



OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

October 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome to our October newsletter. These newsletters are sent out on a monthly basis to keep you informed about what is happening in school. If you ever want to contribute an 'article' or suggest information that should be on the newsletters, I would be delighted to hear about them.

Please note events that are underlined and in italics are new or amended since the previous newsletter.

Wednesday 23rd October - *Hindu Workshops for FS/Y3 and Y4 and Hinduism training for staff, Year 4 building work commences*

Thursday 24th October – PTA Halloween Discos (see PTA Classlist App for more information)

Friday 25th October – Individual school photos, Break up for half term

OCTOBER HALF TERM - Monday 28th October – Friday 1st November 2024

Monday 4th November – *First day back - all children in school, no inset day*

Tuesday 5th November - *CIN merchandise sold from school, Y4 Samba drumming, 6:30pm*
Governors' Vision Meeting

Wednesday 6th November – *History Workshop – Year 4 – Portals from the Past, Robin Class Hazard*
Alley safety session (rearranged)

Sunday 10th November – *Remembrance Sunday – 11am Cenotaph, Alameda Walk*

Monday 11th November – *Road safety week, 9:30am – New Intake Meeting September 2025, 1:15*
Starling WW1 trail

Tuesday 12th November – *Y4 Samba drumming workshops, 1:15 – Kingfisher WW1 walks*

Wednesday 13th November – *1:15pm Woodpecker WW1 walk*

Thursday 14th November – *PTA meeting, Wingfield Club, 7:30pm*

Friday 15th November – *Children in Need Day – 'Be SPOTACULAR' (spotty non-uniform day – more information to follow), Year 3 Paralympic festival (am)*

Monday 18th November – *Anti-bullying week, UK Parliament week, CLS Governors meeting at 6:30pm*

Tuesday 19th November – *Y4 Samba drumming*

Wednesday 20th November – *Year 4 tag rugby festival (am)*

Thursday 21st November - *KS2 Open the Book Assembly*

Monday 25th November – *Santa Challenge begins*

Tuesday 26th November – *Samba drumming to parents in Y4 (see previous emails for timings)*

Wednesday 27th November - *Foundation Stage Maths Workshop to parents at 9:15am, KS1 and 2*
Maths workshop to parents at 2:30pm – see below to sign up

Thursday 28th November – *9:30 am - New Intake Meeting – Foundation Stage September 2025*

Friday 29th November – *9am Inclusion coffee morning for parents – please see below*



PTA 'Mistletoe Mingle' straight after school (more details to follow)

Saturday 30th November - Ladybirds Christmas Bazaar (see below) **and Sunday 1st December** – St Andrew's Christmas Tree Festival, with the choir singing (most likely on Sunday afternoon) – more details to follow

Monday 2nd December - Full Governors Meeting 6:30 pm

Tuesday 3rd December – Year 1 visits to the Methodist Church

Friday 6th December - Christmas activity morning with parents (9 – 10:15 am), Christmas Jumper non-uniform day – more details to follow, Ladybird concert in the main hall (pm)

Monday 9th December - FS Nativity to the school

Tuesday 10th December - 9:30am, FS Performance to Parents, Churches Together choir performance at the park (TBC - more details to follow), Flu immunisations (more information to follow)

Wednesday 11th December - 9:30 FS performance to nurseries, Christmas Lunch day, FS Nativity to parents at 2:15pm (more information to follow)

Thursday 12th December - Year 2 performances to parents (show 1 at 2:15pm, show 2 at 5:45pm) more details to follow, 2 x Y1 classes and 3 x FS classes visit Elfridges

Friday 13th December - 1 x Y1 Class and Y2, Y3 and Y4 Elfridges visits

Monday 16th December – Y1 Superheroes day (more details to follow)

Tuesday 17th December – Theatre visits - TBC which year groups - The King's Polar Bear

Wednesday 18th December - Theatre Visits - TBC which year groups - The King's Polar Bear

Thursday 19th December – Theatre Visits - TBC which year groups - The King's Polar Bear

Friday 20th December - Last day of the school term, break up for Christmas today

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY Monday 23rd DECEMBER – Tuesday 7th JANUARY 2025

Monday 6th January 2025 – INSET Day – SCHOOL CLOSED TO ALL CHILDREN

Tuesday 7th January 2025 – ALL children back to school today

Wednesday 8th January 2025 - Vision Screening for FS children

Thursday 9th January 2025 – 9:30 - extra New Intake Meeting due to overwhelming demand.

