



Rush Common School Newsletter



Friday 13th Novmeber 2024

Dream, Aspire, Succeed

Dear Parents/Carers

I must start this newsletter with the fantastic Nativity and Christmas performances we have seen over this past fortnight. Last week, KS1 treated us to a retelling of the Christmas Story, with lines spoken clearly and confidently and brilliant singing from both year groups. We then had our first ever Preschool and Reception joint Nativity this week. The children really rose to the occasion, showing courage to deliver lines in front of a large audience, and sang a range of traditional and modern Christmas songs with enthusiasm and enjoyment. A particular highlight was Preschool singing some of their favourite Christmas songs! Thank you to everyone who attended the performances, and all the donations given – they are always gratefully received.

On Tuesday of this week, our Orchestra performed a concert for our parents. The children have shown such dedication to learning their musical instruments and came together to perform a lovely array of Christmas songs, with the utmost concentration! I know our parents in the audience enjoyed the occasion, and a special thank you to Mrs Wallis, who organises and conducts the Orchestra.

This week all the children hugely enjoyed Christmas Dinner Day, particularly the visit from Santa Claus. Everyone came to school dressed in their Christmas jumpers for 'Save the Children', and £245 has been raised for this worthy cause. The whole day felt very festive, and I would like to thank everyone (particularly the kitchen staff) for their contributions towards a memorable occasion.

The Christmas activities keep coming, as we invite our Reception parents into school today for their Christmas Craft Afternoon. This is a lovely opportunity for our parents to see their children in their own classroom and see some of the work they have achieved. Also, today the school Choir will be visiting SMEG in Abingdon to sing a range of Christmas songs to their staff. They are really excited to be performing once again!

Our Curriculum Assemblies are really important for children to have the opportunity to speak to an audience, and last week our Year 3 children delivered the first of these assemblies. With a focus on Ancient Egypt, and a memorable (and humorous) section on mummification, the assembly was expertly performed by the children, showcasing their knowledge and enjoyment of the topic. Thank you to all the parents that attended.

Our Girls Football Team continue to impress as they go from strength to strength. On Tuesday this week they played Thomas Reade School and won the game 9-0. One of their greatest assets is their humility which will stand them in good stead as they go forward. Congratulations to them all!

Year 6 and Year 4 have enjoyed curriculum enrichment opportunities across the last two weeks. Last week, Year 6 dressed up as World War II evacuees, and spent a fabulous day at the STEAM museum, while Year 4 dressed up as Tudors and enjoyed a range of Tudor activities throughout the day (including dancing, writing with quills, and baking Tudor tarts). These immersive experiences have really brought the topics to life for the children, and will live long in the memory!

Finally, as the last newsletter of the calendar year, may I wish all of our families an enjoyable Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

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.



Prayer Space

Thank you to the Prayer Space for the delicious staff treats!



Homework Champions

Jerome	3CO	Lydia	5SC
Newton	3LG	Elia	6EW
Avalyn	4CM	Isabel	6EW
Livvy	4CM	Alex	6EW
Isaac	4CM	George H	6EW
Lois	4CM	Talulah	6JN
Khaira	4TJ	Megan	6JN
Stanley	4TJ		
Sophia	4TJ		
Rosie	4TJ		

Thank you to the kind parents in Reception who have created a lovely flower bed around the Rush Common sign.



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

Vacancies - Rush Common School - Dream, Aspire, Succeed

Dates for your diary 2024/2025

End of Term 1b	Friday 20th December at 1.30pm
Start of Term 2a	Monday 6th January 2025
Prayer and Reflection Space	Monday 13th – Thursday 16th January 2025
M&M Performance – Snow White	Friday 31st January 2025
Parent Forum – Curriculum	Thursday 13th February 2025 at 9.15am (online)
End of Term 2a	Friday 14th February 2025
Start of Term 2b	Monday 24th February 2025
Year 4 Youlbury Residential	Thursday 27th – Friday 28th March 2025
Parent Forum – General	Wednesday 2nd April 2025 at 4.45pm (online)
End of Term 2b	Friday 4th April 2025 at 1.30pm
Start of Term 3a	Tuesday 22nd April 2025
Year 5 Kingswood Residential	Wednesday 23rd – Friday 25th April 2025
May Bank Holiday (children not in school)	Monday 5th May 2025
Parent Forum – Personal Development	Monday 19th May 2025 at 3.30pm (online)
End of Term 3a	Friday 23rd May 2025
Inset Day (Children Not in School)	Monday 2nd June 2025
Start of Term 3b	Tuesday 3rd June 2025
Year 6 Call of The Wild Residential	Monday 30th June – Friday 4th July 2025
End of Term 3b	Monday 21st July 2025 at 1.30pm



