

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up.

1 Thessalonians 5.11

Working together to be the best we can possibly be.

Message from Miss Turner

25th September 2026

What a busy week for our Reception pupils who are now staying all day. This week in Collective Worship pupils have found out how they could put their name forward to be a member of the Collective Worship and School Councils. These very important roles in school demonstrate the British values; democracy in action.

Safeguarding:

Following the directive from the Government for no phones to be in schools, we would be grateful to know your thoughts as parents and carers about adults using their phones in the playground at drop off and pick up? Please share here:

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/FbjqmpHaz3>

Wellbeing & Mental Health



Best Start Family Hubs launching in Cambridgeshire from 28 September 2026

From 28 September 2026, Cambridgeshire County Council will launch five new Best Start Family Hubs in Cambourne, Ely, Huntingdon, Wisbech and Cambridge as part of the Best Start in Life national programme. In these initial five locations, existing Child and Family Centres will change name and transform to Best Start Family Hubs, offering similar activities and support as now. In the build-up to the launch, you may notice some changes to their branding, signage and information materials as they prepare to introduce Best Start Family Hubs.

In other locations, Child and Family Centres will be renamed Best Start Network Sites and be part of broader community support.

Best Start Family Hubs build on the services families already know and trust, bringing more support together and making it easier to get the right help, when it's needed. They are more than just a building - they link community venues, outreach and online information so you can access support in ways that work for you.

Families will continue to be able to access the familiar groups, activities and support they already know, including Stay and Play sessions, health advice, infant feeding support, early learning activities and parenting advice. In future, Best Start Family Hubs will widen access to support for families from maternity and early childhood through to young people up to 19, or 25 for those with special educational needs and disabilities.

To mark the launch, local events will take place across the initial five Best Start Family Hub venues. These events will give the chance for families to meet other families, staff and community partners, and find out what support is available near them.

If you have any questions about Family Hubs, or about the launch event please get phone the hub.

Early Years: Attendance adjusted expectations

The Government over the summer have adjusted the expectations upon our younger pupils and their attendance at Pre-School and Reception class.

Whereas historically pupils under five years of age would not be expected to attend all sessions, attending all sessions now has far greater emphasis.

Regular attendance in Reception and Pre-School is strongly encouraged because of its positive impact on learning, development and school readiness.

Settings are expected to monitor attendance, follow up unexplained absences for safeguarding reasons and promote regular attendance.

Attendance

This week's attendance: 95.5%

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

NHS guidance on how to determine if your child is too ill for school

https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/?es_c=AC82DB7E96BFD9AC5E67432445C9813A&es_cl=0D3BE8C5CF33C9EC1AA46E767A80DD1E&es_id=ph7%c2%a3o1

The DFE is keen to know your opinion:

The DFE is keen to know your thoughts on the new SEND reforms:

Please follow this link to find further information: [SEND reform: education otherwise than at school - Department for Education - Citizen Space](#)

The DFE also wish to know your views on funding for SEND inclusion in mainstream schools: [Upfront funding for mainstream schools: creating a 'local SEND inclusion formula' - Department for Education - Citizen Space](#)

Early Years: Pre-School weekly update

The question we will be exploring next week is "What can my amazing body do?". We will be talking about different parts of our bodies and what our senses help us do. Some of the words we will learn about are balance, heartbeat, senses, sight, hearing, touch and movement. We will also recognise that all bodies are different and people may move or communicate in different ways. This week is a celebration of who we are, so please feel free to share an "I can ..." achievement of your pre-school child with us on Tapestry.

Please could we remind parents and carers to label ALL their children's belongings, particularly as they have so many identical items. This includes water bottles, lunch boxes, wellies, shoes, coats and jumpers.

