

Headteacher: Nathalie Fitzgerald

Rowhill School Mission Statement

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

Rowhill School

Spring Newsletter 2026

Message from the Headteacher



As we come to the end of my first term at Rowhill, I want to take a moment to reflect on what has been an incredibly busy, vibrant and rewarding few months. One thing has become very clear: *no two weeks here are ever the same!* From the energy in our classrooms to the excitement of our many trips and events, this term has truly showcased the spirit, talent and resilience of our pupils.

We have had an array of opportunities across the school, including a fantastic theatre performance at the Woodville Halls, and enthusiastic participation in both Voice in a Million and Young Voices. These moments not only allowed our pupils to shine on stage, but also created lifelong memories.

Beyond the arts, pupils have taken part in football matches, visits to local colleges, cinema trips, a trampoline competition, and a hugely engaging Science Week. Our Careers Fair gave learners valuable insight into future pathways, helping them broaden their aspirations and understand the many opportunities awaiting them.

This term also included our Ofsted inspection. The report highlighted key strengths within the school, particularly in personal development, welfare, and safeguarding. I am incredibly proud of the staff and pupils for the work that led to this recognition. Ofsted also identified areas for development, including curriculum and behaviour, and we have already made significant steps toward improvement, but there is much to do! Work has begun on considering changes to our curriculum, ensuring it is not only ambitious but supports positive behaviour and engagement. Alongside this, we are exploring proposed adjustments to the school day which aim to help pupils manage the afternoons more successfully and develop a deeper understanding of SEMH needs. These conversations and plans are rooted in our commitment to continually improving the experience and outcomes for every child at Rowhill.

One of the highlights of my first term has been meeting so many parents and carers. Your insights, experiences, and partnership are invaluable. I look forward to continuing this collaboration so that, together, we can provide the very best opportunities for all our children.

As we look toward the summer term, I am excited about the learning, enrichment, and new experiences ahead. Rowhill is a community full of potential, and it is a privilege to lead the school as we build upon this strong foundation. Thank you all for your support during my first term. I wish you a restful break and look forward to everything the next term will bring.

Warm regards,
Nathalie Fitzgerald

April 2026
Issue 88



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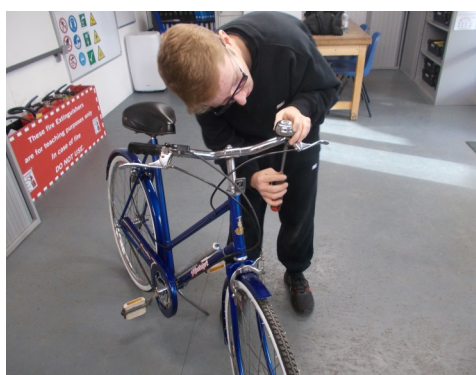
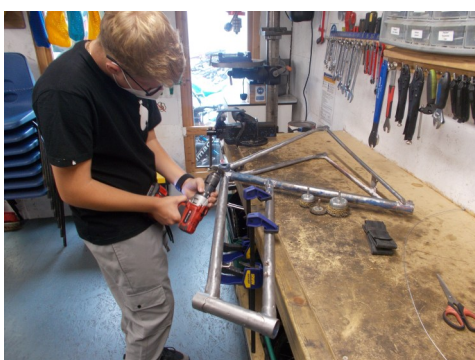
Term 3

Rowhill Bicycle Maintenance

ACP student **Bailey Sylvester** successfully completed the restoration of a vintage bicycle during term 3 of his bicycle maintenance lessons. Bailey has dedicated the past 18 months to this project, demonstrating exceptional perseverance and attention to detail throughout.

He carefully dismantled the entire bike, thoroughly cleaned and restored each component, and meticulously re-assembled it to a high standard. The finished bicycle is a true testament to Bailey's commitment, skill, and hard work.

It has been a pleasure to support you throughout this project. Well, done, Bailey — a fantastic achievement!



Kevin Manewell, ACP

SPORTS AT ROWHILL SCHOOL

It has been a fantastic and productive term in PE, with pupils across the school demonstrating enthusiasm, commitment, and excellent progress. KS3 pupils have engaged very positively in problem solving activities and basketball, developing teamwork, decision-making, and game understanding. KS1 and KS2 pupils have continued to strengthen their fundamental movement skills, showing growing confidence and coordination. KS4 pupils have remained focused as they prepare for practical moderation, working hard to refine their performances. Throughout all lessons, our core principles of determination, respect and resilience have remained at the heart of learning, and the department is proud of the effort shown by all.

