



Rowhill School Mission Statement

Developing the responsible citizen for tomorrow by raising self-esteem and independence through education and care

Rowhill School Winter Newsletter

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Severe Snow / Ice Plan for Parents and Families



During the winter months, extreme bad weather can cause widespread and prolonged disruption. Schools are often affected and it can be difficult to maintain an education service.

As a fundamental principle every effort must be made to keep schools open, even if only a limited numbers of pupils can attend. However, schools may close due to ‘unavoidable’ circumstances. Those circumstances being that it is no longer safe for staff or pupils to be onsite.

We recognise that it is important our school remains open so parents are able to work and pupils can continue to learn. Rowhill School will make every effort to prepare for severe snow/ice this winter by gritting pathways, clearing access points and so on.

How will we let you know if the school is closed?

If we do experience severe snow/ice resulting in hazardous conditions, the head teacher may have to take the decision to close the school. Once this decision has been made we will notify parents via the Kent Closures website. To determine whether Rowhill School is open or closed please visit www.kentclosures.co.uk. Search for the school in the search box. The Kent Closures website may also be used to find out if other services in Kent are open or closed, such as nurseries, children’s centres and libraries. We also recommend parents sign up for email alerts on the Kent Closures website. This service will send an email alert to let parents know if Rowhill School is closed. Local radio will sometimes provide information of school closures.

What can you do to help?

Please visit www.kent.gov.uk/winter for more information about gritting routes, travel issues around Kent so you can plan your journey. Don’t forget suitable warm clothing – gloves, hats, scarves, wellies etc. or even a change of clothing. If you are a working parent or feel you may have a problem with a sudden earlier pick up, please could you put a back-up plan in place with another family member or parent and inform the school. This will allow staff to leave earlier for their safety if weather dictates.

As many of you will be aware I am leaving my post at the end of this term. It has been an honour to work at Rowhill School as a Science & PE teacher, Deputy Headteacher and Headteacher for over 23 years. I have enjoyed my time immensely, particularly seeing pupils make excellent progress academically, socially and emotionally. I want to thank all the staff, Governing Body and parents who have supported me throughout this time. I couldn’t have done that without your continuous support. I’m sure that you will all offer the same level of support to the new Headteacher Nathalie Fitzgerald who will be starting on 5th January 2026.

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year .

Kind regards

Mr G Bartrum
Head Teacher

Term 1

YOUNGMINDS

**Hello
Yellow**
FRIDAY 10 OCT

HELLO YELLOW!



On Friday 10th October, we came together as a school to make the day that little brighter by wearing yellow in support of the Hello Yellow campaign!

Hello Yellow is a campaign organised by the charity Young Minds which takes place annually on mental health day. This Campaign encourages individuals to wear yellow to raise awareness for young people's mental health, showing them that they are not alone in their struggles.



The colour yellow is used as a symbol of hope and positivity.

At Rowhill School we encouraged participation in Hello Yellow day with the aim to spark conversations about mental health, reduce stigma and ensure that the young people at Rowhill are aware of the support that they have access to if they need it.



At Rowhill school we offer individual and small group work for pupils who want support with their emotional wellbeing.

If you would like to know more about what the therapeutic team can offer, and other interventions that take place across the school then please do get in touch.

You can also find more information on the schools' website here:

[Rowhill School; therapy provision](#)



Rowhill School Fundraising



On Friday 19th September
we raised £59.80

Tree of Self-Esteem

At Rowhill we love every opportunity to celebrate the positive work and achievements of our pupils, from the academic accomplishments to the day-to-day positive behaviours we see.

