ROUGEMONT TIMES

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A FAMILY AFFAIR – OUTDOOR CLASSROOM ADVENTURES

STEM RACING

Senior pupils wow on the race track

CAREERS FAIR

Pupils get curious about their future pathways at this year's annual event

WELLY WALKS

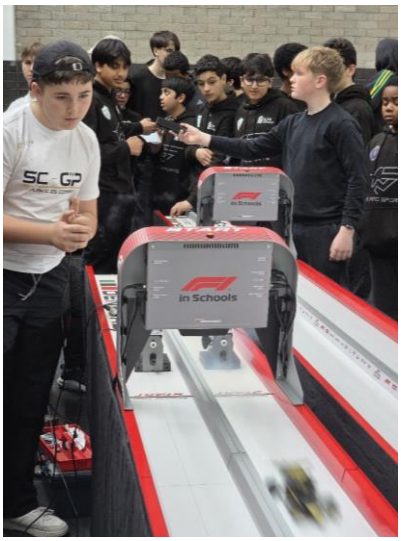
A trip to our new Outdoor Classroom – and the sun came out!

SPORT SPOTLIGHT

Launching our new spotlight for our talented athletes

STEM RACING 2026

Rougemont shines at STEM Racing Regional Event at St Fagan's Museum



Rougemont School enjoyed a fantastic day of innovation, teamwork, and high-speed excitement at the STEM Racing Regional Event held at the historic St Fagans National Museum of History. Full of energy and anticipation, our pupils travelled to the competition ready to put months of design, engineering, and testing into action.

This year, Rougemont proudly entered **five teams**: **three Entry Class** teams and **two Development Class** teams, each eager to showcase their creativity and engineering skills.

From the moment they arrived, it was clear that the day would be both inspiring and challenging. Each team took part in **two professional presentations**, sharing their engineering process with specialists from the STEM industry. These sessions allowed pupils to explain their research, design decisions, and testing methods while developing valuable communication and presentation skills. The industry experts were impressed with the confidence, clarity, and maturity shown by all our pupils.

On the competition track, the excitement stepped up another gear. Teams raced their cars against schools from across Wales in a thrilling display of precision, engineering excellence, and determination. The atmosphere was electric as each car shot down the racetrack, cheered on by teammates and supporters. Whether preparing for race runs, making last-minute adjustments, or discussing improvements, every pupil showed a wonderful blend of teamwork, problem-solving, and resilience.

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STEM RACING 2026

Rougemont shines at STEM Racing Regional Event at St Fagan's Museum

Throughout the event, Rougemont pupils represented the school with pride. Their behaviour, sportsmanship, and enthusiasm were noticed and admired by judges, event staff, and fellow competitors. It was a day that celebrated not just racing success, but the values of collaboration, perseverance, and curiosity that lie at the heart of STEM learning.

We are incredibly proud of all five teams for their exceptional efforts and the professionalism they demonstrated throughout the event. The experience has undoubtedly inspired many of our young engineers, and we look forward to seeing how they continue to develop their skills in the months ahead. A huge well done to all pupils involved—and thank you to the staff and families, with a special mention to Mrs Couch, who supported them along the way.

Results:

Rougemont teams scored Top 3 in 3 sections out of 51 teams across Wales:

Verbal Presentation: *Team Sector GP*

Team Identity: *Team Accelerators*

Sponsorship & Marketing: *Team Yield*

Rougemont's engines are already revving for next year!

The Benefits OF READING

As a young child, there was nothing better than curling up on the sofa with a good book in hand. Hours would pass in the blink of an eye, as I joined a world of imagination. But, for many, this reality is no more: children waste away on screens, adults are tied to their desks and, as a teenager, I often struggle to find time to immerse myself in reading with the mountains of homework stacked up beside me. However, I do believe books might be exactly what this world needs.

