



The Gattons Infant School Newsletter

Autumn Term 2026
25th September

A massive thank you to everyone today for your understanding and support with lunches. It was a very difficult situation with ISS not providing the staff for lunch, at very short notice. We were hoping it would be resolved by lunchtime and so apologise for the late notice to bring in packed lunches. We do understand how difficult this was for all of you, so thank you for helping each other by bringing in lunches and additional food, so that all the children were fed. I am just as frustrated as you are with the service we are receiving and am in communication with the head of catering in West Sussex as we speak. I will send you an email over the weekend when I have assurances from ISS that staff will be here on Monday.

A huge thank you this week from The Pantry. They were blown away with your generous donations in our Harvest assembly on Monday. Many families will benefit from the food you were all able to bring in, thank you!



This week, we have enjoyed opening up our playgrounds for OPAL play. Unfortunately, we are no longer able to call it OPAL play, as due to financial constraints we have made the decision to not continue paying for OPAL's support. A large proportion of our play team at lunchtimes have been on our OPAL journey over the last 5 years and so the play that is on offer won't change. We will just call it Outdoor Play rather than OPAL.

Thank you to everyone who joined us for Book Bonanza last night. It was so lovely to see so many of you enjoying books and reading activities with your children. Please remember to read at least four times a week at home. Research shows that children read to frequently at age five are over half a school year ahead in reading performance by age 15.

Have a lovely weekend.
Sarah Gospel
Headteacher

Dates to remember

Tuesday 29th September
Reception Reading Meeting
- 7pm

Wednesday 30th September
Individual School Photos
and Reception Class Photos

Outdoor Play

We are still looking for more bicycle helmets and small world play. If you have anything, please contact the office before bringing it in.
Thank you!



What is happening in school!

Thank you to everyone who came to the Reception settling in meeting and the welcome meetings for the children in Years 1 and 2. We hope you found them useful. If you were unable to make the meetings or would like to remind yourself about the areas covered, information can be found on our website.

Year 2 had a great Rainbow day at the start of last week



and we had a special rainbow discovery, creating rainbows out of various constructions and much more. Woodland Rangers was a great hit and we had the perfect weather to understand the differences between things that are living, no longer living and never lived. We have also been enjoying our history



topic, learning about William the Conqueror's journey to England and the Battle of Hastings.

Year 1 have seen the arrival and then disappearance of Bog Baby! We have had lots of fun wondering where he has gone and who might have taken him. We will continue to investigate and hopefully find him soon. We have also been tasting different crumbles and raw and cooked fruit ready to design and then make our own crumble.

This week in Reception we have started phonics! The children have learnt 4 new sounds s a t and p and been using robot arms and blending hands to build words. The children are bringing home their first book this week to read with you at home. We look forward to telling you all about reading at the meeting on Tuesday 29th September at 7pm. Please reply using the link sent to you via ParentMail so that we know how many people to expect. Thank you.



FREE courses for parents

The West Sussex Family Learning team has launched free courses for parents and carers. They are designed to provide practical support for families, the courses help parents, grandparents and carers build confidence, develop new strategies and support their children's learning and wellbeing.

This term they are offering - **How to help your child with learning in Reception and Key Stage 1**, **Managing screen time**, along with in person courses such as, **Supporting children with anxiety and building resilience**, available in Horsham and Crawley. To find out more visit <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/adult-learning-service/family-learning-in-west-sussex/>

Reminders

Please do not let your child or their siblings play on/with the school equipment before/after school.
Please remember that you are responsible for your child before 8.50am.

Amazon Wishlists

We have been asked by some parents if we have an up to date wishlist. The link can be found below

https://www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/JT5AXI81QAL4?ref_=abls_nvfly_swo

Outdoor Play Meeting

On Thursday 22nd October you are invited for a stay and play Outdoor Play session. Mrs Gospel will do a presentation at 1.30pm for any parents who would like to find out more about Outdoor Play 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 outside for the weather on that day!

School Photographs

On Wednesday 30th September the school photographer will be in school to take the children's individual school photos and Reception class photos. If you requested a photo with a pre-school sibling, you should have received an appointment time this week.

Multiskills at BHA

On Wednesday, 23rd September, 30 Year 2 children took part in a multiskills festival at Burgess Hill Academy (BHA). They all had a great time and helped the sports leaders learn how to run a group - Thank you to BHA for hosting us.





