

PARKGATE JUNIOR SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

FRIDAY 9TH JANUARY 2026

WELCOME

We would like to start with a big 'Thank you' to all the parents and pupils who have been so welcoming in our first week at Parkgate Junior School. We are enjoying getting to know all of the children and have been impressed with how many have come to say hello and tell us something interesting about themselves.

We would like to extend an invitation to all parents and carers to come and chat with us at the end of the day when you are picking up your children, whether that is just to say hello, or talk to us about a specific matter. We will be outside at pick-up every day next week.

A new year is always a good time for a fresh start and we would like to remind families that children should be arriving at school on time every day, and attending school every day they are well enough to do so. Missing learning due to absence or lateness has a huge, negative impact on your child's academic success and also on their mental wellbeing. Missing a day of school means your child misses out on key learning and important socialising time with friends.

There are many fantastic events and learning opportunities planned for your children this term and we look forward to sharing success and achievements with you in the coming weeks.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 19th - 23rd Jan Cross Curricular Week
- 19th Jan Football Club Match at Orchard Primary School
- 28th Jan Football Club Match at Holy Rood Primary School
- 30th Jan Cross Curricular Week Open Afternoon
- 2nd Feb Football Club Match at Alban Wood Primary School
- 10th Feb Parents evening
- 10th Feb Dance Club Performance
- 12th Feb Parents evening
- 16th - 22nd Feb Half term
- 27th Feb Year 4 Visit to Verulamium Museum
- 6th Mar Year 5 Guildhall Concert
- 12th Mar Book look
- 16th Mar Netball Club Tournament at Future Academies
- 18th Mar Voice in a Million at Wembley
- 19th Mar Year 3 STEM trip
- 24th Mar Year 5 Play
- 27th Mar Parkgate's Got Talent and last day of term (1:30pm)
- 14th Apr First Day of Summer Term



WELCOME AND FAREWELL

We would like to say a warm welcome to two new members of staff, Ms O'Connor who has joined us as a teaching assistant and Mrs Scott our new library/literacy assistant.

Mrs Tate will be leaving us today after 16 years, she will be missed, but we wish her the best of luck for the future.



CATERLINK MENU - WEEK 3

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Macaroni Cheese	Chicken Enchilada Bae with Paprika Wedges	Pork Sausage or Chicken Sausage (halal option), with Roast Potatoes and Gravy	Mild Caribbean Chicken with Golden Rice	Fish Fingers with Chips
Lentil Curry with Rice	Tomato Pasta	Vegan Sausage with Roast Potatoes	Caribbean Stew with Golden Rice	Cheese and Tomato Pizza with Chips
Jacket Potato	Jacket Potato	Jacket Potato	Jacket Potato	Jacket Potato
Cheese or Tuna Baguette	Cheese or Tuna Baguette	Cheese or Tuna Baguette	Cheese or Tuna Baguette	Cheese or Tuna Baguette
		Cheese or Tuna Baguette		

KEEP UP TO DATE

You can find key dates, school information, lunch options, club timetables and lots more information on our [school website](http://www.parkgate-junior-school.co.uk).



An inspiring learning community

MATHS CHALLENGE

Well done to these children for winning the December Math challenge.



JANUARY MATH CHALLENGE



KS2 Monthly Maths Challenge - Big Garden Birdwatch Maths – January 2026

Can you turn bird spotting into brilliant maths?

The Challenge

Take part in your own mini Big Garden Birdwatch! Spot birds for a short time and use your maths skills to record and present what you find.

What to Do

1. Watch for Birds: Spend a 15-30 minute session quietly looking for birds in your garden, from a window, or a local park.
2. Count birds at one time: Count the maximum number of each type of bird you see landing at the same moment (not the total over time).
3. Choose 5 Common Birds: Focus on these five friends: Blackbird, Sparrow, Robin, Pigeon, Blue Tit.
4. Record results with tally marks: Use a notebook to make tally marks (e.g., ||||) for each bird you see at once.

Maths Task: Create a Poster Chart

- Title requirement: Give your chart a clear, catchy title (e.g., "My Big Garden Birdwatch Count").
- Chart options: Choose one way to show your data:
 - Bar chart (using blocks or colored paper)
 - Tally chart (neatly drawn tally marks)
 - Pictogram (using small bird drawings as symbols)
- Labels needed: Label the axes (e.g., "Number of Birds", "Type of Bird") and add a key for a pictogram.
- Example maths sentences: Write 2-3 sentences about your findings, like: "I saw 3 more Robins than Blackbirds." or "The Sparrow was the most common bird."

Maths Skills Being Used

- Counting
- Tally marks
- Interpreting data
- Comparing amounts
- Presenting information

Extra Challenge (Optional)

Can you find the total number of birds you spotted all together? Or try estimating the distance of the furthest bird?

Making It Display-Ready

Use bright colors, make your writing neat and clear, and add your own bird drawings! Ensure it's easy for others to read.