Clubs

Club	Day	Time	Year group	Dates
Colouring Club	Monday	12.45 - 1.15pm	Year 1/2	14 th September to 19 th October
Ukelele Club	Monday	3.15 - 4.15pm	Year 3-6	14 th September to 23 rd November
Needlework Club	Tuesday	3.15 - 4.15pm	Year 6	15 th September to 24 th November
Ukelele Club	Wednesday	3.15 - 4.15pm	Year 1/2	16 th September to 25 th November
Intro to Netball Club	Thursday	3.15 - 4.15pm	Year 1/2	24 th September to 22 nd October
Tag Rugby (run by qualified coach)	Thursday	3.15 - 4.15pm	Year 1	24th September to 22nd October Please note revised start date.
Picture book Club	Friday	12.45 - 1.15pm	Year 1/2	18 th September to 23 rd October

Club booking is available through the Clubs and Trips tab of your MCAS account.
Booking opens at 6pm on Friday 11th September

Ely Tigers Rugby Club



Ely Tigers is open to all age groups from U6 (Year 1) right through to the Senior Team. All children are welcome to join, no matter experience or ability. Ely Tigers train from 9am on Sunday mornings. The first 3 sessions are free of charge, no need to book, just turn up and say hello.

Larch class - PE change

Please note that Larch class PE day will change next week from Monday 28th September to Thursday 1st October. Please can children come in their school uniform on Monday and PE kit on Thursday.

Year 5 Parent meal

We would like to invite Year 5 parents and carers to join us for school dinner on Thursday 22nd October. The meal will be our extremely popular (and very delicious) roast dinner. Parents and carers are asked to purchase their school dinner through MCAS under the Products and Trips tab. The meal will cost £3.80. Meal choice and payment must be made by Friday 16th October please.

Please complete **this form** to book your meal once payment has been made on MCAS.

Unfortunately, we can only offer for one parent or carer to attend on this occasion.

Children in Year 5 who prefer to have a home packed lunch will still have opportunity for their parent or carer to join them. Adults can still order a school dinner or bring a packed lunch from home to sit to eat with their child.

Please can parents and carers of Year 5 children arrive for school dinner at 12.20pm.

FWR



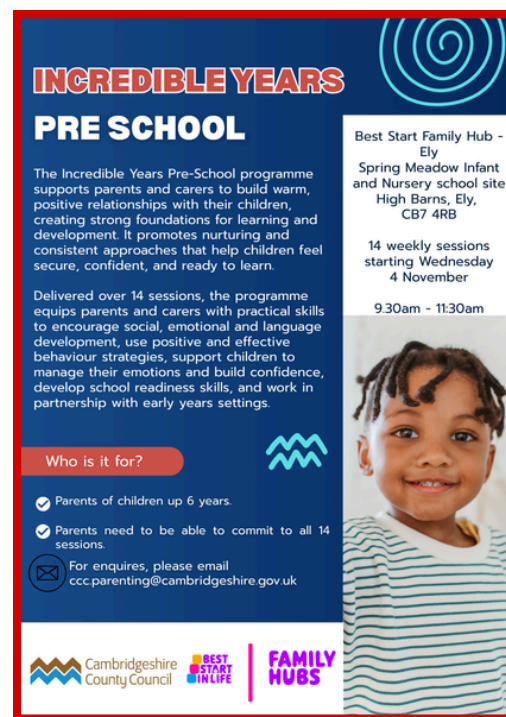
FWR Uniform sales

FWR will be running second hand uniform sales before and after school on the following dates:

- Tuesday 29th September
- Wednesday 14th October
- Friday 20th November
- Wednesday 16th December

Pre-School Parenting course free of charge

An exciting new parenting course for families. The course starts on Wednesday 4th November and will run for 14 weeks giving parents/carers a chance to get to know each other in a safe space and to share parenting challenges and tips. The Incredible Years course is engaging and interactive with lots of short video snippets to watch together and then discuss. Feedback from past deliveries has been that the course has been both enjoyable and helpful. Families can self-refer by emailing the address on the poster. ccc.parenting@cambridgeshire.gov.uk



Therapy dog Tuesday

We are delighted to welcome Sancho, a trained therapy dog and his handler into school on Tuesday afternoons again this year. We will share with our pupils that they require permission from their parents and carers before they can spend time with Sancho.