Dan Masters, Head of PE



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 3

Logan - Well done for your bike restoration work.
Lilly-Anne - For being extremely helpful.
Preston - For turning his day around.
Hayden - for helping to tidy up the bike shed.
JR - for continued, consistent hard work. Keep it up!
Oliver - for being kind and helpful.
Rash - improved effort and behaviour.
Jack - Persevering in DT.
Aiden - for his perseverance in Maths.
Danny - For making a brilliant start to the New Year!
Noah - well done for being bicycle maintenance star of the week.
Jovey - well done for your hard work.



Term 4

World Book Day 2026



On Thursday 5th March staff and students celebrated 'World Book Day' by dressing up as their favourite book characters. Students had the opportunity to visit Waterstone's in Bluewater and exchange their book token for a free book. We had lots of fun activities going on at school too, which included students reading in our morning greeting time and members of staff reading to groups in our special 'Share a Story' room. Prizes were given to Chase and Max in Primary and Harry and Lily in Secondary for the best costumes.





Fishing with Deon

This term pupils did Winter fishing at Rowhill School at the River Darent and River Cray which was extremely successful and enjoyed by all! Now the river season is closed we will be going back to various lakes including Shorne Country Park, Hadlow and Horsmonden. This term we caught pike and silvers, and will be returning to carp fishing throughout the Summer Term.



Brands Hatch Primary Trip

Dan Owen Taylor

Some of our students had an exciting trip to Brands Hatch, where they watched racing cars and motorbikes practising on the track. The children were thrilled to see the cars speeding around the circuit and enjoyed experiencing the sights and sounds of a real racetrack. It was a fantastic opportunity to learn more about motorsport and see how drivers prepare for races. A memorable afternoon day was had by all and more pupils are keen to be included next time!

BrandsHatch



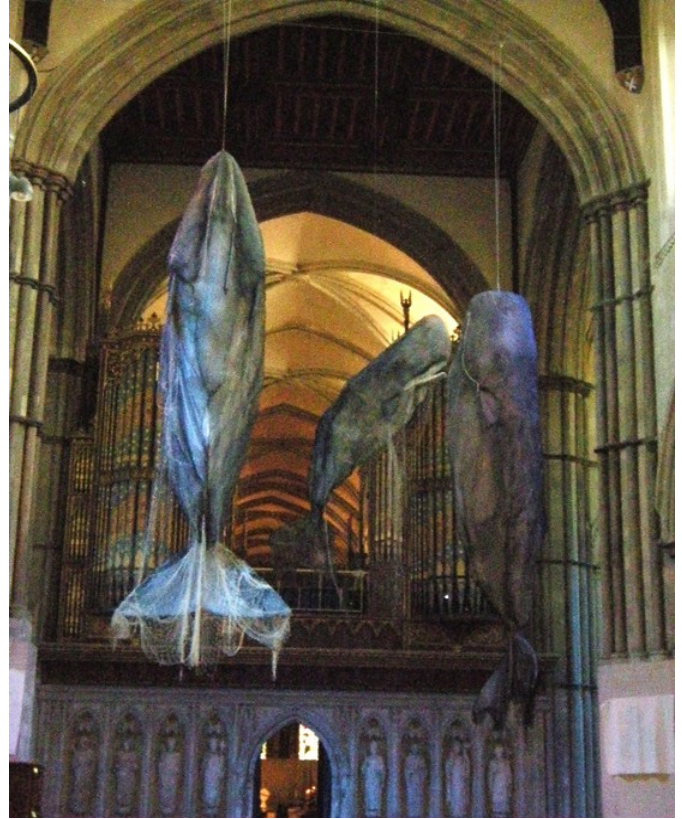
In Search of Whales

Animal Care students from ACP and the main school visited Rochester Cathedral, to visit the Sperm Whale exhibition.

The exhibition was about the effects of man made changes to the marine environment, things like pollution and discarded fishing gear. Students learnt about the products that were gathered by whaling and were able to look at they type of nets etc that whales encounter.

To make the trip cross curricular we also looked at the religious icons within the Cathedral. Things like the stained-glass windows (which will influence future art projects in ACP). We also looked at the history of the area and the link between the Cathedral and the siege of Rochester Castle in 1215.

Students found the tombs very interesting and some noted that people are taller now than a thousand years ago!



2025/26 John Downton Awards

Art Exhibition

The John Downton Awards for Young Artists is an annual exhibition to commemorate the life and work of John Downton, the renowned Kent artist, poet and philosopher,



by celebrating the creativity and diversity of Kent's young artists. Precious, one of our students was shortlisted, for her beautiful life painting of the school field.