For those still in education, reading has been proven to boost performance, time and time again. Those who read at least once a week are twice as likely to get into their first-choice university. These scholarly benefits extend far beyond the essay-based subjects – the pass-rate for GCSE Maths among readers is nearly 20% higher than that of non-readers. Additionally, even those no longer in formal education reap the rewards of reading; the Reading Agency has found reading to reduce the time needed for adults to learn a new skill by up to 40%.

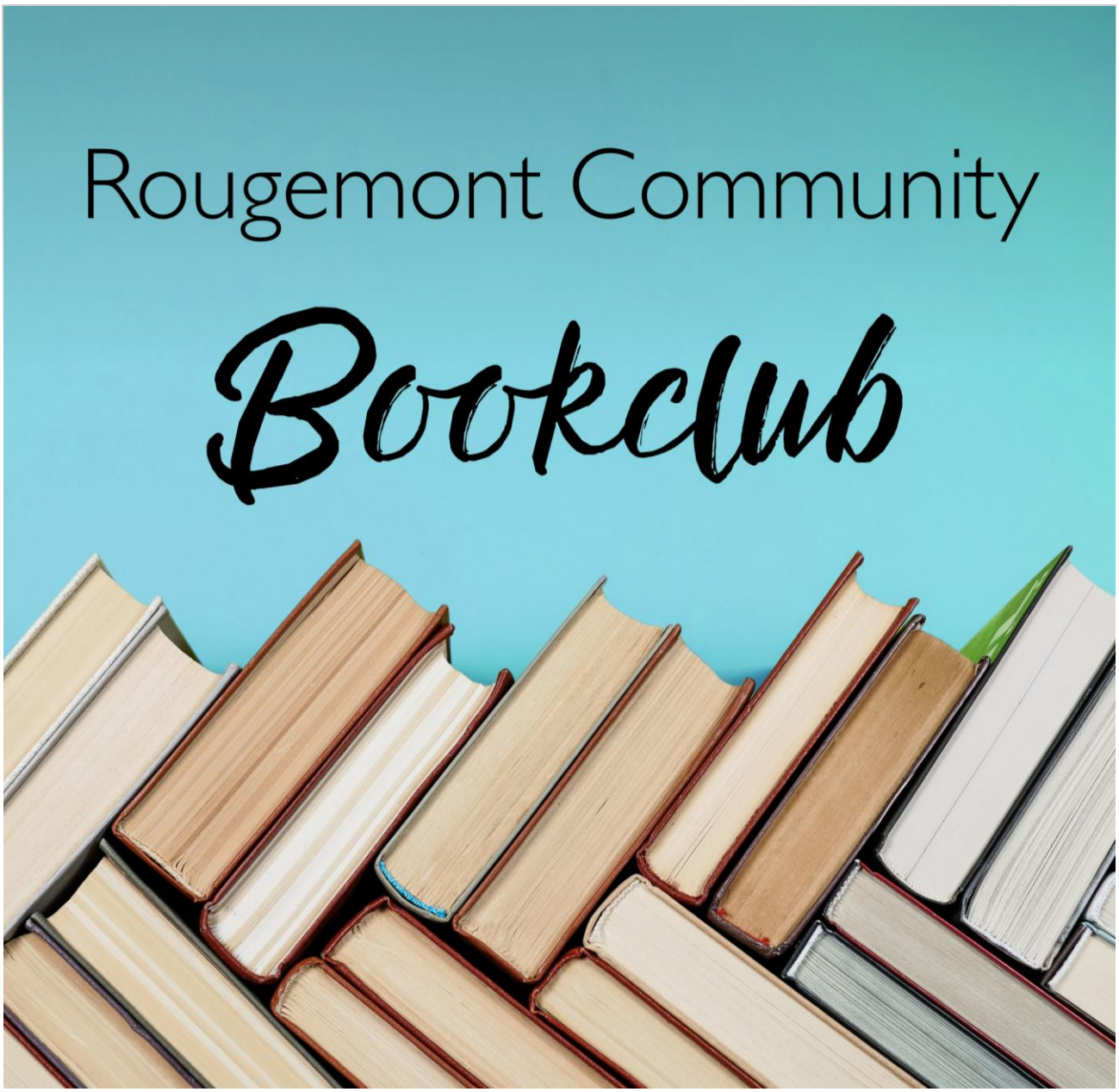
In addition, this brain-boosting activity doesn't have to 'break the bank'; in the UK, the average person lives a mere 10 minute walk away from their local library. Libraries make reading accessible for all. They sometimes carry millions of books, thousands of e-books, and hundreds of e-zines – all free to access. It's no wonder nearly 15 million people visited a library in 2018 alone. Another great aspect of public libraries is how they act as a haven for communities: children can roam these palaces filled with fun and exciting adventures and their parents can catch up on work, all while the helpful librarian pushes a struggling teen to keep reading and progressing. With this in mind, there's no question as to why nearly 80% of Welsh people consider their local library a 'hub of community'.

