



Rush Common School Newsletter



Friday 28th February 2025

Dream, Aspire, Succeed

Dear Parents/Carers

I would like to start with our Girls Football Team, who continue to perform superbly at league matches against local schools. Before half term they played Caldecott School and showed great talent and determination to win 5-0. This followed up our recent Boys Football Team victories. We know the children in our school have such a fantastic attitude to team sports, demonstrating team spirit, competitiveness and commitment to their sport. This translates into excellent (and often winning) performances, and we always expect our children to be humble in victory. A huge thank you to Mrs Barnes (our PE and School Sports Lead) for instilling this fantastic mentality into our sports teams.

Sticking with the football theme, today the children in Key Stage 2 were really excited to have an assessmby from the Club Ambassador at Oxford United, Peter Rhodes-Brown. He is an ex Oxford United player, who also played for Chelsea for several years. His talk was really inspiring, and helped to demonstrate the importance of healthy lifestyles and resilience in the face of any setbacks. This connection with Oxford United started with one of our Year 6 children writing a letter to Oxford United in school, and we hope to develop this relationship further, perhaps inviting some of the current players into school!

Before half term we held our Discos in the new format, during the school day. Holding discos like this was a huge success, not least because it made the discos fully inclusive. We know there were a number of children who had never attended a school disco before who enjoyed the experience immensely. There were also a number of important practical and health and safety reasons to hold the discos in the school day. The children loved dancing and singing along, and many of the staff got involved too! Of course, the other aim of these events is to raise money for the school, and we are so pleased to have raised £1100! Thank you to the parents for the contributions and embracing this new format. A huge thank you also to FoRC for all their efforts to make this a success!

This week we continued our run of police visits to the school, with a visit for Reception and Year 1. The children enjoyed the visit, and learnt so much about how the Police help everyone in our community. These visits early on sow the seeds of how children can keep themselves and others safe as they move forwards in their lives.

Thank you to all the parents that attended our Year 5 Residential Meeting before half term. This was an important meeting, given the change of provider to PGL and we hope it was informative and helpful. Not least, we hope the Year 5 children are excited for what promises to be a great residential. We also hope our Year 4 pupils are excited for their residential to Youlbury which takes place on Thursday 27th March.

Thank you to all the parents that have previously attended and/or are currently attending our SWIFT Training. The training is facilitated by our SENCo, Mrs Drew and a member of the Communication and Interaction Team, and is aimed at parents of children with autism and/or similar communication and interaction needs. It provides a space to learn more, discuss effective strategies for parents, and share individual experiences. I would highly recommend parents emailing the school office, if you are interested in attending or just to find out a bit more.

Thank you to the parents that have used our Park and Stride option at the Boundary House car park. The more parents that take this up, the safer and less congested Hendred Way will be for our children and families at drop off and pick up. I am in regular communication with a member of the Travel Planning Team at Oxfordshire County Council and will update you on any further developments.

I hope you all have an enjoyable and safe weekend ahead.

Kind regards
Kristen Fawcett
Headteacher



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CHINESE
LANGUAGE
FOUNDATION



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Registered in England and Wales. Company No. 7931886
Registered Office: Rush Common School, Hendred Way, Abingdon. OX14 2AW

School Dinners

The cost of school dinners is **£2.65** per day. Payment for school dinners can be made via ParentMail. Meal choices must be made at least 3 days in advance.



Please see our website for latest school and Trust Job Vacancies:

Vacancies - Rush Common School - Dream, Aspire, Succeed

Homework Champions

Josie	2RS
Ben	2RS
Ella	3LG
Sara	3LG
Ted	3LG
Freddie	3LA
Jerome	3LA
Eddie	3LA

Thomas	4CM
Isaac	4CM
Luke	4CM
Emily	4TJ
Leo	4TJ

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

WHATSAPP

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

With more than two billion active users, WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service. Its end-to-end encryption only allows messages to be viewed by the sender and any recipients: not even WhatsApp itself can read them. The UK's Online Safety Bill proposes to end such encryption on private messaging, but for the time being, this controversial feature remains.

EVOLVING SCAMS

WhatsApp's popularity makes it a lucrative hunting ground for scammers. Recent examples include posing as the target's child, requesting a money transfer because of a spurious 'emergency' – plus a scam where fraudsters trigger a verification message by attempting to log in to your account, then (posing as WhatsApp) call or text to ask you to repeat the code back to them, giving them access.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a chat, someone only needs the mobile number of the WhatsApp user they want to message. Therefore, if a child has ever given their number out to someone they don't know, that person could then contact them via WhatsApp. It's also possible that the child might be added to a group chat or community (by one of their friends, for example) containing other people they don't know.

FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp's connectivity and ease of use allow news to be shared rapidly – whether it's true or not. To combat the spread of misinformation, messages forwarded more than five times on the app now display a "Forwarded many times" label and a double arrow icon. This makes users aware that the message they've just received is far from an original – and might not be entirely factual, either.

CHAT LOCK AND SECRET CODES

In 2023, WhatsApp introduced a feature that lets users keep their chats in a separate 'locked chats' folder, saved behind their phone's passcode, fingerprint or face ID. There is an additional feature – 'Secret Code' – where users set a unique password for locked chats. Unfortunately, this creates the potential for young people to hide conversations and content they suspect their parents wouldn't approve of.

VIEW ONCE CONTENT

The ability to send images or messages that can only be viewed once has led to some WhatsApp users sharing inappropriate material or abusive texts, knowing that the recipient can't reopen them later to use as evidence of misconduct. People used to be able to screenshot this disappearing content – but a recently added WhatsApp feature now blocks this, citing protection of privacy.

VISIBLE LOCATION

WhatsApp's Live Location feature lets users share their current whereabouts, which can be helpful for friends meeting up or parents checking that their child is safe while out, for example. However, anyone in a user's contacts list or in a mutual group chat can also track their location – potentially letting strangers identify a child's home address or journeys that they make regularly.

Advice for Parents & Educators

EMPHASISE CAUTION

Encourage children to treat unexpected messages with caution: get them to consider whether it sounds like something a friend or relative would really send them. Make sure they know never to share personal details over WhatsApp, and to be wary of clicking on any links in messages. Setting up two-step verification adds a further layer of protection to their WhatsApp account.

ADJUST THE SETTINGS

It's wise to change a child's WhatsApp settings to specify which of their contacts can add them to group chats without needing approval. You can give permission to My Contacts or My Contacts Except... Additionally, if a child needs to use Live Location, emphasise that they should enable this function for only as long as they need – and then turn it off.

CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY

Check in with the child about how they're using WhatsApp, making sure they know you only have their safety at heart. If you spot a Locked Chats folder, you might want to talk about the sort of content they've stored in there, who they're talking to, and why they want to keep these chats hidden. Also, if children send any View Once content, it could be helpful to ask them why.

DISCUSS GROUP CHATS

Make children aware that there could be members of a group that they don't know well and that words can be misinterpreted. Encourage them to leave a good impression, to avoid joining in if conversations turn towards bullying, and to respond to such situations in an appropriate way. Make sure they know that it's OK to leave a group chat if it makes them uncomfortable – or for any reason, in fact.

THINK BEFORE SHARING

Help children understand why it's important to stop and think before posting or forwarding something on WhatsApp. It's easy – and all too common – for content that a user posts to be shared more widely, even publicly on social media. Encourage children to consider how an impulsive message or forwarding might damage their reputation or upset a friend who sent something to them in confidence.

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

@wake_up_weds

/www.thenationalcollege

@wake.up.wednesday

@wake.up.weds

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SCHOLASTIC TRAVELLING BOOKS

FREE BOOKS FOR YOUR SCHOOL WHEN YOU BUY AT THE BOOK FAIR!

COME TO THE BOOK FAIR

DATE: _____

A POP-UP BOOK-STORE WITH HUNDREDS OF BOOKS FROM JUST £2.99

LAST YEAR YOUR SUPPORT HELPED DONATE £5.3M IN FREE BOOKS TO SCHOOLS NATIONWIDE

Dates for your diary 2025


Book Fair	Week of the 3rd March
World Book Day	Thursday 6th March
Height and Weight check (Reception and Year 6 only)	Monday 10th March
Year 1 Crocodiles of The World Trip	Tuesday 11th March
Science Fair	Wednesday 12th March
Year 2 Cotswold Wildlife Park Trip	Wednesday 19th March
Red Nose Day	Friday 21st March
Parents Evening	Week of the 24th March (dates tbc)
Year 4 Youlbury Residential	Thursday 27th – Friday 28th March
Parent Forum – General	Wednesday 2nd April at 4.45pm (online)
End of Term 2b	Friday 4th April at 1.30pm
Start of Term 3a	Tuesday 22nd April
KS1 Fire Talk	Wednesday 23rd April
Year 5 Residential	Wednesday 23rd – Friday 25th April
FoRC Second Hand Book Sale	Wednesday 30th April 3.00pm

Year 4 Curriculum Assembly	Thursday 1st May at 9.00am
May Bank Holiday (children not in school)	Monday 5th May
KS2 SATs Week	Week of the 12th May
Parent Forum – Personal Development	Monday 19th May at 3.30pm (online)
Whole School Picnic and Open Afternoon	Friday 23rd May
End of Term 3a	Friday 23rd May
Inset Day (Children Not in School)	Monday 2nd June
Start of Term 3b	Tuesday 3rd June
Class Photos	Thursday 5th June
Year 3 Hill End Trip	Thursday 12th June
Vision Screening (Reception Only)	Monday 16th June (Date Change)
Summer Fete	Saturday 21st June
Year 6 Call of The Wild Residential	Monday 30th June – Friday 4th July
Year 6 Leaver's Party	Thursday 17th July
End of Term 3b	Monday 21st July at 1.30pm

Local Community News

Please note items and events detailed below are for information purposes only. Rush Common School do not endorse or make recommendation

LITTLE STARS MUSICAL THEATRE PRESENTS



Matilda
THE MUSICAL JR.

