



Autumn Term Newsletter

23rd October 2025

The Gattons Infant School

Happy Half Term

As we reach the end of our first half term I know we have lots of exhausted children and grown ups! We have had a great start to the year with trips to Hever Castle in Year 2 and the local area for Year 1 and parent workshops in all year groups. Please make sure your children get lots of sleep and plenty of down time next week, so they are refreshed and ready for the second half of term, which is always a busy one! Please remember it is recommended that 4-7 year olds get 10 to 13 hours sleep a night.

Next half term continues to be jam packed with events and fun. We have our Winter Fayre, Reception Nativity and concert at the Kings Church for us all to enjoy. Please look out for notices from FOGS with key dates for your diaries., including non uniform days and raffle tickets to buy and sell.

I have had a lovely email from Alison Bennett MP, thanking everyone who entered the Christmas card competition. Congratulations to Aarush in Y2 and Emilia in Y1 who were highly commended for their designs.

Thank you for all your support this term - have a lovely half term.

Sarah Gospel
Headteacher

OPAL

We are really excited that Houlihans, who are working on some of the housing projects in Burgess Hill, will be building the path on the field over half term. This is part of their community work which means our FOGS fundraising can be used for other resources and projects in the school. A huge thank you to Houlihans and Places for People who identified us as a project for them.

If you are having a clear out at half term, we are looking for:

Small world toys - dinosaurs, cars, playmobile, Sylvanian families, farm animals, horses, stables, characters e.g. Batman.

Car mat / small world mat

Dolls and clothes e.g. Barbie / Bratz, toy prams, toy wheelbarrows

Puppets—fairytales characters

Outdoor cushions

Building blocks

Children's small musical instruments

Playdough



Please find the links for our OPAL and Amazon wish lists if you would like to donate any resources to school. Thank you to those who have donated this term - it makes a huge difference!

Opal <https://amzn.eu/7rcPQwB>
Main list <https://amzn.eu/1XkJkLG>

These links can be slightly temperamental; if they are not working please try again later. Thank you.

What's happening in school!

Year 2 had a fabulous time at Hever castle last week. The children took part in a castle tour, scavenger hunt, medieval workshop and explored the adventure playground. The children were excellent role models and represented The Gattons so well. We particularly loved the castle tour guides fascinating facts and going into rooms set up for medieval times. Thank you to all the adults who helped on our trip.



To mark the end of a successful first half term, children in Reception enjoyed welcoming their parents and carers to a family reading session. Parents and children cosied up with some of our favourite stories and shared the joy of listening to a story. Thank you to all parents/carers, family members and younger siblings for attending.

Year 1 have been using maps to follow sightings of Bog Baby. We were great at following the map and finding lots of local features but we did not find Bog Baby. We called in some helpers to look for him in our school grounds. Parents and carers completed the orienteering activity and we found Bog Baby safe and sound in our classrooms! Thank you for all your help with both activities.

Flu Immunisation

Please remember to complete the online form that was sent to you last week. You must complete a form even if you don't want your child to have the immunisation. All forms must be completed by Wednesday 26th November. Thank you.

Parent/Teacher Consultation Meetings

Online booking for Parent/Teacher consultations is now open. You will have received an email from info@parentmail.co.uk inviting you to make an appointment. Please check your spam/junk if you have not received this email. If you are not able to book online, please call the school office and we will book an appointment for you.

Reception Learning at School Meeting

INSET DAYS - 2025/2026

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

On Thursday 6th November at 9am we will be holding our Learning at School Meeting for Reception parents. If you are able to come to this meeting, and have not yet replied, please reply using the following link:
<https://forms.office.com/e/eShMSwsTct>

Sensory boards

We are looking to make some sensory boards for the children. You can buy them commercially but we are looking to reuse items and make our own. Do you have any resources we could repurpose?

Here are some of the commercially bought boards to give you ideas....



Online safety—Please find below what you need to know about Minecraft. If you'd like more support with online safety for your children, please look at the following websites or come and talk to your class teacher or Mrs Gospel:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>
<https://nationalcollege.com/institutions/national-online-safety/>

Please remember PEGI age ratings on games are to keep your children safe - would you let them watch a 15 or 18 film?

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MINECRAFT

AGE RESTRICTION
PEGI
7

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Still the best-selling game of all time, Minecraft is a bastion of creativity and community, with hundreds of millions of players building and crafting in its almost endless world. The popularity of Minecraft among gamers of all ages means it's important to remain informed about the game, including how to play it safely and whether it's suitable for the children in your care. That's why we've created this guide explaining the risks associated with Minecraft and how to ensure a purely enjoyable gaming experience.

