

Your Newsletter

A few dates to put on your calendars:

Tuesday 3rd January 2023 – Spring Term Starts

Monday 9th January ~ New extra-curricular clubs are to start

Monday 9th January ~ Dry Swim introductory session for Year 4

Friday 13th January ~ Brass Music lessons are to begin in LKS2

Friday 20th January ~ Faith Friends in school – postponed

Tuesday 24th January 14:30 ~ Open Afternoon for Ducklings' Parents

Monday 30th January – Friday 3rd February ~ Waterpark Residential for Year 6

Wednesday 1st February 09:00-09:45 ~ Maths workshop for parents in Ducklings

Monday 6th February ~ Dance Festival

Wednesday 8th and Thursday 9th February ~ Online Parents' Evenings



General Updates:

Lunches:

Our kitchen would like our school meals ordering system to be more streamlined. Therefore, we are asking that children order with their class teachers on the day and are either on school meals for the half term or on packed lunches for the half term, with the exception of Fridays in which packed lunch children will be able to order a school meal on the day.

PE days this half term:

KS1 ~ Wednesday and Fridays

Doves and Kestrels ~ Tuesdays and Thursdays

Falcons ~ Mondays and Wednesdays

Owls, Hawks and Eagles ~ Mondays and Thursdays

Clubs are due to start next week. We are really sorry that there was a difficulty in booking places. We have worked it so that every child has been able to get an allocated place for their choice.

Outdoor learning this term is centred around the ocean and the hazards of plastic. Single use plastic is extremely harmful and so we would like to collect sweet wrappers. Mrs Hicks will be collecting these in the Wing so please feel free to pop in a drop them off.

Attendance

The DfE states that pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. As a school we set our own annual target for attendance. Our target for this year is 96%. In order for us to meet this target we need to ask that all pupils aim for at least this level of attendance. Good attendance at school is vital because even short periods of absence can mean that a child's ability to keep up with school work may be significantly reduced. Friendship groups can also be affected by time away from school and this can be upsetting for children.

Reducing Illness Days

- When a child has a day off we must be notified by a parent or carer as to why. This can be a note or a telephone call. A child returning to school after an absence will be marked as unauthorised absence until we receive a valid explanation.
- If your child is saying they do not feel well and you are unsure about whether it warrants a day off please send them to school. If they are truly ill we will ring you.
- Use common sense when deciding whether or not your child is too ill to attend school. Ask yourself the following questions:
 - o Is my child well enough to do the activities of the school day?
 - o Does my child have a condition that could be passed on to other children or school staff?
 - o Would I take a day off work if I had this condition?
- If your child has to have a medical or dental appointment in school time please do your best to have it after 2pm and then your child can have their registration mark for the afternoon before you pick them up. If it needs to be a morning appointment please try and bring them to school first to get their mark and then return them to school afterwards. Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness (where a child is too ill to attend school) medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause. The Department for Education guidance states "If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes."

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

Holidays cannot be authorised.

Did you know that being 15 minutes late each day is the same as missing two weeks of school during an academic year?

Even just being five minutes late adds up to three days absence over the year.

Information: Royal Mail are making some fundamental changes with the addition of barcodes to regular postage stamps. After 31 January 2023, regular stamps without a barcode will no longer be valid. However, do not despair, you can either use up these stamps before the deadline or swap them for the new barcoded ones with the Stamp Swap Out scheme.

Get your garden Birdwatch ready

It's never too early to get your garden Birdwatch ready. Top up your bird table and your feeders, and fill the bird bath to the brim. And remember to regularly remove old food and clean feeders weekly to avoid the risk of disease. Giving birds time to know your patch as a place to regularly feed means the livelier and more entertaining your Birdwatch will be. No garden? No problem! Even a small window feeder will attract more birds to your Birdwatch.

Over at rspb.org.uk/feedthebirds and rspb.org.uk/keep-your-bird-table-healthy there's loads of advice on making sure you make your garden count this January.

Visit rspb.org.uk/birds-to-spot to find out more about your feathered friends. Knowing your great tit from your coal tit will give you more time to enjoy their antics without having to look them up. If you go to the 2022 results, you'll see which birds were seen the most and which made it into the top ten. What will the rankings look like this year?

Big Garden Birdwatch Live will stream across the event weekend. Tune in for expert commentary, interviews and chat with special guests and wildlife experts from across the UK. We'd love to see your pics and stories on social media so please use #BigGardenBirdWatch. Stay tuned for more details.

Are you ready to look out for birds? Don't miss out, put the date in your diary: **27-29 January**.