Sancho is a Shih Tzu which are generally considered to be hypoallergenic or low allergen. Please follow the link here to advise us about your child taking part:

[Therapy Dog Tuesday with Sancho](#)

myHappy Mind

All parents and carers have access to the My Happy Mind platform where there are lots of resources and ideas to use at home to support your child free of charge.

Simply go to the My Happy Mind website and log in: <https://myhappymind.org/>

You will be asked for a reference number for The Rackham. The number to type in is:

Please access free of charge all the parent and carer resources. **Huge thanks to our wonderful FWR who pay the subscription.**

A message from Cambridge United FC

I hope you're well and you're all settling into the new school year!

I wanted to share our latest Cambridge United schools' vouchers with you, which you're very welcome to pass on to pupils and families at your school.

The vouchers offer one adult and one child ticket for just £12 when using the code on the voucher. The offer is available for the following home fixtures at the Cledara Abbey Stadium:

Saturday 26 September – 3pm - AFC Wimbledon

Saturday 10 October – 3pm - Blackpool

Saturday 24 October – 3pm - Plymouth Argyle

Saturday 21 November – 3pm - Stockport County

We also have a special offer for Cambridge United Women, with one adult and one child able to attend for just £6. This is available for their upcoming game at the Cledara Abbey Stadium, as well as games at their new home, Grange Road Stadium.

It would be great if you could share these with your school community and give families the opportunity to come along and enjoy a game together.

Thanks as always for your support, and hopefully we'll see some of you at the Abbey or Grange Road this season!



School Uniform reminder

We wish to remind parents, carers and pupils about school uniform expectations.

- Hair should be in its natural state without colours from permanent dye or temporary colour.
- Nails should be without nail varnish.
- Stud earrings only.

If you have any questions about this reminder, please contact the office in the first instance. Thank you for your support.

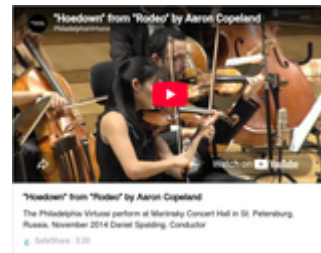
Focus for next week in Collective Worship



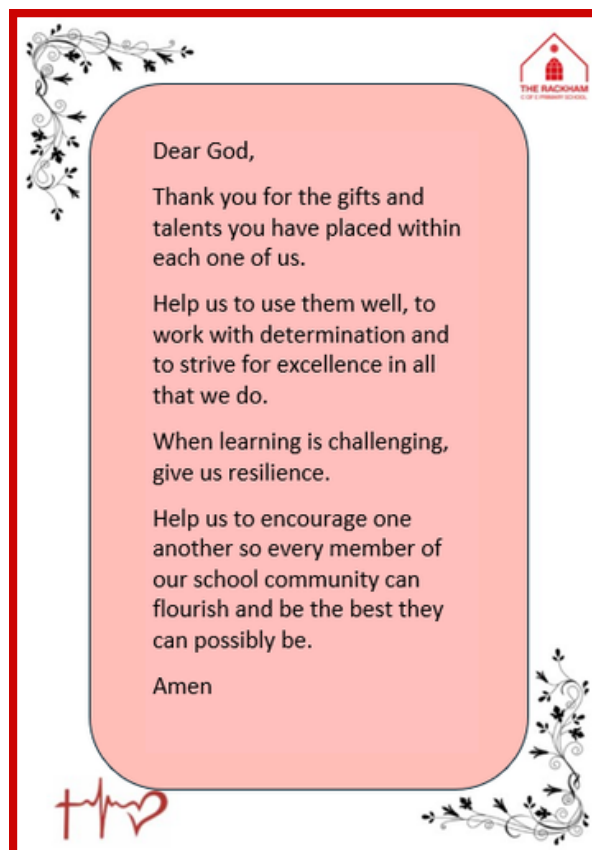
Composer for this half term

Aaron Copland

Click these links to listen to the music we are sharing in Collective Worship.



