



ROEBUCK ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

Monday 1st December 2025

Celebrating another special week at our great school!

Key dates

1/12/25
Bridgebuilders assembly
KS2

1/12/25
KS1 carols around the tree

2/12/25
Bridgebuilders assembly
KS1

2/12/25
KS1 carols around the tree

4/12/25
Y5 Police Station visit

Welcome from the Headteacher

The first week of December sees Roebuck fully embrace the festive season. Classes in the Foundation stage and Key Stage 1 are working hard to prepare for their parent performances over the next couple of weeks, while Key Stage 2 are continuing to work hard on enjoying their curriculum, with some wonderful activities planned for them. Hopefully you will capture a glimpse of what we have to offer in the class posts on X and the newsletter.

Christmas dinner

Please make sure that you have completed your Christmas dinner order before the deadline on 10th December. This will allow the kitchen to ensure that they have sufficient food ordered for the day. Please supply a packed lunch if your child does not want the Christmas dinner.

RSA

Preparations continue for this weekends RSA Christmas Fair. Many thanks to parents who have contributed by sending in donations for the hampers and Jazzy Jars. If there are any more to come in, please can they be sent through the classes or dropped off in the office. Raffle tickets will be able to be purchased on gateway as well as on the day.

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at some point during the day on Saturday.

4/12/25
KS2 Bowling festival

5/12/25
Nursery Nativity

6/12/25
RSA Christmas Fair 1pm - 4pm

7/12/25
Reception Christmas Performance

8/12/25
Reception Christmas Performance



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School attendance

It is really important that each child reaches our school attendance target of 96%. Please make sure your child is in school and on time everyday!

Our whole school attendance figure for this week

95.7%

96%

Attendance percentage we aim for every week



Birch 99.3%



Pine 98.3%



Rowan 98.1%

The winning class(es) will receive an additional playtime this week as a reward. Well done to Birch Class who had 99.3% attendance!



Nursery Chestnut and Acorn

This week Stevenage Library came to visit Nursery. We got to meet Tala the library mascot and we shared some lovely stories and rhymes together.

The children were all given their own book start pack to bring home and keep. Well done to all the Nursery children.



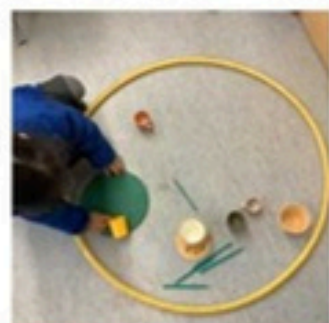
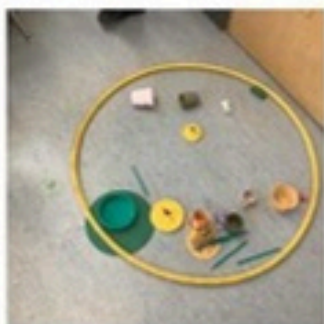
Reception Oak and Willow

In reception, preparations are well underway for our Christmas production of Baarmy Bethlehem! The children are very excited and have been singing their hearts out!

We have also been practising writing sentences and captions and are beginning to use a full stop. We know lots of sounds now!

In Maths, we have been practising making 5 and also sorting objects into groups.

We can't wait to see you at our performances!



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Year 1 Elm and Maple

Christmas is on its way!

It has been a wonderful couple of weeks of learning. All the children have enjoyed learning the songs for our Christmas concert. We look forward to seeing you and your family at the performances - Monday 1st & Tuesday 2nd December at 2pm.

In Literacy, the children have amazed us by using unique and exciting vocabulary to write about our focus story 'Superworm'

In Maths, the children have continued to use 'a Whole-part model' to help them solve and understand addition. We will continue to solve addition calculations using other methods such as counting on.

In PE, we are fortunate to have a cricket coach teach the children pre-cricket skills. Please remember to take the time to go onto 'X' where we will post learning on a daily/weekly basis. We continue to look forward to sharing our fun filled learning with you regularly. Miss Shaha & Miss Binmore



Year 2 Birch and Pine

Year 2 have had a wonderful start to their Christmas activities. We went on a trip to St Peters Church where we heard the story of the Christmas Journey. The Wise Men, Shepherds and Inn Keepers each told their part of the story and helped us do some activities. We have been practising our performance for our Christmas Show and are excited to show our parents next! In literacy, we have started our new story A Crows Tale and started off by creating our own colourful crows. As the week goes on, we will find out how he lost his colours.





