



Newsletter: February 2024

WELCOME

A warm welcome to our new governor, Mr Hare-Churchill!

We are delighted to announce the appointment of a new parent governor to our board, Mr Hare-Churchill. We are really looking forward to working with him!

Attendance – information for parents and carers

We appreciate it may be tricky at times getting your child into school, so we offer our full support with any attendance problems. We hope these FAQs will help explain why your child’s attendance is important:

Q. What is poor attendance?

A. Anything below 95% attendance is worrying as your child has less chance of success and reaching their full potential. It makes it harder for your child to catch up and progress if they are missing key learning opportunities.

Q. What is a good attendance percentage?

A: Ideally, we would like pupil’s attendance to be as close to 100% as possible but understand that at times, we all get sick. The national average attendance rate for school attendance is 95-96% so anything above this would be classed as good attendance.

Q. What will happen if my child’s attendance falls below 95%?

A. We monitor pupil’s attendance every week, every term and every year. If your child’s attendance becomes a concern, we will send you a letter informing you of their attendance and that we are monitoring it. We will work with you to support you in improving your child’s attendance at school. **Unfortunately**, if your child’s attendance does not improve you may be invited to an **Attendance Meeting** at the school and may receive a **Penalty Notice** due to your child’s persistent absence from school.

Q. What should I do if my child is absent?

A. Contact the school on the first day and subsequent days of absence to explain your child’s absence. If your child is absent with no reason provided, school will contact you to carry out a health and well-being check, which may include a home visit.

Morning drop-offs

We have been made aware that some parents are coming up onto the driveways of some of our neighbours to turn around. We would really appreciate it if you would please try to be considerate and not use driveways to turn around. Many thanks for your support with this.

Every Day Counts!

0 days of school	100%	Perfection
Equates to 2 days off school each year	99%	Excellent
Equates to 5 days off school each year	97%	Good
Equates to 10 days off school each year	95%	Slight Concern
Equates to 20 days off school each year	90%	Concerned
Equates to 30 days off school each year	85%	Very Concerned

Q. Isn't my child entitled to 10 days holiday or odd days off for trips?

A. NO. Parents have a legal obligation to ensure that their child receives efficient full-time education. We strongly urge parents to avoid taking family holidays during term-time as school can only approve leave in **‘Exceptional Circumstances’**.

If you decide to take your child out of school during term-time and your leave has been unauthorised by the Headteacher, you may be served with a penalty notice from the Local Authority. A fine of **£120 per pupil per adult** will be issued and should be paid within 28 days. If the fine is paid within 21 days, the payment reduces to **£60** per pupil per adult.

Q. Do you require proof of medical and dental appointments in school time?



A. We may request proof of any appointment such as an appointment card or letter. Please respect that we are required to ask for proof by the Local Authority, as without evidence your child’s absence may not be authorised.

Q. What is meant by genuine medical reasons to be absent?

A. Diarrhoea, sickness, childhood ailments e.g. measles, chicken pox, extremely high temperatures are classified as genuine illnesses. Children should not stay home if they have minor coughs, colds, tummy aches and headaches. If your child is too poorly to remain at the school, the school will contact you. Please remember that even absence due to genuine medical reasons still affects a child's attendance.



Q. What should I do if my child has a medical appointment?

A. When you know in advance that your child will be absent from school for a medical appointment, it would be helpful to let school know before the date of the appointment. You can do this in person, by telephone or email. However, we do request that routine medical appointments and dental appointments are booked out of school hours. We do understand that specialist appointments are allocated with little option but we would appreciate if every effort is made to ensure your child does not miss any of their time at school.

If there are ever any difficulties in getting your child into school, we are here to talk about different actions you can use, so we can make attending school a positive experience whilst ensuring your child is happy and achieving.

If there are ever any problems, please come and see us.

World Book Day, Thursday 7th March

Our School Parliament have decided that we should do the following for World Book Day on 7th March:

- Dress up as your favourite book character and bring your favourite book into school to share. *If dressing up isn't your thing, then it's fine to just wear non-uniform, but we would still like all children to bring in their favourite book.*
- Decorate a hard-boiled egg (or eggs) with 'World Book Day' as the theme. Be creative - this could be a book character, or a whole egg scene!



This is for fun, but there will also be a few prizes for the most 'cracking' egg designs! Entries must be displayed with your child's name and will need to be in school by the end of the day on Wednesday 6th March.

- During that week, children will be given a 'Book Bingo' challenge sheet, with book-related challenges to achieve during the week. Anyone who completes all the challenges will receive a bookmark at the end of the week!

