



THE RUSSELL SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER



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SCHOOL INFO

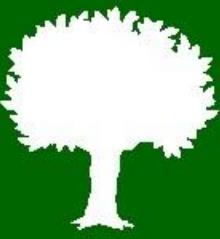
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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND SCHOOL CALENDAR



Headteacher's Update:

Dear Families,

A Happy New Year to you all and thank you all for your kind and generous gifts shared at the end of last term. The children have come back to school focused, engaged and ready to learn and they are already getting into new topics and units of work. A special welcome to the new families who have joined our community this term. As ever, please keep an eye on emails as we have a number of trips and visits coming up this half term.

Last Saturday, 10th January, we held our first open morning for prospective nursery and reception-aged children and their families. This was exceptionally well-attended and this will become part of our yearly calendar. A huge thank you to the staff and parent governors Claire and Coulter who gave up their Saturday morning to come and support. If you know of any families who move into the area between now and September, please do urge them to get in touch and come for a look around.

As you know, we will be going smartphone-free from September 2027. We are only two weeks into the term but already, concerns about internet use out of school have been brought to my attention. I have attached a couple of resources below to help parents and carers with navigating this exceptionally complex and ever-evolving situation. On Wednesday, we welcomed Emma Clarke, safeguarding advisor for Kingston and Richmond conduct a wellbeing and safeguarding audit for us. This is an annual event and it is part of our continuous drive for excellence. As part of this audit, Emma spoke to a number of children and she was very impressed by their knowledge and understanding of how to stay safe online so please do work with your children, using some ideas from the resources below, to ensure their understanding of online safety is practiced when they have access to devices at home.

Wednesday was a very busy day in school as we also welcomed guide dog Faldo and his owner Dave back into school to start their work with listening to children read. We are delighted to have Faldo on the staff team!

Please can all families work hard to ensure they are punctual in the mornings. If you are going to arrive after 8.45, you must register your child at the front desk. The gates have to be locked by 8.50 at the latest and if staff are not able to get this done on time, teaching and learning is directly impacted. Parents and carers cannot walk through the school building in the morning in order to leave via the front office. With morning drop off in mind, it has been brought to my attention that members of our community have been parking illegally and unsafely around Meadlands Drive again. This causes bad feeling with our neighbours, it puts our children at risk and again, the time-related implications of managing these incidents mean that time which staff should be spending with the children is otherwise-directed.

Thank you all for working together as a community to ensure our children and our wider community are safe.

Wishing you all a restful weekend.

Laura Brooks

Year Five are leading the chill!!



With thanks to the initiative, commitment and kindness of Thea, Ayla, Freya, Maaike, Kira, Artemis, Isabelle, Poppy and Dylan in Year 5, we will be launching *Chillcumber Club* next Wednesday lunch time in The Reading Hut. The concept has been developed completely by the children and they have shown remarkable maturity and commitment in order to get it up and running. Following their launch in assembly on Wednesday, the children are going to start the drop-in club next Wednesday.

What we are learning

Nursery

It has been wonderful to welcome the children back to Nursery after the break. They all returned looking so grown up and were very excited to see their friends again.

Over the past two weeks, our learning has focused on number recognition and quantity. The children enthusiastically joined in with number rhymes, using their body movements to support counting in a fun and active way.

We have also been listening to and talking about fairy tales, developing our communication and language skills. Our main story this week was **The Jolly Postman** which sparked lots of imagination and creativity. The children enjoyed role play, dressing up as postmen and delivering letters around the Nursery. This led to meaningful opportunities for mark making, including independent writing of names and postcards.

To support storytelling, we introduced repetitive language such as “Once upon a time...”, encouraging children to recall familiar stories as well as create their own.



Reception

Reception have had a great start to the term and have had quite a few ‘**Amazing Adventures**’ already! We have been exploring traditional tales and after much discussion and numerous votes, we decided what fairytales we would like to focus on and explore more. This week, we started with **Jack and the Beanstalk** which explained why we suddenly found a great big beanstalk growing in our classroom! We had quite a long discussion about Jack and what we thought of him. Although he was brave to climb up the beanstalk and sneaky when taking the gold from the giant, we thought he went too far when taking the harp without asking and was also a little naughty!