Term 1

Robbie – for showing kindness to a friend
Kenzie – well done for helping to repair a bicycle
Tiffany – helping show visitors around the school, well done
Archie – wonderful reading and helping in assembly, well done
Oliver – for helping younger peers
Arthur, Ethan & Oliver – good work litter picking
Ariana – for showing kindness and being a good friend
Jovey – putting things right and encouraging others to make good choices.
Bilal – for helping organise furniture
George – for an excellent start on his AQA coursework
Jayden – well done for helping to fix a primary scooter
Chester – brilliant day at challenger troop, showed dedication and followed instructions
Simon – for supporting peers and making the right choices
Harry – for incredible resilience in a challenging situation
Shaydon – for showing respect to property



Sensory Room Upgrade

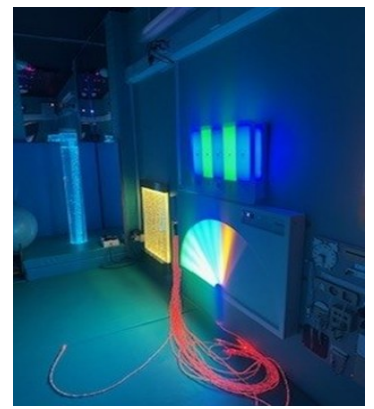
Our school sensory room has had a recent revamp, which was thanks to funding we received from the Redhill Trust.

The Red Hill Trust is a charity founded in 1948 to manage a school for Children with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The Red Hill Trust now awards grants every year to organisations and projects where there will be a direct benefit to children and young people who have SEMH (social, emotional and mental health) difficulties, within a SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) EHCP (education health and care plan).

We were lucky enough to be able to apply for and be successfully awarded a grant of £5000. We used this money to purchase new equipment for our sensory room, including an interactive panel LED board, busy boards, an aromatherapy machine, new LED stargaze ceiling lighting, repainting the room and replacing the wall padding.

There are so many benefits to having a sensory room at school such as :

- promoting emotional wellbeing
- helping children to transition throughout the day
- providing sensory input in a safe and contained way
- supporting children with sensory processing difficulties
- encouraging creative play



Since our sensory room has been refurbished, we have seen a huge increase in the number of children using it and we have received lots of positive feedback. Here is what some of our pupils have said:

“The different activities make me feel happy and I think the ceiling lights look cool”

“I love bouncing on the gym ball and I like the busy board”

“The soft padded walls feel safe”

“When I have finished in the sensory room I feel calm and happy”

Fola Sutherland

Occupational Therapist & Sensory Integration Practitioner



Term 2

Forest School Overnight Camp

This was a highly successful experience for everyone involved—six children and three staff members. All six children were fully engaged, demonstrated strong teamwork, followed instructions well, and often went above and beyond what was expected.

For most of them, it was their first time sleeping in a shelter. They independently chose their sleeping spots, formed their own teams, and worked together to build their base. They prepared everything from scratch: gathering materials to start the fire, chopping vegetables safely with knives, and cooking their meals over the fire. They also took responsibility for washing up, tidying, and packing away at the end.



The archery setup and the night walk were also great successes.



For many of the children, this was their first experience sleeping away from the comfort of their own homes, yet they embraced every moment. They were remarkably self-sufficient and demonstrated a wide range of practical skills.

Overall, the forest school camp was an extremely worthwhile experience. The children thoroughly enjoyed themselves, supported one another, and showed clear growth in confidence throughout the camp.

PIZZA PARTY—100 % ATTENDANCE REWARD

The following students had 100% attendance during Term 1 and were rewarded with Pizza on 8th December 2025

Primary Children

Robbie	Pythons
Kenzie	Pythons
Leo	Scorpions
Joshua R	Eagles
Ariana	Eagles
Jayden	Eagles
Chase	Sharks
Braxton	Sharks

Secondary Children

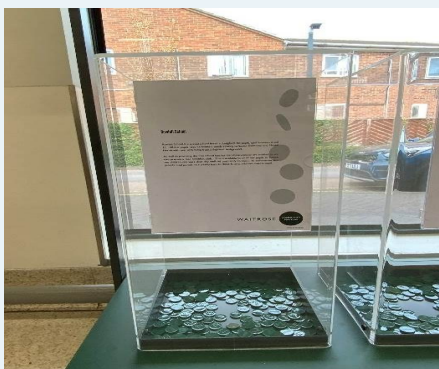
Riley	T1	Riley	T6
Leo	T1	Alfie	T6
Jenson	T2	Evan	T8
Keegan	T2	Simon	V1
Frankie	T3	Matthew	V1
Harry	T4	Charlie	V1
Preston	T4	Lilly-Ann	V2
Charlie	T5	Harry	V2



COMMUNITY MATTERS

Rowhill School was selected as a beneficiary of the community matters scheme run by Waitrose, Longfield.

