



Dear Parents/ Carers,



We have just completed another successful Math's week at Swing Gate. All the children seemed to really enjoy the extra focus on Math's. I hope you enjoyed the Math's workshop and the insight it gave us into the approach to Math's within an Infant school. If you have any further questions, please contact class teachers or Miss Parry who is our Math's leader in school. You can email admin@swinggate.herts.sch.uk. No question is too silly!

More information about the new Math's Curriculum can be found on our school website. The message within the new curriculum is depth and breadth - ensuring depth of understanding. Don't forget you can also find information about new assessment systems within the County on our school website. As our letter said a couple of weeks ago, Year 1 are being assessed against the new system whilst Year 2 will still be assessed against attainment targets and "levels" This is the same nationwide.

General Election



The general election will be held on Thursday 5th May. Despite attempting to put forward a case for an alternative venue to be found, local Election Officers still prefer the Swing Gate site. As the school hall will need to be used for a General Election due to the higher numbers of people expected to vote, **we will need to close the school for children on May 7th**. We are unable to guarantee their safety when the local population have greater access to the school, and the site is unsecured. As the school hall is used as a dining room, it also impacts on provision of school dinners. Please accept my apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Parent forum



Take a look at the parents page of the school website to see the minutes of the last Parents forum. The next meeting for parent forum reps will be held on Tuesday 3rd February - tomorrow! Quite a few questions come up around school lunches. Please take a moment to go through the menus we send home to you. Mrs Coombs, our school cook is also very willing to answer any queries you may have. We have even cooked lots of the vegetables encountered by the children, within the classroom in taster sessions. Mrs Coombs also puts on taster sessions at some parent evenings.

Parents evening



Parents evenings will take place for all classes on Tuesday 10th March (3.30 - 6pm) and Thursday 12th March (6-8.30 pm). This is with the exception of OWLS. As Miss Burkhalter will be leaving at half term, she will be holding separate parents evenings before half term. A letter giving dates and times has been sent to all parents of children in Owls. We look forward to seeing you .

Fond Farewells - Mrs James



I am sad to say Mrs James , a valued Teaching Assistant will not be returning to school. As you know she has been unwell. Mrs James has made a significant contribution to the life of Swing Gate School. She has supported many children and staff in her time with us. I know the children have really benefitted from her enthusiasm and conscientious approach to everything she does. We would like to say a very big "Thank you!". We wish Mrs James all the best for the future. Staff will be presenting her with a leaving gift. Mrs Britton is supporting Year 1 Hedgehogs in her place.



Library update



Mrs Howe has sorted all the books in the library. We are now left with those more suitable for an infant library. We will be looking at different library layouts in the next few weeks. This is a big project, so once again thank you to the FOSG. We look forward to it being lighter, brighter and better set up for infants. We will also be buying more book stock.

Scooter rack



We have a scooter rack, kindly purchased by the FOSG which will be in place soon. I am sure it will be well used.

PE/ Sport



Years 1 and 2 will each be enjoying three weeks of Sports coaching in addition to their normal PE sessions in the next few weeks. This will expose the children to some different sports and give teachers an opportunity to extend their skills. As far as possible normal games lessons take place outside. Please make sure children have old tracksuit bottoms and tops to keep warm. I am sure the children will really enjoy even more PE experiences.

We are hoping to get together with Year 2 from Victoria school to participate in a couple of sports coaching events in the summer term. This will be part of a wider transition process.

Mr Halls - Head at Thomas Coram School, Mrs Kernohan-Neely - Head at Victoria and myself meet up regularly to discuss ways in which we can ensure an easy and informed transition for our Year 2 pupils.

Reading



We enjoy working in partnership with parents/ carers in supporting children's reading. We would be very grateful if you could sign and comment in your children's reading records when you listen or share reading with your child. It really helps us to see if they are furthering their skills at home. If your child reads from any other reading material - please comment. It is always good to see their interests within a wider range of material. Reading skills within school are taught within guided reading sessions. Children also read individually according to need.

Winter weather



The children spend lunchtime outside unless it is pouring with rain. Please can you make sure they have outdoor coats, gloves/ mittens, scarves and hats in this cold weather. We have numerous pairs of gloves in lost property please come and take a look. **Naming all items ensures they all get back to the right owners!** All children should have plimsolls to wear inside to prevent carpets from being covered with mud. As all children will spend some time in the school day sitting on rugs and carpets, we would like to make sure they are not sitting on muddy, wet floors. These should also be named.

Refurbishment



We are just about to replace our hall and kitchen windows under our rolling programme of refurbishment. It should be more energy efficient, brighter and lighter.



**Thank
You**

Thank you to Mrs Halsey and Ms Beattie for sorting out all the playground equipment. We have moved this temporarily whilst we sort out sheds and storage containers. We will be replacing these with one large shed with shelving which should be a more robust solution to "wayward" play equipment. We can then order more playground games.

Coming up !



Class assemblies - I am so sorry I have had to miss some class assemblies. I set out the diary making sure I am available to come to them all, and inevitably meetings, courses and conferences then crop up. At a time of so many changes in education, the number of meetings, updates and courses seems to be on the increase. It is always sad to miss the children presenting their learning. I hope you have enjoyed them.

Owls - Class assembly Friday 6th February

Half term. We finish at normal time 3.05 p.m