



DIARY DATES

January 2024

Mon 8th

First day of spring term – see you all at 08:30!

Thurs 11th

09:30 Open Morning for Reception 2024/25 Admissions

Fri 12th

09:00 Parent Forum

FoSG Christmas Shop

Thurs 11th

09:30 Open Morning for Reception/Nursery 2024/25 Admissions

Fri 12th

Premier Sports Workshop

Mon 15th

Deadline for Reception 2024 Admissions

Visit from Berkhamsted Fire Station

Mon 22nd

09:30 Open Morning for Nursery 2024/25 Admissions

Tues 23rd

Reception screening – School Nursing

February 2024

Fri 2nd

NSPCC Number Day

Fri 9th

09:30 Open Morning for Reception/Nursery 2024/25 Admissions

For further dates visit [the school website](https://www.swinggate.herts.sch.uk).

20th December 2023

And that's a wrap! We have had the loveliest build up to the holidays this year and wish all our school community a peaceful, well-earned break. We look forward to welcoming everyone back to school in 2024!

Christmas Carol Concert

What a treat to see so many families at our Christmas Carol Concert led beautifully by the Year 2 children.



Christmas Dinner Day

On Tuesday the whole school sat down together for our Christmas lunch. Shelley and Fay, our award winning kitchen team, cooked over 170 lunches for the children and staff. Thank to them for all their hard work and delivering a delicious feast.



We were also joined by our wonderful volunteers, Governors and FoSG Trustees as a thank you for all they do to support our school and the children.

Panto!

The children were all enthralled by the pantomime this morning, 'The Littlest Elf'. Watching the children's faces light up as they enjoyed the show was a delight,

they all got very involved cheering and joining in.

Thank you to FoSG for making it possible.



Open Mornings

We are proud to continue to be a 'Good' school following our Ofsted inspection in December 2022.

Our final Reception focussed Open Mornings are at 09:30 on:

- Thursday 11th January.

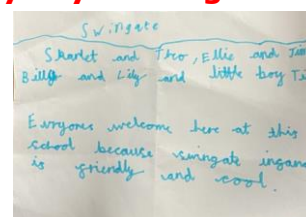
We have also announced our Nursery Open Morning dates:

- Thursday 11th January (combined with Reception)
- Monday 22nd January
- Friday 9th February.

These take place ahead of the online application system opening on Monday 26th February. The deadline to apply is Thursday 28th March. To reserve a place, [contact the office](#).

A poem by Lily in Badgers

We wanted to share a fantastic poem that Lily in



Badgers wrote this week:

'Scarlet and Thea, Ellie and Jim, Billy and Lily and little boy Tim. Everyone's welcome here at this school, because Swing Gate Infants is friendly and cool.'

Well done Lily.



Pause for thought

"What is Christmas?

*It is tenderness for the past,
courage for the present,
hope for the future.*

Unknown

External After School Clubs

Booking for the after school clubs are live! Most are nearly full including the new Art Club. We recommend contacting the provider ASAP if you are hoping to book your child a place. A reminder of the clubs is below and the details on how to book were sent last week by email:

- Mon – Karate (Y1 & Y2)
- Tues – Streetdance (YR – Y2)
- Wed - Game On Football (Y1)
- Wed - 'Art Venturers' Art Club (YR - Y2)
- Thurs - Game On Football (Y2)
- Fri - Lego Engineering Club (Y1 & Y2)
- Friday - Gymnastics Club (YR - Y2)

School Learning

In Voles the children decided to go camping. They have hung a shelter from the tree, found seats and have created a shower. When finding their seats they were given a challenge to find a seat that was a square, circle, triangle or rectangle! They gathered sticks and got the fire ready. They made and ate homemade yoghurt and drank hot chocolate. They also cooked dampers over the flames.



Delivering Special Provision Locally (DPSL)

The Spring 2024 Parenting Courses and Support Brochure for Dacorum is now available to be viewed or download on the DSPL website [here](#).

