



Dear parents/ carers

It has been lovely to see so many of you attending class assemblies and the recent parent evenings. I hope you all enjoyed the tasting sessions hosted by Mrs Coombs, our school cook. It gives you a flavour of what is on offer for the children.

Chicks



We are back into the swing of this half of term with lots of events to enhance the children's learning. This week we have more eggs arriving in Reception, which hopefully will hatch into **chicks**.

Our last lot of chicks are thriving and living on a smallholding. This process always sparks off lots of questions from the children who are fascinated as they watch the first cracks in the eggs through to lots of cheeping chicks. I'm sure you will hear lots about them. This encompasses Science, personal, social, emotional and health education (PSHE) and RE. The Friends of Swing Gate are paying for this experience. Thank you!

Music workshops and Zumba



On Tuesday we have **music workshops** going on throughout the day for all children - it will be very lively, loud and great fun. I'm sure we will all be moving to the rhythm by the end of the day. On Wednesday we will be joining in **Zumba workshops** during the day. These activities have been paid for from renting out our school hall. As far as possible we will always try to pay for as many "extra" activities as we can. The children always remember them, and they make up their bank of memories from school days.

School Uniform



Autumn has definitely arrived. Please could all children wear coats to

school and sensible outdoor shoes as described on our school uniform list on our website. It is very important for the children to wear the correct uniform, it gives them a sense of belonging to "Swing Gate", rather than wearing an interpretation of our uniform. All children need plimsolls to wear indoors. This protects our carpets and floors. All clothes need to be labelled and shoes named. Thank you so much for your support.

Staff Absence

Mrs James has been absent for a few weeks and is unwell. As she could be away for a little while, her support work with children has been picked up by Miss Turnham and Mrs Nethercoat. Mr Coverdale is supporting "Hedgehogs" as Teaching Assistant. We wish her well.

Library



We have been looking at our library and chatting to the Friends of Swing Gate. The library is in need of a complete refit with an overhaul of the present stock - new carpet, new furniture and new books! The Friends have kindly agreed to fund this project. This will benefit all children in school. We will be making it much more accessible to younger children. It is a large project, but it will be great when it gets going. We will be starting by sifting through our present stock. Watch this space!

Poetry Competition



The poetry competition was a great success and we would like to thank Mr Halls, Head Teacher at Thomas Coram and Mrs Hicks for being our judges. A big well done to everyone for taking part and particularly to the winners!



Book Fair



Thank you to all those who helped and attended our annual book fair we raised an impressive £186.47 which we have turned into new books for the school.

Opening and closing class doors.



All staff are using their school laptops to make sure we are all opening and closing our doors at the same time. Key stage 1 start at 8.35 a.m. We do everything possible to make sure we open on time. Occasionally, if we have a supply teacher, or a visitor to school, there may be a slight delay. However, we are punctual for the majority of the time, as we want the children to complete their marking for improvement. Once doors are closed, children who are late have to go round to the main Reception area to sign in. We also try to be prompt when opening doors in the afternoon. If we have a visitor to assembly as we did last week, there may be a slight delay - unintentionally. This is very rare. Our teachers often go straight into meetings after school, therefore it is school policy that if there are no more parents at the door and we still have children waiting, they are taken up to the office area with an adult where they can be collected by parents/ carers. This enables staff to prepare for the meetings and ensures the children are safe, warm and secure. We quite often have children waiting for more than ten minutes after school has finished. We will always put their welfare and safety first.

Christmas Presentations



Christmas presentation dates and times are up on the school website and details of timings were on the previous newsletter. This can be accessed on the school website. We also have some hard copies in the Reception area.

Christmas Jumper Day

This year we have decided to support Save the Children with a Christmas jumper day on Friday 12th December. Children can wear a Christmas jumper to school for a donation. We don't expect you to buy a jumper especially for this, an old jumper with a Christmas theme drawn, stuck or sewn on will be perfect. I believe Blue Peter have ideas on their website.

School Forum

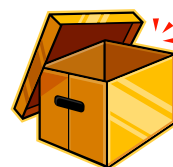


The School forum is meeting on Wednesday 12th November, if you have any items for the agenda, please email them to Nicki di Guiseppe - address on school website.

Parent view.

We try to gather as many parent views as possible, and so carry out a survey every April with results published on the school website. These are carried out and analysed by an independent company. The outcomes have been very pleasing, although we cannot please all the people all of the time even if we do try very hard. Parent view, is another means of capturing parental opinions and views. This goes alongside our pupil and parent surveys, parent forum and pupil subject surveys. Please log onto the website and search for Swing Gate and leave your views. www.parentview.gov.uk

Play equipment - storage



You would never believe that every single skipping rope and piece of equipment was safely stored neatly and tidily in storage containers that closed. It appears that every single container is now broken and the equipment needs to be tidied up and sorted out. We are going to invest in a metal shed and put up metal shelving so that adults can easily access play equipment. In the meantime we are going



to dismantle everything outside the hedgehog's classroom. We buy new play equipment at least annually. Hopefully a better storage solution will solve some of the issues.

Class assembly



We look forward to welcoming parents and carers from Owls to their class assembly this Friday (14th November) starting at 8.50am.

School Website

We are in the process of updating the school website and have hit some technical difficulties. We have been assured that it will be back to normal this afternoon.

What happens if we need to close due to very very bad weather!



In the event of severe weather, the school follows guidelines laid down by county. We do absolutely everything we can to keep school open, but should circumstances dictate closure, we will

send a text to the first listed carer for each child in the school. In addition a message will be posted on Twitter (@SwingGateSchool). Information will also be available on the Herts Direct School Closure website: www.hertsdirect.org and the local radio station BBC Three Counties.

In the event of closure, school work will be posted on the school website, www.swinggate.herts.sch.uk in the Children section, under the appropriate class. The website also has useful links, games and activities for pupils which are linked to the national curriculum and link to areas covered in school.

Decisions about closure are taken as early as possible to give as much warning as possible, whilst not acting too early to allow for any improvement in weather conditions. **Please can you ensure that the school office has upto the minute contact details.**

Just a reminder



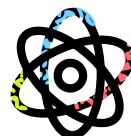
Pupils are not allowed to play on the adventure trail or field before or after school. Please can your child / children, stay with you whilst waiting. Mrs Hardwick has also asked me to remind parents that equipment in the Foundation stage playground has been put out as part of the learning for the morning. Please do not allow children to play with it before school.

Pineapples for "MIND"



Mrs Coombs our school cook is having her hair styled into a pineapple in December to raise money for MIND which is a charity working for better Mental Healthcare services. Believe me it looks impressive in the photo. If you would like to support her please go to www.justgiving.com and search for Zoe's fruits for the fruitcake.

Clothes collection for Science



Once again we are having a collection of old clothes. The amount we collect is then "converted" into science equipment for Swing Gate. Our collection date is Thursday 27th November. We will be sending out collection bags next week. Please bring your full bags back on 27th November and not before as we have no space to keep them before this! Thanks.

Tubs4Tablets

Don't forget we have signed up to Flora's Tubs for Tablets campaign. Please eat as much Flora and Stork as possible. Thanks.