At the end of December the tokens are counted and the awards allocated according to who had the most in their box.



T8 GEOGRAPHY



T8

Have been learning about different cultures this term.

They have been learning about Morocco this month.

Dino bought in the Moroccan Kaftans, Fresh Mint, Tea and Moroccan Cakes for all the students to taste and try on.

All The students really enjoyed trying different cakes and fresh mint tea brewed in the traditional Moroccan tea pots.

We had students from all over the school come to take a look and try on the Kaftans and yummy cakes. what a great morning it was. |



Dangers of Vaping

Vaping poses significant dangers for young people due to nicotine addiction affecting the developing brain, leading to mood issues (anxiety/depression), poor concentration and increased risk of future substance use. Young people also face lung irritation, coughing, potential exposure to heavy metals and dangerous battery explosions.

This is why there is a minimum age of sale for vaping products in the UK. It is illegal to sell vaping products to anyone under 18 or for adults to buy them on behalf of under 18s.

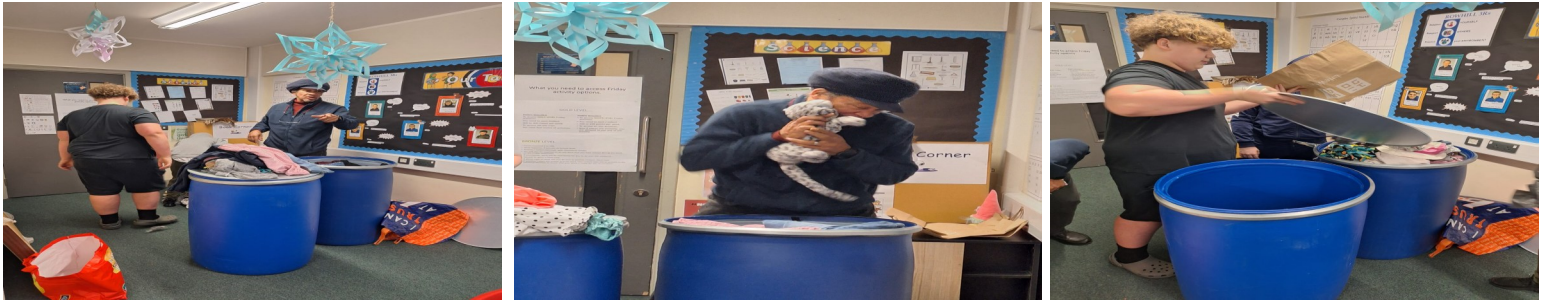
What to look for...

- Unfamiliar gadgets, tech like devices or charging cables.
- Fruity or sweet scents in a young persons bedroom or belongings.
- Increased thirst, nose bleeds, mood swings or restlessness.

PLEASE NOTE THAT WE DO NOT ALLOW VAPES IN SCHOOL

JAMAICA APPEAL

T6 held a successful fundraising appeal for the people on the island of Jamaica who suffered a devastating hurricane in October 2025. On Friday 14th November, they started the day with an organised tea and coffee morning for parents and carers that was well attended with lots of smiling faces. Parents and carers mentioned also how impressed they were with the vast selection of cakes that were available on sale contributed by both children and staff in the school.



T6 decorated the dining hall, the Drum and various parts of the school with the Jamaican flags, whilst some classes did their own version with a message to show their heart rendering support and solidarity.

After entertaining the parents and carers with music and videos, the big sale extended into the drum so that the primary and secondary school children could join in the atmosphere during their break times.

The children in T6 sharpened up their mathematical skills and sold as many cakes as they possibly could. The Secondary school Tuck shop sold drinks at the same time and contributed all their proceeds that was kindly appreciated, yielding to a total of around £490!



Along their learning journey, during PBL and Tutor Times, the class managed to organise two blue barrels which are almost full now with various items such as dry food and clothes which they enjoyed putting together.

