



Rush Common School Newsletter



Friday 17th May 2024

Dream, Aspire, Succeed

Dear Parents/Carers

I must start with our brilliant Year 6 pupils! They have had SATs this week and have approached it with a committed and confident attitude. We know that every child has given their absolute best towards these important tests, and as we always say, that is all we can ask! At the end of the year, children often say SATs week is one of their favourite and most memorable weeks of the year – quite possibly due to being served breakfast by the Year 6 staff (and others), the slightly enlarged breaktimes (post test!) and some of the activities in the afternoons. We feel we get the balance just right so children can succeed and reach their potential in an environment that does not invite any undue pressure. We hope Year 6 parents are rightly proud of their children!

On Tuesday 14th May we celebrated the 70th Anniversary of Sir Roger Bannister's 4 minute mile. It was fantastic to see all of our children run a mile during the day, and I had the pleasure of completing the mile with the Year 3 children. At the end of the day we had a fascinating assembly, in which we watched some of the coverage from 1954 of the historic occasion at the Iffley athletics track. Safe to say commentary has changed quite a bit in 70 years!

Our football teams have been busy over the last fortnight, with boys matches against Caldecott and St Edmunds and a girls match against St Edmunds. The children won all three games by considerable margins, and once again showed the effort, teamwork and humility we expect of our talented footballers! Congratulations to them all!

Sticking with the sporting theme, we have had an external cricket coach in this term (from 'A Chance to Shine') to teach cricket to Years 4 and 6 during PE lessons and then run an after school club. All the children involved in this (some playing cricket for the first time) have loved the way it has been delivered in an active and fun way, and it may have inspired some budding cricketers of the future! The children in BASC, and Multi Sports Club on Wednesday may have been inspired even more, when they saw the teaching staff having some cricket training of their own!

The last two weeks have seen a variety of enrichment activities to complement the children's learning across the curriculum. This has included a visit from the Fire Brigade in KS1 to talk about road safety, visits from Natalie Hunt (Mental Health and Wellbeing coordinator at Abingdon School) to talk to Reception and Year 4 (separately), a Year 4 trip out to Abbey Fishponds, and an enjoyable and fascinating assembly on Islam for all children. We are really proud of the enrichment opportunities children receive at Rush Common, and we know the fantastic impact it has on their learning and personal development.

We have a number of upcoming fundraising activities this term and on the near horizon is the Year 6 Bake Sale on Tuesday 21st May, and the FoRC plant sale on Wednesday 22nd May. Thank you in advance for all the donations provided to make these events a success.

I hope everyone is looking forward to the Whole School Picnic and Open Afternoon on the last day of this half term – it promises to be a lovely afternoon. For now, I would like to wish all of our families an enjoyable and safe weekend ahead.

Kind regards

Kristen Fawcett

Headteacher



School Dinners

The cost of school dinners is **£2.60** per day. Payment for school dinners can be made via ParentMail. Meal choices must be made at least 3 days in advance.



Homework Champions

Bianca	3LA	Freya	4CM
Abhimanyu	3LA	Tilly	4CM
Sasha	3LA	Isla	4CM
Jessica	3LA	Madison	4CM
Lois	3LA	Jake	4LR
Lilly -Mae	3LA	Sophia	4LR
Emily	3LG	Cattaleayah	5AS
Leo	3LG	Ada	5AS
Steffan	3LG		
Emily	3LG		
Harry	3LG		

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about SOCIAL MEDIA & MENTAL HEALTH

An estimated one-third of children have a social media account, so it's important that trusted adults know what content young people are consuming, what they're posting and the interactions they're having. On social media, it can be easy to go down 'rabbit holes' that aren't beneficial to our wellbeing. As platforms grapple with managing such 'legal but harmful' content, lives are being impacted – sometimes to tragic effect. We might be daunted by the scale of the tech giants and their content which so entrails young people, but we can still help children to be aware of their mental wellness: recognising when something isn't OK... and knowing what to do about content that upsets them.