Prayer For This Week



Looking forward to seeing everyone on Monday.

Best wishes,

Miss Turner

Activities and Events

THINK BEFORE YOU PARK

YOU COULD ENDANGER A CHILD'S LIFE
BE CONSIDERATE TO OUR NEIGHBOURS



Unlock the Power of Mandalas

A Half Day Creative Workshop

Open to anyone interested in this holistic and powerful creative healing resource - absolutely no experience necessary. A few hours to make time for yourself, and a bonus might be that you can use any ideas you come away with, to perhaps support others!

Cost: £45.00 (a CPD certificate will be provided on request following the day).

Saturday, October 3rd 2026
Time: 10.00 - 1.30
To be delivered on Zoom

This workshop is led by Emma Most, a skilled counsellor and trainer. She operates in private practice and provides therapy workshops both in the UK and internationally. For more information or to book your place, please email: cambridgecreativecounselling@gmail.com

Let's reclaim childhood

Join the growing movement of parents choosing to wait to give their children smartphones & social media

Sign THE PARENT PACT

- ✓ Delay smartphones & social media
- ✓ Over 135,000 sign ups
- ✓ Takes 30 seconds to sign
- ✓ Reduces peer pressure
- ✓ View live local leaderboards



SMARTPHONEFREECHILDHOOD.ORG

We are proud to announce that we are a myHappyMind Bronze Accredited School!

myHappyMind ACCREDITED SCHOOL

This means we have demonstrated our commitment to building a wellbeing culture for our entire school community.



Launching soon: Best Start Family Hub Ely

From Monday 28 September, Cambridgeshire County Council is launching five new Best Start Family Hubs, which will build on the current Child and Family Centre offer.

We would like to invite you to be part of the launch! Come along to the opening of the new Best Start Family Hub in Ely.

No booking required. Drop in to meet the team, learn about all the support available and enjoy fun activities with your children. You'll find refreshments, information stands and free resources.

Also, we'd love to hear from you about our services and the support you need.

Everyone welcome.

We look forward to seeing you soon at a new Family Hub!

Where and when

- ★ Tuesday 29 September
- ★ 9.30am - 12.00pm and 2.30pm - 4.30pm
- ★ Spring Meadow Infant and Nursery School site, High Barns, Ely, CB7 4RB

Taster activities

- ★ 9.45am Baby sing and rhyme
- ★ 10.30am Storycraft with "The Very Hungry Caterpillar"
- ★ 11.15am Bookstart corner
- ★ 2.30pm Baby sing and rhyme
- ★ 3.15pm Storycraft with "The Very Hungry Caterpillar"
- ★ 4.00pm Parachute play

Education Inclusion Family Advisor Team Countywide Online Workshop Offer

The EIFA team would like to invite parents/carers to our workshops on a variety of parenting and family issues for **September – October 2026**.

Please ensure you book onto each workshop individually by clicking on the link or scanning the QR code and completing the registration form.

Supporting your child with angry feelings	Tuesday 29/09/2026 12:00-13:30	Book onto this workshop at: Supporting your child with angry feelings - EIFA core offer workshop or	
Managing behaviours that challenge	Thursday 01/10/2026 12:00-13:30	Book onto this workshop at: Managing Behaviours that Challenge - EIFA core offer workshop or	
Supporting your child with sleep	Monday 05/10/2026 12:00-13:30	Book onto this workshop at: Supporting your child with sleep - EIFA core offer workshop or	
Managing sibling rivalry	Wednesday 07/10/2026 12:00-13:30	Book onto this workshop at: Managing sibling rivalry - EIFA core offer workshop or	
Digital safety/internet safety	Tuesday 13/10/2026 12:00-13:30	Book onto this workshop at: Digital safety/internet safety - EIFA core offer workshop or	
Supporting your child with feelings of worry	Thursday 15/10/2026 12:00-13:30	Book onto this workshop at: Supporting your child with feelings of worry - EIFA core offer workshop or	
Supporting your child with angry feelings	Tuesday 20/10/2026 12:00-13:30	Book onto this workshop at: Supporting your child with angry feelings - EIFA core offer workshop or	

If you have any questions about our workshops, or the EIFA service in general, please contact earlyintervention@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Cambridgeshire County Council Healthy Relationship Courses Autumn 2026

Supporting positive relationships for parents, families and communities.



