Rackheath Primary School Newsletter

Friday 13th December 2024

Monday really kicked off our Christmas celebrations in school. We had the Reindeer Run and then after school Santa came to town (well the playground). Thank you to everyone who supported the Reindeer Run we raised £102.70.

The rest of the week has had a festive feel too with Reception and KS1 putting the finishing touches to their super nativity performances. The performances are always one of the highlights of the year and I can't wait to watch them next week!

Christmas Performances – And just like that we only have a week left of the term! It promises to be a lovely finale to 2024. Performances are as follows:

- Monday 16th December — Reception Dress Rehearsal - 10.00am; Year 1 & 2 Dress Rehearsal - 1.50pm
- Tuesday 17th December — Year 1 & 2 Performance - 10.00am; Reception Performance - 1.50pm
- Wednesday 18th December — Reception Performance - 10.00am; Year 1 & 2 Performance - 1.50pm



If you can't make either one of the performances on Tuesday or Wednesday, please do let us know. A smaller audience are welcome to join us for Monday's dress rehearsal. This should just be for those parents and family members who cannot make either of the main performances.

Key Stage 2 Carol Concert

Our special Key Stage 2 Carol Concert with the Salvation Army is at 6:30pm on Tuesday 17th December. This will be held outside on the school playground. As well as the carols and readings refreshments will be available too. We hope as many of you as possible will be able to join our festive celebrations.

We would like the children to arrive no earlier than 6:10pm at which time refreshments will be available. Other members of the community are also invited to join us from 6:20pm in time for the start at 6:30pm. There will be no charge for the refreshments but we would ask for donations which will go to charity.

Should any of you be able to bring in some cakes, mince pies, biscuits or savoury snacks such as sausage rolls for the night that would be great. If you are able to please bring them in during the day of the concert.





Christmas Lunch and Jumper Day – This will be on Thursday 19th December. Lunch will be booked via SCOPAY as usual. A SchoolPing has been sent out about this.

Attendance Termly Print Out

This year we have decided to share attendance records with you each term. Next week all the children will bring their attendance herringbone home with them. We have also simplified the way we look at attendance and rather than looking at percentages we are now looking at the number of days of school missed. We feel this makes more sense for children, parents and staff than percentages.

So far, our attendance has been better this year than last. Many of the children haven't missed a day or just a few days, which is great. We know that sometimes children do get ill and can't be in school but if you aren't sure whether to send them in we can make adjustments to keep them in school.

Looking forward a really important figure to think about is 19 days. There are 190 school days a year so if a child is absent for more than 19 days across a school year they would be classed by the government as being persistently absent as their attendance can now not be higher than 90%. We have been in school for roughly a third of the year so it is worth looking to see if your child has been away for 6 or more days so far. If they have been and this was repeated over the next 2 terms, they would then have been off for close to 19 days.

Wellbeing with Mrs Cookson

Did you know that the human brain doesn't fully develop until around the age of 25? This fact sheds light on why children and teenagers often face challenges with decision-making, emotional regulation, and behaviours that can leave adults scratching their heads. Their brains are still learning how to process emotions, evaluate consequences, and respond to the world around them.

With this in mind, the next time your child experiences a wobble - a meltdown, an impulsive choice, or an emotional outburst - try to view your adult brain as a critical support system for their developing one. Think of it as scaffolding, there to provide stability and guidance as they grow.

When your child brings their big, messy emotions to you, take a moment to pause. Instead of meeting their chaos with frustration, meet it with calmness. Show them through your own behaviour how to process and regulate emotions. This not only helps them feel secure but also teaches them invaluable skills they will carry into adulthood.

Your steady, compassionate presence has a powerful impact. It shows them that, even when their world feels overwhelming, they can rely on you to be their anchor.

Best wishes, Claire Cookson (ccookson6nrf@nsix.org.uk or 01603 720 098). You can find more resources at: https://padlet.com/ccookson6nrf/wellbeing



Safer Parking - Thank you to everyone who has supported our parking initiative so far. From what I have seen the road outside the school is noticeably quieter. This is helping to ensure the children are safe on the way to and from school.

School Clubs – There will be no clubs next week. After School Club and Breakfast Club will continue as usual until the end of term.



After School Club Early Finish

On Friday 20th December after school club will finish at 4:30pm. Families this applies to have been contacted already.

Spring Term – Although December is a very busy time, we are already planning for the Spring Term 2025! Our whole school topic is entitled, "To Infinity and Beyond". Some of the key dates are below:

- Monday 13th January – Planetarium Wonderdome in school
- Wednesday 15th January – The children will be invited to come back to school once it is dark for "stargazing," themed work.
- Week of the 31st March – Rackheath Museum week where Family members will be invited in to the school for each class to present their "To Infinity and Beyond," learning.