1. UNDERSTAND THE ALGORITHM

Algorithmic rank content by user interest: someone who regularly interacts with sports news, say, will see the latest results at the top of their feed. Likewise, if a user browses content that can cause harm, that's what will be recommended to them in future. Someone who's had a bad day and looks for posts which reflect their mood will find similar content being suggested to them more and more.

2. AVOID THE MAIN FEEDS

Avoiding the default feeds on social media platforms limits the amount of recommended content that's shown. Users can opt to only scroll through the accounts they follow, use restricted media, or highlight posts that they don't want to see more of. Explore the platform safety settings to see how you can take control of what your child's phone shows them when they open the app.

3. DISCUSS WHAT THEY'VE SEEN

Chatting about what your child's seen online keeps you aware of the content they're interacting with. Don't assume that platforms are screening out inappropriate material, or even that your child would recognise content as being harmful. Discuss who they follow, what posts they like and what comes up in their feeds: if alarm bells ring, it could be time for a more in-depth talk or to seek support.

4. LEARN HOW TO HIDE CONTENT

If your child stumbles across unsuitable content on social media, there's the option to hide that post as well as indicating you'd prefer any similar material not to be suggested in future. On some platforms, you might also be able to block posts that contain specific words, which is an excellent way to start taking control of what your child sees online.

5. SET DAILY LIMITS

Phones and most apps can tell you how much they're being used. Spending too long online can mean a child misses out on other activities that are important to all-round wellbeing. You could set some family rules – for everyone to follow – around device use, such as screen time limits and tech-free spaces: involving your child in creating this agreement makes them more likely to stick to it.

6. MONITOR THEIR ACTIVITY

Keeping a discreet eye on how your child is using social media can help ensure they're not entering potentially dangerous situations. As they grow up, of course, children need space to exercise their independence – but you can still occasionally ask to see what they're looking at. Be transparent about your own social media use and try not to sound judgemental about your child's.

7. TURN OFF PUSH NOTIFICATIONS

Even for adults, it's tempting to check an email or message as soon as the alert sound pings. Push notifications encourage people to open their apps and spend time on their device, so turning them off will help your child to practise mindful use of tech. Most of us have other things that we need to focus on as a priority – and those notifications will still be there later, when we have more time.

8. USE DEVICES TOGETHER

Giving children internet-enabled devices and complete freedom to explore platforms on their own can result in exposure to hugely damaging content. You could consider making a particular area of home a designated space to use phones, tablets and so on – making it much easier to monitor what content your child is viewing and (if necessary) steer them away from any potentially harmful paths.

9. ENCOURAGE OTHER ACTIVITIES

Mental health professionals often highlight the importance of exercise, quality time with loved ones, a balanced diet and restful sleep for our mental wellbeing. Spending hours on social media can cause us to sacrifice other activities that our brains need to feel well – so encouraging your child to put down their phone and enjoy something that doesn't involve a screen can be immensely beneficial.

10. TALK ABOUT PEER PRESSURE

Most platforms default children's accounts to private, so only people they've accepted as friends can see their posts. This reduces the risk of bullying or unkind comments, but – just like offline life – the digital world can still make children feel as if they need to act or look a certain way to fit in. Talk to your child about peer pressure, and listen to any concerns so you can provide the support they need.

Meet Our Expert

Shazia Sarwar-Kalm is executive headteacher of a specialist primary school and, as an emotional therapy coach, works with school leaders to focus on the SEMH, mental health and wellbeing agenda. A passionate advocate for vulnerable learners, Shazia is a Fellow of the Chartered College of Teaching and the author of *The Rainbow Within*, a book which supports children with SEMH needs.



