

# Headlines

Issue 9 - 26.01.24



## MESSAGE FROM MRS FORD, HEADTEACHER

Dear Parents/Carers

### STAFFING

I am delighted to extend a warm welcome to two new members of staff, Mrs Alexis Povey and Miss Tiffany Franklin who have joined us this term as a Learning Support Assistant and Nursery Support Assistant respectively. I am sure they will soon feel part of the Stepgates team.

### SNOW POLICY

In the event of adverse weather, please see our 'Snow Policy' which is on the school website - (Click on 'School Information' and scroll down to 'School Policies'). You will find details of our procedures should we experience adverse weather conditions.

### ATTENDANCE / PUNCTUALITY EXPECTATIONS

At this time of year, as we move from the grey days of January into Spring, I know many of you will be thinking ahead to brighter days and maybe booking a holiday. With this in mind, I thought it would be helpful to remind all parents/carers of my expectations regarding attendance, including 'Requests for Leave of Absence' and 'Lateness'.

The Head Teacher, on behalf of the Governing Body, can grant leave, at their discretion, for up to five days in any school year in **EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**. (Please note - A 'Family Holiday' does not meet the criteria for 'exceptional circumstances'). This includes leaving school early. In accordance with guidance from Surrey County Council no holidays will be authorised at the beginning of the academic year, or during May due to end of year assessments. No parents/carers can demand leave of absence for their children as a right. Holidays taken without the permission of the Governing Body may result in legal action being taken against each parent.

As a school we are obliged to inform you that you may be subject to a Penalty Notice if your child's absence from school is unauthorised. It is important your child attends school to get a good education. **By law**, as a parent or carer, you must make sure that if your child is aged 5 to 16 (compulsory school age), he or she receives a suitable full-time education. This means that your child should not have sessions of unauthorised absence. During term time your child should attend school regularly unless he or she is ill or the school has authorised their absence.

The Penalty Notice fine would be :-

- £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days, rising to
- £120 per parent, per child if paid between 21-28 days.
- If the fine is not paid within 28 days you may be prosecuted under S444.1 of the Education Act 1996.

I must advise you that if the prosecution takes place, the maximum fine is £1,000 per parent, per child. This reflects the seriousness of unauthorised absence from school.

Our inclusion Officer also expects school to provide evidence of illness if attendance is below 90%.

Our key priority is to ensure your child(ren) are as successful as possible, are able to reach his/her full potential and gains maximum benefits from his/her educational experience.

I would hope that upon reflection you are able to support this decision in line with the Local Authority and Government policy, that leave should be restricted to the 13 weeks school holidays except in exceptional circumstances.

**MESSAGE FROM MRS FORD, HEADTEACHER Cont'd...**

**PUNCTUALITY**

I would also like to remind parents that lateness to school is just as serious as non-attendance and could also lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice. It is expected that children will arrive at school on time. The start of the school day is an important time for children to develop their social skills with their peers, as well as preparing them for their learning. We start teaching at 8.45am and 'late' children miss out on vital skills such as phonics and/or basic number work. In cases of persistent late arrival to school, school will liaise with the parents/carers to identify reasons for the persistent lateness and provide appropriate support and guidance. The matter may be referred to the Inclusion Officer (IO) for investigation on her regular visits to school. The role of the Inclusion Service is to monitor school attendance/lateness and to support children in order to improve their attendance/lateness. This often involves a home visit.

Thank you for your support in ensuring all our children are in school on time, every day.

Mrs T Ford  
Headteacher

**ATTENDANCE**

Congratulations to Butterflies Class and Hawks Class for the best attendance in the last two weeks

	2nd - 5th Jan	8th - 12th Jan
<b>WHOLE SCHOOL</b>	<b>95.2%</b>	<b>94.3%</b>
Ladybirds	96.3%	90.9%
Butterflies	99.2%	96.9%
Grasshoppers	96.1%	93.8%
Falcons	91.4%	92.8%
Hawks	96.3%	98.8%
Owls	95.1%	93.6%
Kites	92.4%	93.3%

## Absence from School

Children are required by law to attend school 190 days per year. The Government states that every pupil's attendance should be **at least 95%**.

Being **LATE** after registration will also **LOWER** your attendance.

### How many days do you attend school?

Attendance during one school year	Equals - Days absent	Equals - Weeks absent	Which means this number of lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons
75%	48 days	10 weeks	250 lessons
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks	290 lessons
65%	67 days	13.5 weeks	340 lessons

# PROUD CORNER

## Well done to:

- Aine A, Year 4 - Star of the Week at Gym Club

Thank you for sharing your success with the children at our Whole School Assembly.

