



Rush Common School Newsletter

Friday 6th February 2026



Dream, Aspire, Succeed

Dear Parents/Carers

I would like to start this newsletter with the terrific Orchestra Day that took place on Monday of this week. This is an extraordinary event in which many musicians from across local primary and secondary schools come together at Radley College to create an incredible orchestral performance. There were over 300 children involved and all have individualised pieces of music to learn during the day that contributed to the final performance. Our children were impeccably behaved and immensely enjoyed the opportunity to play alongside peers and learn from some of the older musicians. It was inspiring for our children to be part of it and we look forward to the next one!

Sticking with the theme of performance, last Friday the children absolutely loved the visit of M&M Productions for their pantomime of Sleeping Beauty. The pantomime is an annual event, funded by FoRC, in which all children from all year groups (including Preschool) get to experience a magical production in our school hall. They especially enjoyed seeing some of the staff dancing at the front! A huge thank you to FoRC for this memorable event.

Last week we hosted our popular 'Books at Bedtime' events for children in Preschool and Reception, and then those in Year 1 and 2. The children came to school in onesies, pyjamas and dressing gowns to get cosy in the school hall and enjoy reading stories. There was a roaring fire (on the screen!) and milk for all the children. A huge thank you to Mrs Harrison and Mrs Neal for organising the event and a special mention to Mrs Lipp and Mrs McLardie who read the children stories at each event. We know how much the children and parents appreciate this lovely event.

This week, Year 5 treated us to their Curriculum Assembly, which demonstrated such broad indepth knowledge from across the curriculum. There was something from almost every curriculum subject and some of the writing examples were quite incredible. Thank you to all the parents who came to the Assembly in huge numbers!

I am pleased to let you know that we have arranged for Junior Adventures Group to run their Holiday Camp from our school. They have replaced House of Fun who finished at the end of the last academic year. This is great news for many of our families and it launches during the February half term holiday. Please visit their website to find out more and check availability.

Last week we sent out our progress updates for those pupils with SEND. We hope parents found it useful and informative to see how pupils were progressing against targets, and teachers are looking forward to explaining this in greater depth at the next parents evenings. These parents evenings for all children will take place during the week beginning 16th March and a letter will be sent out in due course about how to sign up.

Last week FoRC held a Second Hand Uniform sale. Despite the weather, there was plenty of interest, and we hope this is really useful for parents (the items for sale are almost as good as new). A huge thank you to those carrying out the sale and all members of FoRC for the continual, highly important, fundraising throughout the year.

Please may I ask all parents to keep a watchful eye out for pupil behaviour when walking to and from school. Unfortunately, a tiny minority of pupils have not been respectful towards resident's gardens. Please remind your children not to go into anyone's front gardens, and do let the school know if you see this happening.

Finally, I would like to thank all of our parents for their continual support of the school in so many ways, including supporting children with their learning at home, volunteering, attending performances/assemblies, getting involved in fundraising, providing donations, and so much more. It makes a huge difference to our school!

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.



Poetry Competition

Congratulations to Florence in Year 3 who has come second in The Shepton Snowdrops Poetry Competition for under 11s. It is an international poetry competition with entries from all over the world. Well done!

Homework Champions

Belle	2LG
Isabelle	3HC
Teddy	3HC
Charlotte	3CM
Amella	3CM
Lexi	3CM
Ethan	3CM
Demilade	4TJ
Isla	4TJ

Lottie	4EG
Albert	4EG
Ella	5SC
Beatrix	5SC
Jake	6JN
Charlotte	6JN
George	6EP
Adam	6EP
Libby	6EP

Secondhand Children's Book Sale

Wednesday 25th March, 3pm

In the school hall at pick up

Most books 50p each!

If you have any children's books to donate
we will have crates outside the Music Room
(to the right of BASC) at drop off and pick up
for 2 weeks before the sale.



All The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, youth and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly authored by National College Society, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, tips and tips, please visit [thenationalcollege.com](https://www.thenationalcollege.com).

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about AI TOYS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

This festive season, the newest toys on the shelves do not just blink or make noises; they listen. Many now come with artificial intelligence (AI), allowing them to talk, learn, and even respond to a child's emotions. These toys can be educational and engaging, but they also collect, store, and process information. This guide explains what that means for families and why it matters.