The awards are for students aged 11 to 18 years from all schools and colleges, including SEND schools, across Kent. 36 schools took part in the exhibitor and 453 pieces of art were entered. Precious was shortlisted in the top 50 of the 11-16 age group.



Science Week

During term 4, the school took part in Science week between the 16th and 20th March. The theme for this year was curiosity, and we encouraged pupils to ask questions and find ways in which we could answer them.

We conducted presentations during our morning welcome with the school which displayed the hard work and effort displayed by our students. We answered questions such as:

"Which ball will bounce the longest?"

"Which type of bottle will make the best water rocket?"



During our lessons for that week, pupils across the school (particularly in upper KS3 and KS4) expanded their curious minds and participated in lessons which provided answers to the following questions such as:

"What ingredients do we need to make salt?"

"How do we make slime?"

"is it possible to make ice-cream in a bag?"

Our pupils answered these questions during their lessons as well as attended Science trips at Sevenoaks School. Well done to everyone who participated in this year's Science week to make it a memorable one!





Guitar Lessons with Sam

We have a visiting guitar teacher who has a full timetable of students learning guitar skills, but also playing in the school band with his support as well as participating in the rock band in Longfield Academy. Over the past three years, six Rowhill students have played in concerts alongside their mainstream peers from Longfield, participating in informal concerts and performing to a high level. Within school, special mention goes to Lewis T5, Theo T6 and Liam and Joe V3 who have attended lessons and made consistent progress in playing bass and electric guitar.

Voice in a Million at Wembley

A Rowhill school group took part in the Voice in a Million concert at Wembley Arena on Wednesday March 18th. This is the tenth year that students from Rowhill school have successfully taken part in this event, which includes around 6,000 school students from all over the country who sing a full repertoire of 12 songs chosen by young people.

The event is a charitable event, promoting the need for parents for adoption as well as support for students with a range of issues such as FASD. It is an amazing experience and students always want to return due to the fun party atmosphere. We had some firsts this year as well; Ryan, a year 11 student with a serious and knowledgeable interest in becoming a lighting engineer, went into the technical support area joining the professional team during the rehearsal to observe and have some work-based experience.



Megan, a 'four times' VIAM participant, took part in the ACE choir this year, going up on the stage and participating in the song from KPOP demon hunters - 'this is what it sounds like.' Both Megan and Ryan did an extremely professional job, representing our school in the best way possible.

Sarah O'Connor, Layla and Dino

Into Film Festival



Rowhill school has the opportunity to take part in the INTO film festival twice a year. INTO film is a charity that makes the cinema experience access to all types of learners.

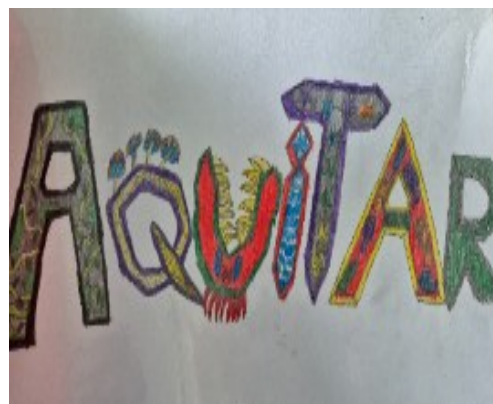
"Taking place at almost 400 cinemas right across the UK, from small towns to major cities, and with titles suitable for both primary and secondary audiences, as well as a number of autism-friendly screenings, there's sure to be something for your learners to enjoy. Films have been specially selected by our expert curation team, with many complementing curriculum learning or offering educational value for young audiences "

In this cycle, students of all ages from Rowhill have had the opportunity to see a range of films from 'Paddington in Peru' and 'Dog man' to 'Ocean' by David Attenborough as part of Science week. Students love to have this opportunity as part of a tutor group, offering a educational but also social opportunity.

The Big Reveal Project

Intergalactic Emergency

Rowhill School was involved in an exciting performing arts project in collaboration with 'The Big Reveal project.' and 5 other special schools from Kent. 'Intergalactic emergency' was the performance which took place on March 4th and included singing, dancing and acting - with a range of students taking part in the performance but also in creating the script and characters, props, costume. Special mention goes to Jinny T6, Tristan v2 and Matthew V1 who were central to the design of our project Aquitar. Some of their designs are shown here.



We also had a team of actors who ranged from T1 to the VHub. Mikey, George and Tommy get a special mention from the Vhub for their script writing and creative ideas.

