



DIARY DATES

January 2023

Thurs 5th

Occasional Day

Fri 6th

INSET Day

Mon 9th

First day of spring term for children

15:15-16:15 Karate
ASC begins

Tues 10th

15:15-16:15 KEW Dance
Streetdance ASC begins

Wed 11th

08:30-08:50 Shared
reading - Voles

15:15-16:15 Game On
Football Year 1 ASC
begins

Thurs 12th

09:30-10:30 Open
Morning for Reception
and Nursery 2023/34
Admissions

15:15-16:15 Game On
Football Year 2 ASC
begins

Fri 13th

Parent Forum

Sun 15th

Deadline for applying
for Reception and Year
3 places for
September 2023

Thurs 19th

08:30-08:50 Shared
reading - Voles

Our [school calendar on the website](#) has all our upcoming important dates on.

21st December 2022

And that's a
(Christmas!)
wrap. We've
ended this busy
term with lots of
festive fun this



week.
Everyone has
well and truly
earned a rest
over the
holidays.

Voles and Rabbits back in their own classes!

We are delighted to say that Voles and Rabbits returned to their own classes this week and have quickly settled back in. This was a very welcome relief for us all. Here are some pictures of the new Voles



flooring and the pile of furniture in the hall whilst it was being laid.

Open Mornings

Our final Open Morning for Reception admissions for September 2023/24 takes place on Thursday 12th January 2023 at 09:30. This is just ahead of the

deadline for applications on Sunday 15th January.

We are also excited to confirm that our Nursery admission focussed Open Mornings will be taking place on the following days at 09:30:

- Thursday 12th January
- Thursday 2nd February
- Wednesday 22nd February
- Monday 6th March
- Thursday 16th March.

If you, or someone you know, has a child due to start Nursery in September 2023 and would like to reserve a place, [contact the office](#) to book. More information can be found on our [admissions pages](#) of our website.

Another winner!

Following a first place win last year in Gagan Mohindra MP for South West Hertfordshire, Christmas card competition, Angela in Foxes was a runner up this year! He recently came to school to present her with a gift and certificate.



Gagan Mohindra MP

I was delighted to be able to hold my Christmas Card Competition again this year. I received a number of fantastic entries, and I would like to thank all of those who sent in their design.

After much deliberation, Anna from York House School was declared the winner! I visited Anna at school to congratulate her in person and present her with a prize. Anna's design was featured on the front of all the Christmas cards I sent out this year... which was over 1,500! I even had the chance to show Anna's entry to the Prime Minister, and it is safe to say he was impressed!

It was incredibly difficult to pick from all the entries I received, so I selected four runners up, whose designs feature on the back of the card. I visited all the runners up at their schools too, to give them their prizes. Congratulations to the runners up:

- Angela from Swing Gate Infant School and Nursery
- Austin from Tiring Park School for the Performing Arts
- Lola, Isla and Lily from St. Peter's Catholic Primary School
- Maya from St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

I am already looking forward to next year's entries!





Pause for thought

*"You do not have to make your children into wonderful people.
You just have to remind them that they are wonderful people."*

William Martin, author

Christmas Performances

We loved seeing the wonderful performances in our run up to Christmas. Our final Nativity performance of the year took place last Thursday with a multimedia Voles show.



Ofsted

As you know we had Ofsted visitors last week. The Lead Inspector wanted me to pass on her thanks to the staff, Governors and children for being so welcoming.

We should receive the report at the start of next year.

Long Service Award for Carole Lollipop

Carole received her long service award and gift from Herts CC this week for her 40 years keeping our children safe at Swing Gate.



New after school club for Year 1 & 2

We are planning to run a Lego Engineering After School Club for Year 1 & 2 next term. The club will run on a Thursday from 15:15-16:15, full information and a booking form will be sent early in the new year.

School Learning

The sudden big freeze bought lots of learning opportunities to the children. Here are Voles enjoying some snow fun



Maths mastery for all!

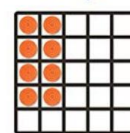
Arrays

When learning mathematics at Swing Gate School, the children develop a conceptual understanding through the Concrete, Pictorial and Abstract (CPA)

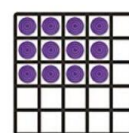
approach where children handle physical resources, use pictorial representations and record using traditional abstract numbers and symbols. To help

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 arrays.

Arrays



$$2+2+2+2=8$$
$$4 \times 2 = 8$$



$$4+4+4+4=12$$
$$3 \times 4 = 12$$



Arrays can be made physically or by drawing pictorial representations. In Key Stage One, children create arrays by arranging objects into rows and columns. This helps them to visualise multiplication as repeated addition.



They are also an effective method of helping children to understand the link between multiplication and division.

At home, children could use a variety of objects to explore this concept. They could place toys or food in even rows and check how many they have in total. Children in Key Stage One could use a chess board and investigate how many different arrays they can make.

Thank you to Friends of Swing Gate!

We would like to say a **BIG THANK YOU** to FoSG for all their hard work, especially at this busy time of year. All the events that they have organised this term have been excellent and really enjoyed by adults and children alike.

Staying Safe in Winter – the dangers of frozen waters

During the recent cold spell. Hertfordshire Fire & Rescue attended water and ice incidents where people have been at risk of falling through frozen lakes and rivers due to rescuing a pet or not seeing the dangers of such activities. Children and pets are particularly at risk when tempted to play on the ice formed on open water, and adults can find themselves at risk in attempting to save them.

A 'useful tips' guide is attached with the newsletter. Please visit the RLSS website on this link, to see useful tools on how to get your children talking about winter water safety: [Winter Water Safety | Royal Life Saving Society UK \(RLSS UK \).](https://www.rlss.org.uk/)

Nippers and Netiquette

Openness when using devices

Establish open, non-judgemental, supportive communication about the use of digital devices. This way, if there are any problems, it is much more likely your child will tell you about them in good time. Always stress that your aim is to keep them safe and happy, not to restrict them.

Wellbeing in Action

Healthy Eating

Avocado Christmas trees

Ingredients

- Wraps
- Avocado
- Cherry tomatoes
- Cheese slices.

Method

1. Mash the avocado and spread on a wrap
2. Cut the wrap into quarters
3. Chop the cherry tomatoes in half (quarters for young children)
4. Cut star shapes from a slice of cheese using a cookie cutter
5. Place the cheese star at the tip of each quarter and arrange the tomatoes to resemble baubles on a Christmas tree.



Mindfulness

With limited hours of daylight, aim to get a good dose of natural light in the morning to boost your circadian rhythms and promote better sleep. A simple walk around will do. Make the most of early nights by appreciating a sunset, and bring the light indoors with twinkling fairy lights or candles. Feel how it lifts your spirits.



And finally...

On behalf of the staff and I, thank you for all your kind wishes and gifts, they are really appreciated.

I hope that you have time to relax and enjoy time with family and friends.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



*Francesca Gallagher (Mrs)
Headteacher*