

Autumn Term Newsletter

12th September 2025

The Gattons Infant School

Welcome Back

It has been so lovely to welcome all the children into school this term, especially our 90 new Reception children. All of the children have been fantastic and I have really enjoyed seeing them all so enthusiastic about their learning and about being at school with their friends. Welcome to all our new Reception families as well. We hope you feel welcomed at The Gattons and will enjoy being part of The Gattons family.

Apologies that this first newsletter is so long but there are lots of important messages and dates to make you aware of. Please put the dates on p6 in your diaries now—more details for some events will follow soon.

Please ensure that you read the Talk to Me sheets that year groups will send home each week. They have important learning for you to do at home but also have important messages and dates for your diaries. Staff will try and let you know key dates for events well in advance so that you can come in to school or help on trips.

We are always looking for volunteers to come into school and Miss Bennett will be sending an email out shortly. If you have any questions about volunteering, please talk to me or Miss Bennett on the gate. Grandparents and members of the community are welcome to volunteer so please pass this on to anyone who might be interested.

Have a lovely weekend.

Sarah Gospel - Headteacher

OPAL

Year 1 and 2 have been enjoying OPAL playtimes already this term with a new sandpit in Year 2 and a digger patch in Reception area to enhance their playtimes. If you have any good condition sand toys, please email photos to Mrs Gospel before bringing them in to school. Reception will start OPAL towards the end of next week. Please remember to name helmets, scooters and bikes clearly. The children will not be allowed to ride them in school without helmets please. We do have some spare school helmets but if you have a helmet, please bring it in.



We are on the lookout for landscape gardeners who might be able to advise us on the path we would like to put on the field. If you are one or have a friend who might be able to help, please email Mrs Gospel on head@thegattons.co.uk

OPAL stay and play for parents / carers

On Thursday 23rd October you are invited for a stay and play OPAL session. Mrs Gospel will do a presentation at 1.30pm for any parents who would like to find out more about OPAL and why we do it. The blue gates will open at 2pm for all parents to come in and play with their children. We will tidy up at 2.45pm ready for you to take your child home at 3pm. If you are unable to attend, grandparents / aunts / uncles etc are all welcome. Please come dressed appropriately to play on the field which may be wet!



What's happening in school!

Year 2 have had a fabulous start to the term and have been sent new challenges from Professor Clunk - curious quests has reached year two with some new faithful friends! We have also enjoyed dressing up as Royals for our portraits and taking part in lots of castle themed discovery times with their friends. We have been building castles out of Lego and junk modelling, taking part in draw alongs and getting to know our new teachers and routines in our new Year 2 environment.

Year 1 have had a fantastic start to the year. The children have been excited by the practical learning experiences and they have settled in so well. We have been getting to know the children by spending time looking at their, "All About Me," mats. We have also been on a hunt in the school for physical (naturally occurring) and human features (man made). We have been reading maps and making our own too.

Please remember to come to our Welcome Meetings next week. These meetings will give you more information about what to expect in your child's new year group.—Y1 on Monday, Y2 on Tuesday, both @ 9am.

The Reception children are settling in really well and we are looking forward to meeting you at our 'Settling In' meeting on Thursday 18th September at 9am. Please complete the reply form that was sent to you via ParentMail on Wednesday using this link: <https://forms.office.com/e/3pXAhutFE>

Reception Reminders

Your child will need a book bag in school every day. These can be purchased from the school office for £4 - cash only. Please do **NOT** send your child with a back pack as there is not room in the corridors for these to hang up. Please make sure you name them.



Please can you also bring in a **NAMED** pair of wellies for your child and put them on the wellie rack in the playground.



Tapestry activation emails are being sent out this week/early next week. Please check your spam/junk if you have not received one. Please activate your account. If you do not receive an email, please speak to your class teacher. Thank you.