The Great Tommy Sleepout

What a fantastic memory our children have created!

A huge shout out to our 3 amazing children who took part in The Great Tommy Sleep Out at Challenger Troop on 17th March.

They showed incredible bravery stepping out of their comfort zones - building their own shelters, cooking their meals, and completing their mission in the dark using only night vision. Although sleep was a bit of a challenge, they still powered through and completed their usual Challenger programme the following day.

We are incredibly proud of what they achieved, raising over £1,500. Well done, Rowhill boys!



Challenger Troop CIC

Our Challenger Troop Programme offers wonderful opportunities for children to grow in self-esteem, confidence, teamwork, resilience, integrity, and courage. Challenger Troop continues to run weekly sessions:

Secondary pupils - 12 weeks course every Wednesday

Primary pupils - 6 weeks course every Friday

New courses begin the week commencing 20th April. If your child would like to be part of this rewarding experience, Syd and Lucy would love to hear from you! We look forward to welcoming both new and returning children in Term 5 😊



Hair and Beauty

This term pupils have invited in friends and family as models. They have practised colouring, cuts and blow drying on their willing participants and received some wonderful feedback!

"I just wanted to say how lucky I was to have had my hair done at school. Sam is so lovely and welcoming and she's a great teacher, showing students how to section the hair, cutting it and colouring it. My daughter's confidence is just shining with all these opportunities she has at school."



Comic Relief IN AID OF



Staff and Students at Rowhill School held a non uniform day and wore something red on Friday 20th March to raise money for Comic Relief and raised a total of £71.37.

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 person's bedroom or belongings.
- Increased thirst, nose bleeds, mood swings or restlessness.

PLEASE NOTE THAT WE DO NOT ALLOW VAPES IN SCHOOL



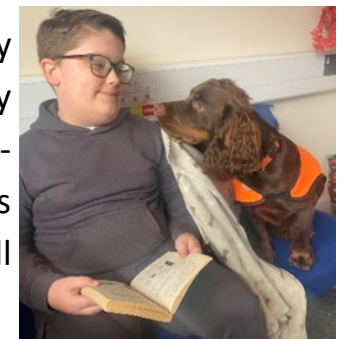
Goodbye and Best Wishes from Helen and Murphy

Murphy and I would like to share that at Easter we will be saying goodbye to Rowhill school.

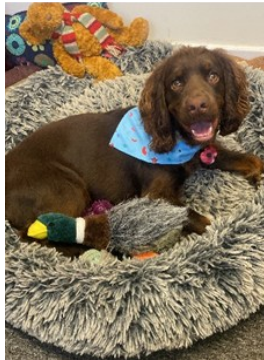
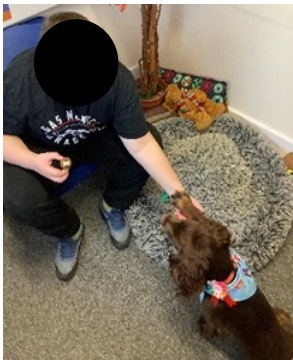
As I prepare to step away from my role as Therapeutic Lead, I wanted to say a heartfelt thank you to all our pupils and their families. It has been a privilege to support such a wonderful community, and I will always carry with me the many moments of growth, resilience, and kindness I have witnessed here.



Murphy has been such a special part of this journey too, offering comfort, companionship, and many wagging tails along the way. Murphy has been grateful for all the cuddles, smiles, and belly rubs! He has loved being one of Rowhill's therapy dogs and will miss you all very much 🐾



We hope the future brings much happiness and success to all our pupils and their families. With very best wishes, Helen and Murphy 🐾



Goodbye from Charlotte Preiss (Secondary TA in Art)

Charlotte will miss working at Rowhill with all the pupils and amazing staff and will be greatly missed by all in school too.

Changes to staffing

Jess Brooks, PA to the Headteacher /HR Assistant, will be leaving the admin team after Easter but staying with Rowhill as part of the TA Team.

EASTER EVENTS





Dartford

HAF Easter Timetable

April 7th - April 17th, 2026

Families of children aged 5 to 16 years, who are in receipt of benefits related to free school meals can access our Easter holidays Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme. The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme in Kent focuses on children's physical health and wellbeing by providing healthy food and exciting activities for children and young people during the school holidays.