ATTENDANCE MATTERS

every student, every day

Attendance

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. Please do NOT report absence via our website as this is not monitored on a regular basis. Thank you.



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 (£1,550, per year, per eligible child), in addition to over £100 worth 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@thegattons.co.uk Thank you for helping to support our school.

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 Contact Forms

An Emergency Contact Form has been sent home. It is very important that this form is 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. If you have to do an IOS update, and then stop receiving ParentMails, it may be necessary for you to update the ParentMail App. Thank you.

Open Mornings

We will be holding open mornings for the parents/carers of prospective Reception children (September 2027 intake) on various dates in November. Details of the dates and booking links will be available soon 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 - Allergies

Following new guidance, if you include grapes or cherry tomatoes 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.



Starting School Applications

Online applications for school places for September 2027 for children born between 1st September 2022 and 31st August 2023, will open on Monday 5th October. The deadline for applications is Friday 15th January 2027. Any applications received after this date will be treated as late applications and will be dealt with after all on time applications.

Census Day – Thursday 1st October

Thursday 1st October is Census Day. It is very important that as many children as possible take up the option of a hot school lunch on this day as the number of children having a meal will determine the meal funding available to our school going forward. Please remember to order your child's meal through the FEED app. Thank you for your support.



Dame Rachel De Souza, the Children's Commissioner has written to me to ask you to ensure that all of your children complete her new survey, [The Big Future](#). Under the Children Act 2004, it is her role to promote the views and interests of children in England, and she has done this so far by conducting the two largest ever children's surveys: The Big Ask and The Big Ambition. Now, for the first time, hundreds of thousands of children will be eligible to vote in the next general election, the biggest change to the franchise in half a century. Yet just one in five children say politicians listen to them. That's why she's launching her final survey, The Big Future.

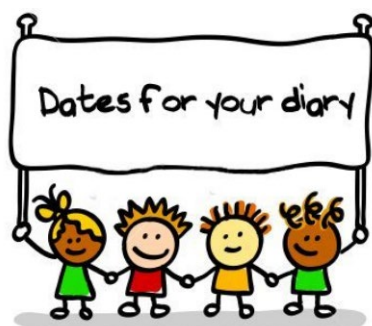
Your child should complete the survey here:

<http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/thebigfuture>.

She wants to make sure that she hears from as many children as possible, aged 0-18, from all backgrounds, in all schools and colleges, and in every part of the country. Please help your child to complete the survey.

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.



September

Tuesday 29th
Wednesday 30th

Reception Reading Meeting - 7pm
Individual School Photos & Reception Class Photos

October

Tuesday 6th
Monday 12th
Tuesday 13th
Thursday 15th
Thursday 22nd
Thursday 22nd
Friday 23rd
Monday 26th—Friday 30th

FOGS AGM and meeting 7pm at school - all invited
Y2 Trip to Hever Castle - Puffins and half of Owls
Y2 Trip to Hever Castle - Eagles and half of Owls
FOGS Quiz - 7pm - Details to follow
OPAL Stay and Play Meeting at 1.30, play from 2pm
FOGS Cake Sale
INSET Day - School closed for children
Half Term Holiday

November

Wednesday 4th
Thursday 5th
Monday 9th
Tuesday 10th
Wednesday 11th
Friday 13th
Friday 20th
Saturday 21st
Tuesday 24th
Tuesday 24th
Thursday 26th
Thursday 26th

Non Uniform Day - FOGS Chocolate Donations
Reception Learning Meeting - 9am
Open Mornings for new Reception Parents
Flu Immunisation - Details to follow
Open Mornings for new Reception Parents
Children In Need Day - Details to follow
Non Uniform Day - FOGS Christmas Fayre Donations
FOGS Christmas Fayre 12.00 - 2.30pm
Open Mornings for new Reception Parents
Parent/Teacher Consultation Meetings - Details to follow
Open Mornings for new Reception Parents
Parent/Teacher Consultation Meetings - Details to follow

December

Tuesday 1st
Tuesday 8th
Monday 14th
Tuesday 15th
Thursday 17th

FOGS Christmas Discos - Y1 & Y2
Carol Service @ Kings Church - Years 1 & 2 - 2pm
Reception Nativity at school 9.20am or 2.15pm
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 2026/2027

Friday 23rd October 2026
Monday 4th January 2027
Thursday 25th March 2027
Monday 7th June 2027