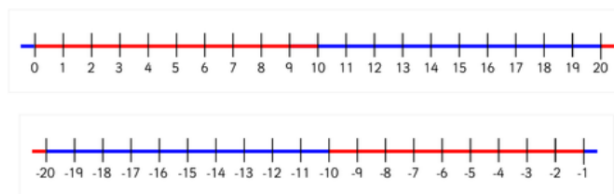
Curriculum Corner

Maths mastery for all!

Number lines

When learning mathematics at Swing Gate School, the children develop a conceptual understanding through the Concrete, Pictorial and Abstract (CPA) approach where children handle physical resources, use pictorial representations and record using traditional abstract numbers and symbols. To help you understand this approach, we will explore some of the key pieces of equipment and representations that we use at school. This week, we are looking at number lines.

Number Lines



Number lines can be used from the Foundation Stage, where children learn to recognise and order numbers. They may be given a blank number line and be asked to put numbers on it.

In Key Stage One, number lines can be used to calculate. For example a child might be asked to solve $7 + 2 = ?$, where they would mark 7 on the number line and then count on two until they get to 9.

Number lines can also be used to solve multiplication and division questions by jumping along the number line in repeated steps. To solve $5 \times 4 = ?$, a child could jump along a number line in 4s five times until they reach the number 20.



At home, number lines can be drawn on the ground using chalk or on paper. You can also search for different types of number lines, for example when looking at house numbers on the road or at the divisions on measuring tapes and weighing scales. Playing board games like snakes and ladders is also a good, early introduction to the concept of moving forwards and backwards on a number line.

Wellbeing in Action

Healthy Eating

Snowflake Pretzels

Ingredients

- 200g white chocolate chips for cooking plus 50g extra to make lollies
- 32 mini pretzels (about 45g)
- white or silver sprinkles
- 8 paper lolly sticks (optional)



Method

- 1) Put a sheet of baking parchment or a non-stick baking tray. Melt the chocolate carefully in a microwave or in a bowl set over a pan of simmering water. Turn off the heat but leave the bowl on the pan. Add the pretzels and stir well.
- 2) Lift the pretzels out of the chocolate with a fork, shaking them so the excess chocolate drips off, put them on the tray and freeze for 5 mins to set. Dip the pretzels in the chocolate again, then lay four at a time on the tray and push them together, with the pointy ends in the centre, to make a snowflake shape. Add a blob more chocolate in the middle of each. Before they set, decorate with the sprinkles. Leave somewhere cold to set.
- 3) If you want to make the pretzel snowflakes into lollipops, melt the extra 50g chocolate as before and make eight well-spaced blobs, the size of a 1p coin, on some non-stick liner. Put a paper lolly stick

on each blob so one end is in the chocolate, then press a pretzel snowflake gently on top and leave to set.

Mindfulness

Seasonal free or low-cost local fun for families ...

£1 Polar bear trails

The Natural History museum at Tring are running polar expeditions around their galleries throughout December and January to find 12 lost polar bears hiding among their displays. Plus, on your adventure, you'll discover what animals live with polar bears in the Arctic. Purchase tickets (£1) from the shop on the day. No pre-booking required. Natural History Museum at Tring, Akeman Street, Tring, HP23 6AP



There's a free woodland Santa's grotto at The Marlowes Shopping Centre in Hemel Hempstead from the 18th November – 24th December. Saturdays & Sundays plus daily from the 18th December. Includes a craft experience, meeting Santa and some reindeer food to take home. Pre-booking required.

And finally...

What a wonderful way to finish the year with the fantastic wishes the children shared at the Carol Service. Their requests for themselves were generally very modest but their wishes for the world were filled with big hope. These included the end to homelessness and pollution and love and kindness for everyone.

Have a lovely festive break!

Francesca Gallagher (Mrs)
Headteacher