SCARY ELEMENTS

While Minecraft can be seen as a kind of 'digital LEGO', certain game modes include creatures accompanied by eerie sound effects. These can be a bit too frightening for some younger players, potentially leading to distressing in-game combat and other encounters – although the combat is quite basic and free from any real depiction of violence.

GRIEFING

Some players in Minecraft take pleasure in deliberately damaging or destroying another person's creations. This behaviour, known as 'griefing', is a form of bullying – it intentionally ruins someone else's experience by erasing hours of their work and forcing them to start over. Many public servers regard griefing as a serious offence and often ban those who engage in it.

ADDICTIVENESS

Minecraft's focus on creativity means that, as with any creative endeavour, it can be easy to get carried away. If your child is finding it difficult to manage their time because they're drawn in by Minecraft's gameplay loop of resource gathering and building elaborate projects, it could have a knock-on effect on their social interactions and schoolwork.

PUBLIC SERVERS AND COMMUNICATIONS

With public servers being so easily accessible in Minecraft, it's highly likely that children will end up chatting with strangers through the in-game text chat. Some servers even place an emphasis on social interaction, actively encouraging communication between players. While there's nothing inherently wrong with this, it does carry certain risks. In addition to the concerns around speaking with strangers online, players who host their own servers may have their IP addresses exposed, posing a further security concern.

ADDITIONAL PURCHASES

Minecraft is available as a free trial on a variety of devices; however, the full game requires a one-off purchase. After that, players have the option to buy additional cosmetic upgrades or subscribe to Minecraft Realms. Realms is an entirely optional subscription service that allows users to run their own private server to play with friends. Without proper supervision, younger players may end up making unintended or excessive purchases.

Advice for Parents & Educators

CHOOSE THE RIGHT MODE

Selecting Creative or Peaceful mode allows children to play Minecraft without having to contend with enemies. It's also a great way for you to get used to playing the game with them, since the difficulty level is far lower. This allows you to work together on a long-term project, creating something special without the threat of enemies and creatures attacking you or damaging your building.

HOST A PRIVATE SERVER

The easiest way to find a safe server for children to play on is to make one yourself. Hosting a server prevents strangers from finding it, unless they've been given its address and password. A private server also lets you control who's allowed to enter and – if necessary – ban anyone who shouldn't be there. This is the closest equivalent to parental controls in Minecraft. Hosting a private server, however, will cost a monthly fee.

TALK ABOUT STRANGERS

At some point in their lives, almost everyone will make contact with a stranger online. Talking to children about online safety, therefore, is essential – as is having a plan for dealing with any hostile or difficult people. It's important that a child knows never to tell a stranger about themselves online and that they should come to you straight away if they do encounter a problem.

RESEARCH CONTENT CREATORS

Much of Minecraft's early stages can be an exercise in frustration for players who don't know where to start. Thankfully, there's a wealth of material online and in video format to help you learn the basics. Just be mindful that some of this content may not be appropriate for children, so you should consider watching it yourself first.

PLAY MINECRAFT WITH YOUR CHILD

As a creative building tool, Minecraft makes it great fun for children to team up and construct vast buildings accompanied by imaginative landscapes, much like working with LEGO or model kits. Playing in a game mode that includes enemies can encourage critical thinking and teamwork; however, you should consider which game mode is appropriate for the child in your care.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Gaming Editor at the Daily Star, and has worked in games media for more than 6 years. A long-time gaming enthusiast, he is also a parent and therefore a keen advocate of online safety for children of all ages.

#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal

Each year we support the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal. From Monday 3rd November, Year 2 children will be visiting classrooms to sell poppies. If your child would like to purchase a poppy, can you please send a silver coin donation into school in a named envelope in your child's book bag.



Diary Dates

November

Monday 3rd
Thursday 6th
Friday 7th
Monday 10th
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
Anti bullying week - wear odd socks to celebrate our uniqueness
Children In Need Day - Details to follow
Non Uniform Day - FOGS Christmas Fayre Donations
Y1 Drama Workshop
FOGS Christmas Fayre
Parent/Teacher Consultation Meetings
Parent/Teacher Consultation Meetings



December

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

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

January

Tuesday 6th

First day of the Spring Term