



## DIARY DATES

### February 2021

**Feb 15<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup>**

Half term (school closed to all)

### Feb 22<sup>nd</sup>

Nursery 2021/22  
Online Admissions  
Open (New Date)

### Feb 25<sup>th</sup>

20:00 Raising Boys –  
an online seminar by  
Steve Biddulph

### March 2021

#### March 2<sup>nd</sup>

Virtual 'Meet the  
Headteacher' Open  
Session – Nursery  
2021/22 admission

#### March 4<sup>th</sup>

20:00 Raising Girls –  
an online seminar by  
Steve Biddulph

#### March 5<sup>th</sup>

Parent Forum Meeting

#### March 6<sup>th</sup>

World Book Day

#### March 23<sup>rd</sup>

Perform Drama  
Workshops – whole  
school in Bubbles

#### March 26<sup>th</sup>

Last day of term (early  
close at 13:30)

### April 2021

#### April 12<sup>th</sup>

INSET Day – school  
closed to children

#### April 13<sup>th</sup>

First day of term

### May 2021

#### May 6<sup>th</sup>

Polling Day – school  
closed to children

## 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021

We've made it to half term! Well done to the children, staff and parents for an amazing unprecedented term of learning.

### Polling Day school closure

On Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> of May school will be closed to our children as we are a designated polling station for the [Hertfordshire County Council and Crime Commissioner elections](#). We wanted to reassure all our families that polling staff and voters will only use the hall and main reception areas which will be cleaned that evening. The classrooms will remain closed all day and this event poses no concern for the children's return on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> of May.

### Coronavirus update

Thank you for playing your part and helping to keep our school safe by following current Government guidelines during the national lockdown.

It's so important that we don't become complacent during half-term so we can all enjoy the break and hopefully come back to either remote, or face to face learning (for children considered vulnerable or children of critical workers) safely.

Hertfordshire County Council have asked us to share their 'Play your part' leaflet with you as a reminder of what we all can and cannot do during the lockdown

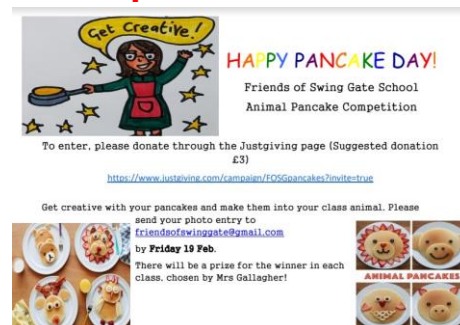


restrictions. Please take the time to read it and remind your children that for now, we all have to play our part to protect ourselves, our families and our friends. The leaflet has been attached to this ParentMail (soon to be School Gateway).

### COVID-19 results over half term

If you or a family member test positive for COVID-19 over half term, please email the school office on [admin@swinggate.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@swinggate.herts.sch.uk). The inbox will be monitored on a daily basis over the holidays.

### FoSG Update



To celebrate Pancake Day on 16<sup>th</sup> February, Friends of Swing Gate are holding an animal pancake making competition. Why not get creative and have a go at making a pancake shaped as the Swing Gate animal of your class! To take part, please send a photo of your child's pancake creation to [friendsofswinggate@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofswinggate@gmail.com) by Friday 19<sup>th</sup> February. If you would like to, you can also use our [link](#) to donate to FoSG (suggested donation £3). There will be a small prize for the winner in each class, these will be chosen by Mrs Gallagher. Thank you so much for your support.

*Friends of Swing Gate*



## Pause for thought



## World Book Day – Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March

At Swing Gate we have a three-year cycle of ways to celebrate World Book Day and we are now in line with Thomas Coram School. These are:

- dressing up as a book character
- wearing pyjamas and sharing a favourite bedtime story
- making a 'sandwich board' to represent the cover of a favourite book.

This year the children will be dressing up as a book character. We hope to make this as easy as possible for families, especially with the pressures that remote learning is adding. Please don't spend money ordering costumes online or make non-essential journeys to the shops for your child's costume. Instead, a simple, homemade costume or something recycled from a dressing-up box is all your child needs. It might even be an accessory like a hat, a crown, a mask or even face paints. The teachers are planning many lovely book-related activities for Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March and are organising a Book Week. There will be more information closer to the time on Google Classroom.

## School learning

Voles made pancakes that they then enjoyed eating and also had playdough pancake races. Here is Mr Coverdale acting as class chef and Holly and Finley mid race.



Reception's learning theme has been 'wild animals'. During child initiated play, they made animal masks. Here is Harry in Squirrels wearing his cheetah mask.



For their literacy lessons, they made pancakes on Monday and completed a task of 'mindful eating' to think of adjectives

to describe the taste, appearance and smell of pancakes. You can see Mrs Halsey flipping one of the pancakes!



## Remote learning

Please remember to keep sending your pictures in to [admin@swinggate.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@swinggate.herts.sch.uk). We love seeing them!

Here is Renu in Squirrels embarking on a town wide search for the missing pancake (!) as part of Reception's literacy task.



## University of York Research Project

**Contact:**  
[SleepStudy@York.ac.uk](mailto:SleepStudy@York.ac.uk)  
07548389133

**Website:**  
<https://sites.google.com/york.ac.uk/the-omg-sleep-study/home>

**Social Media:**  
<https://twitter.com/OmgSleep>  
<https://www.facebook.com/sleepstudy334/>

**Are you a parent with a child under 6?**

Research needs you!

We're carrying out research into memory and sleep in parents.

You would be required to complete a memory game on your phone and answer some questions about your daily activities.

You would be entered into 3 prize draws if you complete the study.

