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CB6 2HQ

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

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

20<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

What a fabulous way to end our week in school. Thank you to all pupils who shared a joke with their class this week in preparation for School Council's quest to identify The Rackham's Funniest Class. Congratulations to Rowan and Ash classes! If you would like to make an online donation to Comic Relief, please follow this link: [Donate | Comic Relief](#)

We also thank St Peter's Church in Coveney for funding a visiting theatre company who performed their play 'The Fisherman's Tail' for our Reception and Key Stage One pupils on Thursday afternoon this week. Superb entertainment enjoyed by children and adults alike. Thank you!

**Attendance:**

This week's attendance: 92.06%

The Rackham has a policy on Attendance. Please follow this link to read the policy on the school website. [Policy Library | The Rackham C of E \(VC\) Primary School](#)

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.

**Safeguarding: Action following review of vehicle access to the school site**

The large school gate will close at 8.15am once the taxi has left the school site.

The small gate will remain open.

At 8.30am the large gate will be open until 8.45am when it will be closed.

The small gate will be closed once all pre-schoolers are on site.

At the end of the school day, the small gate will be open at 3pm.

The large gate will be open at 3.15pm until the taxi has left the school site.



## Wellbeing and mental health:

At The National College, we provide everything educators and trusted adults need to strengthen, manage and evidence their professional, and personal development, in one place, on one platform. This guide focuses on one of many issues which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.thenationalcollege.co.uk](http://www.thenationalcollege.co.uk) for further information and resources.

# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about THE DANGERS OF VAPING

Data collected for ASH (Action on Smoking and Health) shows an increase in 11 to 17-year-olds experimenting with vaping: from 7.7% in 2022 to 11.6% in 2023. It's concerning that these age-restricted products are getting into the hands of under 18s as most contain nicotine, which can be detrimental to brain development and cause long-term addiction. Some schools have reported students having their focus in lessons affected by nicotine cravings, vaping in school toilets; and even trying vapes found in their local park. Raising awareness of the risks among young people could help to prevent these problems from escalating and reduce the number of young vapers.

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

#### NICOTINE ADDICTION

Since they were initially developed to help people stop smoking, the vast majority of vape liquids contain nicotine. Not only is this a highly addictive stimulant, but it can also have detrimental effects on brain development in the under-25s. Nicotine can decrease the ability to pay attention, weaken impulse control, affect mood and increase the likelihood of substance addiction as an adult.

#### POTENTIAL TOXICITY

Many vape liquids have been found to contain heavy metals such as lead, tin, nickel and (in some cases) mercury, all of which are toxic. These metals often take the form of tiny shards inside a device's liquid tank, which are then inhaled into the body. Some media reports have suggested these metals are particularly prevalent in illegally imported vapes which don't comply with UK regulations.

#### UNCLEAR LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES

The liquids in vapes also contain solvents, which can create carcinogens at the point of evaporation. Vapes were only introduced in the UK in 2016 – and, because of the relatively short timeframe involved, there is insufficient medical evidence to assess the long-term harms that regular inhalation of these chemical fluids might have on the human body.

#### ATTRACTIVE PACKAGING

The packaging of many disposable vapes is very appealing to young people, frequently using the colours and flavours of the sweets or fizzy drinks they're used to buying. There's a relative lack of regulation around vape marketing, and vaping is often depicted positively on social media – which can lead young people to develop favourable views of vaping and overlook the possible harms.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

In the UK alone, around 1.5 million disposable vapes go to landfill every week. Due to such significant numbers of these products not being recycled, their components – a lithium battery and a chemical liquid – pose a toxic risk to the environment, the ecosystem and wildlife. Vapes are also predominantly made of plastic and metal, materials that, of course, do not naturally decompose.

### WHAT IS VAPING?

Vapes contain a liquid (vape juice/e-liquid) that is heated by a battery and evaporates, creating a chemical vapour which the user inhales. They can be disposable (once the liquid or battery runs out the vape is thrown away) or rechargeable (the user replaces the liquid and recharges the battery on demand). Most vape liquids contain nicotine and other chemicals.

#### LACK OF AWARENESS

A proportion of young people tend to view vapes as harmless, mainly because of the perception (often strengthened on social media) that 'vaping is cool' and on trend. In many instances, young people don't fully appreciate the concept of addiction: that is, they aren't adequately aware of the risk of becoming hooked on nicotine before trying a vape.

#### WIDER HEALTH CONCERNS

Studies are already showing a link between vaping and oral health problems such as tooth decay and gum disease. This is because vaping reduces the number of bacteria in the mouth, while increasing bacteria – resulting in tooth decay and oral plaque. There are also concerns that, in some cases, vaping can lead to the development of asthma, a persistent cough and breathing difficulties.