2:45pm – Parent Volunteers in School Induction session (Please sign up for this using this very quick Google Form – thank you - <https://forms.gle/m5WpyQihDrnFygik8>)

More detailed information on the above events will follow in due course

Free School Meals 'Census' Day:

You will remember that a few Thursdays ago we asked you to encourage your child to have a school dinner so we had the highest possible number of school meals taken for our census. You all did an absolutely amazing job and a **staggering 91%** of children had a school dinner that day. Thank you so much for your support. This will mean we get the maximum funding possible from the government – thank you!



Parents' Evenings:

Thank you for making the time to attend our parents' evenings recently. We really benefit from working together to support children to progress both academically, personally, socially and emotionally. Please expect a follow up call to arrange an alternative appointment if we did not get to see you over the two days. Attendance at these meetings twice a year is part of the minimum 'engagement' we expect as you support your children with school. Thank you.

Driving to school:

Over the last few weeks, the school has received several complaints from local residents and other Russell parents regarding the way some of our parents who drive to school are conducting themselves. Please can we try really hard to:

- Respect all of our neighbours by not parking across driveways or cutting through gardens
- Driving with full care and attention - for example, not using mobile phones whilst driving
- Be civil and courteous to others in our community, particularly in the presence of children

Thank you for your support with this. It helps to keep us all safe and happy around school.

School Councillors for 2024/25:

As part of learning about democracy and British Values in school, and to ensure that 'pupil voice' is very clearly heard at Russell, we have again elected our school council. The following children have been duly elected and will work hard with Mrs Salih on several projects this year. We look forward to working with them:

School Councillors 2024 2025

<u>Year 1</u>	Owls Mollie and Louie Puffins Millie and George D Wrens Olivia and Thomas H
<u>Year 2</u>	Penguins Ella and Alfred Greenfinch Isla and Arthur Robins Isla and Freddie B
<u>Year 3</u>	Goldfinch Bianca and Elijah Blackbirds Anna and James Nightingales Neriah and Max
<u>Year 4</u>	Woodpeckers Violet and Charlie C Starlings Sofia and Harry Kingfishers Sienna and Monty

Russell Lower School

Challenge • Enjoy • Respect • Succeed



Inclusion Coffee Morning:

Everyone is welcome! The theme is: Behaviour as communication (including 'masking') - Friday 29th November, 9 - 10 am - just turn up!

Russell Lower School

Challenge • Enjoy • Respect • Succeed



Inclusion Coffee Morning/Drop-in

Friday 29th November 9.00 – 10.00am

Please join us for our next SEND & Inclusion Coffee Morning taking place on Friday 29th November from 9.00 – 10.00am. This will be an opportunity to discuss Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Inclusion at Russell Lower School with a focus on:

Behaviour as communication (including 'masking')

Everyone is welcome (whether or not your child has an identified SEND)

Paralympian Visit to school:

Thank you to our entire community for all their support in the lead up to Monday's excitement. Victoria and Fred really impressed the children and the children really impressed them with their energy, enthusiasm and support. Not only did we have a fantastic morning of sporting fun, but we learnt about patience and perseverance with Victoria and raised over £8000! Not only will this enable us to support many more GB athletes in the future, it will also bring a substantial amount of money into Russell to spend on new sports equipment. Thank you so much for all your support - this is the most we have ever raised as a community, outside of a Russell Ball. Thank you all for your enormous generosity. See some of the fun here: <https://www.russell-lower.co.uk/october-2024>

Football posts ruined:

Please could you remind the children (and enforce for us) the rule that they may not play on the school site/with equipment before or after school? This is for their safety and because things repeatedly get damaged. Within the last few weeks we have had several pieces of expensive equipment broken during these times - including a whole set of football posts. Thank you - we really appreciate your support.



Maths Workshops for parents:

Maths is not taught how it used to be! Would you like to come and hear how we teach it and how you can further support your children at home? If so, please sign up using these simple Google Forms:

Foundation Stage Maths Workshop for parents – 9:15am – 10am, Wednesday 27th November

<https://forms.gle/nfrXPuNjPmaU2NDz6>

KS1 and KS2 Maths Workshops for parents – 2:30pm – 3:15pm, Wednesday 27th November

<https://forms.gle/T8795MdtJ8WTVSWW7>

Collection of children from school:

If someone new is going to collect your child from school or the Aviary Before and After School Club, please make sure you inform the class teacher or the school office. We cannot release your children without prior consent. Please also be aware that we do not release children to anyone under 16 years of age. Thank you.

