



# Rush Common School Newsletter

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2025



## *Dream, Aspire, Succeed*

Dear Parents/Carers

I would like to start this newsletter by congratulating George and Holly, who were elected as our new Head Boy and Head Girl last week. There were many speeches, all of which were brilliantly performed, and it was certainly a tough choice when it came to the voting. All the children should be immensely proud of putting themselves forward and displaying such confidence. There are also a number of other leadership roles at the school including House Captains, Sports Captains, Digital Leaders, Play Leaders and children running their own clubs.

Today is National Teaching Assistant Day and it is a good time to remind ourselves of the incredible work our T.A.s do to support children on a daily basis. The nurture, care and educational support shown to children by our dedicated T.A.s helps to ensure that all of our children feel happy, confident and can flourish at our school.

Today is also the European Day of Languages, and at Rush Common we are celebrating all the languages across the world that are spoken at our school. There are currently 27 languages across the school and it is important for children to celebrate this diversity. Thank you to every parent who has submitted a video showing themselves or their child reading a story in languages other than English. During the day the children will have the chance to watch these videos, and appreciate the many children in our school that speak two or more languages at home.

On Monday we held our Reception Phonics Workshop in which parents learnt about our phonics scheme and how they can support their children at home. There was even some audience participation! Thank you to everyone who attended the event and we hope it was useful. This Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> September, we are holding a similar event for our Year 1 parents, and we hope to see many of you there.

On Wednesday we held our first House Competition of the year. Children competed fiercely and put everything into the quizzes, Times Tables Rockstars and Cross Country to earn points for their house. Overall, the winning house was the Eagles – congratulations to all the children in this house.

Our Extra-Curricular Clubs have started this week and it has been lovely to see children enjoying these additional opportunities. A special mention here for Mrs Barnes, who decided to run two clubs on the back of huge demand for the Football Club. I am already looking at the clubs offer for the Spring and Summer Terms to create a balance and breadth of clubs offered across the year. If any parent has a particular skill or interest and would be interested in running a club at our school, please do let me know.

Tomorrow is our first Taster Session for children that will be starting Reception next September. It is a great opportunity for children to spend time enjoying the Reception classrooms and outdoor area. We also have another Taster Session on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> October, as well as three Open Days and Individual Tours. If you know anyone that is looking for a school place next September please do let them know about Rush Common, as word of mouth is really important in ensuring the maximum number of children join our school.

Finally, may I wish everyone a safe and enjoyable weekend ahead.

Kind regards

Kristen Fawcett  
Headteacher



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## School Dinners

The cost of school dinners this term is **£2.80** per day. Payment for school dinners can be made via ParentMail. Meal choices must be made at least 3 days in advance.



## Music for School Foundation Sticker Competition



Well done to Josie in Year 3 who entered the MFSF 'Good Work' sticker design competition this year. From hundreds of entries, Josie's design was 1 of 5 shortlisted for public vote, and she successfully achieved 1st runner up. Josie's sticker design will be used in music lessons. Congratulations on your achievement Josie!



## Homework Champions

Oliver	2LG
Filip	2LG
Riley	3CM
Juliet	3CM
Emily	5SC
Charlotte	5SC
Elí	5SC
Sophia	5SC

Ted	5LB
Sasha	5LB
Sophie	5LB
Luke	5LB
Freya	6EP
Ellie	6JN
Charlotte	6JN



## SNAP STREAK

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### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

# SNAPCHAT


AGE RESTRICTION  
13+

With over 800 million active monthly users and billions of 'Snaps' sent each month, Snapchat is a popular messaging app among children and young people. It allows users to share fun, spontaneous pictures and videos with friends and family while using playful filters. One of Snapchat's unique features is that pictures, videos and messages are only viewable for a short period of time.

## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Snapchat's use of artificial intelligence (AI) includes features like the 'My AI' chatbot and AI-powered filters, offering interactive experiences that can be fun but also pose risks. These tools may share unfiltered or inaccurate responses, promote unrealistic beauty standards, and collect personal data. Advanced filters and deepfake-style lenses can distort reality, potentially leading to manipulation, impersonation, or inappropriate content.

## SCREEN ADDICTION

Snapchat boosts user engagement and daily use with features like streaks (daily Snapchat exchanges between you and a friend). When a streak's been going for a few days, users will see a  emoji. The number alongside it shows the number of days, but if users miss a day and break the streak, the only way to restore it is to pay. This encourages daily use habits, and frequent notifications can keep users returning to the app even more often.