Year 1

Year 1 have had a great couple of weeks back at school. We began the new term by making New Year resolutions to set goals for 2026. To start off our topic 'Bright Lights, Big City,' we have been learning about the landmarks of London. In English, we have started learning the book 'The Queen's Hat' and have begun to prepare ourselves to re-write the story. In maths, we have been working on our number fluency up to 10 and we have been investigating the number 10. In geography, we have started looking at our local area by drawing maps of our classroom and we have been learning about aerial maps. We have had a great start to 2026 and I cannot wait to continue to watch the children progress in their learning!

Year 2

It has been a fantastic couple of weeks in Year 2 after a well-deserved break. We have started our new piece of English writing - a biography about the amazing Jane Goodall. In history we have been looking at historically significant people and more importantly, what makes them significant. In art there have been some fantastic portraits sketched, thinking about facial proportions, and they look fantastic. In maths, we have started looking at grouping numbers and multiplication. A big well done to Year 2 for a fantastic start to the spring term. Fun Fact: This year is the National Year of Reading and the perfect time to share your love of reading with your child!

Year 3

Happy New Year to you all! A busy and fun-packed return to school this year for Rachel Carson class. We have begun our exciting Egyptian themed topic and we have been thinking about setting targets and making New Year Resolutions! In English, we have been practising our joined-up handwriting and creating our own *What Am I?* riddles. In maths, we have been converting and finding equivalent mm, cm and metres and using our estimating skills. We have started our swimming themed PE lessons – thank you for ensuring your child has all their kit and thank you to all our faithful volunteers!



Year 4

This week in Year 4, we have thought a lot about our dreams and aspirations. The children have set themselves challenging but achievable goals and are feeling very accomplished! We have begun to learn about writing newspapers, as well as starting our new reading book, *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*. We have also started to learn about Ham House and its significance in preparation for our trip there next week. The children have also been busy preparing for our class assembly - they are very excited to share their learning!

Year 5

Year 5 have had a great start to the new term and have settled back into routines really well. We have begun our new history topic learning all about *Early Islamic Civilisation*, with pupils showing enthusiasm and curiosity in their lessons. In English, the class is reading *Tom's Midnight Garden*, which is inspiring narrative writing with a strong focus on setting and atmosphere. In maths, area has been our focus and pupils worked brilliantly as architects, designing their own playgrounds, using their knowledge of area. Year 5 also made an excellent start to swimming this term, demonstrating positive behaviour and a great attitude throughout.



Year 6

Since returning this half term, Year 6 have shown a positive and eager attitude towards their learning. The children are thoroughly enjoying our new World War II topic and have already produced multiple pieces of work, reflecting their enthusiasm for the topic. This motivation has continued into reading; the class have embraced the true realities of life as juveniles at *Camp Green Lake* which is from our new book *Holes* by Louis Sachar.

This half term, half of the class have begun their music technology sessions and they are enjoying developing new skills, whilst the other half are benefiting from additional maths. These groups will swap next half term to ensure all children have equal opportunities. Alongside this, the children have been practising enthusiastically for the O2 Young Voices performance. We're looking forward to this immensely!

7 questions to help you start a conversation with your child about online safety

#WakeUpWednesday



1 Which apps/games are you using at the moment?

THIS WILL GIVE YOU A GOOD OVERVIEW OF THE TYPES OF THINGS YOUR CHILDREN ARE DOING ON THEIR DEVICES, ALONG WITH THEIR INTERESTS. REMEMBER THAT THEY MIGHT NOT TELL YOU EVERYTHING THEY ARE USING, SO IT IS A GOOD IDEA TO ASK THEM TO SHOW YOU THEIR DEVICE, BECAUSE NEW APPS AND GAMES ARE RELEASED REGULARLY. IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE THIS CONVERSATION OFTEN TO ENSURE YOU ARE UP TO DATE WITH WHAT THEY ARE DOING.



2 Which websites do you enjoy using and why?

AS IN THE TIP ABOVE, ASHING THIS QUESTION WILL ALLOW YOU TO FIND OUT WHAT YOUR CHILD IS DOING ONLINE, AND ENCOURAGE POSITIVE CONVERSATIONS ABOUT THEIR ONLINE ACTIVITY. ASK THEM HOW THEY USE THE WEBSITES, AND TAKE AN INTEREST IN HOW THEY CAN USE THEM IN A POSITIVE WAY. ALSO ASHING THEM TO SHOW YOU IF POSSIBLE.



