



# Rush Common School Newsletter



Friday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2025

## *Dream, Aspire, Succeed*

Dear Parents/Carers

This week has been Children's Mental Health Week, and the theme has been 'Know Yourself, Grow Yourself'. We started the week with an Assembly for all children about self-awareness and the importance of understanding their range of emotions. Children were encouraged to think about how understanding feelings allows us to make good choices in reaction to differing situations and circumstances. This assembly was followed up by in-class activities about understanding emotions. These enrichment activities, allied with our weekly PSHE sessions and targeted ELSA for individuals, allows us to support children to become more emotionally literate, resilient and better equipped to deal with set backs and difficult situations that may arise in their lives. This in turn gives them the platform to express themselves and achieve great things!

Speaking of great things, Year 5 treated us to a brilliant Curriculum Assembly this week, which showcased all of the learning that has been taking place in Year 5. The children spoke eloquently and demonstrated a great depth of learning across a wide range of curriculum subjects, including Geography, Art, English, Science and History. The Assembly also included a Mayan dance, in which the children were impressively synchronised. Thank you to the Year 5 staff for preparing the children for this assembly.

As well as Curriculum Assemblies, we try to provide other opportunities for children to perform in front of an audience. One such opportunity was Year 4's recital of McCavity the Mystery Cat in last week's Celebration Assembly. It was a fantastic performance of a well-loved poem, and we will enjoy similar performances from other year groups across the remainder of the school year.

Last week the whole school enjoyed M&M Production's Pantomime of Snow White. The children were wowed by the literal 'all singing, all dancing' performance in the school hall, and came away from the show with huge smiles on their faces. There was a real buzz in the air on pantomime day, and the exposure to such a high quality performance is inspiring for our children. I think they were also inspired by the staff members who had a dance off during each performance!

Last Tuesday we held our hugely popular 'Books at Bedtime' event for children in Preschool, Reception and Key Stage One. The hall was made all cosy with fairy lights, cushions and a roaring fire (on the hall screen!). The children enjoyed reading books with their parents and carers, and milk was provided while everyone listened to members of staff reading their favourite children's stories. A big thank you to Miss Lambert for her reading of Jack Frost, and Mrs Cleaves for reading 'Oi Frog'. Thank you to everyone who attended this lovely event.

Our Yr 5/6 Boys Football Team were out last week competing in a football league match against Thomas Reade. I am pleased to share that we won the game 3-2. Also, in action this week were our Tag Rugby Team, who competed fantastically in a tournament against other local teams. Both teams demonstrated fantastic team spirit, and represented the school superbly.

We recently updated our Uniform Policy, with some minor changes. Please do read the policy to make sure you are fully up to date - the policy can be found here [Uniform-Policy-2025.pdf](#) On the theme of uniform, FoRC provide second hand uniform (which seems almost as good as new) for a fraction of the price. There will be a Second Hand Uniform sale on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March between 2.30pm and 3.30 pm in the school hall.

Finally, please may I ask all parents to park safely and respectfully. It is not acceptable to park up on grass verges at any time. If you think someone may be parked illegally please use the following guidance to report it at <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-travel/parking/illegal-parking>.

I hope everyone has a safe and enjoyable weekend, and as this is the last newsletter of the half term, I would like to wish everyone a lovely half term break.

Kind regards

*Kristen Fawcett*  
Headteacher



### 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

Ella	3LG	Ella	4TJ
Phoebe	3LG	Sara	4TJ
Asiri	3LA	Teddy	4TJ
Freddie	3LA	Noah	4TJ
Robyn	3LA	Rowe	5SC
Ava	3LA	Elliot	5SC
Noah	3LA	Holly	5SC
Sophie	3LA	Tori	5SC
Evie	4CM	Oliver	6EW
Eva	4CM	Lily	6EW
Sophie	4CM	George	6JN
Arthur	4CM	Vincent	6JN

### Dates for your diary 2025

Parent Forum – Curriculum

Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February at 9.15am (online)