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Year 3 Cherry and Pear

In DT, Year 3 have been making pneumatic mechanisms for their toys this week. We had to carefully pierce a hole in the box and then problem solve how to get our balloon securely onto the tube so that no air would escape. We loved watching the balloon inflate and move the lid. We can't wait to decorate them and let them come to life. In maths, we have been working really hard on solving division and multiplication problems. We used practical resources to show and explain our answers



Year 4 Rowan and Cedar

Over the last few weeks Year 4 have been very busy in Reading, Science and Geography, working together collaboratively. We have enjoyed using atlas to locate where our food comes from and then calculating the food miles. We were very shocked to see how far our food had travelled!





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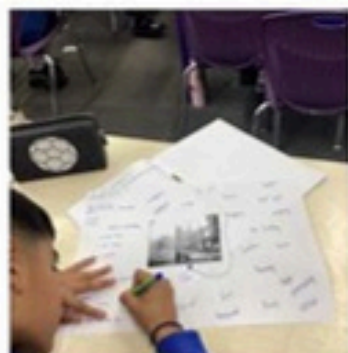
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Monday 1st December 2025 Year 5 Sycamore and Juniper

In Y5, as part of our new unit about Robert Falcon Scott the Antarctic explorer, we were asked to bring a blanket (or a sleeping bag), a card game or a book and plenty of warm clothes. We took out the parachute and made a big tent. While we were inside, we spoke about what it would have been like for Captain Scott and his men. We also spoke about how they may have passed the time. During Science this week, we did an experiment testing how fast different liquids travelled down a piece of cardboard. Different liquids moved at different speeds. Some were really slow like paint and PVA glue. In art we have been looking at the work of Fredrich Hundertwasser. We created some patterns inspired by his love of wavy lines and natural shapes.

Year 6 Ash and Elder

Year 6 have had a very exciting two weeks. We were visited by Barclays Bank and had the opportunity to visit the Barclays van. We learned about saving and investing our money. In history we are loving learning about World War 2. We have been studying different sources to infer about what life was like, also learning about key events such as The Blitz and The Battle of Britain. This has helped us to write a recount in writing, based on what life was like during this time. In music we have been producing our own 'hip hop beats' using Yustudio





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PE Latest news

A brilliant couple of weeks for Roebuck.

Two groups of years 4s took part in a non competitive dodgeball festival, learning skills and playing mini games.

The boys football team came 2nd place in the Stevenage Borough Academy's football tournament, the boys played brilliantly and were unlucky to lose in the final! The year 6 rowing team absolutely smashed it completing a 2000m rowing race in 9.28 minutes, an amazing score to win the gold medals!



Dream catcher assembly

Year 5 and 6 were visited by former pupil Ciara Horgan, who shared her successes as a national champion inline speedskater. Ciara talked about how she got involved in inline speedskating, in Year 6 while at Roebuck and described her journey training and competing in national and international competitions both nationally and in Europe. She talked about the dedication and determination that she had to show when training and competing at a very high level, as well as talking through her successes in becoming a national Champion. We thank Ciara for giving up her time in coming in and sharing her experience with the children.

DETERMINATION, **R**ESPECT, **E**XCELLENCE, **A**LTOGETHER, **M**OTIVATION & **S**AFETY



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Food recycling update

As mentioned in the last newsletter, as part of our sustainability plan, we have started food recycling in the dining hall. All food waste from school dinners and food waste such as fruit peel, apple cores from packed lunches can be disposed of in the food waste bins. Where children have decided to not eat their packed lunch and are throwing food away they are being encouraged to keep it in their lunchbox so that parents are aware of what hasn't been eaten. Please can we ask both parents who provide packed lunches and those who order school meals to consult with the children when preparing or ordering lunches, so they are aware of their likes and dislikes. There is an increasing number of children throwing food away where they have food prepared or ordered without their knowledge. We appreciate your support in this matter.



