



DIARY DATES

February 2023

Mon 6th – Fri 10th

Feel Good Week

Don Rae Dance
Workshop – Chinese
New Year Theme

Tues 7th

10:30 'Connecting
Generations' afternoon
tea – Voles

14:00 'Connecting
Generations' afternoon
tea – YR, Y1 & Y2

Wed 8th

08:30-08:50 Shared
reading – Voles

Thurs 9th

Archery Workshop –
YR-Y2

Fri 10th

Classic car in
playground for Y1
topic learning

Mon 13th – Fri 17th

Half term

Mon 20th

Nursery 2023/24
Admissions Online
Portal opens

Wed 22nd

09:30 Nursery 2023/24
Open Morning

Balanceability - Voles

School council
meeting

Thurs 23rd

Archery Workshop –
YR-Y2

Tues 28th

PE Event – Y2

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

03rd February 2023

We are officially GOOD!



We were delighted to have been assessed as good once again. Thank you to all our staff, children and families for your support and help in making sure the inspector could see how wonderful we are!

Open Mornings

Our Nursery Admission Portal will open on Monday 20th February for parents and carers to apply for Nursery places in September 2023. Our Open Mornings will be taking place on the following days at 09:30:

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

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

Parent consultations

Parent consultations will be taking place on Tuesday 28th from and Thursday 30th March. Parent/carers will be able to book a slot via your child's Arbor account. We will send further information closer to the time.

Welcome to our new Governors

We are delighted to welcome Katy Fixter and Joshua Kubale as new Co-opted Governors, both are

also parents of Swing Gate children.

World Book Day

We will be celebrating

World Book Day on Thursday 2nd March. This

year it is the turn of the children designing and creating a sandwich board of a favourite book. This activity will be completed in school.

Term dates

Our term dates for 2023/24 are now available on [our school website](#).

You can also view our [upcoming calendar dates](#) here on the website. We have updated this to the end of this academic year including sports day, transition dates and parents evening.

NSPCC Number Day

The children have all been busy creating their item for NSPCC Number Day. Here are Year 2 designing their beautiful t-shirts.



In addition to the enterprise event the children have been completing a number of fun mathematical activities.



Pause for thought

"Learning is a treasure that will follow its owner everywhere."

Chinese Proverb

Reminders

We never like to make the newsletter a list of reminders but there has been recent recurrent issues that we wanted to make sure all our families are aware of.

Breakfast Club – You **MUST** book your child's place. We have to staff Breakfast Club and just one extra child can make our ratios illegal. We would never want to have to turn away an unexpected child, please make sure you book their place ahead of the session by 14:00 on the previous working day. The School Office is not manned at the weekend. If you have any issues, please [contact the school office](#).

Reading books:

- should be in your child's book bag daily
- when you read with your child each evening, please sign their reading record, this can be a note as simple as 'read whole book or read pages 5-7'
- library books must be returned. We are working hard, aided by fantastic support from our volunteer, Lauren Wilson, to have a well-stocked library for all the children to enjoy, a new library book will not be issued until the previous one is returned to school. We will be handing out reminder slips.

Water bottles - do not put water bottles in your child's book bag. No matter how leak proof they claim to be. A significant number of books have been returned to school ruined this term. We will need to charge parents/carers for any damages as these are all part of the new book system that we heavily invested in at the end of last year.

Parking – We are still aware of and receiving reports of poor parking at drop off and pick up. Please be considerate to our neighbours and

local businesses. Safety is paramount and we want to ensure our children can walk to school without badly parked cars making crossing roads so hazardous.

Parking is also available at The Old Mill which is a short 2 minute walk away from school with safe crossing points across London Road by The Bull pub.

Carole Lollipop – Please ensure that you cross Swing Gate Lane and Curtis Road with Carole.

Conjunctivitis

We have a number of cases of conjunctivitis in school at the moment. Children can still attend school as long as they are well enough in themselves. The NHS advice on caring for conjunctivitis can be found [here](#).

We have also attached a 'Should my child be kept off school?' advice leaflet from the Public Health Agency with this week's newsletter.

School Learning

The children in Voles explored big tools in the dough. They enjoyed finding out how they worked.



Our newest member Voles Class, Hattie looks great in her uniform! Thank you to Jill Baxter who made the doll's clothing.



Year 1 were lucky to be invited to an inter-school PE event at Sports Space on Wednesday 1st February.



We were so proud of how the children behaved and we all had a really good morning.





Year 1 also took part in a D&T activity of toast making. School smelt delicious that day!



Year 2 learnt a lot during the whole school D&T project



about making toast. They explored how toasters work. Then they surveyed their friends about how they would like their toast to be prepared, thinking about the type of bread, spread, shape and how long to toast

for. Every child made a slice of toast. They really enjoyed tasting the results of their work too! Now the children can make toast for their families at home (with a little bit of supervision!)