School Discos and Non School Uniform Day

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February

End of Term 2a

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February

Start of Term 2b

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February

Book Fair

Week of the 3<sup>rd</sup> March

<b>Height and Weight check (Reception and Year 6 only)</b>	<b>Monday 10<sup>th</sup> March</b>
<b>Year 1 Crocodiles of The World Trip</b>	<b>Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> March</b>
<b>Year 2 Cotswold Wildlife Park Trip</b>	<b>Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March</b>
<b>Parents Evening</b>	<b>Week of the 24<sup>th</sup> March (dates tbc)</b>
<b>FoRC Second Hand Uniform Sale</b>	<b>Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2.30pm -3.30pm</b>
<b>Year 4 Youlbury Residential</b>	<b>Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> – Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March</b>
<b>Parent Forum – General</b>	<b>Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April at 4.45pm (online)</b>
<b>End of Term 2b</b>	<b>Friday 4<sup>th</sup> April at 1.30pm</b>
<b>Start of Term 3a</b>	<b>Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April</b>
<b>KS1 Fire Talk</b>	<b>Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April</b>
<b>Year 5 Residential</b>	<b>Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> – Friday 25<sup>th</sup> April</b>
<b>FoRC Second Hand Book Sale</b>	<b>Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> April 3.00pm</b>
<b>Year 4 Curriculum Assembly</b>	<b>Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May at 9.00am</b>
<b>May Bank Holiday (children not in school)</b>	<b>Monday 5<sup>th</sup> May</b>
<b>KS2 SATs Week</b>	<b>Week of the 12<sup>th</sup> May</b>
<b>Parent Forum – Personal Development</b>	<b>Monday 19<sup>th</sup> May at 3.30pm (online)</b>
<b>Whole School Picnic and Open Afternoon</b>	<b>Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> May</b>
<b>End of Term 3a</b>	<b>Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> May</b>
<b>Inset Day (Children Not in School)</b>	<b>Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June</b>
<b>Start of Term 3b</b>	<b>Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June</b>
<b>Class Photos</b>	<b>Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> June</b>
<b>Vision Screening (Reception Only)</b>	<b>Monday 16<sup>th</sup> June (Date Change)</b>
<b>Summer Fete</b>	<b>Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> June</b>
<b>Year 6 Call of The Wild Residential</b>	<b>Monday 30<sup>th</sup> June – Friday 4<sup>th</sup> July</b>
<b>Year 6 Leaver's Party</b>	<b>Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> July</b>
<b>End of Term 3b</b>	<b>Monday 21<sup>st</sup> July at 1.30pm</b>



# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

# TIKTOK

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Adults tend to associate online videos with YouTube – but among teens, TikTok is king. The app provides a stream of short clips tailored to users' interests, based on what they've already watched. Around half of British children use TikTok, and while much of the content is benign, Ofcom considers it the app where youngsters "were most likely to encounter a potential harm".



## AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

While TikTok's Following feed only displays videos from familiar creators, for you is a collection based on a user's previously watched clips. Most of these videos will probably be inoffensive, but the app could potentially show something unsuitable. If children then engage with this content, more like it will follow. TikTok's guidelines prohibit the sharing of illegal or inappropriate content, but the huge number of uploads means that a small amount inevitably slips through.

## BODY IMAGE AND DANGEROUS CHALLENGES

According to Ofcom, most online harms for teens are body image related for girls (promoting unhealthy eating, body shaming and so on) and dangerous stunts for boys. Both are prevalent on TikTok. One extreme example of the latter was the 'blackout' trend, which encouraged users to hold their breath until they passed out from a lack of oxygen. This led to two families filing lawsuits against TikTok over the tragic deaths of their children.

## IN-APP SPENDING

TikTok is free, but users have the option to buy TikTok coins, which can be used to purchase gifts for content creators. Coin bundles range from £8.99 to an eye-watering £99, while that may not sound appealing, the app still generated £7.9 billion in user spending in 2023. TikTok's policy is that under-18s can't make in-app purchases, but it's possible to bypass this with a fake birth date.

## CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

With more than 1.5 billion users globally, the potential for contact from strangers on TikTok is high – especially as accounts created by over-18s (or young people using a fake date of birth) are set to public by default. This means that not only is someone's profile visible to everyone else on the app, it also suggests their videos to others and enables anyone to download or comment on them.

## MISINFORMATION AND RADICALISATION

Although the short videos on TikTok tend to be more frivolous than the longer ones on YouTube, clips can still influence impressionable minds in a negative way. Not only is there plenty of dangerous misinformation on TikTok, but Ofcom reports that nearly a third of 12 to 15-year-olds use TikTok as a news source – so you should be wary of misogynistic, racist or conspiracy-themed material shaping how they see the world.