Activities

- Wingham Wildlife Park
- Dartford Football Club
- Skate Board Workshop
- Hangloose







Contact us
DartfordFH@kent.gov.uk
03000 411049

Find us on Facebook or Instagram at Dartford Family Hubs

Family Hub Sites are run by Kent County Council

Dartford Family Hubs

Weds 8th April
Wingham Wildlife
Park Day Trip
(5-16 years)

This includes entrance tickets to Wingham Wildlife Park for HAF eligible children aged 5-16 years, accompanied by a parent/carer/guardian. Packed lunch will be provided. Meet at 9:00am at Dartford Family Hub, coach travel provided to and from Wingham Wildlife Park.

Meet at 9am

Thurs 9th April
Dartford
Football Club
(11-16 years)

This session will include football skills led by FA coaches, football matches and physical activities. A hot meal will be provided. Please note that transportation will not be included, you will need to make your own way to the venue. Comfortable sports clothing and suitable footwear is advised. Please bring a water bottle.

10am - 2pm

Tues 14th April
Hangloose at
Bluewater
(8-16 years)

This includes the Zipline and SkyTrek activities at Hangloose. Restrictions apply - minimum age 8 years. Minimum weight 35kg/5 stone 7lb - Maximum weight 120kg/18 Stone 12lb. Minimum Height 1.2m/3ft 11inches. Packed lunch will be provided. You will need to make your own way to the venue. A parent/carer/guardian should accompany and remain at the event.

Meet at 10am



Weds 15th April
Skateboard
Workshop
at Dartford Family
Hub (11-16 years)

This session includes designing your own skateboard, spray painting it and adding personalised graphics with the FAR Academy. You will learn how to grip tape the board and put the trucks and wheels on. A hot meal will be provided.

10am - 3pm

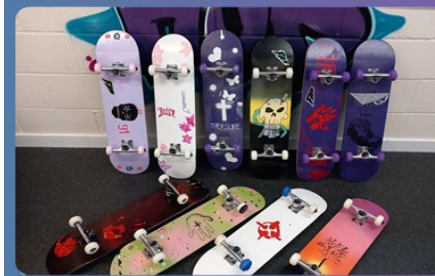
Booking Information

These sessions require booking. A valid HAF Code for each child wishing to attend will be required.

Please note that **spaces are limited**. You will be contacted by a member of the Family Hub team to confirm your place.

All sessions except Wingham will require a separate booking for each child wishing to attend.

Please use the QR Codes on HAF Timetable. Alternatively email Dartfordfh@kent.gov.uk to receive the booking link.



Enter our FREE family competition

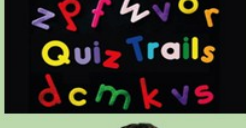
Enter at Prize Draws on our home page - good luck!



A great activity for the Easter Holidays!
We're a Mum and two daughters team creating educational, history based fun Kent Quiz Trails!
They liven up a healthy family walk!

Let the adventure begin with

We're a Mum and two daughters team creating educational, history based fun Kent Quiz Trails!



LOW - COST!
Clues for adults PLUS clues for juniors which are made for 5 to 11 year olds!

FREE TO ENTER!

WIN

We've teamed up with What's On In Kent to give away a 'Best of Kent Explorer Adventure Pack'!

Top Prize: One lucky winner will win a wicker picnic hamper with plates, cutlery and glasses, one each of the Quiz Trails short stories books, 5 Quiz Trails of your choice and lots of sweet treats!

Three runner-up winners will each win 3 Quiz Trails of your choice!

Enter on our website
www.QuizTrail.co.uk

*Closing date 31st March 2026 at 11:59pm. Free to enter - no purchase necessary.

WHAT'S ON? IN KENT.COM

Download the app here!

Download the app to discover hundreds of activities and events going on in Kent!

Special offers too!

www.QuizTrail.co.uk

Quote Discount Code **DISCOUNT10** at our checkout

10% OFF



NEW!

Trustpilot

Quiz Trail

Reviews • Excellent



www.QuizTrail.co.uk

Quote Discount Code **DISCOUNT10** at our checkout

10% OFF

A fun low-cost, healthy activity that entertains all!

Quiz Trails are written for adults and packed with local history. As well as adult leisure reading, Quiz Trails are a fabulous activity for adults and children to do together - **with a set of fun clues for each**.

You can take as long as you like to complete the trail, making it the perfect activity for a relaxed trip out.

At just £5.99 a copy for a group to share, Quiz Trails are the perfect way to spend time outdoors in the fresh air with loved ones - **great to do with grandparents too!** ALL trails are accessible.

children's UNIVERSITY

Quiz Trails are an 'Approved Activity' for The Children's University

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 21st April 2026.

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 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/video call appointment with a practitioner.

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

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: EWTandESTenquiries@nelft.nhs.uk