

Ryefield Bulletin

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Fidget Toys in School – A Consistent Approach

Over recent months, we have seen a significant increase in the use of fidget toys in classrooms. While these were originally introduced with positive intentions, they are now, in many cases, becoming a distraction—both for the children using them and for others around them.

We want to reassure parents that we fully recognise the importance of supporting children to focus and regulate their attention. This is rooted in well-established principles of Self-regulation, which highlight that small physical movements can help children remain engaged in learning.

Similarly, research into sensory processing shows that some children benefit from simple, repetitive actions such as squeezing, twisting, or handling objects. However, our experience—and wider educational research—shows that the type of object is far less important than the purpose it serves. In fact, more complex or novelty fidget toys can often draw attention away from learning rather than support it.

With this in mind, the school will be moving away from allowing the use of commercial fidget toys. Instead, where appropriate, we will provide and use simple, low-key resources such as small pieces of string or soft material. These offer the same benefits—supporting focus through movement—without the distraction that more elaborate items can bring.

This approach aligns with our wider commitment to evidence-informed practice, where we focus on strategies that have the greatest impact on learning, rather than those that may simply be more visible or popular.

We do, of course, recognise that some children have specific needs and may require more specialist resources. Where this is the case, appropriate support and equipment will continue to be put in place, following careful consideration and, where needed, advice from external professionals.

We ask that children do not bring fidget toys into school; if they do, they must remain in their bags until hometime. If a child would benefit from additional support with focus or regulation, this will be carefully considered and provided by the school in a consistent and purposeful way.

As always, if you have any questions or would like to discuss how we support your child, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Vanguard Learning Trust Cooking Competition 2026

We are delighted to share that Ryefield Primary School were the winners of last year's Vanguard Learning Trust Cooking Competition—a fantastic achievement and something we are very proud of!

The competition, held at Vyners School, brings together young chefs from across the Trust to showcase their culinary skills in a friendly but competitive environment. Pupils are challenged to prepare, cook and present a dish within a set time, with judging based on skill, presentation and how well the dish reflects the principles of the Eatwell Guide.

As we look ahead to the 2026 competition, we are now on the lookout for our next team of talented chefs to represent the school. This opportunity will be open to children in Year 5 and Year 6 who have a keen interest in cooking, food, or nutrition. Whether your child already loves cooking at home or is keen to develop their skills further, this is a brilliant chance to get involved. Further details, including how to express interest and what the process will involve, will be shared directly with eligible pupils in the coming weeks.

We look forward to building on last year's success and seeing the next group of Ryefield chefs rise to the challenge!

Dates for the summer term

Week of 20th April: Equality Week

Wed 22nd April: DebateMate Cup

Thu 23rd April: Hearing and Vision checks

Wed 29th April: Y2 and Y4 Sports Festival

Fri 1st May: Mini Marathon (whole school)

Mon 4th May: **BANK HOLIDAY**

Week of 5th May: Deaf Awareness Week

Tues 5th May: AIM High Writing

Fri 8th May: Y3 Ancient Greece Workshop

Week of 11th May: Y6 SATS

Mon 11th May: Monster Kickabout

Wed 20th May: VLT Cooking competition

Wed 20th May: Y1 Trip to Look Out Centre

Week of 25th May: HALF TERM

Wed 10th - Fri 12th June: Y5 Residential

Fri 12th June: Viking Workshop

Wed 17th - Fri 19th June: Y6 Residential

Wed 17th June: VLT Table Tennis Comp

Thurs 18th June: Rounders Tournament

Tues 23rd June: EYFS Sports Day (**TBC**)

Wed 24th June: Class Photo Day

Thurs 25th June: KS1 & KS2 Sports Day (**TBC**)

Use of School Play Equipment Before and After School



Following our message earlier this week, we would like to reiterate our expectations regarding the use of school play equipment at the start and end of the day.

Once children have been collected from their class or dismissal point, they are the responsibility of their parent or carer. During this time, the school's play equipment—including climbing frames, trees, the field, and goal netting—should not be used.

This is not about limiting children's enjoyment, but about ensuring everyone's safety. At these times of day, equipment is not supervised by school staff, and we are unable to manage risk in the way we do during the school day.

We appreciate that some families may need to remain on site while waiting for siblings to be dismissed. In these situations, we ask that children stay with their parent or carer and do not use the play equipment or engage in activities that could lead to injury.

We would be grateful for your support in ensuring this is followed consistently, so that the start and end of the school day remain safe and orderly for all.

