



January 2026

Rowsley C of E Primary School Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to our January newsletter! It's hard to believe that we are already four weeks into the new term and the school is once again full of energy, enthusiasm and busy learning. The children have settled back into their routines brilliantly, showing resilience, curiosity and a real eagerness to get stuck into new topics and challenges. January is always a time of fresh starts, and it has been wonderful to see such a positive and purposeful atmosphere across the school as we begin the year together.

Homework Club/ SATs Club

After the February half-term, Monday's Homework Club will no longer be available for Year 5 pupils, but it will resume after the SATs in May. In its place, a Year 6 SATs Club will be running, focusing on past papers, test techniques and revision. While attendance is optional, we strongly encourage Year 6 pupils to take part, as the sessions are designed to build confidence and help reduce any worries around SATs.

What is going on in school?

The Julia Donaldson Class (EYFS, Y1 & Y2)

As part of their fairy tale topic, the Reception children have been thinking about their favourite fairy tales. They have been practising their letter formation and their sentence writing by imagining that they are a character in the story and creating speech bubbles for themselves. They have thoroughly enjoyed this topic, especially the dressing up!



Y1/2 have been making moon buggies in DT. They have learned about the moon landing and explored the mechanisms of a moon buggy. They have been experimenting with wheels and axles. They have planned their models, including different features and worked collaboratively to create their final models, ensuring their moon buggies move smoothly over bumpy surfaces.



The Judith Kerr Class (Y3 & Y4)

It has been lovely to see how enthusiastic Judith Kerr class have been about their foundation subjects this half term. In geography, we have been learning about the USA, including comparing Matlock, Derbyshire to Matlock, Washington (turns out both are as rainy as each other!). In computing, children have been enjoying using Scratch to explore sequence, selection and repetition and have created super multiplication quizzes. Scratch is a free website that can be accessed at home without signing up for an account. Science has perhaps elicited the most excitement recently, with children exploring different ways to create electrical circuits with buzzers, bulbs and motors. We have made our own switches to include in our circuits and also investigated conductors and insulators.

In English, we looked at an abridged version of *Still I Rise* by Maya Angelou, which explores the theme of resilience in the face of oppression. Y3/4 wrote their own versions about standing up to bullying, using Angelou's structure. Please find attached a whole-class version, using a mix of different children's wonderful ideas.



I had the pleasure of popping into the Y3/4 Class to see their poetry writing. I was blown away by their enthusiasm for writing, their ideas and their handwriting.

The Joseph Coelho Class (Y5 & Y6)

As always, Year 5 and 6 have returned to school full of enthusiasm and ready to learn. The children have thoroughly enjoyed exploring different biomes around the world, discovering the rich biodiversity within them and the adaptations needed for plants and animals to survive. Alongside this, we have begun our art printing topic using gelli plates, and the results have already been fantastic. We launched this work by studying the Japanese artist Hokusai; his famous artwork *The Great Wave of Kanagawa* will continue to inspire our printmaking as the term progresses.

They have also been writing a non-chronological report on emperor penguins, which will lead to them writing their own report on a different Arctic or Antarctic animal.

I have also been able to start a 'Book Club' for 10 children in the class. The readers were split into two groups, each with a different text: *Sky Song* by Abi Elphinstone or *Darwin's Dragons* by Lindsay Galvin. The idea is that they read their books and then come together to discuss the text and then swap. We will be meeting every 4 weeks to discuss the books and do some work on them. I have been really impressed by their enthusiasm for this.



Year of Reading

The Education Secretary and the National Literacy Trust have announced that 2026 is the National Year of Reading, and they are urging all ages to rediscover reading for pleasure.

Reading is one of the most important skills children learn—it supports their vocabulary, imagination, confidence and success across the whole curriculum. Our aim at Rowsley is to help every child develop a lifelong love of books and stories, and you can make a huge difference at home. Please try to share books regularly, talk about what you're reading, visit the library, and encourage your child to read little and often (even 10 minutes a day helps).

Every Pupil Premium child gets a free book every half term. These books are chosen carefully to suit your child; they may link to their topic in school, their likes and interests or be a recommended read. If your child does not receive a free book, they will have access to LOTS of books in our class and school libraries. Thank you for helping us make reading a special part of every child's day.