The Department of Psychology at the University of York are running a fully online research study aimed at better understanding and raising awareness of the cognitive impact of the postpartum period on new parents and have asked us to invite our parents and carers to take part. Please see the attached flyer for further information.



## eSafety Parent Talk

For anyone that was unable to join the eSafety Parent Talk on Wednesday, you can now access the recording of the talk by clicking on to this Teams link. This is for use by families of Swing Gate, Victoria and Thomas Coram only, and should not be shared on to third parties. One parent commented *"It was very informative and highlights so many important safety issues that could easily be overlooked."*

## Vote for Balanceability

We are delighted that Club Sport will be back to run their Balanceability bike skills sessions for Voles and Reception Classes in the summer term. Club Sport have asked us to share the exciting news that they have been nominated for an award for 'best sports club' for their Balanceability sessions. They said "In the 10 years Club Sport has been running I don't think we have ever been nominated for an award so it would mean so much to us if we can win one for our fantastic Balanceability programme which has had great feedback from schools and parents. It would be great if you could kindly vote for us (we are 'Club Sport Balanceability')". Here is the [link](#).

## The National Football Museum's Children's Football Writing Festival

This year the NFM Children's Football Writing Festival is going digital and will run from 15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> February. The festival sees four authors reading from their books at 11.00am each day. Designed to spark the imagination of football crazy youngsters, the talks will be broadcast on **YouTube** and **Facebook**. Each will last around 10 minutes. The festival will also include simple writing challenges to encourage children to pick up a pen and transfer some of their football flair to paper.

Half-term fixture list kicks off with Tom Palmer reading from *Rocky of the Rovers* with authors Eve Ainsworth, Seth Burkett and Matt Oldfield of the *Ultimate Football Heroes* series, sharing their stories too.

## Wellbeing in Action

### Pea and Sweetcorn muffins



#### INGREDIENTS

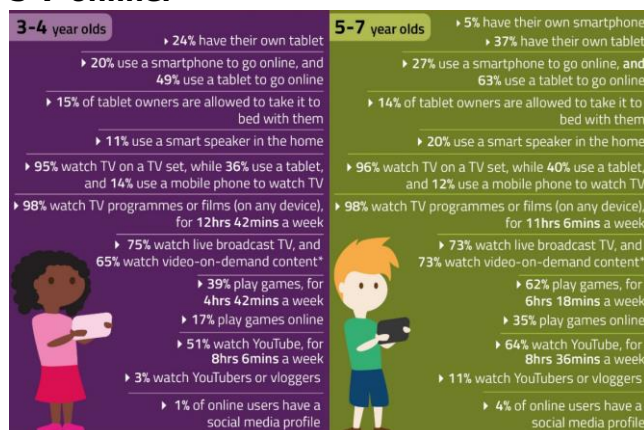
- 6 medium eggs
- 50g grated cheese
- 1 tbsp flour
- 100g frozen peas and corn
- 1 tbsp chopped chives

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat the oven to 180c.
- Crack the eggs into a beaker. Add the flour and whisk the ingredients together.
- Line a muffin tin with six muffin cases. Divide the frozen peas and corn between the muffin cases, followed by the grated cheese.
- Finally pour in the whisked eggs and flour and then bake in the oven for 20 minutes.
- These muffins can be kept covered in the fridge for up to 3 days. They can also be frozen and defrosted in the fridge overnight.

## Mindfulness

### Five top tips for supporting children aged 3-7 online.



OFCOM Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes Report 2019

### Discuss how technology fits into family life:

- begin by talking about how you use the internet as a family when at home and





beyond and how going online can make us feel. Use the conversation starters below to help guide these discussions.

**Establish rules and boundaries:**

- why not try using our [family agreement](#) to create a set of boundaries to help keep your child safe when using technology. You could even ask older children to suggest rules that could help you as a family and discuss how they will help keep you all safe when online.

**Consider how changes to routine can impact on digital wellbeing:**

- changes to routine can mean children have more or less access to technology and the internet which can in turn have an impact on how it makes them feel. Discuss as a family how the rules and boundaries you have created with your family agreement will work when there are changes to routine.

**Be supportive:**

- it's important that children know who they can turn to for support and that they feel listened to and supported if anything ever worries or upsets them online. Make sure children know who all the trusted adults that they can ask for help are, whether it's at home or at school.

**Stay informed:**

- it's important that you know what to do or where to go to find out if ever your child does need help with something that is worrying or upsetting them online. Visit our ['Need help?'](#) page for parents and carers for more advice, support and reporting routes.

**Conversation starter ideas:**

- a simple and effective way to get involved in your child's online life is through discussion - an open dialogue is the best way to help your child access the amazing resources the internet has to offer whilst keeping them safe online.

- what is your favourite thing to do online?
- what things make you happy when you use technology?
- what things make you unhappy/angry/sad when you use technology?
- do you have any rules at home/school for using technology? What are they?
- who helps you to stay safe?

**And finally...**

What a half term this has been! I would just like to say how impressed I have been with the whole Swing Gate Community:

- the children for their resilience in such unprecedented times both in school and at home
- the staff for managing to provide great remote learning at such short notice
- the parents for stepping into the role as teacher, without any training and understanding whilst we became more proficient and faced with the occasional glitch.

I would like to finish this half term on a positive note and ask you all to take time to look after yourselves and have a break from remote learning, if nothing else. Remember we need to put on our own life jacket, before we can



help anyone else.

Additionally, the five ways to wellbeing apply equally

to us as they do our children. Maybe take on the ['Jerusalema' challenge](#) and join in with the family during half term.

*Francesca Gallagher (Mrs)  
Headteacher*