATCH

BY ALEX HALLATT

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Thank you to everyone who has helped in the making of this book. Particularly Izzie, William, etc, etc.

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CHAPTERS

- 1: Kick-Off
 - 2: The New Girl
 - 3: Team Tryout
 - 4: All For One
 - 5: The Weakest Link
 - 6: Eyeing the Competition
 - 7: Takeaway Coach
 - 8: Getting Ivan Onside
 - 9: Practice Makes Perfect
 - 10: Going For Goals
 - 11: Foul Play
 - 12: Post-Match Analysis
- Afterword

Glossary

About the Author

If You Need Help

CHAPTER ONE

KICK-OFF



It was the last day of the school holidays and it was raining so hard it came down like white sheets. If they had a choice, most kids stayed home. But not the FAB club. They donned welly boots and raincoats and put up umbrellas. Then they ran to join each other at the clubhouse, splashing through puddles and jumping over flooded drains.

Ravi was the first inside, as usual. He insisted on the password before he opened the door.

“Snotty nose,” said Toby.

“I know,” said Ruth, “I can’t reach my handkerchief. It’s in my trousers underneath my waterproof ones.”



“No,” said Toby, and then shouted, “SNOTTY NOSE is the password.”

Ravi let them in and Jake and Nancy shook their umbrellas all over him.

“Hey, you know the rules!” said Ravi.

“And you know us,” said Jake.

Trevor changed the subject. “Does anyone want cake?”

Everyone did. They poured hot chocolate from their flasks and Trevor cut them all big slabs of banana cake with chocolate buttercream frosting.



“Can you believe our last term at Marypuddle starts tomorrow?” said Ruth.

“Yes,” said Ravi, “next year we will be at Hardy Hills School.”

“I don’t want to leave Marypuddle,” said Toby.

“Yes, Marypuddle has been great since it’s had money to spend on everything,” said Trevor.

“The playground is the best,” said Toby.

“I like all the art supplies,” said Ruth.

“Have you seen how many books are in the library?” said Ravi.

“And now we have a computer room that has computers from this century,” said Nancy.

“Plus the school meals are the best in the world,” said Jake, looking at Trevor.



“I’ve enjoyed working on the meal plans,” said Trevor, “but I’ll have to study more at Hardy Hills next year if I’m going to get good grades.”

“Grades aren’t the only important thing in life,” said Ruth, as she licked the frosting from her fingers.

“Yes, there is also football,” said Trevor.

Everyone laughed.

“No, I’m serious. We should think about the Big Match this term.”

“What big match?” asked Nancy.

“What are you talking about, Trevor?” said Ravi.

“Are you guys serious?” said Trevor. “At the end of every school year, there is a football match between Marypuddle and Shiverworth School for Boys.”

“I’ve never heard of it,” said Toby.

“It’s probably because our school loses the match every year,” said Ruth.

“That’s not true,” said Trevor.

“He’s right,” said Jake.

“Marypuddle has won that match.”

Trevor smiled.



“In 1923.”



Ruth said, “Mr Penalty is desperate for Marypuddle to win, but he’s not the best coach. When he can persuade kids to play in the team, they usually just mess about and he lets them. When they play Shiverworth, they aren’t prepared and they lose big.”

“How big?” asked Toby.

Jake said, “Last year the score was 47-1 to Shiverworth.”

“At least Marypuddle scored one goal,” said Toby.

Trevor muttered, “It was an own goal. At that point, Shiverworth weren’t even trying. When

one of the team passed back to the goalie to kick it to the other end, he missed the pass and it went into the goal.”



“I remember that,” said Ruth. “Their coach was furious. I thought he was going to hit the goalie.”

“Yeah, Coach Hardnutt is a piece of work,” said Trevor. “All he cares about is winning.”

“Actually, it seems he cares more about the other team losing,” said Ruth.

“It would be great if Marypuddle could win the game,” said Ravi.

“Yes,” said Jake. “They would have more of a chance if they took the game seriously and had a team that could play together well.”

“What’s the chance of that?” asked Ruth. “Kids only volunteer to play on the Marypuddle team to get out of detention. And when they do, Mr Penalty can’t control them.”

Trevor smiled and looked at them all. “So you’re in?”

“What?” asked Ravi.

“The Big Match is only five-a-side now. Plus substitutes. We could put a team together.”

“No way,” said Ravi.

“You’re mad,” said Nancy.

“No he’s not,” said Ruth. “We could have a go at this. It would be fun. What has Marypuddle got to lose? And besides, Coach Hardnutt is a bully. And aren’t we friends against bullying?”

“Yes,” said Toby, “but some of us aren’t very good at football.”

“Then we can learn,” said Ruth. “We’ll listen to our coach and do what he says. And Ravi can read all about football and give us some tactics.”

“And I can look at the data from professional matches and see which of those tactics work best in our situation,” said Nancy.

“I like kicking a ball around,” said Jake, “but I don’t know much about real games. I’m only going to do this if we all play together.” He looked at Toby and Ravi.

They shrugged as if to say, “Why not?”

Trevor looked at his friends. “Are you in?”

WE'RE IN!