You can find out more at <https://goallin.org.uk/>

World Book Day will be on 5th March this year. As always, dressing up is optional. If your child wishes to wear their uniform on that day, that is absolutely fine. Alternatively, they could come out of uniform as any number of every-day characters – please see your child's class page on our website for ideas – or they could dress as their favourite character in costume. Your child will soon be coming home with their book token – they can be used from 12th February to 15th March.

Road Safety

Following an incident at the pedestrian crossing on the A6, we would like to remind everyone in our school community of the importance of road safety. Please can we ask all parents and carers to talk to their children about crossing safely, using the crossing where available, stopping to look and listen carefully, and never stepping into the road until it is safe to do so. We also ask that families model safe behaviour by crossing responsibly and parking considerably around school. The local PCSO has been informed and is aware of the concerns raised. Thank you for

your support in helping to keep all of our children safe. I hope to ask the parish council to buy some high-vis vests for those children walking to school.

We will also be talking to the children about road safety during a Collective Worship.

Fidget Toys

Please note that some children are allowed to use a small fidget item in school as part of their agreed support plan. This is arranged in partnership with parents/carers and, where appropriate, with advice from relevant professionals. To avoid items being lost, broken or causing distraction, we ask that children do not bring fidget toys (or any other toys) into school unless this has been agreed with staff. Where a fidget item is part of a child's plan, it should be discreet, safe, and non-distracting for others—ideally something that can be kept in a pocket and used quietly. Thank you for your support in helping us maintain a calm, inclusive learning environment for all pupils.

PTFA

As always, we are very grateful to our PTFA for all their hard work in raising funds for our school.

They are already planning for the Water Olympics and Sports' Day.

Recently they have given funds towards the cost of a coach for the pantomime, the bus to Haddon Hall a contribution to the Y5/6 residential to Boggle Hole.

Dates for your Diary

Date	Event	Details
February		
Friday 13 th Feb	School Closes	End of Half Term
Monday 23 rd Feb	School Re-opens	School re-opens
March		
Monday 2 nd March	Online Anxiety Workshop	Workshop for parents 4:00 – 5:00
Monday 2 nd March	Parents' Evening	See letter for times
Tuesday 3 rd March	Parents' Evening	See letter for times
Thursday 5 th March	World Book Day	Further details above
Thursday 19 th March	Y5/6 Hockey Tournament	Bakewell Juniors
Friday 20 th March	Red Nose Day	Details to follow
Tuesday 24 th March	Easter Service	2pm at St Katherine's. All Welcome.
Friday 27 th March	School Closes	End of Half Term
April		
Monday 13 th April	School Re-opens	School Re-opens
Tuesday 14 th April	Infants to Haddon Hall	Whole Class trip to Haddon Hall
Monday 27 th April	Class Photos	
Additional dates for future planning:		
July		
6 th – 8 th July	Y5/6 Residential	Trip to Boggle Hole
Tuesday 14 th July	Junior Play Production	Matinee performance – 1.30 Evening performance – 5.30
Tuesday 21 st July	Pizza & Water fight night	Y6 event back at school
Wednesday 22 nd July	Y6 Leavers' Service	9..30 am at St Katherine's Church then back to school for elevenses
Thursday 23 rd July	Last Day of term	School Closes
Monday 7 th September	Return to School	School Re-opens

And finally...

The school newsletter can be found on our school website and diary dates are on the school website calendar.

If you have any queries or questions, please do speak to us or arrange a meeting. You can email the school at info@rowsley.derbyshire.sch.uk or email myself at c.hewitt@peaktorfederation.co.uk

If you would like a paper copy of the newsletter, please let me know and this can be arranged.

Live 'life in all its fullness.' (John 10:10b)

Claire Hewitt

Deputy Head Teacher

Still I Rise

You may push me, tread on me and taunt me,

*With all your twisted, brutal lies,
You may shove me, hit me, push me,
But like a new sapling, I rise.*

*Just like the days go by,
And with the bravery of a soldier,
Just like wishes floating in the sky,
Still I rise.*

*Do you want to see me crumbling?
Like an old rotten piece of chalk?
Body broken like my heart,*

So broken, I can't talk.

But I am flying, I am gliding,

*I rise,
Floating around the clouds,
I rise,*

*I am a dragon, big with might,
I am a tiger, but still won't fight.*

Leaving behind nights of distress and torture,

*I rise,
I am extraordinary, brave, thrilled and free,*

I believe in my imagination, believe in me,

I rise,

I rise,

I rise.