TOYS THAT LISTEN AND LEARN

When a toy uses AI, it collects data such as voice recordings, interactions, and location and movement. This information is sent to remote servers, where it is analysed to improve responses. Your child's voice becomes training data, which may be stored indefinitely or shared with third parties.

WEAK SECURITY PROTECTIONS

Some AI toys have poor password protection or open-source vulnerabilities. Others may have microphones or cameras that stay on, even when the toy appears to be off. This can lead to recordings being made without your knowledge, including conversations unrelated to play.

ARTIFICIAL VOICES, REAL INFLUENCE

For very young children, an AI companion may become one of the first voices they interact with regularly. Over time, these voices become trustworthy, or authority can shape how a child learns to communicate. If the model is artificial, then part of what is learned is artificial as well.

PRESSURE TO KEEP ENGAGING

Some toys reward repeated use or track engagement, encouraging children to interact more. When children compete for their toys, it creates pressure to play more often. This increases the amount of data collected and can make learning feel like competition.

MARKETING THROUGH PLAY

Toys that learn a child's preferences may feed that data into future advertising. A toy that knows a child's favourite colour or hobby could help a company design more targeted marketing to that child and their family.

PLAYTIME AS DATA TRAINING

The information collected from children helps train AI systems. Their voices, movements, and behaviour shape how machines 'understand' people. Play becomes part of a much larger system that influences how future technologies behave.

Advice for Parents & Educators

START WITH A CONVERSATION

Talk to young people. Explain that some toys learn from what they say and do. Help them understand that even friendly technology should have boundaries, and to ask questions about it. Curiosity is healthy; blind trust is not.

SET LIMITS ON USE

Turn off Wi-Fi or Bluetooth when the toy is not in use. Check for updates regularly, as they can change privacy or safety settings. Treat connected toys like any smart device: they should be monitored, updated, and patched off when not in use.

MODEL DIGITAL AWARENESS

Children learn from adults. If they see you checking privacy settings, reading terms, and talking openly about online safety, they are more likely to do the same. Show them how to question technology in a healthy way.

RESEARCH BEFORE YOU BUY

Look for toys that work offline or store data locally. Check for a firm or clear vendor so you can feel confident about the privacy policies to understand what data is collected, where it goes, and whether it's shared with others.

REVIEW PRIVACY SETTINGS

Find out where the data is stored and who has access to it. Some companies call or share data with advertisers. If the toy connects through an app, check what it requests access to and limit those permissions whenever possible.

BALANCE AI WITH REAL PLAY

AI toys can be fun and useful, but they are not a replacement for real human interaction. Encourage lots of free play with technology with activities that foster emotional and social development. Use AI toys to support learning, not define it.

Meet Our Expert

Glenn Heston is Executive Director of Compass Education, the advice government, school trusts, and global organisations on AI governance and safeguarding, helping schools and families understand how technology shapes learning, wellbeing, and the digital future of children.



X @wake_up_weds

f /www.thenationalcollege

ig @wake.up.wednesday

spotify @wake.up.weds

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is accepted here, current as of the date of release: 12.11.2022

This poster and others can also be viewed on the link below:

<https://www.rushcommonschoo.org/information-for-parents/other-useful-information-2/online-safety-information/>

Dates for your diary 2026

End of Term 2a	Friday 13 th February
Start of Term 2b	Monday 23 rd February
Travelling Book Fair	Tuesday 3 rd – 6 th March
Crocodiles of The World Year 1	Tuesday 3 rd March
World Book Day	Thursday 5 th March
Year 2 Trip to Cotswold Wildlife Park	Wednesday 11 th March
Parents' Evening	Week of the 16 th March (Days and times tbc)
Year 1 Curriculum Assembly	Tuesday 17 th March at 9.00am
Weight and Measure Programme (Reception And Year 6 Children Only)	Wednesday 18 th March
Red Nose Day	Friday 20 th March
Year 2 Curriculum Assembly	Tuesday 24 th March at 2.30pm
Year 3 Curriculum Assembly	Wednesday 25 th March at 9.00am
ForC Second Hand Book Sale	Wednesday 25 th March at 3.00pm
Science Fair	Thursday 26 th March
End of Term 2b	Friday 27 th March at 1.30pm
Start of Term 3a	Monday 13 th April
Year 5 Liddington Residential	Wednesday 15 th – Friday 17 th April
Year 6 SATs Information Evening	Thursday 16 th April at 5.00pm
May Bank Holiday (children not in school)	Monday 4 th May
Reception Trip to Roves Farm	Wednesday 6 th May
KS2 SATs Week	Week of the 11 th May
Whole School Picnic and Open Afternoon	Friday 22 nd May
End of Term 3a	Friday 22 nd May
Inset Day (Children Not in School)	Monday 1 st June
Start of Term 3b	Tuesday 2 nd June
Class Photos	Thursday 4 th June
Phonics Screening	Week of the 8 th June
Vision Screening (Reception Children Only)	Thursday 18 th June
Reception and KS1 Sports Day	Friday 19 th June 9.00am – 12.00pm
Reception and KS1 Back Up Sports Day	Tuesday 23 rd June 9.00am - 12.00pm