Communication workshop For Mums, Dads & Carers

Online
December 2025
&
January 2026



This 2 hour fully funded workshop is open to all Hertfordshire parents and carers. Join us to learn more about:

- Why communication matters for everyone
- Communication to build and support healthy relationships
- The stress response system and the effects on communication
- The Language of Safety
- Skills and strategies - from learning to practice
- Communication and the Protective Behaviours Process

Thursday
11 December 2025
9.30am – 11.30am
or
Monday
19 January 2026
7.00pm – 9.00pm



To book your place please use this link or the QR code

<https://forms.office.com/e/dTWHKe8yaM>



Please like us on Facebook for further updates @hertfordshireschools

Funded by
Hertfordshire
County Council



Adult learning

Please see the flyer sent through for parents to access free funded workshops.

Booking

There is one online booking form for all workshops using this link:
<https://forms.office.com/e/dTWHKe8yaM>

We will also send two Posters for parents and Carers to help understand a bit more about the risks associated with two online platforms that children are frequently interacting with. Classes do online safety sessions in an attempt to inform children of the dangers on these platforms. The posters do highlight possible dangers to young children who use them.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about YOUTUBE KIDS



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

As its name suggests, YouTube Kids is a child-friendly version of Google's online video-sharing platform. Its colourful user interface is designed with young people in mind, and it offers a curated, family-friendly experience with features like age-based content settings and parental controls.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT BYPASSING FILTERS

18
CONCERNED

YouTube Kids is less likely to show inappropriate material than YouTube, but there have been reports of the app showing age-inappropriate content to young viewers. One investigation found that YouTube Kids had shown videos that promote skin bleaching, weight loss, drug culture and firearms to children as young as two, as inappropriate content had bypassed the platform's algorithms and human moderators.

BE WARY OF ADVERTISING

BUY NOW!

Like Google's regular YouTube app, YouTube Kids features pervasive advertising before a video plays. While these adverts are designed to be family friendly and are subject to a strict review process, it's worth noting that YouTube Kids collects information around children's viewing to inform targeted content and advertisements.

DESIGNED TO BE ADDICTIVE

YouTube Kids is designed to be addictive. The platform's design features, such as the constant stream of new videos and the reward system of points or virtual stickers, can be very engaging and make it difficult for children to switch off. Research has shown that spending too much time using digital services such as YouTube can lead to screen addiction, affecting children's daily routines, studies, and even their social lives.

SETTINGS CAN BE CIRCUMVENTED

YouTube Kids offers built-in parental controls, enabling you to set screen time limits and curate the content children are able to view; however, children are often more tech-savvy than we think. They can easily bypass or tweak these settings if they have access to the associated Google account password, thereby exposing themselves to age-inappropriate and potentially dangerous content.

AI-GENERATED MISINFORMATION

There is also a risk of children accessing videos that contain disinformation and misinformation. A BBC investigation found that some YouTube channels are using artificial intelligence (AI) technology to create misleading "scientific" videos that are recommended to children as educational content. These videos included conspiracy theories and ideas that lack scientific backing.

DATA COLLECTION RISK

While there are limits on the data that YouTube can collect on children under 13, children can still inadvertently give away sensitive information when using YouTube Kids. The platform collects data on children's viewing habits, content searches and location, which YouTube and third-party advertisers can use.

Advice for Parents & Educators

PARENTAL CONTROLS

YouTube Kids offers several settings that allow you to manage what content children can view. For example, you can choose what level of content you want them to access, such as 'Preschool' or 'Younger'. You can also turn off the search function, so that only those videos approved by the YouTube Kids team themselves will appear on a child's recommendations list.

CHECK WATCH HISTORY

YouTube Kids has made it easy for you to keep an eye on what the children in your care have been watching on the app. By clicking on the 'Recommended' icon at the top right of the home screen, you can see which videos they've been viewing, and how much of each. If a child watches YouTube Kids while signed into a Google account, you can check their history through Google's 'My Activity' page.

SET TIME LIMITS

The built-in parental controls let you keep a tab on how long children spend watching videos. You can set a timer that limits screen time and disables the YouTube Kids app once a specified length of time has been reached. It's also worth speaking to children about the dangers of spending too much time on YouTube, to ensure they remain focused on other, more important activities.

WATCH TOGETHER

It's important that you try to make YouTube Kids a fun and positive experience for children. One way to do this is by introducing watching sessions, where you all gather around and share the most enjoyable videos that you have recently watched. This can be a great way of giving you both new things to talk about and of keeping an eye on what they're watching.