Riley S bought in some very special cakes made by his grandmother decorated in the Jamaican flag colours. Scott W said that he really enjoyed selling the cakes along with Theo B who brought in some homemade specialities from home.

The children in T6 are planning now to send off the barrels to Jamaica in the new year and will be keeping everyone up to date with the progress.



Here's wishing you all a *Merry Christmas!*

Christmas 2025



SHARKS CLASS AT ROCHESTER CHRISTMAS MARKET

On **Friday 28th November**, Sharks Class set off on a wonderfully festive adventure to the **Rochester Christmas Market**—and it truly felt like stepping into a Christmas card!

When we arrived, we enjoyed our lunch on the benches surrounded by the delicious smells drifting from the food stalls. With full bellies and excited chatter, the fun really began.

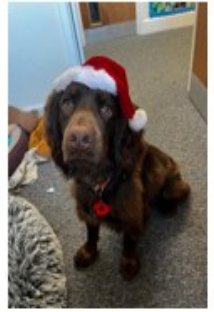
Children had the chance to enjoy a whole host of festive attractions, including the swings, the helter-skelter, bouncy spinning cars, trampolines, and even a spooky haunted house! Many also tried their luck at *hook a duck*—and were thrilled to win some fabulous prizes.

It was a joyful day filled with laughter, excitement, and Christmas magic. Sharks Class certainly helped kick off the festive season in style! 🎄 ✨



Merry Christmas from Murphy

Murphy and all the therapy team at Rowhill school want to wish our pupils and their families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



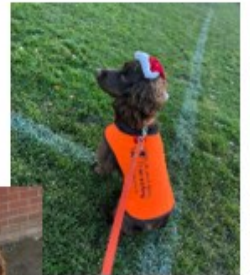
Murphy has had a busy and joyful December!



From supporting children in the therapy suite with his calming presence, to enjoying his daily advent treat, and even marshalling the recent Santa Fun Run – he's been a true star!

Murphy continues to bring smiles, comfort, and encouragement to everyone he meets. He's not just a dog; he's a mentor, a friend, and a festive cheerleader!

Thank you for letting Murphy be part of your journey this year. Here's to more wagging tails and happy moments in 2026!



Rowhill Christmas Plays

Thank you to all parents who attended the Christmas Productions at Rowhill. We're sure all our students appreciated you coming to support them. We would like to apologise to the parents of our secondary students for the technical difficulties during their production. Please note we are addressing the problem and there will be an opportunity to view the play at a later date and we will keep you informed regarding this.

SPORTS AT ROWHILL SCHOOL

Pupils have shown excellent progress in Physical Education throughout Terms 1 and 2, particularly in developing their knowledge of health and fitness and applying it confidently in lessons. Their skills and teamwork in tag rugby and pickleball have grown impressively, demonstrating both understanding and enthusiasm for new challenges. Across the school, the Physical Education Department's core values of respect, resilience, and determination have been evident in every lesson and activity. We are incredibly proud of their efforts, and the growing excitement around PE points has been wonderful to see. The PE department wishes you all a very merry Christmas and a happy new year!

Dan Masters

Fishing

Fishing at Rowhill School is one of the most popular outdoor activities enjoyed by many including myself.

Even on a tough day in November, a team effort with two of our top anglers, Edward and Rylee was rewarded with this pike.

Deon



Introducing Rowhill School's New Head Teacher - Nathalie Fitzgerald

"I am very excited to be joining Rowhill School in January. I have already spent some time in school getting to know staff and a few pupils and I look forward to meeting you all properly in the New Year.

I hope you all have a wonderful Christmas break."



Healthy Parent Carers Course
Improving parent carers' health and wellbeing

**Do you know a Parent Carer with a child with additional needs and/or disabilities?
Would they like to take positive action to improve their health and wellbeing?**

As Parent Carers our children are our first priority, meaning we often neglect our own health and wellbeing. This course was developed to help parent carers put themselves first. Run by Parent Carers, over 6/12 weekly sessions, it uses activities to engage carers to encourage discussion and mutual support.

