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**Working together to be the best we can possibly be.**

*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Philippians 4.13*

2<sup>nd</sup> May 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

What a superb start to the summer term our pupils have had. Our green trackit lights are increasing by over 1,000 a day and pupils are engaged in their learning. Very well done everyone.

**Safeguarding:**

In choosing to take a place at The Rackham, all parents and carers are agreeing to abide by the Governing Body's policies and procedures of our school. These policies and procedures are reviewed regularly by the Governing Body.

I attach a copy of our current Parent and Carer Code of Conduct. The policy serves as a useful reminder of what is and what is not tolerated on the school site and online.

**Wellbeing and mental health:**

The dawn chorus is the symphony of song performed by birds and the best time of year is from mid-March to early May. The dawn chorus can be heard in some form or another almost everywhere - from gardens, parks, hedges and woods to marshes and even mountain tops. If you want, just open your bedroom window, lie back and enjoy the songsters near you. A walk with a guide is also a great idea to get the most from the experience – check out some of the [events at RSPB reserves](#). In the UK the dawn chorus is at its peak just before and just after sunrise, around 5am.

More details here: [The Dawn Chorus 2025 – Everything you Need to Know](#)

**Parent and Carer feedback:**

On the school website you will find a tab called 'You suggested, we listened'. As a school we wholeheartedly see the parent and carer community part of the team 'working together to be the best we can possibly be'. [You suggested, we listened | The Rackham C of E \(VC\) Primary School](#)

If you have a suggestion for the Senior Leadership Team, do please let us know:

**May Day Bank Holiday Monday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2025:**



A reminder that school will be closed on Monday next week. We wish you all an enjoyable May Day Bank Holiday and look forward to welcoming everyone back to school on Tuesday 6th May.

### Un-named uniform lost property, how we would like to help families:

We are concerned about how much un-named uniform is finding its way to lost property.

With the current cost of living challenges, we would like to assist families and **propose** until May half term, where uniform is identified as being un-named, staff in school will assist families by writing the child's name with permanent marker pen on the label of the item of clothing. We welcome parent and carer feedback on this proposal.

Parents and Carers may wish to purchase name labels, one option: <https://www.stikins.co.uk/> Using school fundraising code 16404 will also help to raise funds for FWR at no cost to you.



### What do you know about County Lines? Free training for parents and carers:

The Ivison Trust (formerly known as Parents Against Child Exploitation (PACE)) are holding two evening seminars specifically for parents and carers in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough with a focus on County Lines and

Criminal Exploitation. These seminars will be delivered with a parent whose child has been a victim of exploitation, sharing their experiences and advice on responding to risks.

The sessions will share what criminal exploitation is, with a focus on county lines and explore how to spot signs that it may be happening to your child or a child you know. They will also cover trends in the local area and where to get advice and support if you are concerned.

For more information and to register a place visit [Parent webinars - county lines and criminal exploitation - Ivison Trust](#)

#### What parents will learn

- Learn what county lines is
- Understand what is happening in your local area
- Learn how exploiters groom children
- Understand the signs that your child might be at risk
- Know where to access support and advice if you have concerns

#### Upcoming webinars

- Cambridgeshire 17th June 2025 7:00pm – 8:30pm – [Book your place](#)
- Peterborough 18th June 2025 7:00 – 8:30pm – [Book your place](#)



**Scooter and bike sheds:** A reminder that we have a dedicated scooter park beyond the two bike sheds as you enter the school site. We politely request that pupils park scooters in the dedicated area to ensure enough room is within the bike sheds to park bikes. Thank you for your help.



**Sun cream:** The UV rays are becoming greater in intensity and have been recorded at 4 this week. The recommendation for applying sun cream from the Government and Cancer Research UK is when the UV levels are 3+. Parents and Carers are reminded to send sun cream into school with their child. Children will be reminded to

apply cream at lunchtime. Children should arrive on site already wearing sun cream please. We recommend sunscreen sticks or lotions for easy application. Some pupils find the sprays tricky to use.

**Individual child fans:** We provide large fans in every classroom so would request individual fans are left at home please.

**Stanley water bottles:** Following my previous update about these water bottles, we have reviewed as a staff and conclude the bottle design is tricky as they are very unsteady when standing on pupil's desks. We would be grateful for any future purchases of water bottles to be 1 litre maximum. Thank you for your help.



**Swimming lessons:** Swimming lessons have got off to a great start this week. Some reminders now we have commenced lessons.