## SEXTORTION

Because Snapchat's disappearing messages feature may foster a sense of safety, users may become targets of sextortion. For example, a predator may pressure someone into sending nude images, then somehow capture those images to threaten and intimidate the victim. This might involve claiming they will share the images with friends or family unless money is paid.

## SNAPCHAT+

Snapchat+ is the platform's premium subscription service, offering early access to new and exclusive features. In June 2023, Snapchat introduced a new tier called 'Snap+' giving subscribers access to hundreds of lenses and AR experiences for playing, creating, and sharing Snaps. These paid features may encourage young users to spend money to access exclusive content, increasing the risk of overspending or feeling pressured to make in-app purchases.

## ACCESSIBILITY

Snapchat is now accessible from a web browser, meaning children can use it on a laptop or tablet without downloading the app. This can make activity harder to monitor, reduce the effectiveness of parental controls, and increase the risk of unsupervised communication or exposure to inappropriate content.

## INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some content on Snapchat isn't suitable for children. The hashtags used to group content are determined by the poster, so even an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's disappearing messages feature also makes it easy for young people to share explicit images on impulse – so sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### ACCESS THE SNAPCHAT FAMILY SAFETY HUB

Created with guidance from Common Sense Media, Snapchat has developed a Family Safety Hub that explains how the app works and how to use its in-app protections for teens. It's recommended that you review this guidance before allowing a child to download Snapchat. Remember, the app is only intended for children aged 13 and over.

### BLOCK AND REPORT

If a stranger connects with a child on Snapchat and makes them feel uncomfortable by pressuring them to send or receive unwanted or inappropriate images, the child can tap the three dots on that person's profile to report or block them. There are options to state why they're reporting that user, with a tailored reporting section under the 'Nudity and Sexual Content' category. In this category, there's the option to report somebody for threatening to leak sexually explicit images or videos.

### ENCOURAGE OPEN DISCUSSIONS

Snapchat's risks can be easier to handle if you nurture an open dialogue. Talk about scams and blackmail before letting children sign up. If they're sucked into a scam, encourage them to tell you immediately. Talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting, emphasising its inherent risks. Furthermore, explain how 'popular challenges' on the platform can have harmful consequences.

### USE PRIVACY SETTINGS TOGETHER

Sit down with the children in your care and explore Snapchat's privacy settings as a shared activity. You can help them adjust who can contact them, view their stories, or see their location on Snap Map. It's a good opportunity to explore why some settings are safer than others, reinforcing their understanding of online boundaries. Encourage them to regularly review these settings, especially after app updates or changes in their friendship groups.

### 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 27: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/snapchat>



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# Rush Common School

*Dream, Aspire, Succeed*



## Visits, Tours and Taster Sessions - Autumn 2025

### Taster Sessions

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September and Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> October 10.00 am – 12.00 pm

Your children will experience our Reception classrooms and outdoor area with a wide range of fun, educational activities led by our brilliant Reception teachers.



*'Children in early years get off to a flying start'*

*Ofsted Nov 2021*

### Open Mornings

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> October, Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> October and Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> November 9.00 am

See children learning across the school, meet our school staff and ask plenty of questions.

*'Happiness is all around. It is as if pupils have an extended family at school'*

*Ofsted Nov 2021*



### Individual School Visits



Arrange a time to meet with the Headteacher, before a tour of the school. Plenty of opportunities for questions

*'Pupils love coming to Rush Common School'*

*Ofsted Nov 2021*

To register your interest, email: [office@rushcommon.school](mailto:office@rushcommon.school) or phone: 01235 533 583

Follow us on Facebook, or visit our website to find out more. [www.rushcommonschoool.org](http://www.rushcommonschoool.org)