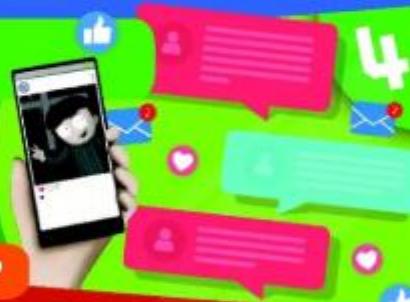
3 How does this game/app work? Can I play?

SHOW A GENUINE INTEREST IN WHAT THEY ARE DOING. WHILST YOU ARE PLAYING A GAME OR USING AN APP WITH THEM, IT MIGHT HIGHLIGHT SOMETHING THAT THEY DON'T NECESSARILY THINK IS A DANGER TO THEM. IF THEY ACT LIKE THEY DON'T WANT TO SHARE THEIR ACTIVITIES WITH YOU, QUESTION WHY.



4 Do you have any online friends?

CHILDREN CAN FORM POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEOPLE ONLINE, AND THIS HAS BECOME MORE COMMON THANKS TO ONLINE MULTI-PLAYER OPTIONS. BUT THEY MAY NOT FULLY UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A FRIEND AND A STRANGER. YOU COULD MAKE THE QUESTION MORE SPECIFIC TO YOUR CHILD, FOR EXAMPLE: 'HAVE YOU MET ANYONE ONLINE THAT YOU LIKE TO PLAY GAMES WITH?' THEY MAY NOT WANT TO SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH YOU. SO ENSURE YOU TEACH THEM ABOUT HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS.



5 Do you know where to go for help?

ALTHOUGH YOU MAY BE THE ADULT THEY TRUST THE MOST, SOME CHILDREN STRUGGLE TO TALK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS ONLINE DUE TO CONFUSION OR EMBARRASSMENT. BECAUSE OF THIS THEY MAY STRUGGLE TO APPROACH THE NORMAL PEOPLE WHO WOULD HELP, SUCH AS YOURSELF OR A TEACHER. HAVE A CHAT TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT EXACTLY WHERE THEY CAN GO FOR HELP, AND HOW THEY CAN REPORT ANY ACTIVITY THAT THEY BELIEVE IS INAPPROPRIATE ONLINE.

6 Do you know what your personal information is?

YOUR CHILD MAY ALREADY KNOW WHAT THEIR PERSONAL INFORMATION IS BUT THEY MIGHT NOT THINK ABOUT HOW IT CAN BE SHARED. HAVE A CONVERSATION ABOUT WHAT PERSONAL INFORMATION IS AND HOW THIS CAN AFFECT THEM IF IT IS SHARED BEYOND THE INTENDED RECIPIENT. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOUR CHILD UNDERSTANDS THE DANGERS OF SHARING CONTACT DETAILS OR PHOTOS, AS INFORMATION SUCH AS THIS CAN SPREAD QUICKLY ONLINE.



7 Do you know your limits?

CHILDREN MAY NOT UNDERSTAND THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF DEVICE OR GAME ADDICTION. TALK TO THEM OPENLY ABOUT HEALTHY HABITS AND ASK WHETHER OR NOT THEM SPENDING TIME ONLINE OR PLAYING A GAME IS AFFECTING THEIR SLEEP, PERFORMANCE AT SCHOOL OR IF THEY ARE GENERALLY LOSING INTEREST IN OTHER ACTIVITIES. YOU MAY LEAD ON TO ENCOURAGING ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSING THE INTRODUCTION OF TIME LIMITS WHEN AT HOME.

Setting parental safeguards on your child's devices

If you're viewing this on a screen, tap (or click) the appropriate icon below.

If you're looking at this on paper, point your phone's camera at the appropriate QR code and tap the link that appears.

Follow the instructions on the website exactly, in particular setting the age of the child.

We recommend you set the device not to allow *any* apps or games to be installed without your permission.

Protect your settings with a strong password that is not known to the child.