Year 6 Call of the Wild Residential

Reception Curriculum Assembly

Move Up Morning

KS2 Sports Day Tilsley Park

KS2 Back Up Sports Day Tilsley Park

End of Term 3b

Monday 29th June – Friday 3rd July

Wednesday 1st July at 2.15pm

Wednesday 8th July

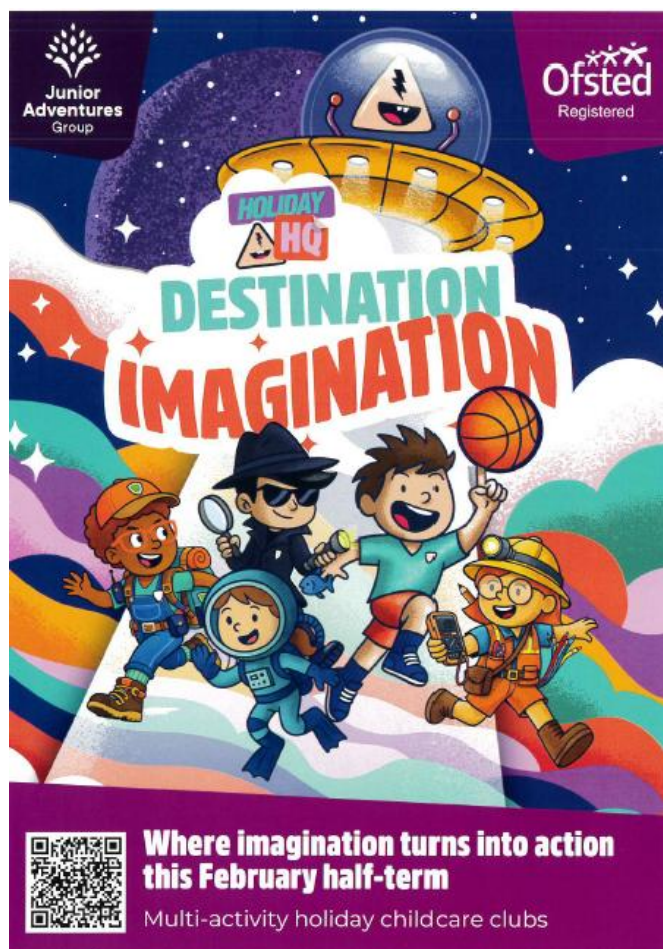
Friday 10th July 9.00am - 2.00pm

Thursday 16th July 9.00am - 2.00pm

Friday 17th 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



Junior Adventures Group

Ofsted Registered

HOLIDAY HQ

DESTINATION IMAGINATION

Where imagination turns into action this February half-term

Multi-activity holiday childcare clubs

The poster features a vibrant illustration of five children in various costumes (astronaut, detective, explorer, superhero, and another explorer) running towards a large, stylized rocket ship. The background is a dark blue space with stars and a large, colorful, abstract shape resembling a rainbow or a comet. The text is bold and colorful, with 'DESTINATION IMAGINATION' in large, stylized letters.



HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING

AT DESTINATION IMAGINATION THIS FEBRUARY HALF-TERM

Holiday HQ Destination Imagination offers a mix of activities designed for children aged 4-11, keeping them engaged throughout the day. From **Hero Activities** and hands-on **Make & Take** creations to **Skill Zone** challenges that support confidence and teamwork, every day brings something a little different. Daily themed activities include:

- DEEP-SEA DISCOVERER**
 - ✓ Sunken Treasure Quest
 - ✓ Ocean Creature Cookies
 - ✓ Sea Bottom Mini Golf
- EXPLORER ENGINEER**
 - ✓ Elements
 - ✓ Endurance Towers
 - ✓ Static Surge Dance
 - ✓ Electric Paper Circuit
- RAPID RESCUE RESPONDER**
 - ✓ Disaster Dash – Save the Town!
 - ✓ Mini Parachute Buddy
 - ✓ Emergency Airlift Landing Zone
- INTELLIGENCE AGENT**
 - ✓ Operation: Escape Room!
 - ✓ Cipher keypad
 - ✓ Operation: Stealth Trace
- SPORTS STAR**
 - ✓ Super Sports Tournament
 - ✓ Finger Football Frenzy
 - ✓ Slam Dunk Snack Shootout

Holiday HQ by Junior Adventures Group provides trusted, Ofsted-registered holiday childcare. Flexible attendance options and a range of payment methods help families plan February half-term with confidence.

JUNIORADVENTURESGROUP.CO.UK

@JUNIORADVENTURESGROUPUK

The poster has a dark purple background with a torn paper effect at the top. It features a cartoon character of a child in a space suit and a photo of two children working on a project. The text is white and yellow, with icons for each activity category.



February half-term childcare at our school

This February half-term, Holiday HQ is coming to our school, delivered by Junior Adventures Group, the same trusted team that provides our wraparound care.

👨👩 Designed for children aged 4–11, with activities adapted across age groups, Holiday HQ offers structured, multi-activity holiday childcare, helping children stay active and engaged while parents manage the working week.

🌐 Destination Imagination

This February half-term's theme invites children to step into imaginative roles each day — from underwater explorers and creative engineers to sports stars and intelligence agents — through hands-on activities, team challenges and creative play.

All Holiday HQ days follow a familiar, reassuring structure with themed activities, creative workshops, teamwork challenges and sports-based games.

🛡️ Holiday HQ is Ofsted-registered, with friendly, DBS-checked staff, flexible booking options and a 48-hour cancellation policy if plans change. Sibling discounts and Tax-Free Childcare are available, where eligible.

📅 **Monday 16 – Friday 20 February**

🕒 Times & Prices

Full Day £45 | 8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Short Day £38 | 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Special introductory offer:

Save **20%** on your booking with code **HOF10**

👉 **Rush Common School Club Page**

😊 Have any questions?

☎️ **0333 577 1533** | ✉️ **hello@junioradventuresgroup.co.uk**

Christ's Hospital

Families are warmly invited to attend our Open Morning on Thursday 7 March, which provides an excellent opportunity to see the school in action, meet staff and students and gain a fuller understanding of life at Christ's Hospital <https://www.christs-hospital.org.uk/admissions/book-an-open-morning/>

atom Festival of Science & Technology
14th - 25th March 2026

Inspiring workshops for kids
Tours: History of Science Museum + UKAEA + Harwell

Sun 15th March
"Our Place in the Universe"
The Peagram Lecture
Professor **Brian Cox** CBE

Tue 17th March
"Predators"
Professor **Tim Coulson**
FameLab Academy

FREE
Science Market
interactive event
for all the family
Sat 14th March

atomfestival.org.uk

BOOK TICKETS ONLINE

Worm Tunnels, HARWELL, UK Atomic Energy Authority, Science Centre




OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY

Saturday 21 February 2026

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

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



www.brookes.ac.uk/sciencebazaar
sciencebazaar@brookes.ac.uk

@OxfordBrookesPublicEngagementResearch

@oburesearchpublicengagement

Oxford Brookes University, Headington Campus, OX3 0BP

NO PARKING ON SITE EXCEPT FOR ACCESS NEEDS

UNDER 11s CRICKET

ABINGDON VALE CRICKET CLUB

NEW PLAYERS WELCOME



INDOOR TRAINING

Indoor winter training sessions take place on Sunday afternoons on 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd & 29th March and 12th April from 12pm-1.30pm. £5 per session.

@ Larkmead School, Faringdon Road, Abingdon, OX14 1RF

OUTDOOR CRICKET

Outdoor training takes place on Friday evenings during May, June & July from 6pm-7.30pm, with games played on Sunday mornings throughout the summer.

@ Abingdon Vale CC, Hales Meadows, Culham Road, Abingdon

For any new or prospective players, please contact:
Paul White - juniors@abingdonvalecc.co.uk or 07764 432720