



Rufford C. of E. Primary School

'Together in Faith and Learning'

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Headteacher: Mrs S.E. Cookson

Friday 11th September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

At Rufford C. of E. Primary School, the wellbeing and safety of our children are always our highest priorities. Following careful consideration, research and liaison with other headteachers, we have decided that children can no longer bring sweets, chocolates, cakes or other treats into school to share with their classmates on their birthdays.

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in awareness of food allergies and the very serious risks they can pose. The introduction of Benedict's Law from September 2026 has further highlighted the importance of schools taking every possible step to protect children with allergies and ensure that all pupils can participate safely in school life. Even with the best intentions, it can be difficult to guarantee that shared treats are safe for every child.

We are also mindful of the social pressures that can arise from birthday treats. Families can sometimes feel obliged to spend money on sweets or gifts for a whole class, and we recognise that this may not be possible or desirable for everyone. We want every child to feel equally valued on their birthday, regardless of what their family can provide.

We also recognise the important role schools and families play in promoting healthy lifestyles. Reducing the amount of sugary treats shared during the school day supports our efforts to encourage healthy eating habits and good oral health. Frequent consumption of sweets can contribute to tooth decay, which remains one of the most common childhood health issues. By choosing not to bring sweets into school for birthdays, we can help reinforce positive messages about looking after our bodies and our teeth.

Please be assured that birthdays will continue to be recognised in school. Each class has its own special birthday traditions and ways of making children feel celebrated on their big day. Whether this is being the classroom helper, receiving a birthday certificate, enjoying a special song, or taking part in another class tradition, we will ensure that every child's birthday remains a memorable and happy occasion, without the need for sweets or treats. I have even heard that Mrs Fairclough has invested in her very own birthday chair cover! Fingers crossed it will be on my chair for when the time comes.

We appreciate your support as we continue to create a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment for all our pupils. If you have any questions about this change, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs S. E. Cookson

S Cookson
Headteacher
Rufford C. of E, Primary School