The Rackham NEWSLETTER

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up.
1 Thessalonians 5.11

Working together to be the best we can possibly be.

23rd October 2026

Message from Miss Turner

What a busy half term this has been. We have been delighted to welcome so many parents and carers into school. This week we welcomed Year 5 parents and carers to join us with their child to enjoy a school dinner. Well done to all involved with the Year 6 Horstead residential. Wishing everyone a restful half term holiday. Looking forward to seeing you again on Monday 2nd November!

Safeguarding:

If you think a child or an adult with care and support needs is in immediate danger, phone 999.

Make a referral to Children's Services:
Make a referral to Cambridgeshire County Council Children's Services - Instructions and Data Protection - Cambridgeshire County Council website (achieveservice.com)

NSPCC website:
NSPCC | The UK children's charity | NSPCC

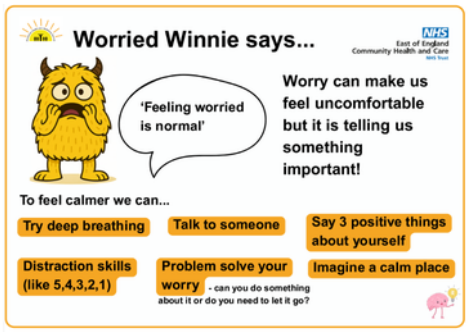
NSPCC website for information about child protection:
Child protection system in the UK | NSPCC Learning

Reporting a crime:
Contact us | Police.uk (www.police.uk)

Wellbeing & Mental Health







Attendance

This week's attendance: 94.8%

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

Early Years: Pre-School weekly update

After half-term, our Big Question is "Why does it sparkle?" At pre-school we will be exploring light, colour and exciting sounds as we learn about bonfire night and Diwali, the Festival of Lights, which some of our families celebrate. We would love to hear how you celebrate at home. You might enjoy watching a fireworks display, making colourful fireworks pictures, creating rangoli patterns or sharing some yummy treats together.

Of course, fireworks are not for everyone. Loud bangs can be frightening for little ones and our four-legged friends. If a quieter evening is preferred, why not snuggle up with blankets, make dens, have fairy lights, glow sticks and hot chocolate or even have fun making shadows with torches. You could also help your pets feel safe by making them a cosy, quiet space with their favourite blanket or toy. Whatever your family choose to do, we'd love to hear about the colours, lights and special moments you enjoy together.

Year 1 and 2 food tasting

For our design and technology unit after half term we will be teaching the children about food preparation in relation to fruit and vegetables. We will be carrying out a fruit and vegetable tasting session in the week beginning Monday 2nd November which will include carrots, cucumber, grapes, apples and strawberries. Please let us know if your child cannot have any of the foods mentioned or you would like to discuss this further by emailing the school office.

Parent's Evening's: Pre-School to Year 6

Parent's Evening will take place on Wednesday 11th November (3.30pm - 7pm) and Thursday 12th November (3.30pm - 5.30pm).

Bookings for Reception to Year 6 will opened via MCAS today and will close on Wednesday 4th November.

If you wish to book a meeting with your Pre-School child's key worker, please contact the office to book a time.

Poppy Appeal 2026

Poppy Appeal for the Royal British Legion: Poppies will be on sale (cash or card) after half term. We will marking Armistice Day on Wednesday 11th November.

Pupils who attend Girlguiding or Scouts are welcome to wear their uniform on this date.

School meal booking

Please would parents ensure meals are booked in advance and no later than 8.30am on the day.

Games and PE days

Please note the changes to Forest school sessions, outdoor and indoor PE in red.

Class	Outdoor Games	Indoor PE
Rowan	Thursday - Forest School	Friday
Ash	Wednesday - Forest School	Thursday
Beech	Monday	Thursday
Larch	Monday - Forest School until Christmas	Wednesday
Chestnut	Monday	Wednesday
Hazel	Wednesday	Thursday
Sycamore	Thursday - Forest School until Christmas	Friday
Elm	Wednesday	Tuesday
Willow	Thursday	Friday
Cedar	Friday	Tuesday
Oak	Friday	Monday

Forest school sessions for children in Pre-School to Year 4 will take place in all weathers. Please ensure your child has access to:

* Sun hat
* Winter hat/gloves
* A waterproof coat
* Filled in shoes (trainers, boots, wellies) these need to be additional to school shoes
* Waterproof trousers if available
* A spare change of clothes (including socks)

These can be left at school on your child's peg so that they have access to them for every session.