Spring Term Curriculum - To Infinity and Beyond – It is always great to involve parents, families and friends in our learning. This term we would love to hear from anyone with an interest in space and astronomy or other aspects of science. Please get in touch with me at head@rackheath.norfolk.sch.uk if you have an idea or a useful contact.

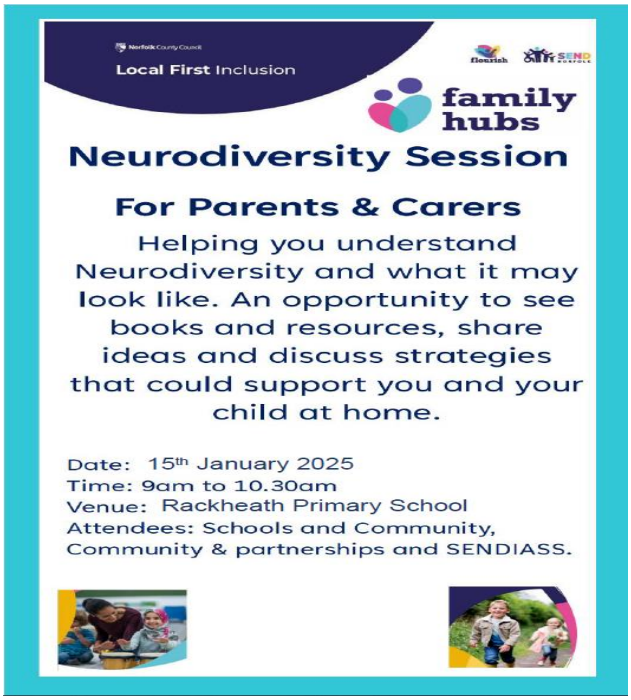


SATS Briefing - Monday 27th January

Mr Edwards and I will be holding a briefing for parents of our Year 6 children about the SATS tests the children will sit in May. We very much hope that all Year 6 parents will be able to attend the briefing, which will be in the hall at 6.00pm.

Parent Café – 15th January 2025

We are very pleased to share that on Wednesday 15th January we will be hosting a neurodiversity session for families at the school. This will be hosted by the Schools and Communities Team who will be joined by other professional partners and SENDIASS (follow the link to learn more - https://www.norfolksendiass.org.uk/)



We are very lucky to have these teams join us and I would strongly recommend attending if you would like find out more about local support services or ask questions of the professionals attending. The focus is on neurodiversity but the team will also be able to offer support for areas like mental health, sleep, diet or around managing behaviour at home.

With this in mind if you have any worries linked to your child it would be worth dropping in for a chat. They will be with us from 9:00am - 10:30am. There is no obligation to stay the whole time - you might just want to pop in for 5 minutes to see what is there.

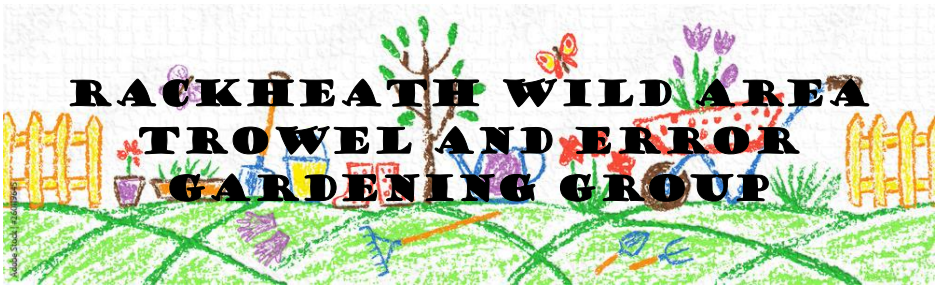
It would great to see lots of you there.

CHRISTMAS DATES

There is lots happening this term in the run up to Christmas. Here are some key dates.

Monday 16th December	Reception Dress Rehearsal – AM Year 1&2 Dress Rehearsal - PM
Tuesday 17th December	Year 1&2 Performance – AM Reception Performance - PM
Wednesday 18th December	Reception Performance – AM Year 1&2 Performance - PM
Tuesday 17th December	KS2 Carols with the Salvation Army - 6:30pm
Thursday 19th December	Christmas Dinner and Jumper Day





We may have had lots of rain…but that hasn't stopped the Gardening Group getting out there and getting stuck in! One of the latest projects has been to build a small den with some of the excess from our rather impressive Christmas tree! Oh…and planting lots of bulbs ready for spring!

We have just been given another grant…this time from Veolia…to allow us to add more to the area! Our next mini projects are a vegetable section, willow archway and a wormy!







Bombers



Can't believe we are nearly at the end of the autumn term and Christmas is almost upon us.

The children have been having fun this week with lots of Christmas related activities. They have been completing Xmas puzzles, playing lotto and dominoes and singing lots of festive songs. There has been dressing up and lots of cooking in the kitchen and hands on medical treatment in our Vets.