Meet Our Expert

Carly Page is an experienced journalist with more than 10 years of experience covering the technology industry. Previously a senior cybersecurity reporter at TechCrunch, Carly is now a freelance journalist, editor, and copywriter. Her bylines include Forbes, TechRadar, Tes, The INQUIRER, The Metro, Uswatch, and WIRED.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/youtube-kids-2023>

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

ROBLOX



Roblox is one of the most popular video games among children. In 2020, the game's developers claimed that more than half of the USA's children had played it. As a 'sandbox' title, the game lets players create their own gaming experiences with Roblox Studio to build custom levels, which can then be shared online.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

ONLINE PLAY RISKS

Because Roblox connects random players across the world, it can put younger players into an environment with anonymous users who could use the platform for nefarious reasons. For example, some role-play games are used for online dates and mature role play, which could expose young users to inappropriate messages in the public chat box.

ANONYMOUS PLAYERS

The anonymity of users can leave players vulnerable to bullying, harassment, and predatory behaviour. Without the right parental controls or monitoring, users can connect with each other via personal messages or friend requests, and it is very difficult to know who's behind a username in this vast online world.

MATURE CONTENT

Content is difficult to moderate throughout Roblox, due to the number of games available. This is particularly notable on smaller games and experiences, but in summary, some of the games and experiences offered on the platform contain age-inappropriate content that could easily be seen by young players.

RISK OF ADDICTION

Roblox games can feature rewarding or satisfying mechanics that keep players coming back or persuade them to stay logged-in for much longer. Like most games, they focus on interactivity, with constant rewards via in-game unlocks and cosmetics, which can sometimes lead to an addictive need to remain online for long periods of time.

IN-GAME SPENDING

The majority of games within Roblox have extensive monetisation options, usually through season passes or microtransactions. Purchases can range in value from a few pence up to much larger sums of money. While some games offer a lot of content via purchases, others can offer very little for real world money, causing younger players to end up out of pocket.

SCAMS

Many of the games on Roblox feature collectible items, pets, or characters. These objects, while digital, are worth a lot of real money on certain online markets. Scammers will attempt to trade with younger users in the hopes of getting rare items that can be sold for real money, manipulating the child into handing them over, usually via misleading information.

Advice for Parents & Educators

MONITOR THE CONTENT

While Roblox does implement plenty of moderation tools and parental controls, it's up to parents and guardians to monitor the types of games a child or impressionable player is experiencing. If a youngster wants to play Roblox, be sure to check out which specific games they want to play within it, and get a good idea of their content.

PLAY TOGETHER

Consider playing Roblox with the children in your care. There are few more effective ways to see how monetisation works, gauge whether the game could lead to addictive behaviours, or even witness how interaction between players works, than sitting down and trying the game for yourself. This should help you figure out whether it's suitable for particular children.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF TOOLS

Use the parental controls within the game itself and teach youngsters how to report and block other players. Knowing the powers within their reach will make Roblox a safer, happier experience. You can set age ranges for who's allowed to contact you, close public chat boxes, block spending, and even make your Roblox profile completely private. All these options are helpful in cutting off bad actors from engaging with children.

TEACH ONLINE BEHAVIOURS

Have an open conversation about the risks of online play and how to spend money wisely. By being honest and giving tips on how a younger user can protect themselves, you can empower them to not only take care of themselves, but others too. Any user can be reported to Roblox moderators by other players for behaving inappropriately. With this knowledge, younger players can be aware of what to look for and help prevent it.

Meet Our Expert

Dan Ilescombe is a videogame journalist and author of over 20 books on gaming, including books on Minecraft, Fortnite, Roblox, and more. For 15 years he has been writing about his passion for gaming. When he's not playing games, he's talking about them at GAMINGbits.



THE RSA PRESENTS

ROEBUCK ACADEMY'S
**CHRISTMAS
FAIR**

SANTA'S GROTTO, FESTIVE
GAMES, RAFFLE, TOMBOLA,
WINTER WORKSHOPS, EXTERNAL
STALLS, ALONG WITH DELICIOUS
FOOD & DRINK TREATS!

A mix of all things
festive!

Saturday 6th December

1pm - 4pm

ALL WELCOME!

ST MARGARETS, STEVENAGE, SG2 8RF