## ADDICTIVE DESIGN

With its constant stream of eye-catching videos, TikTok can be addictive to young brains. In 2024, UK children spent an average of 127 minutes per day on the app; that's twice as much as in 2020. Excessive use can interfere with young people's sleep patterns – often leading to irritability – and distract them from other, healthier activities. The instantly skippable nature of bite-size videos may also impact children's ability to maintain focus.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

Family Pairing allows parents to link their TikTok account to their child's, and control settings remotely. Parents can then turn on Restricted Mode (reducing the chances of a child seeing inappropriate content), set screen-time limits, make accounts private and manage whether their child can send messages – and if they can, to whom. Children can't alter these settings without parental approval.

### DISCUSS THE DANGERS

If a child wants to use TikTok and you're happy for them to do so, it's good practice to discuss the potential risks. Ensure that they don't share any identifying personal information, and that they know to talk to a trusted adult if they're worried by interactions on the app. With more teens using TikTok for news, it's also worth talking about misinformation and propaganda, and how to identify it.

### BLOCK IN-APP SPENDING

If a child is using an iPhone or Android device to access TikTok, you can alter their settings to prevent them from making in-app purchases. We'd recommend enabling this feature, as it can be quite easy for a young person to spend a significant amount of real money buying TikTok coins to unlock more features of the app – sometimes without even realising.

### READ THE SIGNS

If you're concerned that a child is spending too much time on TikTok, or that they've been emotionally affected by something they've seen, it's important to know how to spot the signs. Increased irritability and a lack of concentration are potential red flags, as is failing to complete homework or skipping meals. Remember, the parental controls are there for a reason, and it's never too late to introduce limits.

### 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 and The New Statesman.



The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/tiktok-2025>

@wake\_up\_weds

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@wake.up.wednesday

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# TIPS FOR FAMILIES

Place2Be's  
**CHILDREN'S  
MENTAL HEALTH  
WEEK**

## 1 Encourage journaling

Just like Riley, encourage your older children and young people to express their emotions and thoughts through journaling. It can be less confronting than speaking out loud and is a helpful way to process what is going on.

## 2 Make space for reflection

When children and young people reflect on their different emotions, it can help them better understand themselves and what they need.

Go for a walk, drive, or try some mindful colouring or baking together.

## 3 Be visual

Use imagery, such as emojis or flashcards to help children and young people recognise and label their feelings.

## 4 Practice mindfulness

Try mindful activities, and quiet family time, to enjoy being in the present moment. This can help children and young people be aware of their thoughts and emotions and learn a useful new coping technique.

## 5 Communicate

Feedback is crucial for helping us see our blind spots and gain greater insight. Children and young people are no different. Creating safe and supportive ways to share your own experience with your child can help them understand themselves and their impact on the world around them.



If you're a parent or teacher, you'll find loads of useful advice to help you support the brilliant young people in your lives – from FAQs to downloadable packs. [Here4You.co.uk](https://www.here4you.co.uk)



## Local Community News

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



**house  
of fun**

# Space Week!

**A WEEK OF SPACE-THEMED SPORTS, COOKERY,  
ARTS & CRAFTS! INCLUDING:**

- ROCKET JUNK MODELLING
- DANCING LIKE AN ASTRONAUT
- CLAY ALIEN DESIGN
- SPACE-ROCK CAKE BAKING

## FEBRUARY HALF-TERM MULTI-ACTIVITY CAMP

**Monday 17th to Friday 21st February, 2025  
open from 8.30am to 6pm each day!**

RUSH COMMON PRIMARY SCHOOL,  
HENDRED WAY, ABINGDON,  
OX14 2AW



Scan the QR code to book now!  
or visit [house-of-fun.co.uk](https://house-of-fun.co.uk), or call 07762 944204





# ALL STARS & DYNAMOS



ABINGDON VALE CRICKET CLUB

AVCC are hosting the ECB National Cricket Programme for juniors as follows:

**MIXED  
ALL STARS  
(Ages 5-7)**

When: Saturday Mornings  
From: 3rd May onwards  
Time: 9.15am to 10.30am  
Location: Abingdon Vale CC