FRIENDS OF RUSH COMMON'S

CHRISTMAS ★ RAFFLE ★



BUY YOUR TICKETS AT:

www.peoplesfundraising.com/raffle/forcchristmasraffle

£1
PER TICKET

Prizes Include:



- Miele Vacuum Cleaner worth £169
- £100 John Lewis Voucher
- Waterperry Gardens Season Ticket for 2 People
- Breakfast for 4 at the Courtyard by Marriott, Oxford
- Bright Sparks Snowman Science Kit
- House of Fun Holiday Camp Session
- Rainbow Hampers
- Loose Cannon Brewery Tour
- Pranik Therapy Relaxation Sessions by Harriet Matthews
- 4 Passes to Jump Inc
- Vouchers for Laser Combat
- 1 Month Free Classes to MF Dance
- Family Pass to Partyman World
- Family Pass to Snakes & Ladders



Raffle drawn on the 13th Dec at 8pm

Promoter: Friends of Rush Common, c/o Rush Common School, OX14 2AW. Registered Charity No. 1169863
Registered with Vale of White Horse District Council No. GALOTT/09552/19

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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING APPS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

When looking at options for supporting a child's mental health, the sheer volume can be overwhelming. There are many wellbeing apps available, but unfortunately not all are trustworthy. It's important to evaluate which resources are suitable, reliable and effective. This guide lets you know what to consider before installing such an app, to determine just how useful it's going to be.

QUALITY & RELIABILITY

Mental health apps can be a useful starting point when looking for wellbeing advice and strategies and can be a useful extension to the in-person services available. However, they aren't a substitute. Information on the quality of some of these apps is scarce. They may look cute and child-friendly, but have they been designed by a mental health professional? Furthermore, do they have research to back up their content?

PLACE RESPONSIBILITY ON CHILDREN

Some apps add the words 'kids' or 'children' to their title or use cartoon icons to make them more appealing to young people. When signing up for some of these apps, some will speak to the parent directly, saying something along the lines of "Your child is good to go. Let them take it from here". It's important to remain involved in the child's mental health journey, so regular check-ins are recommended.

DISREGARDING APPROPRIATE SUPPORT

Young people who feel anxious and have trouble sleeping may download a mindfulness app to help. While this is a good strategy initially, it's not addressing the root of the problem. A child could simply try managing these symptoms themselves (as opposed to speaking out and seeking professional help), which could potentially worsen their anxiety in the long run.

LACK OF PERSONALISATION

Mental health or wellbeing apps are useful tools for the short term, teaching users several helpful habits to manage their condition – such as keeping an illness diary, improving nutrition and practicing mindfulness exercises. As every person is unique – and children especially will grow and develop in different ways – these apps struggle to tailor themselves to users' individual needs. For example, many apps don't distinguish between the ages of users and can offer extremely generic advice.

DATA SECURITY

As with any other app – not just those for mental health and wellbeing – it's wise to check out the privacy policy before downloading it. Some of these applications may share data with third parties for numerous reasons (such as targeted advertisements), and if a user is sharing personal and sensitive information within the app, they probably don't want it ending up elsewhere without their consent.

IN-APP PURCHASES

Many apps will provide their most basic features for free but will require you to pay for other aspects – such as a more tailored experience or access to additional resources. This could be a one-off fee or a regular subscription. Consider whether this is actually required. Is it benefiting the child, or could they receive the same support from a medical professional?

Advice for Parents & Educators

CHECK THE CREDIBILITY OF THE APP

Before you download a mental health and wellbeing app, investigate the developers. Have they consulted with qualified mental health professionals to create their resource? Also check whether the app is affiliated with any government or mental health organisations, as these are solid indicators of legitimacy. Reviews can also be a useful signpost to the app's quality. There are many good apps out there, but there are just as many that miss the mark.

SEEK PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

Trusted mental health and wellbeing apps designed by qualified, reputable organisations can be used alongside the personalised advice and support of fully trained professionals. These apps should never be considered a substitute for counselling or other tailored medical help. If you have real concerns about a child's mental wellbeing, you should seek appropriate advice from a suitable source, such as their GP – or Childline, who can be contacted by calling 0800 1111.