Opportunities for both Face to Face or Virtual

Participants must commit to all sessions
(Support will be offered where necessary)

**Register for the course on the joy app or by emailing us at
healthyparentcarers@medwaypcf.org.uk**

The Healthy Parent Carers programme was inspired by and developed together with parent carers from the Family Faculty in the Peninsula Childhood Disability Research Unit (PenCRU) based in the University of Exeter Medical School.

Healthy PARENT CARERS

University of Exeter Medical School

MVA Supporting Communities in Kent & Medway

joy

Farewell Mr Bartrum

At the end of term, we will say a fond farewell to Mr Geoff Bartrum, who is retiring after over two decades of dedicated service to Rowhill School. Geoff joined the staff in 2004 and made an immediate impact, leading the PE department. He is passionate about sport and inspired generations of Rowhill pupils to participate in a wide range of different activities, many of which he introduced to the school. He encouraged pupils to perform to the best of their ability, always emphasising the importance of respect and fairness. These values have shaped the way he has worked within the school, initially as Head of Secondary, Deputy Head and finally as Headteacher.



Geoff has had a clear vision to create an inclusive, nurturing environment, where all pupils can thrive, achieve and succeed in school and beyond. Geoff has developed

the school in countless ways: championing innovative teaching and learning approaches, leading a drive to a more therapeutic approach, fostering positive partnerships with parents and carers, as well as being a constant support for pupils and staff alike. His door was always



open, and his presence in the corridors and classrooms was a constant source of encouragement. We will all miss his sense of fun, infectious humour and even his renditions of various Arsenal songs!

Geoff has been an inspirational, innovative leader and we all wish him a happy, restful and relaxing retirement.





Self-regulation strategies for kids

By Fola Sutherland

Occupational Therapist & Sensory Integration Practitioner

What is self-regulation? It is essentially the ability to control your emotions, behaviours and responses. It can help to manage difficult situations, deal with challenges and achieve your goals. It involves some level of reflection and understanding of emotions, too. This is something both children and adults struggle with from time to time. Here are some tips which may support your children in developing this essential life skill.

Recognise emotions – Just like we teach kids how to ride a bike, or drink from a cup. We need to teach them how to manage their emotions. This starts with being able to recognise and label different emotions. Happy, scared, excited, angry etc.

Identify triggers – Try to observe your child in different situations and settings, and start to notice what triggers emotional dysregulation and meltdowns. This is a key first step in understanding their behaviour.

Develop a toolkit – Self-regulation does not mean a child is **always** happy and calm. It simply means that they have a coping toolkit. This toolkit helps get them to a better emotional state and regain control of their behaviour.

Teach calming strategies – yoga, exercise, deep breathing or taking a walk in nature are things which can boost serotonin and help to calm children down.

Provide sensory input – Sensory input such as tactile (touch, hugs, textures), vestibular (swinging, rocking), proprioceptive (deep pressure, massage, weighted items), auditory (calming music, white noise, ear defenders), can all be calming and regulating to our nervous system. It is important to identify with your child which of these they like and dislike in order to better support them.



I hope you find some of these tips helpful. If you wish to discuss anything further, please contact Fola Sutherland, school Occupational Therapist, who is available on Wednesdays.

Staying Safe Online

At Rowhill school we are very keen for our students to safely experience the wonders of technology. As well as using all of the basic software programmes such as; Word, Power point, Excel, Publisher and Database, we cover block coding in Computer science.

We also take online safety very seriously.

In the Primary and Transition Hubs we make wallet cards with details of helplines, and encourage our students to give them to people who may need help.

Parental support to safeguarding your child on line

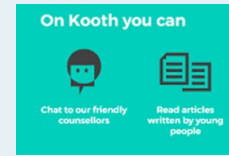
Please see attached flyers regarding parental advice to keeping your child safe on line

This information is also available on our school website

Please contact CEOP or 101 Police to report any online abuse immediately

Resources

Kooth offers emotional and mental health support to 11–19 year olds. www.kooth.com



Childline: no problem is too big or too small. Children and young people can call free on 0800 1111 or get in touch online.