TICKETS ON SALE NOW

3rd - 5th April

£13 Adult
£8 Child

littlestarsmusicaltheatre.co.uk

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International. All Authorised performance materials are also supplied by MTI.

OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY

FREE FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY!
MOST SUITABLE FOR 6-16 YRS

SCIENCE BAZAAR BEYOND

Saturday 1 March 2025

9:30am - 11:30am Relaxed autism-friendly early opening
11:30am - 4pm Open to all

Fun activities, hands-on workshops, experiments, talks, shows, competitions and cafe

BOOK TICKETS



www.brookes.ac.uk/science-bazaar
sciencebazaar@brookes.ac.uk

X @obuengagement #BrookesBazaar25
f @OxfordBrookesPublicEngagementResearch
ig @oburesearchpublicengagement

Oxford Brookes University, Clerici Building, Headington Campus,
Gipsy Lane, Headington, OX3 0BP

Event sponsored by **MORGAN SINDALL**

Sutton Courtenay

Environmental Education Centre

A journey of learning and discovery



Family Pond Dipping Workshops
Tuesday 8 April 2025; 10:00am - 11:30am and 1pm - 2:30pm
Spring pond dipping fun for families with children 4-11 years at Sutton Courtenay Environmental Education Centre. £8 per child. BOOKING ESSENTIAL

Family Trail: Easter Butterfly Hunt
Wednesday 9, Thursday 10, Saturday 12 and Tuesday 15 April 2025; 10am- 2pm
Flutter by and find a rainbow of butterflies (and a chocolate treat!) on our Easter Trail for ages 4-11. £8 per child. BOOKING ESSENTIAL

Day Camp: The World of Butterflies
Wednesday 16 April; 9:30am - 3pm
A day camp for 8-12 year olds, discovering our fluttering friends at Sutton Courtenay Environmental Education Centre. £35 per child. BOOKING ESSENTIAL

Young and Teen Rangers
Monthly Saturday clubs for young people aged 8-17 years who love wildlife. Check the website for upcoming dates and booking. £7 per child (rising to £8 in April); BOOKING ESSENTIAL

Nature Tots
Fun outdoor sessions on our beautiful nature reserve for 18 months to 4 years, Wed-Sat once a month. Check the website for upcoming dates. £7 per child; BOOKING ESSENTIAL

Visit our website to book or for more info:



bbowt.org.uk/events
01235 862024 or sceec@bbowt.org.uk

bbowt.org.uk

More nature everywhere



ATOM Festival of Science & Technology

15th - 26th March 2025

Inspiring Workshops for kids

Talks by leading scientists

Mark Simmonds OBE
"The Whale-Human Interface"
Tue 25th March

"Einstein, Bohr and Bell"
Wed 26th March

The Peagram Lecture
Prof Tony Hey CBE

Hands on the Planet Family Activities
Sun 22nd March

FREE
Science Market interactive event for all the family
Sat 15th March

atomfestival.org.uk

BOOK TICKETS ONLINE

Warm Towns Fund, UK Atomic Energy Authority, HARWELL, ENABLE, KAVLI INSTITUTE

OXFORD UNITED IN THE COMMUNITY

www.ouitc.org



PREMIER LEAGUE KICKS THURSDAY IN ABINGDON

White Horse Leisure and
Tennis Centre, Audlett Drive,
Abingdon, OX14 3PJ

YEAR 5 - YEAR 8

4:00PM - 4:45PM

YEAR 9 - YEAR 13

4:45PM - 5:30PM

Fun and social football - free
to attend



Scan the QR to book

Contact Us
Mark Thomas
plkicks@oufc.co.uk



Premier League

Kicks



OXFORD UNITED
IN THE COMMUNITY



YAMAHA
YAMAHA MUSIC SCHOOL



Come and try our engaging music courses
on Sunday 23 March - book now!

Children start their music journey with us between
the ages of 2 - 7 and can continue through to 18



Matrix Arts Centre
Sutton Courtenay OX14 4UA
www.matrixartscentre.org.uk