Low Income Families - Claiming for low income Free School Meals

All infant school children receive a Universal Free School Meal. However, if you are on a low income your child may be eligible for **pupil premium/low income free school meals** which releases vital funding to the school (£1,510, per year, per eligible child), in addition to over £100worth of benefits from the school, as follows:

- * the Government provides shopping vouchers for school holidays including half terms (approx £10-£15 per child per school holiday week)
- * free school jumper or cardigan per year (usually saving £14-16)
- * free book bag, PE bag, and water bottle per year (saving of £9)
- * free school trips (approx saving of £12-£16)
- * free in-house school clubs (approx saving of £15)
- * free holidays clubs, including meals

If you think that your child may be eligible please apply online using the link below, or search "WSCC free school meals" to navigate to the application:- <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/schools-and-colleges/free-school-meals>

If you need help with this application or access to a PC, we would be very happy to assist. Please contact Clare Tidbury in the school office, or email office@thegattsons.co.uk

Thank you for helping to support our school.



Book Bonanza

On Thursday 25th September, we will be holding our Book Bonanza. The children will have a visit from a local book shop, The Book Nook. They will listen to a story and be inspired by the books they will be selling during the fair. You are invited to come to our Book Bonanza from 3 - 4.30. You can bring card or cash to purchase a book if you would like to. There will be lots of activities for you to enjoy with your child. Siblings are welcome.

Harvest Celebration

Our Harvest Festival celebration will take place on Wednesday 24th September. We will be donating any food that you are able to give to the Burgess Hill Pantry. The Pantry have asked for donations of the following items:

Tea, small boxes normal, herbal or decaf. Coffee normal or decaf.
Ketchup, Mayonnaise, Salad cream, pasta sauces
Cereal, biscuits, sugar, hot chocolate, Milk UHT, Fruit Juice UHT
Washing Up Liquid, Laundry detergent
Shower gel, Shampoo and conditioner, Feminine Hygiene Products



A volunteer from the pantry will be talking to the children in Year 1 and 2 about the work of the pantry in their assembly.

Attendance and Punctuality

We would like to remind parents and carers that we are only able to authorise absence in term time in exceptional circumstances which does not include family holidays. If possible, please try to arrange dental appointments for after school or in the holidays.



Arriving on time for school is important as late arrivals are disruptive for the class and can be embarrassing for the child. A child who is late for school is missing out on a very important part of the school day including setting out the context for the work for the day - the classroom doors are opened at 8.50am for the children to come in and start at 8.55am. We want to have all our children in class ready to start the school day promptly and would ask parents for their support in this aim. Thank you.

Please look out for our separate Attendance Newsletter which gives up to date information on our attendance figures as well as helpful information and guidance.

Reporting a child's absence

If you need to report your child's absence by email (office@thegattons.co.uk) or via the answerphone, can you please ensure you have included your child's full name **AND** class. Thank you. If we do not hear from you by 9.25am, we will ring you to find out why your child is not in school. Any arrival at school after 9.25am is unauthorised (unless it is for a previously authorised reason). Please be aware that 10 unauthorised absences can result in a Fixed Penalty Notice fine which is issued by the Local Authority.

Mobile Phones

Please remember that we have a no phones on the playground policy when you are dropping off and picking up your children. We will remind you politely if you are using them. Please support us with this in safeguarding all of our children.



School Photographs

On Tuesday 30th September the school photographer will be in school to take the children's individual school photos and Reception class photos. We are able to arrange for children to be photographed with siblings (either pre-school or in school) in addition to their individual photo and a letter will be coming home soon regarding this. Please note we cannot do this for children at Southway.



Scooters and Bikes

It is lovely to see so many children coming to school on their scooters and bikes. Please can all children hop off their bikes and scooters once they reach the school gate. This will make sure we are all respecting the right to be safe and cared for. **ALL SCOOTERS AND BIKES MUST BE NAMED** - it is not unusual for several children to have the same model - and should be placed in the appropriate part of the scooter park. Thank you.



TUMMY BUGS!

Please remember that if your child is unwell with sickness and/or diarrhoea for whatever reason, they **MUST** stay away from school until they have been symptom free for a **MINIMUM** of 48 hours. This period of time significantly reduces the risk of the bug spreading throughout the school. We will request that children are collected if we discover they have not been symptom free for 48 hours. Thank you.



Emergency Contacts and Medical Information

An Emergency Contact Form and a Medical Condition Form have been sent home. It is very important that these forms are completed, even if your details remain the same, so that we can check that our records are correct. If you have not already done so, please can you return these forms as a matter of urgency.