However, some people see reading as "foolish" and claim it detaches us from reality. This could not be further from the truth. When children begin to read, their brains are taught to distinguish between the real world and the story. Instead of 'getting lost in fiction', they are able to organise their minds more efficiently, leading to reduced stress in later life. In addition, books carry new perspectives. Those who read more often are significantly less likely to hold prejudice against others, and are more compassionate than their peers.

Then there's the issue of phones. 'For you pages' warp our reality and numb our brains with constant dopamine. This destroys our neuroplasticity – our brain's ability to form new connections – and makes us anxious and stressed. Reading, on the other hand, does the opposite. The gradual build of the story helps regulate our dopamine, and allows our brains to stay calm.

It's for these reasons that I believe there's nothing we need more today than reading. While technology fights for our attention, libraries and books offer us a safe space to unwind and improve ourselves. Starting these habits can feel daunting, but steady progress builds change. A good first step would be extending the Welsh government's reading initiative in schools. Today, every primary school in Wales is required to promote reading up to Year 4, but this is not enough. Students should be pushed to find their own books, so that they actually want to read.

Hadi M. (Year 11)



Rougemont Community Book Club – Calling all parents!

Do you enjoy reading and want to chat about what you read with like minded people? Would you like to be introduced to new and different books? Have you ever been a member of or wanted to join a book club?

To celebrate the NLT Year of Reading, we are 'going all in' and reaching out to our Rougemont community to see if there is sufficient interest to start a book club for parents. We would love to host an informal gathering of fellow readers in our school refectory so invite anyone who may be interested to complete the form below to let us know.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdzvDFhsIXzNXzrywVCClrsxS3NhWjvyToQWGVEncOnXRUbew/viewform?usp=publish-editor

CAREERS FAIR 2026

Watch the highlights here

This week, pupils from Years 9 to 12 #gotcurious about their future pathways by attending our annual careers fair.

A wide variety of business leaders across South Wales hosted stands at the fair, ready to talk with our pupils who were keen to learn more about the array of opportunities on offer.

From creative and digital industries to STEM corporations, legal and medical professionals to public services, pupils were able to learn more about apprenticeship programmes and work experience opportunities all designed to help create their personal pathway to success.

We are incredibly grateful to all the businesses and organisations who gave their time and expertise to help shape the pathways and futures of the next generation.

CAREERS FAIR 2026

Watch the highlights here

An array of businesses exhibited at this year's fair.

We were delighted to welcome back alumni Max, Harvey and Alex who all shared their pathways with our pupils.

Red, our School dog, particularly enjoyed the Careers Fair and is already considering a new career as a pilot!

INFANT & NURSERY WELLY

A welcome break in the rain helped make our 'Welly Walk' a huge success!

This week Nursery and Reception hosted a 'Welly Walk', where parents joined our pupils in a walk to our brand new Outdoor Classroom, to enjoy a variety of activities in the sunshine.