BREAKFAST CLUB

7:45 AM - 8:45 AM

- Early drop-off from 7:15 AM
- Fruit and cereals
- Fruit smoothies
- Porridge
- Toast and spreads
- Fun activities

AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

3:15 PM - 6:15 PM

- Late pick-up till 6:45 PM
- Creative arts and crafts
- Outdoor activities
- Cooking and baking
- Gardening
- Sports
- Dance
- Themed rewards
- Healthy meals
- Snacks and drinks



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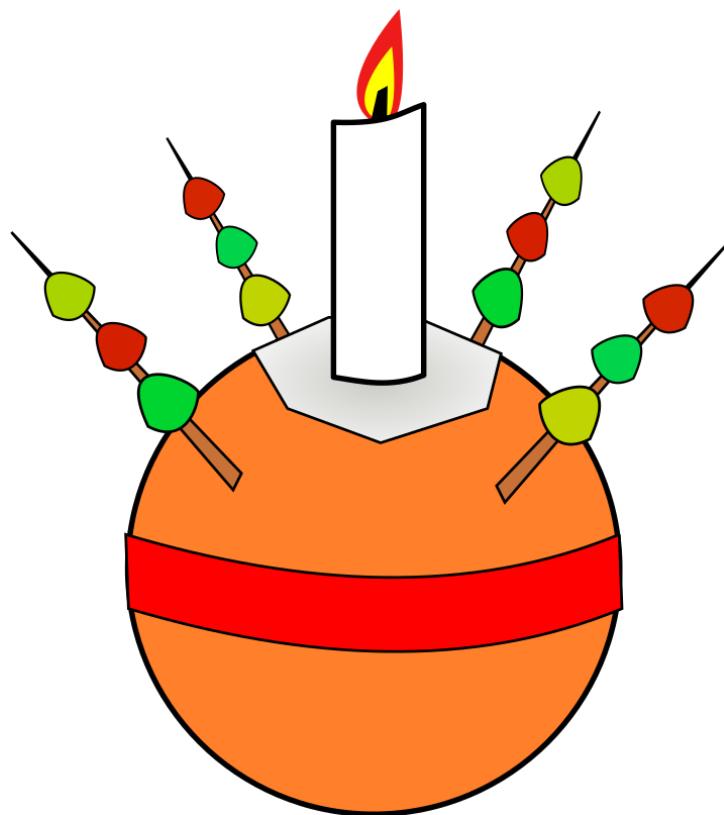
www.footyfun4kids.com

Christingle Service

St Peter's Church, Church Lane, Petersham

Sunday 1st February 9.30am

All ages welcome to make your own Christingle
and discover their special meaning



HAM FEVER

At St Richard's Church, Ham, TW10 7NL
on Saturday 17th Jan 2026, 3pm until 9pm

Fundraising to fix the church's leaky roof!



A fabulous afternoon and evening dance party. DJ Si will be spinning a variety of tunes from the 1960s through to 2025 plus synchronised dances for you to learn, courtesy of Aerolatino

18 and over welcome



Children welcome with an adult

Scan the QR code to purchase a ticket and for more information



Upcoming dates for Spring term

20.1.26	Year 4 trip to Ham House
30.1.26	Year 4 class assembly 9.00am in the hall. All welcome
5.2.26	PTA film night for children in the hall from 4.20pm. More details to follow - TBC
6.2.26	Number Day in school
9.2.26	Mental Health Week
10.2.26	Safer Internet Day
13.2.26	Annual <i>Bounceathon</i> Final day of half term. School closes at normal time (3.15)
23.2.26	INSET day – school closed to children
24.2.25	Children return to school. Gates open 8.30am
25.2.26	Year 6 Young Voices at the O2. More details to follow
5.3.26	World book day and the start of 'Readathon.' More details to follow soon.
6.3.26	Year 2 class assembly 9.00am in the hall. All welcome
9.3.26	Science week
11.3.26	Year 3 trip to Royal Festival Hall. More details to follow
17.3.26	Parents / Carers' eve 3.30 – 5.00
19.3.26	Parents / Carers' eve 3.30 – 7.00
25.3.26	Isle of Wight Info eve for Year 6 families. 6.00pm
27.3.26	Last day of term. School closes at 1.45pm
13.4.26	Children return to school. Gates open 8.30am