We would like to remind parents that we are only able to give prescription medicines to children during the school day and, in the case of antibiotics, only if they have to be taken 4 times a day. All medicines must be brought to the school office and the appropriate paperwork completed. Please do not put medicines of any description in your child's school bag. Thank you.

ParentMail

All the Reception children are on ParentMail. Please ensure that you have activated your account so that you do not miss any important information. Please remember to update your ParentMail details if your email address or mobile number change in addition to letting the school office know. Thank you.

Open Mornings for prospective Reception Children

We will be holding open mornings for the parents/carers of prospective Reception children (September 2026 intake) on various dates in November. Details of the dates and booking links can be found on our website. Please pass this information on to any friends or family that you know have a child due to start school next September. Thank you.

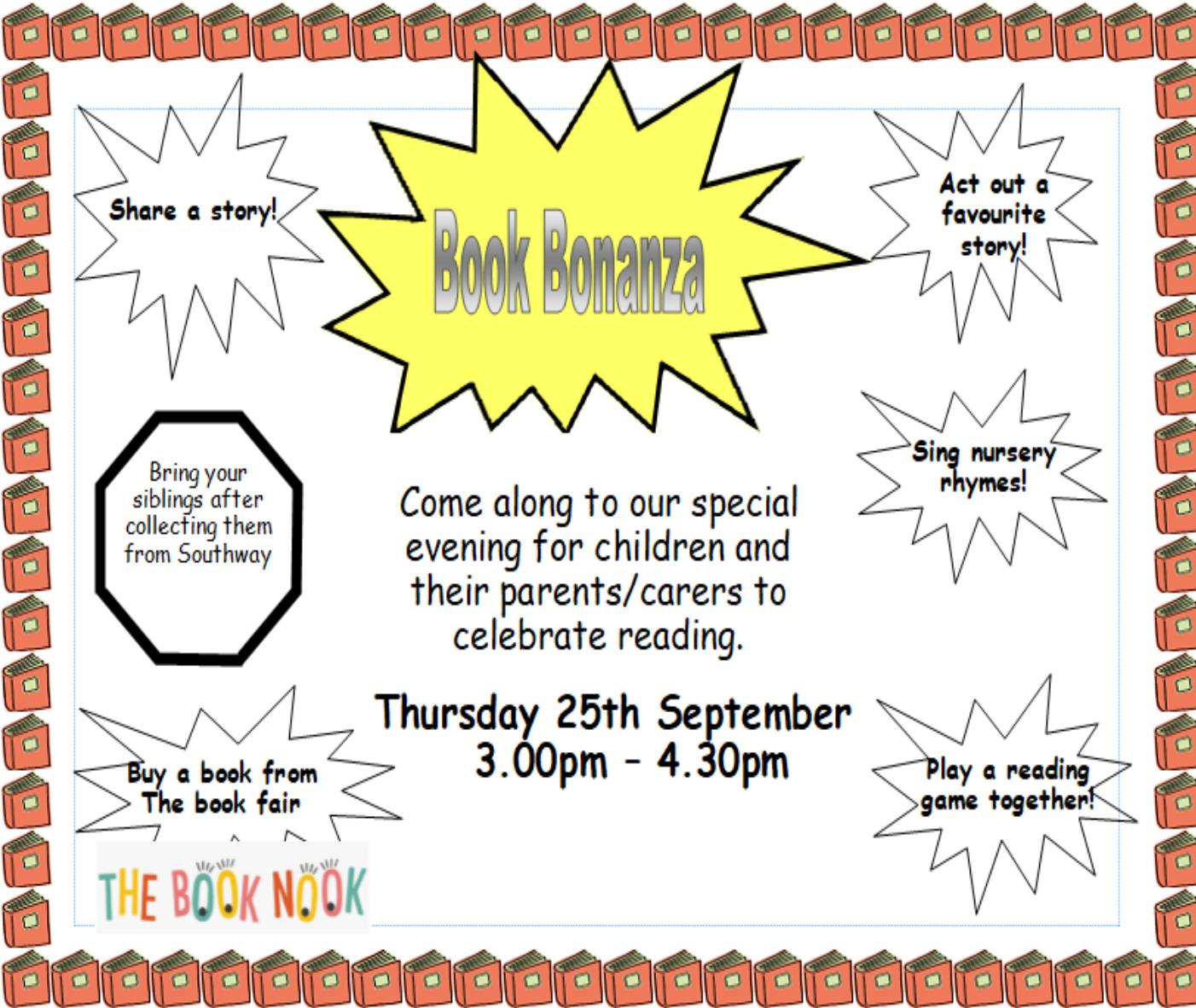
Lunchbox Information

Following new guidance, if you include grapes in your child's lunchbox, please ensure that these are cut into quarters, lengthwise, to avoid them becoming a choking hazard. Please remember **NOT** to include any nuts or nut products, including Nutella and Peanut butter, in your child's lunchbox. Thank you.

And finally

*Please help us to help you by ensuring that **ALL** items of clothing, including coats, shoes, gloves, hats and plimsolls are clearly labelled. Please also label book bags, PE bags, water bottles and lunch boxes. Thank you. If labelled items are mislaid, once found, they will be returned to your child's class.*





Book Bonanza

Share a story!

Act out a
favourite
story!

Bring your
siblings after
collecting them
from Southway

Sing nursery
rhymes!

Buy a book from
The book fair

THE BOOK NOOK

Come along to our special
evening for children and
their parents/carers to
celebrate reading.

Thursday 25th September
3.00pm - 4.30pm