A break in the inclement weather meant that pupils, together with their families and teachers, could explore the new Outdoor Classroom which has been specially developed in our woodland area at the bottom of our site to enhance the outdoor learning experience of our pupils.

Planting flowers and exploring the natural world around them made for a fun afternoon and we were thankful that the rain stayed away!

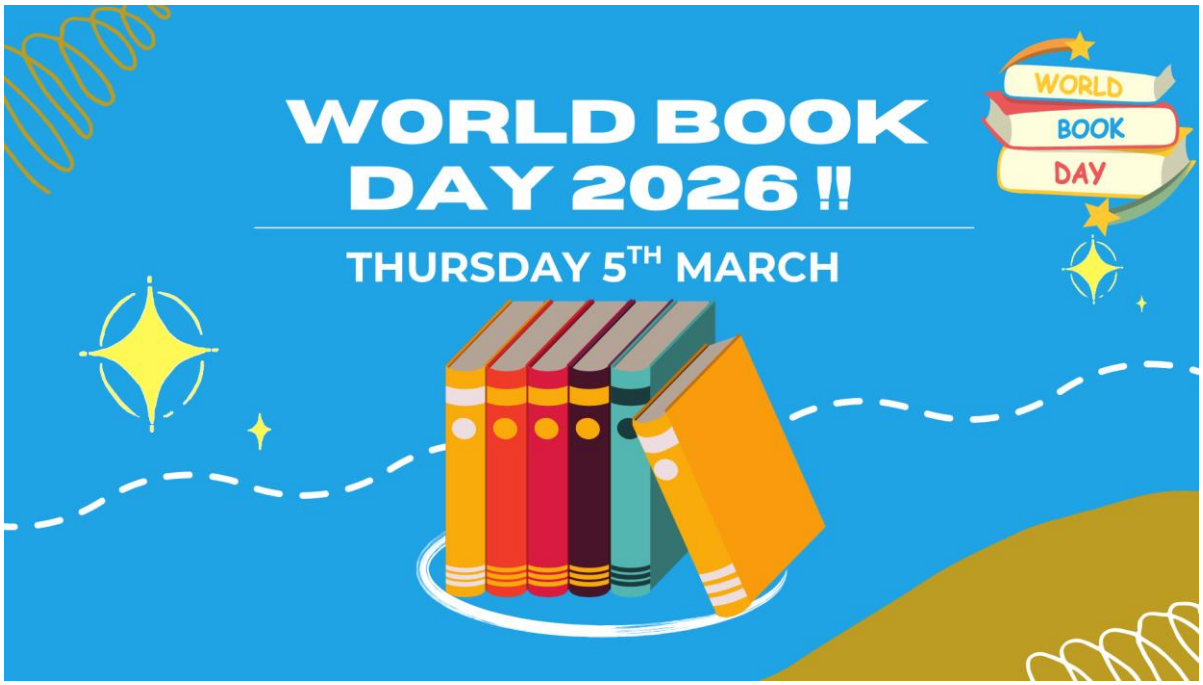
The great outdoors play a significant role in our Infant curriculum with opportunities to take learning outdoors in abundance.

Our 90-acre site is a safe haven for our pupils to develop a love for the outdoors.

It was lovely to see so many parents join us to explore our new Outdoor Classroom!