#### UNREGULATED VAPING PRODUCTS

The number of retailers selling all vapes to under-18s is a worry, as the choice of these products being unregulated (and therefore containing illegal chemicals and higher levels of nicotine) is high. A related concern is that the unregulated products are unlikely to have been tested and safety checked – presenting a possible fire risk if the liquid and battery come into contact.

#### SCARCE INFORMATION

The lack of information about the ingredients and potentially harmful chemicals in vapes is worrying. Some vape fluids (unregulated in the UK) contain rare metals, which can cause an allergic reaction or anaphylactic shock. Toxic medical warnings aren't required on vape packaging – with only medical disclaimers found on the websites of the various brands.

#### VAGUE INGREDIENTS LISTS

Early research has suggested that the chemicals used to produce some strawberry and banana flavoured e-liquids can kill cells in the blood vessels and heart. These ingredients aren't identified on the packaging, instead being listed under the name 'natural and artificial flavourings'. Such vague listings mean that consumers aren't aware of the healthiest content so can't identify potential risks.

**Meet Our Expert**  
 From the Cambridge and Peterborough Health Schools Service, coordinated by Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council, with their support in various health-related projects aimed at young people, we aim to embed a positive, coordinated approach among both primary and secondary schools in discouraging smoking and vaping behaviours.

**HEALTHY SCHOOLS**  
 CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH

**The National College**

Source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-56199254>

[www.thenationalcollege.co.uk](http://www.thenationalcollege.co.uk) @thenatcollege /thenationalcollege

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 27.09.2023



**School Uniform: Footwear a reminder:** Branded and coloured trainers and boots are beginning to appear in school again. Branded and coloured footwear is inappropriate for school. Our school policy does include trainers however our Uniform Policy states the following: **Black shoes or completely black trainers (no coloured logos) worn with white / grey / black / red socks or tights (not leggings).** [Policy Library | The Rackham C of E \(VC\) Primary School](#)

We politely request parents and carers to support the school and the uniform policy and send pupils into school wearing only completely black shoes or trainers. Thank you.



**Spare clothes appeal:** We would be grateful for the return of spare clothes sent home with children to be returned to pre-school please. In addition, if families have any spare underwear, we would be pleased to accept donations. Thank you so much.



**Contacting staff at The Rackham C of E Primary School and Pre-School:** Where parents and carers wish to contact staff to update or pass on a message, please email [office@rackham.cambs.sch.uk](mailto:office@rackham.cambs.sch.uk) or speak

to a member of the Office Team.



**Swimming lessons after Easter** We are very much looking forward to our swimming lessons which will take place weekly for every child in school soon after the Easter holidays. 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

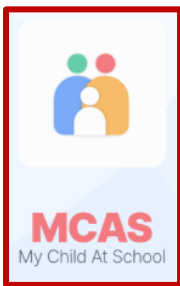
with a bikini or long (knee-length) baggy swimming shorts as these are not appropriate or practical for learning how to swim and your child will be unable to enter the pool.

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 before school on our swimming day. Please don't forget 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. Swimming hats are available for £1.50 and can be purchased via your MCAS account.

For our younger children in school, during the Easter holiday, we would be grateful if you could support your child in becoming independent with dressing and undressing and also drying themselves after a bath or shower.



**Trip and Wraparound care payments:**

Please could we remind you that instalment payments for Year 4 Big Camp, the Reception theatre trip and Year 6 Horstead residential are due by Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March.

Please could you ensure Breakfast Club and Afterschool Club outstanding payments are up to date by Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March.

Thank you.

**Collective Worship Council prayer for this week:**

Dear Father,  
Thank you for the ability to be kind.  
Thank you for the ability to be generous.  
Thank you for the ability to be thankful.  
Thank you for the gift of having friends.  
Thank you for the gift of having a family.  
Thank you for the gift of being me.  
Amen



**Overture and Piano concert:** For the families of those children who take part in Overture or who have piano lessons with Mr Wheatley, we will be holding our end of term concert on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March at 9.00am. Please book your tickets via this link:

Booking will close at 9am on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March

**FWR events:**

FWR are excited to be holding a Doughnut Day fundraiser on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March. Doughnuts will be on sale to the primary school children after lunch for £1 each. Pre-School parents will be able to purchase doughnuts after school if they wish to do so.

Please note that this is optional.

**Doughnut Day!**  
**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March**



Due to School Food Standards guidance, if your child does not have £1 we are unable to provide a doughnut during school hours. If children forget their money on the day, FWR will be selling doughnuts after school with payment by cash or card.

Please complete this form [Doughnut Day - 27th March 2026](#) if either of the following statements apply:

- You DO NOT want your child to have a doughnut or
- Your child cannot have these doughnuts due to special dietary needs.

The form must be completed by 9am on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March. We hope to be able to provide an alternative if made aware of dietary requirements.