**What to wear for swimming:** For these sessions, the children will need to wear a one-piece swimming costume or fitted swimming trunks. UV swimming t-shirts are allowed.

*Please do not send your child with a bikini or long (knee-length) baggy swimming shorts as these are not appropriate or practical for learning how to swim and your child will be unable to enter the pool.*

In line with the Cambridgeshire swimming policy, the children will not wear goggles for their sessions as our focus is on developing water confidence and safety. Earrings **must** be removed for swimming. Please remember to also send your child with a named towel. All other swimming aids will be provided by school.

Any child with hair that is longer than chin length or a fringe that impedes their vision when wet will be expected to wear their own swimming hat. If you do not have your own swimming hat, these are available to purchase via MCAS for £1.50 and can be collected from the school office.

#### **Swimming timetable from 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025:**

<b>Monday</b>	Larch class	Willow – girls only	Oak – girls only
<b>Tuesday</b>	Chestnut	Silver Birch	Year 5/6 - all boys
<b>Wednesday</b>	Cedar – girls only		
<b>Thursday</b>	Beech	<b>Rowan *</b>	<b>Ash *</b>
<b>Friday</b>	Sycamore	Elm	Hazel
<b>* NB Reception PE day will change to Wednesday.</b>			



### **Dates for your diary:**

Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May: Yard Sale

Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> June: Funday Sunday

### **FWR Pre-Loved Uniform Sales Summer Term:**

Sales before and after school, on the following dates:

- Friday 16<sup>th</sup> May
- Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> June

### **FWR Yard Sale - Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May:**



#### **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May**

9am – 12.30pm

£6 per 'yard'

Spaces also available at the school.

Scan the QR code to book or pay in cash at the Post Office.

Bookings close midnight Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May

Maps £1 on the day from the school.

### **Learn to ride cycle training:**

We have been offered a date for next academic year to provide a fully funded course for children currently in Years 2 – 5 who cannot yet ride a bike but would like support to learn.

We have a limited number of extra places available. If your child has a bike and you would like them to take part in this training, please email the office.



**FWR Smartie Fundraiser for Early Years:** Please return tubes of coins collected over the Easter holiday to the school office, class teacher or pre-school. Thank you.





**The Rackham Pre-School:** The Pre-School has spaces available from September 2025. We can accept children from the age of 2 years 6 months. Please contact the school office for more information via [office@rackham.cambs.sch.uk](mailto:office@rackham.cambs.sch.uk)

### **Phonics:**

Our pre-school children do not need to learn phonics, this will happen as soon as they start in Reception. If parents and carers have any questions about this, please contact the office in the first instance: [office@rackham.cambs.sch.uk](mailto:office@rackham.cambs.sch.uk) Thank you.




### **Girl Guiding in Witchford:**

Did you know Girlguiding is active in your community? 1st Witchford Rainbows, 1st Witchford Brownies and 1st Witchford Guides provide a range of extracurricular activities for girls aged 4-7, 7-10 and 10-14. We work through a variety of Girlguiding themes, go on adventures, play games, do crafts, bake, take part in community events, undertake challenges, learn new skills and most importantly, have FUN! Would your daughter like to join us? We meet in Witchford on Tuesdays in term time, 4:30-5:30 for Rainbows, 6:00-7:30 for Brownies, and Guides meet 6:30-8:00. Rainbows is currently at capacity and running a waiting list, but there are spaces available at Brownies and Guides. Please see [www.girlguiding.org.uk](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk) for more information, or contact us directly using [witchfordrainbows@gmail.com](mailto:witchfordrainbows@gmail.com) / [witchfordbrownies@gmail.com](mailto:witchfordbrownies@gmail.com) / [witchford.guides@gmail.com](mailto:witchford.guides@gmail.com).

Would you like to volunteer with Girlguiding? We help all girls to know they can do anything! Are you curious, adaptable, thoughtful, ambitious? Could your skills compliment Girlguiding in Witchford? Please see [www.girlguiding.org.uk/interested](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/interested) for more information.

Your local Girlguiding leaders, Ellen, Robyn, Brown Owl, Arctic Owl, Butterfly and Squirrel.