LOOKING AHEAD

What's on next week at Rougemont



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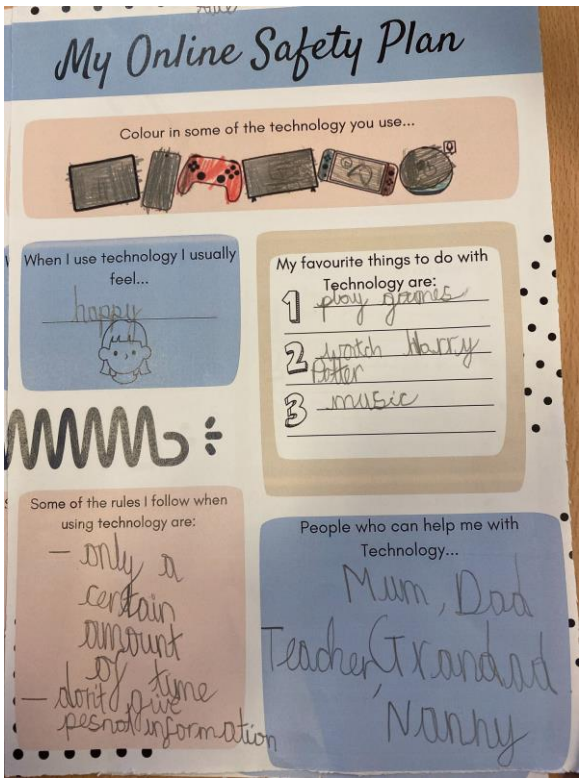

SAFER INTERNET WEEK

Safer Internet Week took place earlier this month and serves as the focal point for promoting safer, more responsible technology use among children and young people worldwide.

All pupils from Infants to Sixth Form have been actively participating in activities and assemblies based on this year's theme, 'Smart tech, safe choices - exploring the safe and responsible use of AI'.

Pupils in Infants read a story and thought about how to stay safe using an iPad and how a trusted adult can help them with anything that may go wrong. They then sorted things that were safe, such as 'playing educational games' and things that were unsafe, such as 'watching a video which has fighting'.

Infant pupils also created an 'Online Safety Plan' discussing their favourite thing to do with technology, rules to follow and who can help them with technology. Good work, Rougemont!

Next week, during our Prep and Senior Eisteddfods, we will be supporting Velindre's *Wear Red for Velindre* fundraiser.

More details are shared in this week's Head's Study!

GYMNASTICS DISPLAY

A dynamic display of agility and precision from our Infant pupils this week.

This week, our Infant pupils welcomed parents for their Gymnastics Display.

Pupils have been working very hard with subject specialist teacher Mrs Mountford during their weekly PE lessons, to improve their forward and backward rolls, balancing, jumping and landing skills.

"This was a fantastic morning for the parents – what a brilliant display!" – Year 2 parent

SPORT SPOTLIGHT

SPORT SPOTLIGHT LAUNCH

Shining a spotlight on our elite athletes.

We are excited to launch our new Sport Spotlight Series on our @RougemontSport platform to highlight the talents of our young sportspeople.

This week, Lottie our GB Skier shares her pathway to success.

PUPIL ACHIEVEMENTS

News from across the School

Congratulations to Year 9 pupil Maddie who won an U18 Regional Singles tennis title on the weekend. Having come through tough rounds and then Quarters and Semi finals, Maddie went on to win the Final 6-4,6-3!

Welsh Schools National Cross Country Championships Congratulations to Tom who won the Middle boys (Y10 & 11) race.

In the Year 7 girls race, Eva came 33rd, Junior boys (Y8 & 9): Elis came 15th (team silver), Senior boys (Y12 & 13): Sam came 17th and Oscar 22nd, and they also helped South East Wales pick up team silver.

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News from across the School

Charlotte (Year 4) and Molly (Year 7), were nominated for a Borough award for their roles in the AAODS production of *Annie*. They both won their categories up against a lot of competition from many other Monmouthshire theatre societies!

Molly : Best actress in a leading role under 18

Charlotte: Best supporting actress under 18

The girls have also both been nominated for a NODA award and we wish them all the best as they attend the awards ceremony in Noreth Wales this April.

Well done to Year 11 pupils Swar and Bumi who competed in the USW ACE Cyber Security Competition Final this week.

Well done to our fantastic senior pupils who passed their exams before Christmas.

A huge congratulations to you all. What a terrific achievement!