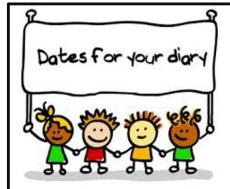
Play a reading
game together!

Diary Dates

September

Monday 15th
Monday 15th
Tuesday 16th
Thursday 18th
Tuesday 23rd
Wednesday 24th
Tuesday 30th
Tuesday 30th

Y1 Welcome Meeting - 9am
Rainbow Relaunch—Y1 & Y2—colourful socks
Y2 Welcome Meeting - 9am
Reception Settling In Meeting - 9am
FOGS AGM and meeting 7.30pm at school - all invited
Harvest Celebration Assembly - food donations for The Pantry
Individual School Photos & Reception Class Photos
Reception Reading Meeting - 7pm



October

Monday 13th
Wednesday 15th
Friday 17th
Friday 17th
Monday 20th
Tuesday 21st
Wednesday 22nd
Thursday 23rd
Thursday 23rd
Friday 24th
Monday 27th—Friday 31st

Y2 Trip to Hever Castle - Details to follow
Y1 Parents in - 2.30pm - Details to follow
Y2 Trip to Hever Castle - Details to follow
Reception parents in - 2.30pm Family Reading Session
Y2 Celebration of Learning - Owls Class 2.30pm
Y2 Celebration of Learning - Eagles Class 2.30pm
Y2 Celebration of Learning - Puffins Class 2.30pm
OPAL Stay and Play
FOGS Quiz - Details to follow
INSET Day - School closed for children
Half Term Holiday

November

Monday 3rd
Thursday 6th
Friday 7th
Friday 14th
Thursday 20th
Friday 21st
Saturday 22nd
Tuesday 25th
Thursday 27th

Y2 Drama Workshop
Reception Learning Meeting - 9am
Non Uniform Day - FOGS Christmas Fayre Donations
Children In Need Day - Details to follow
Non Uniform Day - FOGS Christmas Fayre Donations
Y1 Drama Workshop
FOGS Christmas Fayre
Parent/Teacher Consultation Meetings - Details to follow
Parent/Teacher Consultation Meetings - Details to follow

December

Monday 1st
Tuesday 2nd
Thursday 11th
Thursday 11th
Monday 15th
Thursday 18th

Flu Immunisation - Details to follow
Carol Service @ Kings Church - Years 1 & 2 - 2pm
Reception Nativity at school 9.30am or 2pm
FOGS Christmas Discos
Thank you assembly for volunteers
'All Things Christmas' Day - Details to follow

Provisional dates—please be aware these are subject to change

REMAINING INSET DAYS 2025/2026

Friday 24th October 2025
Monday 5th January 2026
Monday 23rd February 2026
Friday 22nd May 2026