REMINDER - School admissions to Foundation Stage in September 2025 and Middle Schools

It's that time of year again! Even though the children have only just started in their new year group, you need to make your applications now:

Children born between 01/09/20 and 31/08/21 are due to start school in September 2025.

Parents/ carers need to make an application to CBC **by 15 January 2025, even if their child attends a nursery/pre-school on the school site.** All the information you will need regarding your Starting School 2025 application is available on the CBC website (see hyperlink below).

Year 4 parents, please bear in mind that applications for **Middle School are also needed within the same timescales i.e. before 15th January 2025.** Please note: this will not just happen automatically.

[School admissions | Central Bedfordshire Council](#)

Russell Lower School Values:

Each half term, we teach the children about a different value. We then have a weekly 'values' assembly where we celebrate the demonstration of this value. The value this coming half term is:

Autumn 2: Peace

PE and festivals news:

We now have our Year 4 Sports Leaders in place and they have received their first session of training via Redborne Sports Partnership. They will be working with Mrs Cox over the next half term to get up and running in leading fun and active sessions across the school over lunch times.

Our sports leaders for this year are:

Woodpeckers - Cameron, Frankie, Lucy, Jessica

Starlings - Hugh, Esmee, Holly

Kingfishers - Thomas, Freddie, Bonnie

Well done to them all!



Community information and events:

Please see below

And finally:

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter, packed with all our events in the lead up to Christmas. It has been one of the longest half terms ever and I know that everyone is now very ready for their half term holiday - have a wonderful one. Please remember, there is not an INSET day following half term, so see you straight back after it on Monday 4th November!

Many thanks and kind regards,

Nicki Walker
Headteacher

Community information and events:

Wrap Up

Do you have any coats or ski clothing that are no longer required?

Wrap Up UK is a project that Ampthill and District Rotary Club are supporting. If you are able to donate a Winter Coat or Ski Clothing in good condition to help the homeless, please bring it to school and place it in the receptacle in the office foyer. Thank you.



Rotary Great Britain & Ireland Working with Hands On LONDON

WE NEED UNWANTED WARM COATS
Coats you no longer need can make a real difference to people in need during winter time. Donating a coat for a person in need will not only keep them warm, it will also unlock a huge opportunity for a charity to connect with someone who may not otherwise ask for help.

WE NEED CHILDREN'S WARM COATS AND SNOW SUITS
There are more charities supporting children and babies at risk involved in Wrap Up each year, and demand is increasing. All-in-one snowsuits have been specifically requested for young children and infants.

WE ONLY ACCEPT COATS, SO DON'T DONATE OTHER ITEMS
While we really appreciate the good intentions, please don't send us any other clothing items. We can only accept coats.

PLEASE RESPECT PEOPLE AT RISK
Only send coats you would be happy to receive. Dirty coats with buttons missing and a broken zip aren't nice for anyone - especially someone currently living in crisis.

www.wrapupuk.org



St. Andrew's Parish Church, Ampthill

Christmas Tree Festival

Saturday 30th November

10.00 am – 4.30pm

Sunday 1st December

11.00am – 4.00pm

Special Guests and live music throughout.

**Entry £2.50 if you are over 14 years of age.
If you are under 14 you can come in free!
There is no charge for entry during services**

**Refreshments, Cards and Gifts, books, decorations and raffle.
Live music. Story tellers throughout the event**

www.amphilltrees.org



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AMPTHILL FIREWORKS

AMPTHILL GREAT PARK
FRIDAY 1st NOVEMBER
GATES 6_{pm} PRE-SHOW 6.30_{pm} FIREWORKS 7.45_{pm}
FAIRGROUND - LIVE MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT - FOOD & HOT DRINKS

TICKETS ONLINE ONLY AT **Eventbrite**

ADULTS	£10
CHILDREN	£4
FAMILY	£25
PARKING	cash £5

**NO ALCOHOL
 NO FIREWORKS
 NO SPARKLERS
 NO BACK PACKS**
ITEMS FOUND IN YOUR POSSESSION WILL BE CONFISCATED

ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL

ASSISTANCE & BGS ONLY

FOLLOW EVENTS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

AMPTHILL FIREPLACES
 Sponsors of the **BEACON**

www.ampthillfireworks.co.uk

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Ladybird Forest Pre-School

Ladybird's Christmas Bazaar

- Raffle
- Mince pies
- Mulled Wine
- Stalls
- Fun
- Meet Santa
- Games
- & More!

Russell Lower School Hall,
Queens Road, Ampthill MK45 2TD

£1 ENTRY with free raffle ticket

30th NOVEMBER
11:00AM-1:30PM