Forest School sessions for Years 1 - 4 will rotate on a half termly basis

Clubs

Club	Day	Time	Year group	Dates
NEW - Christmas Card Club	Monday	12.45 -1.15pm	Year 1/2	2nd November to 23rd November
Ukelele Club	Monday	3.15 - 4.15pm	Year 3-6	14th September to 23rd November
Needlework Club	Tuesday	3.15 - 4.15pm	Year 6	15th September to 24th November
NEW - Lego Club	Tuesday	3.15 - 4.15pm	Year 1/2	3rd November - 24th November
Ukelele Club	Wednesday	3.15 - 4.15pm	Year 1/2	16th September to 25th November
Tag Rugby (run by qualified coach)	Thursday	3.15 - 4.15pm	Year 1	4th November - 25th November

Club booking is available through the Clubs and Trips tab of your MCAS account

Governing Body update: Governor elections now closed

The Board is pleased to report that Ian Clifton has been re-elected (unopposed) as a Parent Governor. Updates about further Parent Governors will be shared soon.

My Child's Art Christmas card

My Child's Art Christmas card form, there are plenty of spares to collect from the main office if you have not yet completed your child's design.

We would be pleased to receive further completed Christmas themed pictures by 9am on Monday 2nd November. Please see some hints on what to use below.

Following submission, cards will be available for adults to buy as Christmas cards and gifts from the company. The Early Bird discount is available until 2nd November. Here is the link to the inspiration portal. **https://mychildsart.co.uk/inspiration-portal**

Order information



The Rackham Harvest Festival: Thursday 5th November

All food donations will be given to St. Andrew's food bank in Witchford.
We are delighted to welcome our new vicar, Revd. Chris Hollingshurst to the celebration.



St Andrew's Church, Witchford



A letter from Norwich City FC

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We have a great opportunity for female students in Year 3–6 to attend a free trial training session at our Cambourne and Ely Development Centre. If offered a place, players join our programme under a modest participation fee, which grants them the following benefits:

Weekly training sessions delivered by UEFA-qualified coaches — educational, fun, and skill-focused
Training alongside talented peers to push development
Access to the club's full development pathway
Full NCFC training kit
Opportunities to travel on residential training retreats
Competitive fixtures against other development programmes and local clubs
Training schedule:

Cambridgeshire - Cambourne Girls Development Centre
Address: Cambourne Village College, Sheepfold Lane, Cambourne, Cambridge, CB23 6FR
Date: Wednesday 14th of October 2026
Time: 5:30 - 7:00 pm
Age group: U8 - U11 (Year 3 - Year 6)
Outfield and Goalkeeper Centre

Cambridgeshire - Ely Girls Development Centre
Address: The Hive Leisure Centre, Leisure Park, 15 Downham Rd, ELY CB6 2FE
Date: Friday 23rd of October 2026
Time: 5:30 - 7:00 pm
Age group: U9 - U11 (Year 4 - Year 6)
Outfield and Goalkeepers welcome

All sessions take place at our excellent facilities in Cambourne and Ely.
If your daughter would like to attend a free trial session, please sign up via our trial form or please contact me at Phil.turner@canaries.co.uk to arrange as free trial session.

Sign up trial link: **https://forms.gle/n6Wu5f1RskpVgD3q6**
We look forward to welcoming any new players to the centre!

Kind regards,

Phil Turner
Norwich City FC
Head of Girls Football



FWR





FWR Uniform sales

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

- Friday 20th November
- Wednesday 16th December

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.