Blue Peter Book Badge

If you haven't done already, why not apply for the Blue Peter Book Badge? Tell them about a book you have read and what you thought about it. Maybe you liked the characters, or perhaps you enjoyed going on exciting adventures in faraway places. Upload your illustration of a character or a scene from the story. This could be a drawing, painting or even digital artwork. Parents/carers will need to help fill out the form and personal details using this link:



<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/findoutmore/blue-peter-apply-for-a-book-badge>

This is exactly what Lily did and she has recently received her badge!



Snarestone Cross Country, Saturday 9th March



We will be hosting the next Unity Partnership cross country race on Saturday 9th March, 10:30am start. As we are the hosts, it would be amazing to see a bumper turnout from Snarestone children. All children are welcome to run, regardless of their ability, with the emphasis firmly on participation and enjoyment.

We will also need a large group of volunteers to help the event run smoothly, including runners ('hares' at the front, 'scoopers' at the back), marshals and help with refreshments. There will shortly be a letter going out with further details and a reply slip. We would be extremely grateful for any support you can offer. Thank you!

Red Nose Day, Friday 15th March – Break the Rules Day!

Rules to be broken (50p 'fine' for each):

1. Wear school uniform
2. No pyjamas, oodles or blankets
3. Healthy breaktime snacks only (please still remember we are a nut-free school!)
4. No jewellery
5. No soft toys in school
6. No make-up/temporary tattoos
7. No nail varnish
8. No watching cartoons in class



Term Dates 2024-25 – IMPORTANT UPDATE

Due to changes to the dates of teacher training days from Rise, our revised term dates for 2024-25 are as follows. The changes to previously published term dates are in red – children **will not** be in school on Friday 18th October and Friday 14th February, but they **will** be in school on Monday 6th January and Thursday 10th July:

Term Dates 2024-25

Autumn Term

Teacher Days Thursday 22nd August / Friday 23rd August 2024

August Bank Holiday Monday 26th August 2024

School Opens to Pupils Tuesday 27th August 2024

Teacher Day **Friday 18th October**

Mid-Term Break Monday 21st to Friday 25th October 2024

Schools Close Friday 20th December 2024

Spring Term

School Opens to Pupils **Monday 6th January 2025**

Teacher Day **Friday 14th February**

Mid-Term Break Monday 17th to Friday 21st February 2025

Schools Close Friday 11th April 2025

Summer Term

School Opens Monday 28th April 2025

May Day Monday 5th May 2025

Mid-Term Break Monday 26th to Friday 30th May 2025

Schools Close **Thursday 10th July 2025**

Children's Mental Health Awareness Week Internet Safety day

Last week, our children took part in Children's Mental Health Awareness Week. The theme was 'My Voice Matters' and we learned about how important it is to speak out and reach out when times get hard. Kingfishers also made positivity pebbles which they hid around school for other children to find!

On Tuesday it was Internet Safety Day. The theme was 'Inspiring Change'. A very useful website with lots of parent guides can be found here:

<https://safetynet.skipseducational.org/parent-guides/#a-parents-guide-to-social-media>

Collective Worship

This term's collective worship themes so far have been:

- New year, new start
- Generosity
- Children's mental health awareness week
- Internet Safety

Our themes for the rest of the term will be:

- Chinese New Year
- Humility (Lent)
- Forgiveness (Easter)



Rise teacher training PGCE

Rise Multi Academy Trust have partnered with Ambition Institute to offer teacher training, enabling qualification as a primary teacher in 12 months.

Our in-school training programme allows students to do most of their training in one school, allowing them to put their academic learning into practice in a classroom environment in which they feel familiar and comfortable.

Our programme is a one-year full-time post graduate training programme starting in September 2024, enabling you to gain QTS and a PGCE on completion of the course. To be eligible, students will need:

- An undergraduate degree, 2:2 or above, or equivalent.
- GCSE grade 4/C or above in English, Maths and Science, or equivalent.

Our PGCE will ensure that you:

- learn from highly skilled mentors and expert teachers with a wealth of experience in teacher education
- gain a thorough grounding in evidence-based teaching theory, enabling you to make the most effective choices in the classroom
- are taught using only the most up to date and research-based methods
- become a reflective teacher who continues to improve
- develop strong professional relationships with other trainees, teachers and leaders within our network of 25 primary schools
- begin your teaching journey with a trust dedicated to supporting teachers' professional development and wellbeing

To register your interest or to find out more, please email recruitment@risemat.co.uk



Train to be a teacher

Transform your future and the lives of our pupils with our Teacher Training programme starting in September 2024.

We are partnering with Ambition Institute to provide teacher training across our schools. This programme will allow you to take the next step in your teaching career by training to become a qualified teacher.