1 Healthy Relationships Course

Looking to improve your relationship with a family member, friend, neighbour or colleague? Join our 6-week course.

- Virtual Course – Starting Tuesday 6 October
- Face to Face Course – Starting Wednesday 7 October, 10am – 12pm, Best Start Family Hub Huntingdon



2 Supporting Co-parenting

- Improve communication with your partner to support your children. Online via Teams: Monday 12 October and Monday 19 October, Midday – 1pm
- Improve communication with your ex-partner to support your children. Online via Teams: Wednesday 14 October and Wednesday 21 October, Midday – 1pm



3 RISE Programme

A programme for victims/survivors of domestic abuse whether in or out of the relationship.

- Face to Face Course, Thursday 5 November, 9:30am – 11:30am, Fenland
- Face to Face Course, Tuesday 3 November, 12:30pm – 2:30pm, Cambs City



4 Parenting with an Abusive Ex-Partner

If you have experienced an abusive relationship, communicating with an abusive ex-partner about parenting matters can be difficult. We encourage you to read our guidance on parenting with an abusive ex-partner and contact us for support.



Email RPCLead@cambridgeshire.gov.uk to book onto a course or to find out more information.

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Cambridgeshire County Council

@CambsCC

St. Andrew's Church



NEWS from the Parish church of St. Andrew Witchford for the community

Church wardens:

**Dr Rosemary Westwell, (01353) 663918 rjwestwell@hotmail.com; mobile: 07432342845
email@ rjwestwell@hotmail.com**

**2nd church warden: Mr Freddie Lawes, tel (01353) 665369 mob: 07799596697 email:
hemlocks42@btinternet.com**

Rector: Rev. Chris Hollingshurst 07534970127

SERVICES: Unless stated otherwise, services take place in the church at 10.00 on Sunday mornings every week. Occasionally, there may be changes to services. These will be on our Facebook page ('St. Andrew's Church Witchford') and on the church notice board. Coffee/tea and biscuits are served at the end of services. All welcome.

If you wish to arrange a baptism, wedding, funeral or home communion please contact the church warden.

VACANCIES:

The Friends of St Andrew's Church Witchford are seeking new members, Why not join them for fun activities while helping our church stay open and upright? They are also seeking a secretary. Contact Rosemary Westwell

COFFEE MORNINGS

are held on the first and third Wednesdays of the month at 1000 -1130 in St Andrew's Hall Witchford. Cost: minimum £5 for coffee, cake and a raffle strip.

CRAFT MORNINGS:

on the second Thursday of the month.

10.30 -12. a.m. in St Andrew's Hall. contact: susanmaud.sm@gmail.com 07954 178560

VILLAGE LUNCH CLUB

takes place on the first Friday of the month at 12.30 p.m. in the Village Inn. Contact Rosemary Westwell (see above) or Gill Brand (01353) 662073 mobile: 07770932 to pay in advance.

FREE FOOD

is available at the FOODSWAP on the first and third Wednesdays of the month from 11.30 a.m. overnight in St Andrew's Hall porch in Witchford. Please feel welcome to bring or take in-date and sealed food. Rosemary Westwell and Susan Maud can be approached for applying to use using Ely Foodbank too.

ST. ANDREW'S HALL

may be hired at £12 per hour for locals, £15 per hour for others. Please contact the Church Hall caretaker, Jan King (01353) 658621 M:07761341325 rule.king.uk@gmail.com