### Dates for your diary 2025/2026

<b>Year 1 Phonics Workshop</b>	<b>Monday 29<sup>th</sup> September 3.00pm</b>
<b>Flu Vaccinations</b>	<b>Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> October</b>
<b>Inset Day (children Not in school)</b>	<b>Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> October</b>
<b>Travelling Book Fair</b>	<b>Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> – Friday 10<sup>th</sup> October</b>
<b>Individual School Photos</b>	<b>Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> October</b>
<b>World Mental Health Day</b>	<b>Friday 10<sup>th</sup> October</b>
<b>Show Racism The Red Card Day</b>	<b>Friday 17<sup>th</sup> October</b>
<b>Year 1 Dinosaur Workshop</b>	<b>Monday 13<sup>th</sup> October</b>
<b>Road Safety Week</b>	<b>Week of the 20<sup>th</sup> October</b>
<b>End of Term 1a</b>	<b>Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October</b>
<b>Start of Term 1b</b>	<b>Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November</b>
<b>Author Visit Years 4,5, and 6</b>	<b>Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> November</b>
<b>Year 4 Ufton Court Information Evening</b>	<b>Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> November</b>
<b>Year 5 Museum Trip</b>	<b>Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> November</b>
<b>FoRC Firework Night</b>	<b>Friday 7<sup>th</sup> November</b>
<b>Parents' Evening</b>	<b>Week of the 10<sup>th</sup> November (Days and times tbc)</b>
<b>Anti Bullying Week</b>	<b>Week of Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November</b>
<b>Odd Socks Day</b>	<b>Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November</b>
<b>Children in Need Day</b>	<b>Friday 14<sup>th</sup> November</b>
<b>Year 4 Ufton Court Residential</b>	<b>Monday 8<sup>th</sup> – Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December</b>
<b>KS1 Nativity Performance</b>	<b>Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December at 2.15pm</b>
<b>Christmas Jumper Day</b>	<b>Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December</b>
<b>Reception Nativity Performance</b>	<b>Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December at 2.15pm and Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> December at 9.15am</b>
<b>Christmas Dinner Day</b>	<b>Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> December</b>
<b>End of Term 1b</b>	<b>Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December at 1.30pm</b>
<b>Start of Term 2a</b>	<b>Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026</b>
<b>End of Term 2a</b>	<b>Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2026</b>
<b>Start of Term 2b</b>	<b>Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026</b>
<b>Travelling Book Fair</b>	<b>Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> March 2026</b>
<b>World Book Day</b>	<b>Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2026</b>
<b>Parents' Evening</b>	<b>Week of the 16<sup>th</sup> March (Days and times tbc)</b>
<b>Red Nose Day</b>	<b>Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2026</b>

<b>Science Fair</b>	<b>Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026</b>
<b>End of Term 2b</b>	<b>Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 1.30pm</b>
<b>Start of Term 3a</b>	<b>Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2026</b>
<b>Year 5 Liddington Residential</b>	<b>Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> – Friday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2026</b>
<b>Year 6 SATs Information Evening</b>	<b>Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at 5.00pm</b>
<b>May Bank Holiday (children not in school)</b>	<b>Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2026</b>
<b>Reception Trip to Roves Farm</b>	<b>Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2026</b>
<b>KS2 SATs Week</b>	<b>Week of the 11<sup>th</sup> May</b>
<b>Whole School Picnic and Open Afternoon</b>	<b>Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2026</b>
<b>End of Term 3a</b>	<b>Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2026</b>
<b>Inset Day (Children Not in School)</b>	<b>Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2026</b>
<b>Start of Term 3b</b>	<b>Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2026</b>
<b>Class Photos</b>	<b>Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2026</b>
<b>Phonics Screening</b>	<b>Week of the 8<sup>th</sup> June 2026</b>
<b>Year 6 Call of the Wild Residential</b>	<b>Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June – Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2026</b>
<b>Move Up Morning</b>	<b>Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2026</b>
<b>End of Term 3b</b>	<b>Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2026 at 1.30pm</b>

## Local Community News

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



**OPEN EVENING**

Thursday 9th October  
5.00pm – 8.00pm

Head Teacher talks at  
5.15pm, 6.15pm & 7.15pm  
(no booking required)

OPPORTUNITY  
RESPECT  
DETERMINATION

Watch our new School video

**OPEN MORNINGS**

15th, 16th, 17th, 20th and 21st October from 9.15am

Come and explore your child's next stage in education

John Mason School  
Wootton Road,  
Abingdon OX14 1JB



**Fitzharrys School**



**Open Evening**

Thursday 25th September 2025 | 5.30pm – 8pm  
No booking necessary  
Headteacher Mr Speke will give a presentation at 6pm and 7pm

**Open Mornings**

Monday 29th September – Thursday 2nd October 2025  
Tours 9am & 10am  
Booking essential; contact us to book your tour  
Mr Speke will meet visitors after tours

Fitzharrys School, Northcourt Road, Abingdon, OX14 1NP  
t: 01235 520698 e: office.4127@fitzharrys.school w: www.fitzharrys.oxon.sch.uk







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Enjoy a fantastic range of activities, including

- Swimming
- Badminton
- Activity packs
- Stay and Play sessions
- Soft Play
- Children's holiday activities & so much more!

Find out more here:



**YOU MOVE**

YouMove is here to offer free and low cost activities for children 0-17 and their families on benefit related free school meals or Universal Credit, refugee children, young carers, and children supported by early help services.

### **Premier Soccer Spaces Available**

Premier Soccer still have a few spaces for Year 1 and 2 children in their Football Club after school on a Tuesday. Please email [mark@premiersoccercentres.co.uk](mailto:mark@premiersoccercentres.co.uk) if your child is interested in joining.