**MIXED  
DYNAMOS  
(Ages 7-9)**

When: Saturday Mornings  
From: 3rd May onwards  
Time: 9.15am to 10.30am  
Location: Abingdon Vale CC

**GIRLS ONLY  
DYNAMOS  
(Ages 7-11)**

When: Saturday Mornings  
From: 3rd May onwards  
Time: 9.15am to 10.30am  
Location: Abingdon Vale CC



Please register on the ECB Website

[www.ecb.co.uk/play/all-stars](http://www.ecb.co.uk/play/all-stars)

[www.ecb.co.uk/play/dynamos-cricket](http://www.ecb.co.uk/play/dynamos-cricket)



## JUNIOR TRAINING 2025



ABINGDON VALE CRICKET CLUB

We are pleased to announce details of our junior training sessions

### NEW PLAYERS WELCOME

#### Under 11's

Sunday 23 Feb:	12pm-1.30pm
Sunday 02 March:	12pm-1.30pm
Sunday 16 March:	12pm-1.30pm
Sunday 30 March:	12pm-1.30pm
Sunday 06 April:	12pm-1.30pm
Sunday 13 April:	12pm-1.30pm

#### Under 13's

Sunday 23 Feb:	1.30pm-3pm
Sunday 02 March:	1.30pm-3pm
Sunday 16 March:	1.30pm-3pm
Sunday 30 March:	1.30pm-3pm
Sunday 06 April:	1.30pm-3pm
Sunday 13 April:	1.30pm-3pm

£5 per session

Where: Larkmead School,  
Faringdon Road, Abingdon  
OX14 1RF



- Please confirm attendance via clubs Cognito Forms [sign-up form](#).
- For any new players, please contact Paul White - [juniors@abingdonvalecc.co.uk](mailto:juniors@abingdonvalecc.co.uk)



## THE OXFORD & CAMBRIDGE SINGING SCHOOL

The Singing School was established in 2013 to provide children with the opportunity to sing great classical music with world class coaches in a relaxed and fun environment and to develop their confidence and ability in singing and performing.

This Easter, we will be learning some beautiful seasonal music by Handel, Gibbons and John Ireland as well as some light-hearted pieces by Cole Porter and Aaron Copland. And, as always on our courses, we will be giving sessions on vocal technique, music theory, music appreciation and history.

To join our mailing list and for more information on our courses, please see [www.oxbridgesingingschool.com](http://www.oxbridgesingingschool.com) or email [oxbridges@gmail.com](mailto:oxbridges@gmail.com)

7 & 8 APRIL 2025

ST. BARNABAS' CHURCH, JERICHO, OXFORD

[www.oxbridgesingingschool.co.uk](http://www.oxbridgesingingschool.co.uk)

# Ripple Kids

## SWIMMING SCHOOL

**SIGN UP TODAY**

We offer safe, fun environments to help kids build confidence and love the water. For children aged 4 months to 12 years

**LOCATIONS:**

- Abingdon School Sports and Leisure Centre
- Harwell Primary School
- Kingfisher School
- The Gourmet Goat Farmer (Blue Lagoon Pool)

SCAN QR CODE FOR MORE INFO



**'SCIENCE IN A HEARTBEAT'**

Fun Science for kids during the school holidays!

Suitable for ages 5 to 11 yrs  
£35 per child (sibling discount available!)

**Bright Sparks Events**

## February Holiday Camps 2025: Venues and Dates

Monday 17th Feb	West Oxford Primary, Ferry Hinksey Road, Oxford, OX2 0BY
Tuesday 18th Feb	Didcot Civic Hall, Britwell Road, Didcot, OX11 7JN
Wednesday 19th Feb	Begbroke Village Hall, Begbroke Lane, Begbroke, OX5 1RN
Thursday 20th Feb	Stockham Primary School, Stockham Way, Wantage, OX12 9HL
Friday 21st Feb	Caldecott Primary School, Caldecott Road, Abingdon, OX14 5HB

Daily - 9am to 3.30pm. £35 per child per day. Sibling discount available.

For more information about our activities or to book a place for your child, please see the 'Holiday camps' tab on our website. Spaces are subject to availability.



Call: 01865 522 775

[www.brightsparksevents.co.uk](http://www.brightsparksevents.co.uk)