The children in Year 2 are also learning about the Victorians this half term. They have taken part in a school Victorian day which saw the children seated in rows and completing activities involving the three Rs... reading, writing and arithmetic. There was minimal use of modern day equipment such as interactive whiteboards instead children had the opportunity to write on a slate board. In the afternoon they took part in a walk to the local cemetery to find the resting place of some local people that were important in the area for various reasons, including the Countess of Bridgewater who once owned the Ashridge Estate.



Ashlyns Learning Ambassador visit

On Thursday, Ashlyns Learning Ambassadors were in school running a science lesson for our Year 2 children. Following the visit Mr Crean from Ashlyns sent his thanks to Swing Gate staff and children saying, 'It was clear when

talking to our Learning Ambassadors that they had really enjoyed and learnt from the experience. I hope your pupils enjoyed the lesson!'

SEND Parent Survey

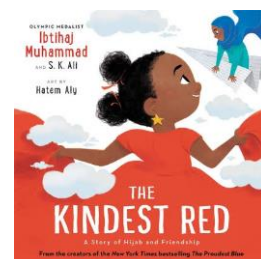
A local group of parents are asking schools to share the following message:

'The purpose of our survey is to gather data on and understand the experiences of families and professionals within Hertfordshire regarding the lack of SEN Officers or EHCP Coordinators over the last 6 months (since July 2022). We plan to use this information to raise our concerns with Hertfordshire LA about the ongoing issues this is causing, in an attempt to effect change for Hertfordshire families and professionals.'

This survey is open to parent/carers and professionals in Hertfordshire who have been impacted by the lack of SEN Officers or EHCP Coordinators within the Local Authority over the last 6 months. If you wish to complete the survey you can find [it here](#).'

Book recommendation from Mrs Marshall

'The Kindest Red' By Ibtihaaj Muhammad and S.K.Ali. In this beautiful story, Faizah dreams of a kinder world. With a friend, she then shares acts of kindness with



other children at her school. The colourful and dynamic illustrations act as both a mirror and window into our children's world. Mrs Marshall loves this book because it is full of thoughtfulness and optimism.

Warm Spaces

This winter Hertfordshire Family Centre Service are taking part in Hertfordshire County Council's Warm Spaces





initiative. Heating our homes is more expensive than ever, and to help, local families can come and use their centres to stay warm this winter. At their warm spaces you will find;

- a welcoming space where families with a child under eight years old can pop in
- a place to enjoy a free hot drink, bring in your own snacks and relax and enjoy some time with your family
- staff and volunteers who will welcome you to the centre, let you know what's going on locally and if you require any support from another service, they will do their best to help you.

To find a Warm Space local to you, visit: hertfordshire.gov.uk/warmspaces

Alternatively, please get in touch with HertsHelp on 0300 123 4044, who are able to advise on a range of extra support for Hertfordshire residents this winter.

Nippers and Netiquette

Safety Apps

You might be able to control access by using apps on your child's devices, either those that come with the device or those that you install from an app store. Some apps provide reports of what your child has searched for or browsed.

None of these controls are 100% reliable so open communication is still key. It's also important to recognise that children are entitled to some privacy themselves and you might be in danger of losing their trust if the measures that you choose feel too invasive for your child.

Wellbeing in Action

Healthy Eating

Salad pots

Ingredients

- 30g cheddar cheese
- 1 small carrot
- 1/2 red pepper, deseeded



- 2 x lettuce leaves
- 4 x 15ml spoons sweetcorn.

Equipment

Chopping board, grater, plate, vegetable knife, peeler, kitchen scissors, 2 clear plastic cups.

Method

1. Grate the cheese.
2. Top, tail, peel and grate the carrot.
3. Snip the pepper into strips and then into small pieces.
4. Cut the lettuce leaves into thin strips.
5. Arrange the ingredients in layers in the cup.

You could add other ingredients to your salad pot:

- chopped cherry tomatoes, grapes or olives
- grated courgette
- canned tuna
- cooked prawns
- sliced ham or chicken.

Mindfulness

Why not try a movement break for when your child has been sitting for a while and is doing homework or reading. Having a movement break can help them to focus and learn. An example of this can be seen [here](#).

Social media

Swing Gate School is on Facebook and Twitter, if you have an account why not follow us to keep up to date with our news. You can find us [on Facebook @swinggateschool](#) and [on Twitter @SwingGateSchool](#)

And finally...

There is great excitement around school planning for the Connecting Generations event next week. I am personally looking forward to welcoming our guests and sharing a sense of community with them.

Have a lovely weekend.

*Francesca Gallagher (Mrs)
Headteacher*