READ THE PRIVACY POLICY

Look into the app's terms of service – especially its privacy policy. Do so by yourself first, then go over it with the child who is considering using the app, to ensure they know what data will be collected and how exactly it will be used. Use all of this information to make an educated decision on whether or not to download that particular app.

ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Mental health and wellbeing apps can be useful for writing down feelings, tracking your own health and other such activities. These can help if the problem is short-term and temporary – such as a child getting stressed about approaching exams – or if you're currently waiting for professional support. Nonetheless, it is important that children aren't solely reliant on the app and have a safe space to talk about their feelings and experiences in the real world.

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

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://thenationalcollege.com/guides/mental-health-apps>

@wake_up_weds

/www.thenationalcollege

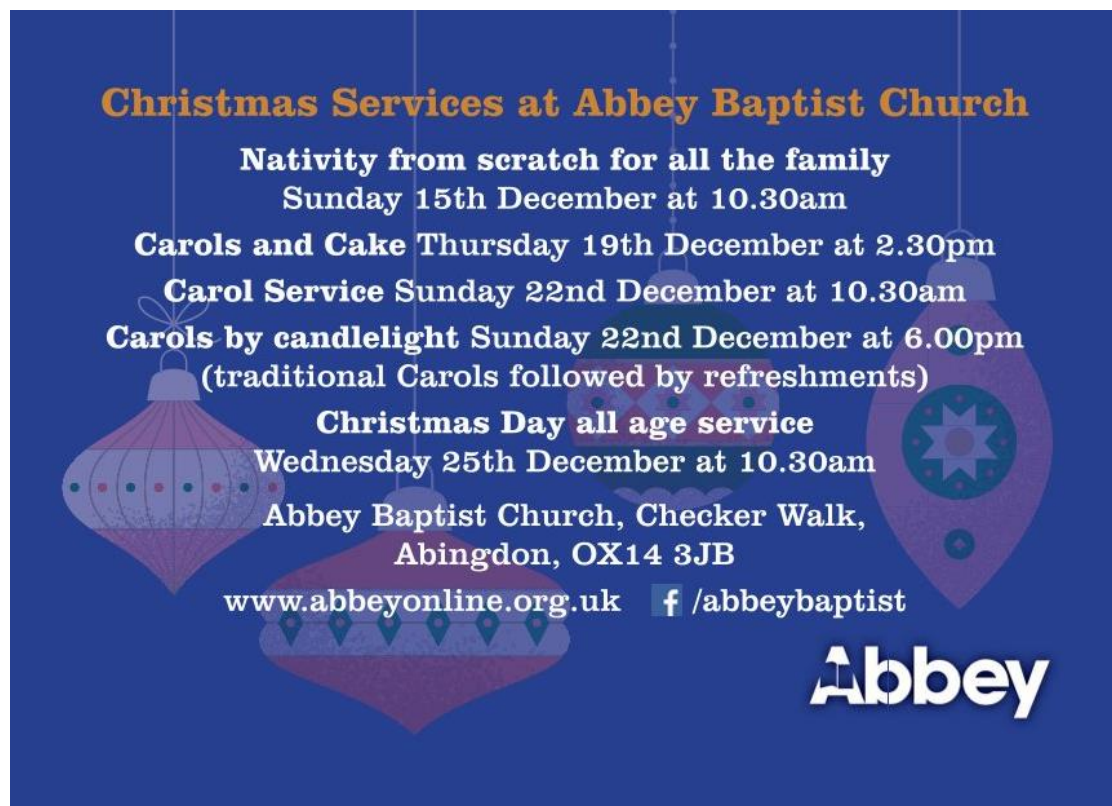
@wake.up.wednesday

@wake.up.weds

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 04.12.2024

Local Community News

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



Christmas Services at Abbey Baptist Church

Nativity from scratch for all the family
Sunday 15th December at 10.30am

Carols and Cake Thursday 19th December at 2.30pm

Carol Service Sunday 22nd December at 10.30am

Carols by candlelight Sunday 22nd December at 6.00pm
(traditional Carols followed by refreshments)

Christmas Day all age service
Wednesday 25th December at 10.30am

Abbey Baptist Church, Checker Walk,
Abingdon, OX14 3JB

www.abbeyonline.org.uk  [/abbeybaptist](https://www.facebook.com/abbeybaptist)

Abbey



THE | OXFORD & CAMBRIDGE SINGING SCHOOL

The Oxford and Cambridge Singing School is for boys and girls aged 7-13 who love to sing. The Singing School was established to give children the opportunity to experience great classical music with world class coaches in a relaxed and fun environment and to develop their confidence and ability in singing and performing.