## HEADTEACHER AWARDS

Well done to the following children who have been presented with Headteacher Awards:

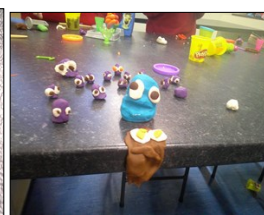
- ◆ Matilda C, Year 6
- ◆ Ruby G, Year 6
- ◆ Alannah B, Year 6
- ◆ Elizabeth L, Year 6
- ◆ Alla S, Year 6
- ◆ Jack B, Year 6
- ◆ Ava G, Year 6
- ◆ Ene A, Year 3

## KEY STAGE 2 PLAYDOUGH CLUB



Key Stage 2 Playdough Club meet on a Monday after school. The children get to use their creativity and create models using their imaginations. They can chill with friends and share ideas and resources.

A lovely way to unwind for an hour.



## IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

### BUTTERFLIES CLASS ASSEMBLY

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> January was the Greatest Show by Butterflies Class at Stepgates. Not only did they dance, do acrobatics and have strong men in the show, they sang "A Million Dreams" like angels.

Each child told the school and audience what their dream is to become when they are grown up, from Artists to Lighthouse Keepers.

It really was a great show and the children were superb - not sure how we are going to top that!

### Are you looking for a Nursery place for your child in September 2024?

*We are now commencing the admission process for our Sunbeams Nursery for September 2023.*

#### **If your child was born between 1st September 2021 and 31st August 2022**

If your child is under three years of age, we offer EITHER five morning sessions (9:00am to 12:00 noon) OR five afternoon sessions (12:30pm to 3:30pm). You may choose less than five sessions but we would recommend you choose at least two sessions per week.

For eligible parents we offer four 'Free Early Education for Two year olds' (FEET) places, for which a copy letter proving eligibility from Surrey County Council needs to be provided to secure this place. (For eligibility please see: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/childcare-professionals/providing-free-early-education/providing-free-early-education-for-two-year-olds#>)

#### **If your child was born between 1st September 2020 and 31st August 2021**

We offer 15 hour funded places on a two and a half day split; either Monday full day, Tuesday full day and Wednesday morning OR Wednesday afternoon, Thursday full day and Friday full day.

For eligible parents we offer 30 hour free childcare places, for which a code from HMRC needs to be provided to secure this place. (For eligibility please see <https://www.gov.uk/30-hours-free-childcare>)

For further information and/or an Application Form, please contact:

Mrs M Fernandez  
Business Manager  
Telephone: 01932 563022  
Email: admin@stepgates.surrey.sch.uk

## DATES - 2023/2024

### UPCOMING EVENTS - SPRING TERM 2024

Friday 2nd February	Hawks Class Assembly 9:05am
Friday 9th February	Children finish at normal time for half term
Mon 12th to Fri 16th February	Half Term
Monday 19th February	Children return to school
Wednesday 21st February	Ladybirds Trip to Chertsey Museum
Friday 23rd February	Grasshoppers Class Assembly 9:05am
Tuesday 5th March	Parent-Teacher Consultation Evening
Thursday 7th March	World Book Day
Friday 8th March	Falcons Class Assembly 9:05am
Friday 15th March	Ladybirds Class Assembly 9:05am
Friday 22nd March	Owls Class Assembly 9:05am
Tues 26th - Thurs 28th March	Year 4 (Hawks) Residential trip to Henley Fort
Thursday 28th March	Last day of Spring Term - Children finish at 1pm
Fri 29th March to Fri 12th April	Easter Holidays

### SUMMER TERM 2024

**DURING MAY ASSESSMENTS FOR ALL CLASSES WILL TAKE PLACE  
NO AUTHORISED ABSENCES WILL BE GRANTED DURING THIS TIME**

Monday 15th April	Children return to school
Monday 22nd April	Book Fair this week
Monday 6th May	Bank Holiday - School Closed
Mon 13th - Thurs 16th May	SATs (Standard Assessment Tests) Week
Thursday 23rd May	Class Photos
Friday 24th May	Sports Day (Weather Permitting)
Friday 24th May	Children finish at normal time for half term
Mon 27th May to Fri 31st May	Half Term
Monday 3rd June	Children return to school
Monday 3rd to Friday 7th June	Year 6 (Kites) Residential Trip
Monday 10th June	INSET Day - School closed
Thursday 27th June	Year 6 (Kites) to Harry Potter Studios
Tuesday 2nd July and Wednesday 3rd July	Secondary School Induction Days - <b>(Please check with individual school for further details)</b>
Friday 19th July	Last day of Summer term - Children finish at 1pm
Monday 22nd July and Tuesday 23rd July	INSET Days - School closed