A Christmas card design competition for the local MP

I'm challenging children from across Ely and East Cambridgeshire to design a festive card that reflects the spirit of the season - joy, kindness, and togetherness.
The winning design will be featured on the front of my official Christmas card, which I send to colleagues, community leaders, and constituents. The two runners-up will also feature on the back of the card. All children will receive a participation certificate, and the three winning entries will receive a small prize.
This year, I'd like the children's designs to be inspired by the theme '**Wildlife in Winter**'.
Further information:
Before the deadline, please send the original artwork only to the following address – no photocopies, please. Once judging has taken place, we will ensure all artwork is returned to you.

Charlotte Cane MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Designs should be created on A4 paper, but will be reduced to A6 size for printing.
Please avoid 3D elements such as glitter, stickers, or glue, as these do not reproduce well.
On the back of each entry, please include the child's full name, age, school and school year – clearly written.
The winner's name, school and age will be included on the final card and announced through my communication channels including on social media and in my newsletter.
If a parent or guardian would prefer certain details, such as a surname, to be omitted, please clearly state this on the back of the artwork.

I would be thrilled to see your creativity and imagination shine through your designs. The deadline for entries is **Monday 2nd November**. Please send the entries with enough time to reach us by then.

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.**

Focus for first week back in Collective Worship



Composer for next half term

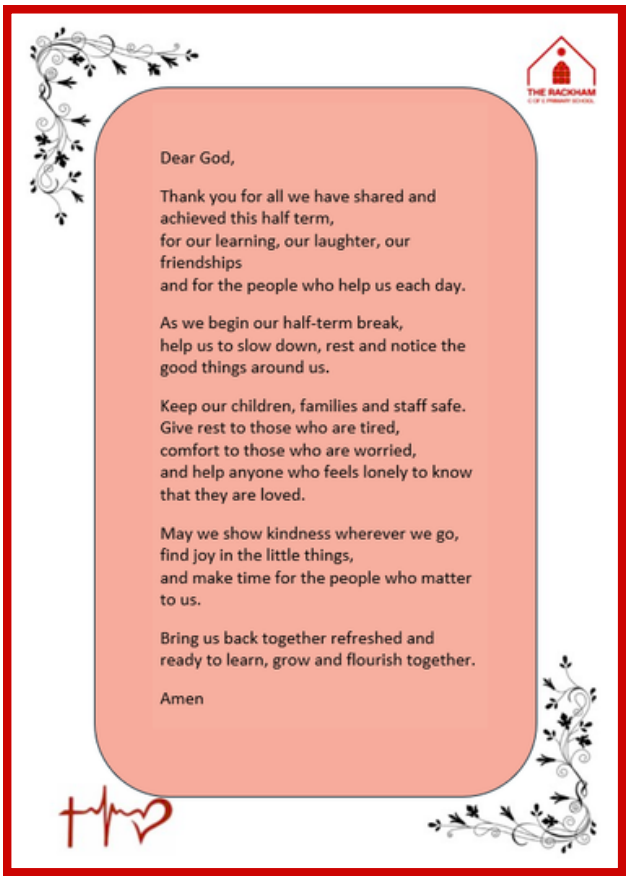
Tchaikovsky

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 2nd November.

Best wishes,

Miss Turner

Activities and Events

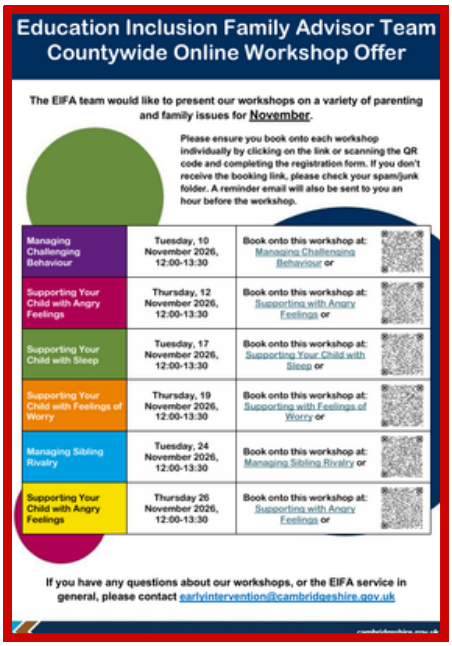




















St. Andrew's Church



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 11.00 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