We will continue with these themes and in addition, we will be having some fun party snacks and games all next week. The children are welcome to wear any Christmas jumpers / clothing. Hopefully the staff will too.

Our stay and play is running until next Thursday, 19th December for anyone who would like to call in 30 minutes prior to collection and play with their child before departing. Funding forms for next term are being issued. Could we please urge parents to complete and return as soon as possible. Thank you.

Reception

Wow! We are so proud of our reception children – we had the best run through yet of our Nativity performance this week – and our first dress rehearsal which the children really enjoyed!

We have been enjoying the story 'Stanley's Stick' by John Hegley. We have thought about what we could use a stick for – a wand, a mixing spoon, a ruler! Also, we are now in full festive mood with our other stories as they've all had a Christmas theme, such as Julia Donaldson's 'What the Ladybird Heard at Christmas' and 'Stickman'. The latter being a great chance to compare and contrast to our other 'stick' themed story! One of our favourite activities this week has been our science work in which we were challenged to 'release the scent of Christmas' by melting the ice to discover lovely, festive smelling things like oranges, cinnamon sticks, cloves and pine branches! The children used a great range of vocabulary and problem-solving skills!

We have been recapping our phonics and maths through lots of festive themed activities and games – the children loved an online phonics game which helped with their blending skills – it's called 'Pick a picture' and it's free on the 'phase 2' resources section on the 'Phonics Play' website.







Year 1

We've had a busy few weeks in Year 1. Rehearsals are in full swing for the Key Stage 1 Nativity: 'Little Angel Gets Her Wings'! We are very excited about showing you next week. We also really enjoyed our recent Rainbow Day and did a great job of filling our orange hamper.

We learnt the new sounds 'i-e' (nice smile) and compared it to 'igh' (fly high), 'o-e' (phone home) and compared it to 'ow' (blow the snow) and 'e-e' (go Pete and Steve) and compared it to 'ea' (cup of tea) and 'ee' (what can you see). In English we finished our work on Beegu. We drew our own story maps to help us to retell the story. We then wrote the story using our story maps to help us. We worked hard to say and remember our sentence, use full stops and finger spaces and use capital letters to start a new sentence. Then, we became authors and made our own books writing the traditional Christmas Story.

In Maths, we looked at 3D shape. We learnt the names for cube, cuboid, sphere, tetrahedron, pyramid, triangular prism, cone and cylinder. We played games to guess the shape by describing it, and sorted the shapes in different ways. We recapped 2D shape names when describing the faces of the shapes. We have also completed maths challenge booklets to show what we have learnt so far this year. We have been doing some fun Christmas maths like making snowflakes with different shapes.

In Science, we played i-spy but with 'i-spy something made from…' We wrote about what properties materials have, for example glass is transparent. We have been busy making Christmas decorations, Christmas cards and doing Christmas baking this week!

A few children have read to us during snack-times. Ava, Mabel and Pippa have all been brilliant.





Year 2

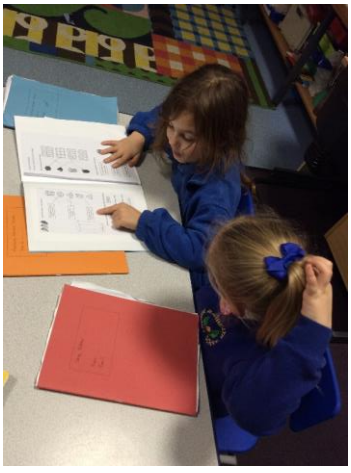
It's been another busy and exciting week in Year 2! We started the week with the Rudolph run, where the children enjoyed trotting around the playground in their festive headwear.

The children completed two reading assessments this week, answering questions about both a fiction and non-fiction text. It was their first time completing a reading assessment, and they did brilliantly! Their hard work during guided reading sessions is clearly paying off.

In phonics we recapped the last of our sounds: 'or', 'oor', 'ore', 'aw' and 'au'. After Christmas, we will move on to Spelling Zone, where we will begin learning some spelling rules! In Maths, we focused on shape patterns. The children created their own patterns and then took on the challenge of completing patterns made by their friends.

This afternoon, the children shared their learning with the Year 1 children. It was lovely to see how proud they were of their hard work!

We have also been busy practicing for our Christmas performance, and the children even had the chance to try on their costumes. They are so excited to share their performance with you next week.

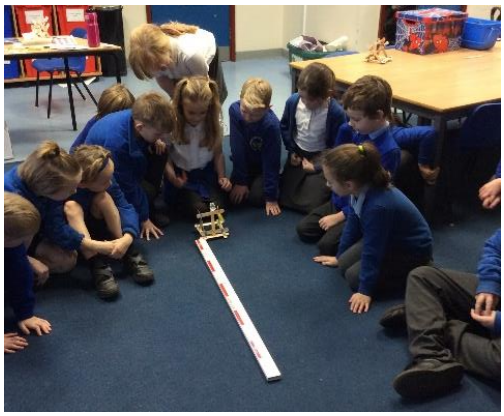



Year 3

What a wonderful week we've had in Year 3!