### **Workshops and events**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Healing Through Story</b> Using Myths &amp; Movies to Support Children's Mental Health</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A new and exciting online creative workshop - open to all!</p> <p>Unlock the power of story to support children's mental health! Join our hands-on creative workshop and discover how archetypes from films and fairytales can help children navigate emotions, build resilience, and express themselves. Perfect for parents, teachers, and anyone passionate about children's well-being, this session blends psychology and storytelling in an engaging, practical way. No prior experience needed—just a love for stories and a desire to make a difference! We will explore the characters of Elsa, Superman, the Hulk and Cinderella!</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>TWO OPPORTUNITIES TO SIGN UP!</b> <b>SATURDAY MAY 10TH 10.00-3.00 AND REPEATED ON FRIDAY 13TH JUNE</b></p> <p>To reserve your place please email: <a href="mailto:cambridgecreativecounselling@gmail.com">cambridgecreativecounselling@gmail.com</a> This workshop will take place via Zoom, and you will only require a few basic creative materials.</p> <p>£50 - payable a week before the course (instalments available on request)</p> <p>Emma Moat is an experienced play therapist, counsellor, and trainer with 20 years of expertise across the UK and Europe. She has led highly successful workshops, earning excellent feedback for her engaging and transformative approach to supporting children's well-being through creativity and storytelling.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">    </div>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Ely Sinfonia in Ely Cathedral</u></b></p> <p>If you are heading to Eel Day on Saturday 3 May, your local orchestra, Ely Sinfonia (<a href="http://www.elysinfonia.co.uk">www.elysinfonia.co.uk</a>), will be rehearsing from 1 to 4pm in the cathedral for a concert that night.</p> <p>If you live locally it is free to enter the cathedral.</p> <p>The orchestra would be delighted if you want to pop in and see, and hear, all the instruments you could possibly imagine, playing Tchaikovsky (a former Inspirational Person this year at school) amongst other music.</p> <p>It is also a chance to spot Mr Wheatley, our school piano teacher, featuring on violin!</p>
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### **Term dates for 2025 – 2026:**

Term dates for next academic year are now available on the website and can be found [here](#).

### **Uniform orders:**

Uniform items for school and pre-school pupils (**including jumpers and cardigans**) are now available from Sigma.

Pre-School: [Clubs & Groups - Sigma Embroidery & Printing](#)

Primary School: [Clubs & Groups - Sigma Embroidery & Printing](#)

Orders must be placed by parents and carers and can be collected from Sigma Embroidery on Sedgeway Business Park, Witchford.

### **Attendance:**

The Rackham has an updated policy on Attendance. Please follow this [link](#) to read the policy on the school website.

Thank you to all our parents and carers for supporting our drive for improved attendance. The Government has identified a child's attendance of 96% and above is the key figure to give best chance of academic progress. Please can we remind you that absence must be reported to the office by 9am on each day of absence.

This week's attendance: 95.15%



Looking forward to seeing everyone on Tuesday.

Best wishes,

Miss Turner

**Dates for your diary:**

5 <sup>th</sup> May	May Day Bank Holiday Monday
12 <sup>th</sup> May	Y6 SATs week
21 <sup>st</sup> May	Year 5/6 Colchester Zoo trip
22 <sup>nd</sup> May	Last day of term for pupils
23 <sup>rd</sup> May	Professional Development Day for teachers
26 <sup>th</sup> May	HALF TERM
2 <sup>nd</sup> June	Year 6 Bikeability Y6 this week
5 <sup>th</sup> June	Reception Classes Parent meal (booking required nearer the time)
9 <sup>th</sup> June	EYFS History off the Page event
12 <sup>th</sup> June	Class photos (Pre-School to Year 6)
WC 16 <sup>th</sup> June	
27 <sup>th</sup> June	Year 3/4 History off the Page event
29 <sup>th</sup> June	Funday Sunday
WC 30 <sup>th</sup> June	
7 <sup>th</sup> July	Transition afternoon
10 <sup>th</sup> July	Pre-School, EYFS and KS1 Sports Day (booking required nearer the time)
11 <sup>th</sup> July	KS2 Sports Day (booking required nearer the time)
16 <sup>th</sup> July	Parent's Evening (booking required nearer the time)
17 <sup>th</sup> July	Parent's Evening (booking required nearer the time)
17 <sup>th</sup> July	Reserve Sports Day for Pre-School, EYFS and KS1
18 <sup>th</sup> July	Reserve Sports Day for KS2
21 <sup>st</sup> July	Year 6 Leaver's BBQ (booking required nearer the time)
22 <sup>nd</sup> July	Year 6 Leaver's Assembly to parents and carers (booking required nearer the time)
22 <sup>nd</sup> July	Year 6 Parent or carer school buffet invitation
22 <sup>nd</sup> July	Last day for children
23 <sup>rd</sup> July	Professional Development Day for teachers
	SUMMER HOLIDAY