TT ROCKSTARS CHALLENGE



Well done to all of those that took part on the TT Rockstars challenge. These classes have won themselves some extra play: Heron, Parrot, Eagle, Owl



Great work by these children who came top three in their classes.

LOST PROPERTY

Our lost property pile is getting bigger! We cannot store the amount we have. All items will be in reception today, please have a look after school and claim any items that belong to your child. Any items left over will be sent to recycling. Please ensure all items are labelled with your child's name so that we can return them.

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

We would like to remind all parents that the playground equipment must not be used before or after school.

CROSS CURRICULAR WEEK

This year's Cross Curricular Week will focus on **Our World** – exploring the continents and countries of the world and how important this huge range of language and culture is. We are also going to be thinking about how we look after our planet. We have lots of exciting activities and workshops that the children will participate in, including Music, Dance and Drama workshops.

Can you share a story/ folktale?

We are keen for parents/carers/family members to come to school and share some stories or folktales that they were told growing up. These can be stories from our own Heritage or stories we were told that were then passed on through generations. It would be lovely to have these told or read to the children. If you have a story and would rather send it in to be shared by class teachers, that would also be lovely!

Poems/ songs and learning new languages

We also would like to use this as a chance to celebrate the huge number of languages spoken in our school. If you are able to come in to class and help the class to learn a short poem, a song or a few basic greetings in a language other than English (it doesn't need to be complicated), please let us know.

Please fill in the form before **15th January 2026**.

We will contact you later with more details.



REPORTING ABSENCE

If your child is ill and cannot attend school please call the school office and select option 1 to report the absence leaving your child's name, class and symptoms.

If your child has a medical appointment please report this to the school office as soon as possible and before the date of the appointment.

If you wish to take your child from school for any other reasons please complete an absence request form which can be found on the school website, or you can collect a copy form the school office.

PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR - PARENT WORKSHOP



The Mental Health Support Team will be running a workshop for parents on Monday 2nd February 2026 at 3.30pm, the session will last approximately 1 hour.

In this session, we will focus on:

- Identifying the root cause of challenging behaviour
- Understanding why children become dysregulated and experience meltdowns/outbursts
- Learning proactive and responsive strategies to address your child's behaviour in a way that encourages positive behaviour.

If you would like to attend this session, please complete [this form](#) form by Monday 26th January.

If you have any questions regarding this, please speak to Mrs Drake.

PTA NEWS



Happy New Year from the PTA!

Are you having a post Christmas clear out? Did you get some lovely gifts which aren't quite to your personal taste?

We would love your new, unwanted gifts for future fundraising events.

Please donate any new and unused toiletries gift sets, candles, hand creams, gloves, mugs or similar. You can find a donation box in the school reception for the next two weeks.

We'd also love any small/medium sized toys and games which are in excellent condition with all parts present.

Thank you for your support!

PTA@parkgatejm.herts.sch.uk

CLUBS



INTERNAL CLUBS:

There are still **spaces available** for the following school clubs. Please sign up on **Arbor**:

- Y3-5 Multisport Club (Thursday mornings, starting on 8th January)
- Y6 Football Club (Thursday afternoons, starting on 8th January)

EXTERNAL CLUBS:

- Y3-6 Multisport Club by Xtra Time (Tuesday afternoons, starting on 13th January) - [booking form](#)
- Year 5 11+Club (Wednesday afternoons, starting on 14th January) - **contact coach directly**

(07507399004/tara.moore@resolutefire.co.uk)

- SKILL7 After school football club - see the [website](#) for full details and to book.

MUSIC LESSONS



Registration now open for music lessons

Instrumental and vocal lessons

- ▶ Music lessons are available during the school day at hundreds of schools in Hertfordshire.
- ▶ We also provide lessons in the afternoon, evening and on the weekends at our 12 music centres across the county.
- ▶ We offer various lesson types and durations. Please visit our website for more information.
- ▶ Financial support is available to pupils receiving certain benefits, to help with the cost of lessons.
- ▶ As your child progresses on their musical journey, they will be invited to join ensembles or music groups that perform regularly.



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STARS OF THE WEEK

Congratulations to the stars of the week:

★	3 Owl	Eliza	Hakeem
★	3 Robin	Akaran	Matilda
★	4 Heron	Shreya	Rumayso
★	4 Puffin	Maaz	Idris
★	5 Parrot	Fianna	Lara
★	5 Toucan	Eesa	Quinten
★	6 Eagle	Aanaya	Tharanethan
★	6 Falcon	Ruby	Faayze

ATTENDANCE

Congratulations to 6 Falcon for 98% attendance last week.

3 Owl	90.97%
3 Robin	94.14%
4 Heron	93.13%
4 Puffin	97.86%
5 Parrot	94.17%
5 Toucan	86.55%
6 Eagle	94.84%
6 Falcon	98%

RAFFLE WINNERS

Congratulations to this week's raffle winners for positive behaviour:

We will be back with raffle winners next week