Nutritional and allergy information: Suitable for vegetarian: Yes Suitable for vegans: No Contains: Gluten (Wheat), Soya and Milk. Please use the following link to access full nutritional information: [Sainsbury's White Iced Ring Doughnuts x4 | Sainsbury's \(sainsburys.co.uk\)](#)

Thank you for your ongoing support.



**Do you have a moment to support a local charity?**

One of our parents, Edd Hancock, is about to start a series of fundraising events throughout March this year to raise funds for a couple of charities close to his family. One being Addenbrookes and the other a smaller local one set up in name of his wife. The Katy Hancock foundation. [Katy Hancock Foundation](#)  
Mr Hancock is also trying to raise funds for a running track for The Rackham and has made this part of his fundraising. Mr Hancock is devising a separate page for these donations. Mr Hancock aims to run a total of 262 miles throughout the month of March including organised half marathon events as well as local runs around the village.



**Activities and Events:**



**Free Spring Tennis Festival**

**9<sup>th</sup> –15<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

Come and try tennis for **FREE** at Ely Tennis Club during our Spring Tennis Festival. We're running a variety of fun, active sessions throughout the week for children aged **4–11 years**.

Tennis is a fantastic sport for young people — it's enjoyable, inclusive, and helps children develop confidence, coordination, teamwork, and resilience both on and off the court.

**How to book:**

Online booking is essential as we only have a limited number of spaces available - <https://inspire2coach.co.uk/try-tennis/>



**Easter Tennis Camps**

We are also running tennis camps on selected dates throughout the Easter break.

Families can view availability and book online via our website: <https://inspire2coach.co.uk/summer-camps/>

**Early bird offer:**

Get **10%** your basket automatically applied when booking 21 days in advance of camp date

We will NOT tolerate behaviour that is:

- ☹️ thre@tening,
- ☹️ abuſive or
- ☹️ vi@lent

# NO EXCUSE FOR ABUSE

We strive to create a safe and secure environment for pupils and staff alike. And we WILL take action when necessary.

## BARRACUDAS

ACTIVITY DAY CAMPS

HIGHLY RATED School Holiday Camps

AT A SCHOOL NEAR YOU IN 2025!

EXCLUSIVE PARENT DISCOUNT

USE CODE SCHOOL20 FOR AN EXTRA £20 OFF YOUR BOOKING!

- 4 to 14 year olds!
- 10+ Activities!
- Choice each session!
- Specialist Courses!
- Flexible bookings!

barracudas.co.uk  
01480 467 567

# Easter

HAF  
Holiday Activities and Food Programme

Your child could enjoy fun, exciting activities, make new friends, and receive a tasty meal and snacks - all completely free!

Children who receive benefits-related free school meals are eligible and can book for up to 10 hours of holiday fun this Easter.

Find out more  
Scan the QR Code or visit [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

Questions: HAF@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

FULLY FUNDED

## Your Education Inclusion Family Advisor



**Emily Norman**

Education Inclusion Family Advisors offer you an opportunity to ask for information, advice and support on any issue affecting your family life in a relaxed and confidential environment. These areas include:

- Challenging behaviour
- Routines
- Supporting emotions and wellbeing
- School transitions
- Parenting strategies
- Building resilience and confidence

As Education Inclusion Family Advisors, we offer support in various ways:

- Up to six 1:1 sessions with parents/carers (virtually, or face to face in your child's school if required)
- Workshops on specific topics (currently held virtually)
- Signposting to other services such as parenting courses and support services

For more information, please speak to your school's office, or contact me directly on 07879 426 947 / [Emily.Norman@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:Emily.Norman@cambridgeshire.gov.uk) or by using this link or QR code to request support: <https://forms.office.com/WELIopdrZG>

FAO PARENTS  
Free & Online

NHS

### BUILDING CONFIDENCE WORKSHOP

Does your child often feel scared or show physical symptoms of anxiety?  
Are worries stopping them from doing the things they want to do?  
Are you struggling to know how best to help them overcome their fears?

Join the Mental Health Support Team for an online workshop looking at how you can help your child manage their worries and build confidence

We will be looking at the following:  
Why you are best placed to offer support  
How worry impacts us and which factors may maintain anxiety  
Strategies you can use to support your child



**Thursday 2nd April at 12:30 to 3:30pm**  
On Microsoft Teams  
2.5 hours - plus breaks throughout

For more information and to book your place please access the following link: <https://bookwhen.com/east-cambs-mhst-parents/#focus=rs4w-70260402123000>

ROYAL ESTATE  
Sandringham

## EASTER ACTIVITIES

### Archery Sessions

A fantastic fun activity, whether you're a complete beginner or returning to improve your aim, the fully trained GB instructor will be with you throughout your archery experience.