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Dates for your diary 2024

Year 6 Junior Citizens	Monday 20 th May
Year 6 Bake Sale	Tuesday 21st May (Please note date change) 3.00pm
Year 1 Curriculum Assembly	Wednesday 22 nd May 2.30pm
FoRC Plant Sale	Wednesday 22 nd May 3.00pm
Sports for Schools Athlete Visit	Friday 24 th May
Whole School Picnic	Friday 24 th
End of Term 3a	Friday 24 th May
Inset Day (Children Not in School)	Monday 3 rd June
Start of Term 3b	Tuesday 4 th June
Class Photos	Thursday 6 th June
Year 3 Curriculum Assembly	Tuesday 11 th June 9.00am
Year 6 Non-School Uniform Day	Friday 14 th June
Year 6 Ice Lolly Sale	Tuesday 18 th June
Year 2 Abingdon Museum Trip	Tuesday 18 th June 2JM Wednesday 19 th June 2RS
Reception Curriculum Assembly	Wednesday 19 th June 2.15pm
Year 3 Hill End Trip	Thursday 20 th June
FoRC Summer Fete	Saturday 22 nd June 12.00pm – 2.00pm
Year 6 Residential Call of the Wild	Monday 24 th – Friday 28 th June
Move Up Day	Wednesday
KS2 Sports Day (Tilsley Park)	Tuesday 9 th July 9.00am – 2.00pm
Vision Screening (Reception Only)	Tuesday 9 th July
Reception and KS1 Sports Day	Friday 12 th July 9.30am – 11.30am (gates open 9.15am – School Field)
Year 6 Performance	Tuesday 16 th July 6.00pm Wednesday 17 th July 6.00pm
Reception and KS1 Back Up Sports Day	Wednesday 17 th July
KS2 Back Up Sports Day (Tisley Park)	Thursday 18 th July
Year 6 Leavers Assembly	Tuesday 23 rd July 9.00am
End of Term 3b	Tuesday 23 rd July 1.30pm

The Oxfordshire CAMHS School In-Reach Team holds parent webinars over the course of the academic year. Whilst many are for parents of older children, there is an upcoming webinar for parents of primary school-aged children. Please see the information below.

These awareness sessions contain useful information about how to support your child with some of the commonly seen emotional and mental health concerns. The webinar format allows parents to join from home. Cameras and microphones will be off, but questions can be asked through the Q&A function. Please note these sessions cannot be recorded for copyright purposes, but handouts can be sent on afterwards.

Please register for the webinar you wish to attend using the links below. If you have any difficulties with the links please contact Single Point of Access on 01865 902 515.

Understanding childhood anxiety

- **Date:** Thursday 27 June 2024
- **Time:** 6.00 – 7.30pm

This session is aimed at managing anxiety in children under 12. It highlights when anxiety might be a problem (as opposed to a 'normal' developmental phase), describes different anxiety disorders and how these can be recognised and discussed. It explores why treatment is important and gives a detailed overview of a Cognitive Behaviour Therapy approach aimed at parents.

Register for childhood anxiety webinar:

<https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/55220694-0878-478d-b2b8-d12a354a4caa@759ac89b-2aa4-4973-b048-e6903b46a8b6>

Local Community News

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

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CHILDREN'S MULTI-ACTIVITY CAMPS FOR 5-13 YEAR OLDS

COOKERY, ARTS & CRAFTS AND SPORTS ACTIVITIES

All our activities are carefully planned so that children feel a sense of achievement, make friends and experience new things.

BOOK HERE

Rush Common Primary School, Abingdon
Tuesday 28th - Friday 31st May
8.30am-6.00pm

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Wanted: Local children and young people to sing three songs in a massed choir in The Abingdon Passion Play

Radley College has very kindly organised for any children who would like to learn three songs for the Abingdon Passion Play (two performances on Saturday June 22nd at midday and 5pm) to come along at 4.15pm - 5.30pm to the Silk Hall at Radley College on Monday May 20th, to work with choir leaders who lead The Big Sing. Please send names of young people interested to Sally Mears (smears@gmail.com) in advance of this workshop. Thank you.