Scan the QR code to find out more about shaping futures, including yours, today.

You can also email recruitment@risemat.co.uk to discuss this further and ask any questions you may have.

Qualify as a primary or secondary teacher in 12 months.

Benefit from evidence-based, flexible learning online and in-person.

Achieve qualified teacher status (QTS) with a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE).



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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

GROUP CHATS

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Occurring through messaging apps, on social media and in online games, group chats are among the most popular ways that young people engage with their peers online. Involving, by definition, three or more individuals, these groups allow users to send messages, images and videos to everyone in one place. While they are useful for helping friends, people with shared interests or members of a club to communicate and coordinate activities, they can also leave young people feeling excluded and bullied – as well as providing opportunities for inappropriate content to be shared and viewed.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

BULLYING

Unkind comments or images which are purposely aimed at an individual can be shared freely in a group chat – allowing and often encouraging others to join in the bullying behaviour. If this content is shared in a group of their peers (especially a larger group), it serves to amplify the hurt, embarrassment, anxiety and isolation that the victim feels.

SHARING GROUP CONTENT

It's important to remember that – while the content of the chat is private between those in the group – individual users can easily share a message, photo or video with others outside of the group or screenshot what's been posted. The risk of something your child intended as private becoming public (and potentially going viral) is higher if there are people they don't know well in the group.

EXCLUSION AND ISOLATION

This common issue with group chats can happen in several ways: starting a new group, for instance, but deliberately excluding a certain child. Likewise, the chat may take place on an app which one child doesn't have access to, meaning they can't be involved. A child can also feel isolated when a group chat is used to discuss or share images from an event that everyone else but them attended.

UNKNOWN MEMBERS

Within larger group chats, it's more likely your child will be communicating with people they don't really know. These strangers may be friends of the host, but not necessarily friendly toward your child. It's wise for young people not to share personal details and stay aware that they have no control over the messages and images they share after they've put them online.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some discussions in group chats may include inappropriate words, swearing and unsuitable images or videos. These could be viewed by your child if they are part of that group, whether they actively engage in it or not. Some chat apps have a disappearing message function, so your child may be unable to report something they've seen because it can only be viewed once or for a short time.

NOTIFICATIONS AND FOMO

A drawback of large group chats is the sheer number of notifications. Every time someone in the group messages, your child's device will be 'pinged' with an alert: potentially, this could mean hundreds of notifications a day. Not only is this highly distracting, but young people's fear of missing out on the latest conversation results in increased screen time as they try to keep up with the chat.

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CONSIDER OTHERS' FEELINGS

Group chats are often an arena for young people to gain social status. This could cause them to do or say things on impulse, which could upset others in the group. Encourage your child to consider how other people might feel if they engaged in this behaviour. If your child does upset a member of their group chat, support them to reach out, show empathy and apologise for their mistake.

GIVE SUPPORT, NOT JUDGEMENT

Remind your child that they can confide in you if they feel bullied or excluded in a group chat, instead of responding to the person who's upset them. Validate their hurt feelings and help to put them back in control by discussing how they'd like to handle the situation. On a related note, you could also empower your child to speak up if they're in a chat where others are being picked on.

BLOCK, REPORT AND LEAVE

If your child is in a chat where inappropriate content is being shared, advise them to block the users sending the material, report them to the host app or platform and exit the group. If any of this content could be putting a minor at risk, contact the police. Emphasise to your child that it's OK for them to simply leave any group chat that they don't feel comfortable being a part of.

PRACTISE SAFE SHARING

In any online communication, it's vital for young people to be aware of what they're sharing and who might potentially see it. Discuss the importance of not revealing identifiable details like their address, their school or photos that they wouldn't like to be seen widely. Remind them that once something is shared in a group, they lose control of where it may end up and how it might be used.

AVOID INVITING STRANGERS

Sadly, many individuals online hide their true identity to gain a child's trust – for example, to gather information on them, to exchange inappropriate content or to coax them into doing things they aren't comfortable with. Ensure your child understands why they shouldn't add people they don't know to a group chat – and, especially, to never accept a group chat invitation from a stranger.

SILENCE NOTIFICATIONS

Having a phone or tablet bombarded with notifications from a group chat can be a massive irritation and distraction – especially if it's happening late in the evening. Explain to your child that they can still be part of the group chat, but that it would be healthier for them to turn off or mute the notifications and catch up with the conversation at a time which better suits them.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.

National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

For more information visit <https://www.nos.org.uk> or contact us on 01530 270598 or office@snarestone.leics.sch.uk

For further guidance, tips and resources, visit the UK Safer Internet Centre at <https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parents-and-carers>