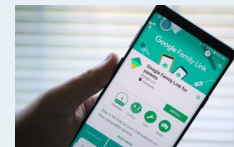
www.childline.org.uk



National Online Safety: help equip school staff, parents, and pupils with the knowledge they need to understand online dangers. [National Online Safety - Family Toolbox](#)



Family Link is a highly recommended app that lets you set digital ground rules for your child using devices. It is compatible with android and apple products.



The Kent Resilience Hub

The Kent Resilience Hub is a resource that helps young people, parents and carers, staff and practitioners to understand emotional wellbeing and resilience.

<https://kentresiliencehub.org.uk/>



Term Dates 2025—2026

Term 1

Monday 01 September 2025 – Training Day school closed to pupils

Tuesday 02 September 2025 – Training Day School closed to pupils

Wednesday 03 September 2025 – Friday 17 October 2025

Break – Monday 20 October 2025 – Friday 24 October 2025

Term 2

Monday 27 October 2025 – Friday 19 December 2025

Monday 17 November 2025 – Training Day school closed to pupils

Christmas Break: Monday 22 December 2025– Friday 02 January 2026

2025 - Term 3

Monday 05 January 2026 – Training Day school closed to pupils

Tuesday 06 January 2026 – Friday 13 February 2026

Break – Monday 16 February 2026 – Friday 20 February 2026

Term 4

Monday 23 February 2026 – Thursday 02 April 2026

Easter Break – Friday 03 April 2026 – Friday 17 April 2026

(Bank Holiday – Friday 03 April 2026 & Monday 06 April 2026)

Term 5

Monday 20 April 2026—Training Day school closed to pupils

Tuesday 21 April 2026 – Friday 22 May 2026

Break – Monday 25 May 2026 – Friday 29 May 2026

(Bank Holiday – Monday 04 May 2026 & Monday 25 May 2026)

Term 6

Monday 01 June 2026 – Tuesday 21 July 2026

We look forward to welcoming our students back on Tuesday 6th January 2025

Reminders

Contact Details: Please can you inform the school of any changes to your contact details, including mobile phone numbers and emergency contact information. We should not need to contact you often, however when we do, we really need to, and if we aren't aware of changes this can delay the process of sharing information with you.

No Smoking: Please can we remind all parents and carers that Rowhill School is a no smoking site, neither vapes or cigarettes are permitted to be used. We thank all parents and carers for their support in ensuring their child does not bring these into school.

Absence: If your child is absent from school, please can you inform the school on the first day of the absence. Should you wish to discuss any attendance issues, please speak to Cathy Webb (DSL). Cathy can be contacted on 01474 705377 ext 141.

Medical Forms and Medication: If you have recently received a medical form please can you return this to Natalie Russell as soon as possible. We also ask that parents and carers ensure we have a sufficient supply of medication for their child for the term . Thank you.

OSI - ONLINE SUPPORT FOR PARENTS AROUND CHILDHOOD ANXIETY

Being away from caregivers, General worries, School worries, Bedtime fears, Social worries, Phobias (e.g. spiders, dogs, injections), & more

DOES YOUR CHILD HAVE PROBLEMS WITH ANXIETY?

OSI (Online Support and Intervention) is an online platform designed to help parents to learn tools and techniques to help their child (aged 5 to 12 years old) to overcome difficulties with anxiety.

Parents work through weekly online modules that contain videos, quizzes, and interactive worksheets. Parents are also supported by a weekly telephone/videocall appointment with a practitioner.

You can access OSI at a convenient time for you using any electronic device!

Best care by the best people

OSI - ONLINE SUPPORT FOR PARENTS AROUND CHILDHOOD ANXIETY

FEEDBACK FROM PARENTS / CARERS

"My son's anxiety has noticeably declined, and I feel much more confident...we worked together on a specific goal and I have to say it was life changing. I even used it for my daughter about a fear she had and again, I can say that it worked for her too."

"It has been tremendously worthwhile for us, and I have a happier child now as a result."

GET IN TOUCH:

Scan the QR code for more information on OSI.

If your child attends one of our schools, and you are interested in learning more about OSI and whether this is the right support for you, please email our team at: EWTEandESTenquiries@nelft.nhs.uk

Best care by the best people