Pupils will learn some beautiful music and at the same time gain a background in vocal technique, music theory and history. Families are most welcome to come and listen to an informal concert at the end of each day.

For more information and to book, please see
www.oxbridgesingschool.com

Sat 21 & Mon 23 December 2024
Oxford

The Nurturing Programme

A **FREE** 10-Week programme for parents and carers.

Over the 10-weeks, we will look at lots of different topics, including:

Understanding... why children behave as they do

Recognising... the feelings behind behaviour (ours & theirs)

Exploring... different approaches to discipline

Finding... ways to develop co-operation and self-discipline in children

Learning... the importance of looking after ourselves

Where? Abingdon Carousel Family Centre, Caldecott Chase, Abingdon, OX14 5GZ

When? Tuesday mornings from 9.30am -11.30am

Starting? Tuesday 14th of January 2025

Cost? Free

Interested? To book a place, please email m.etienne@abingdoncarousel.org.uk or call (01235) 526691

How Nurturing Programme Parent Groups have helped other parents

"I am a much more confident, positive and understanding parent. I feel much more able to cope now."

"We are having less family arguments and the household is a lot calmer."

"The group was fun. It's the only two hours I have for myself each week."

"The atmosphere was really relaxed. No-one judged anyone and everyone was listened to and respected."



Check out familylinks.org.uk for more information on *The Parenting Puzzle* book and the Nurturing Programme

The 10-week Nurturing Programme for parents and carers

where:
Abingdon Carousel
Caldecott Chase
Abingdon
Oxfordshire
OX14 5GZ

when:
Tuesday: 9.30am - 11.30am
Starts on 14th January 2025 - 25th March 2025
(No session on 18th Feb 2025)
FREE COURSE

contact details:
For more information or to book a place please contact:
m.etienne@abingdoncarousel.org.uk
(01235) 526691



Beezee FAMILIES



We're here to help your family
make healthy habits fun

Join our **FREE**, 12-week healthy lifestyle programme to help your family build habits around food and physical activity. Our in-person group sessions start on:

Date: 15th January 2025 **Time:** 5:30pm - 7:30pm

Venue: White Horse Tennis and Leisure Centre

Or you can join us online!



Sign up for your
FREE PLACE today

@ HelloOxfordshire@maximusuk.co.uk

☎ 03332 208 952

oxf.maximusuk.co.uk

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Our programmes are for children above their ideal weight, see our website for more information. 24-1887

Beezee FAMILIES



Ready to have fun, play games,
and build healthy habits as a family?

Sign up to Beezee Families today for **FREE**, fun-filled, healthy lifestyle support. Our award-winning programme has helped hundreds of families, just like yours.

How can we help your family? By signing up you can:

Get expert support and practical tips from our nutritionists

Start making healthy lifestyle changes as a family

Discover delicious and nutritious meals

Find fun ways to get more active



Find support that works for your family

- IN PERSON**
Join us for 12 weeks of in-person group sessions
- ONLINE**
Log in for 10 weeks of online group sessions, plus 2 check-in calls
- ACADEMY**
Learn at your own pace by enrolling onto the Academy

You can get **FREE** goodies during in-person and online programmes



Sign up for your **FREE PLACE** today

oxf.maximusuk.co.uk

@ HelloOxfordshire@maximusuk.co.uk

☎ 03332 208 952

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Our in-person and online group programmes are for children above their ideal weight, see our website for more information. 6885-12

Oxfordshire Junior Chess is excited to announce that we will be holding the annual county junior chess tournament on the weekend of 4th / 5th Jan 2025 at Cumnor Primary School. As in previous years, there will be U9, U11, U13, U15/18 sections. The online entry form link is <https://forms.gle/PpAYv8Rq1xvKPG8C9> from which full tournament information and rules can be accessed. The tournament caters for first time tournament entrants all the way through to experienced junior players. Queries are welcomed by email to Anna Bishop at oxfordshirejuniorchess@gmail.com.