During your archery session you'll gain a greater understanding of your bow and arrows, learn fun facts about this increasingly popular sport. Take part in a whole host of fun archery-based games and challenges. £35 for a 30 minute session. One family per session, up to six people, suitable for ages 4+.

Available dates: Sunday 29th March, Sunday 5th April, Sunday 12th April, Sunday 24th May, Sunday 31st May

To book visit [www.sandringhamestate.co.uk](http://www.sandringhamestate.co.uk)

Booking link: [Cambridge North and Ely Mental Health Support Team - Booking by Bookwhen](https://bookwhen.com/east-cambs-mhst-parents/#focus=rs4w-70260402123000)

ROYAL ESTATE  
Sandringham

## EASTER ACTIVITIES

### Forest School Sessions

A laid-back, traditional forest school in Norfolk, in the beautiful ancient woodlands adjacent to the Play Area. Bugs, crafts, sensory learning, swamp, scavenger hunts, hammocks, swings and slackline, campfire (if conditions allow).

Come and be guided by Nana Lavender, an experienced teacher, and enjoy the spectacular woodlands. £12 per child, with adults free. Tickets are per child to attend the workshop.

Available dates: Tuesday 7th April, Wednesday 8th April, Thursday 9th April

To book visit [www.sandringhamestate.co.uk](http://www.sandringhamestate.co.uk)

Supported by Foodbank

WITCHAM VILLAGE

# EASTER EGG HUNT

SUNDAY 29TH MARCH 11AM - 1PM

£4 PER CHILD

Including, tiny toddler, stalls, arts and crafts, raffle and light refreshments

All profits will support Ely Foodbank

5-11 YEARS OLD

# After School CLUBS

£7.50 per session

Calm. Confidence. Resilience.  
Supporting children with tools they can use for life.

We teach powerful mindfulness and mindset techniques in a fun and innovative way. Through Mentoring 4 Kids by Kids™ meditations, movement, stories, games and creative activities.

MiniMe Mindfulness  
Mindset Mentoring 4 Kids

THE RACKHAM C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL  
WEDNESDAYS, 3:30-4:30PM  
CHILDREN COLLECTED FROM SCHOOL HALL 3.15PM

BOOKING: CAMBRIDGE MINIMEMINDFULNESS.CO.UK (CLICK ON THE GREEN BUTTON & FIND THE RACKHAM)

QR Code  
To Book

BOOK NOW  
MiniMe Mindfulness™ - teaching positive mindfulness and mindset techniques in a fun and innovative way. Because little eyes are always watching.™

[www.minimemindfulness.co.uk](http://www.minimemindfulness.co.uk)

Looking forward to seeing everyone on Monday.  
Best wishes,  
Miss Turner

**Dates for your diary:**

<b>Dates for your diary</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
25 <sup>th</sup> March	Overture and Piano concert (Mr Wheatley) - booking open
26 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 2 Parent meal – booking closed
27 <sup>th</sup> March	Doughnut Day
27 <sup>th</sup> March	Last day of term
<b>Easter holiday</b>	
13 <sup>th</sup> April	First day of term
23 <sup>rd</sup> April	FWR meeting at 7.30pm
1 <sup>st</sup> May	Year 4 Bikeability
4 <sup>th</sup> May	Bank holiday – school closed
11 <sup>th</sup> May	Year 6 SAT's week
17 <sup>th</sup> May	FWR Yard Sale
20 <sup>th</sup> May	Reception and Year 1/2 Sports Day – booking required nearer the time
21 <sup>st</sup> May	Year 3 – 6 Sports Day – booking required nearer the time
21 <sup>st</sup> May	Last Day of term for children
22 <sup>nd</sup> May	Professional development day for teachers
<b>Half term</b>	
1 <sup>st</sup> June	First day of term
1 <sup>st</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup> June	Year 4 Multiplication check
5 <sup>th</sup> June	FWR non-uniform day when pupils bring a bottle to school for Funday Sunday. Any type of bottle for the bottle stall from shampoo to Champagne!
7 <sup>th</sup> June	FWR Funday Sunday
W/C 8 <sup>th</sup> June	Year 1 Phonics screening
8 <sup>th</sup> – 11 <sup>th</sup> June	Year 6 Bikeability
16 <sup>th</sup> June	Class photos
17 <sup>th</sup> June	Year 1 School trip – further information available soon
18 <sup>th</sup> June	Year 2 School trip – further information available soon
19 <sup>th</sup> June	Reception classes Theatre trip
W/C 22 <sup>nd</sup> June	
W/C 29 <sup>th</sup> June	
W/C 6 <sup>th</sup> July	
17 <sup>th</sup> July	Year 6 Leavers assembly at 10am followed by Year 6 parent buffet – further information will be available nearer the time
17 <sup>th</sup> July	Last day of term