On Tuesday, we spent the whole day learning about catapults. To begin, we explored and understood the use of a catapult. Following this, we looked at three types of catapults, developed by the Romans; these were known as the Scorpion, the Ballista and the Onager. The children then followed instructions to create their own catapults (in groups of three) from lollipop sticks and elastic bands before testing their catapult's firing capability through launching pompoms and recording the distance they'd travelled - one landed at an impressive distance of 117cm. Finally, the children spend the afternoon session designing, creating and evaluating their own made from Lego.







In Maths, we spent time practising our times tables and recapped three methods of division (sharing, grouping and using bar models). I wonder if your child / children would like to show you how to use these methods to solve 28 ÷ 4…

In English, the children have finished writing their play scripts. In addition to this, they have begun exploring non-chronological reports. Next week, they will plan and write their own non-chronological reports linked to Roman life.

Furthermore, we spent Wednesday afternoon presenting our presentation of learning posters and sharing our knowledge across a variety of subjects with the Year 5 children before discovering what Year 5s have been learning about this term.

Year 4

This week has been full of excitement in year 4 with many of the children becoming increasingly excited for Christmas. Despite their excitement when asked the children have remained focused and eager to learn. In English we started looking at a new story called 'Escape from Pompeii' even though we didn't have much knowledge at the start of the week the children have been able to produce some lovely writing with exciting adjectives, verbs and adverbs in!

On Tuesday we had a catapult day where we learnt about different catapults used by the Romans. The children had the tricky task of following some complicated instructions in groups to create a catapult out of lollypop sticks and rubber bands. They used their own initiative to ask for different materials such as masking tape to make their catapults more secure. In the afternoon the children designed and created their own Lego catapults, I was blown aware with how far they were able to launch a projectile. Jacob G managed our longest distance of 380cm followed by Oscar with 305cm.

We have also been busy practicing for the carol concert next week. Year 4 have created their own moves to accompany 'It was on a starry night', we would love it if your child is able to attend the carol concert so that can show how fantastic they are! Finally in maths this week we completed some question papers, they have also shown a desire to improve this half term and their results show this.

I hope you all have a lovely weekend.







Year 5

Not long to go! You can certainly tell that… we have some very excited children in class.

The main focus for us in year 5 this week has been preparing for our museum work where we have showcased all of the topics we have covered this year. The children needed to prepare a small presentation based on an area of our work. Below is a table of all areas that we covered in the museum:

Adding and Subtraction	Multiplication and Division	The Three Kings of 1066
Weaving	8 Billion Ideas	The Midnight Fox

As you can see from the photographs below, the children absolutely loved having the opportunity to teach the year 3 children all about what we have been up to and they produced some amazing pieces of work!







Year 6

I cannot believe that we only have one week of this term left! As always, it's been very busy in Year 6 with lots of activities taking place. Firstly, the class have finished their projects linked to our Presentation of Learning Day. The Year 6s will present their work to Reception and Year 4 next Tuesday.



In Maths, we continued to learn how to find percentages of amounts. After this, the Year 6s converted fractions into percentages. Finally, we tackled a variety of arithmetic questions.

In Literacy, the children had two grammar challenges linked to adverbials and then moved on to a new unit of work – persuasive texts. They had to come up with a new brand of confectionary and began planning all of the reasons why customers should buy it! It was brilliant to see so many creative ideas.



In addition to rehearsing for our Carol Concert, the children also had a Rudolph Run with their buddies in Reception. In Art, we learnt about Pop Art and the children went on to produce their own pieces inspired by this movement. Finally, during French lessons, we learnt the days of the week.

I have said to the children that on Thursday and Friday next week, they can bring in a board game (or card game) if they wish!

Attendance Bear

Well done to Year 5 who had 97% attendance last week. Attendance Bear will spend next week with them!



Reading Bear will spend time with:

Year 2 who had **17 out of 29** and
Year 5 who had **29 out of 32**

of their children read to their family at least 3 times at home this week!

Star, Angel and Diamond Certificate Winners – Well done to the following children who got their certificates in assembly today.

	STARS, ANGELS AND DIAMONDS
Reception	Theo P, Ruby, Maggie
Year 1	Jace, Freya, All of Year 1
Year 2	Arthur, Nael, Jasmine
Year 3	Henry, Elliot, Sienna
Year 4	Louis, Edie, Jacob G
Year 5	Anya, William, Lilah-Mae
Year 6	Connor, Honey, Ricki

Have a lovely weekend

Best Wishes
Chris Ashman