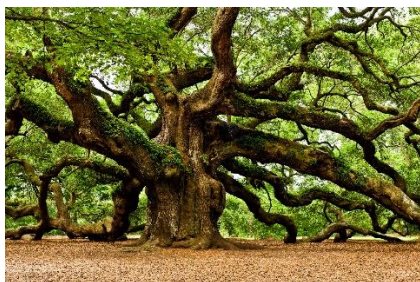


**GEORGE FENTHAM ENDOWED SCHOOL  
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February 2024

**Term Dates**

<b>SCHOOL TERMS &amp; HOLIDAY DATES</b>	<b>2023/2024</b>
<b>Spring Term</b>	Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2024 - Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2024
<b>Half Term</b>	Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> February 2024 - Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> February 2024
<b>Easter Break</b>	Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> March 2024 - Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> April
<b>Summer Term</b>	Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> April 2024 - Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2024
<b>May Day Bank Holiday</b>	Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> May 2024
<b>Half Term</b>	Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> May 2024 - Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> May 2024
<b>5 INSET DAYS</b>	Inset Day 1: Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> September 2023 Inset Day 2: Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> October 2023 Inset Day 3: Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2024 Inset Day 4: Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> May 2024 Inset Day 5: Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2024



**Dates for Diary 2023/24**

Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> February	League football GF Girls vs Hockley Heath
Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> February	Year 5 Young Voices Resorts World Arena
Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> February	League Football 4.00pm GF Boys vs St Patricks
	League football 4.30pm GF Boys vs Meriden
Thursday 29 <sup>th</sup> February	Rescheduled Girls football GF vs St G & T
Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 1 Jungle Explorer Day
Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> March	Reception and Year 6 National Childhood Measurement Programme
Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> March	Yr4 Cadbury World
Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> March	Parent Consultations - online
Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> March	Parent Consultations in person
Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> April	Yr4 & Yr5 Chance to Shine Cricket

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Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> April	Yr4 & Yr5 Chance to Shine Cricket
Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> April	Yr4 & Yr5 Chance to Shine Cricket
Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> April	Yr4 & Yr5 Chance to Shine Cricket
Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> May	Yr4 & Yr5 Chance to Shine Cricket
Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> May	Class Photographs
Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> May	Yr4 & Yr5 Chance to Shine Cricket
Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup> - Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> June	Yr6 Residential Culmington Manor
Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup> June	Yr4 Cricket Berkswell
Thursday 20 <sup>th</sup> June	Yr4 Cricket Berkswell

**Contact details/Parent Pay**

Starting after half term we will be sending home, class by class, the current contact details we hold on file for your child/children. When you receive this please can you check all the details and, if necessary, amend and return to the school office for us to update our systems. It is vital that all information is kept up to date so we can contact you easily. Email addresses are also just as important as this links to our Parent Pay which is a much used communication channel and also this is where you can give consent to trips and activities and pay any monies requested for example, school lunches or school trips/activities.

**Change of pick up end of school day**

To continue to ensure the safety of your child, please can you inform the class teacher in writing or send an email to the school office notifying us of a change to pick up at the end of the school day.

If you have emailed the office, we will do our best to let you know we have received the request and will then pass the message on to the class teacher. It is essential that these requests are received by **2:30pm** so that we have time to respond.

**Important - School Lunches - Paying by Parent Pay**

With regards to paying for School lunches via Parent Pay, please can you ensure your child's account is credited with enough money to cover the cost of their school meals. If this is not the case, we may contact you to discuss the option of a packed lunch until any debt is cleared.

**Polite Request - Car Parking and Voluntary One-Way System**

Thank you to all of our parents and visitors who park carefully, considering the safety and well-being of our children, families and residents. Unfortunately, we still have some drivers who are stopping and parking without consideration and putting our children in danger.

The Nursery car park is for use by Nursery parents only at the start of the day. Please ensure your car is parked in one of the marked bays not abandoned in the entrance or exit which causes blockages in the car park and on Fentham Road.

There is a voluntary one-way system at school drop off and collection times which is to enter at the bottom of Fentham Road by the war memorial and to leave the top end of Fentham Road along Marsh Lane. Thank you for your support in this matter.

**Class Events**

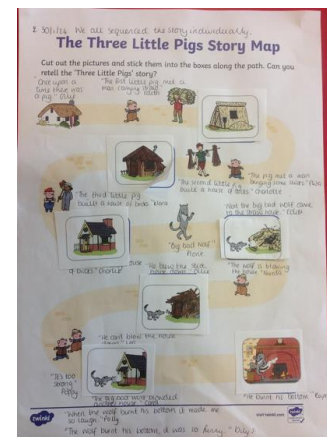
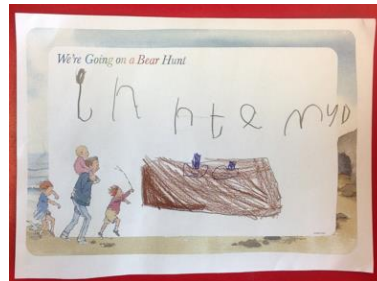
**Nursery:**

What a busy half-term we have had! We have looked closely at the artwork 'The Starry Night' by Vincent Van Gogh and recreated our own versions for a wonderful display in the corridor.

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As our learning theme is 'Once Upon a Time', we have had a half-term filled with amazing stories. We joined Baby Bear in pretending to build a rocket to fly to the moon in 'Whatever Next'. We went on a 'Bear Hunt' and drew our favourite parts of the story. We have sequenced the story of 'The Three Little Pigs' and built houses out of recycled materials. And we learnt about Lunar New Year and listened to the story 'The Great Race.'



Have a lovely break and we look forward to our new learning theme 'Pirate Adventures' next half-term.

**Mrs Bromhall**

**Reception:**

This term Reception have had a really busy time completing lots of activities around the theme 'Zoom, Rocket, Zoom'. We have read the stories 'Whatever Next' and 'How to Catch a Star' which have inspired our writing and role play. We found out about famous astronauts Neil Armstrong and Tim Peake. We have looked at stars and the different constellations to look out for in the night sky. The children designed and made their own rockets, selecting resources and materials independently. We created a joint display with Nursery using Vincent Van Gogh's 'The Starry Night' and listened to music by Gustav Holst who composed pieces of music called 'The Planets'. Also during this half term, we have learnt about the Lunar New Year and how it is celebrated in China! We had a fantastic week of activities preparing and cooking a Chinese noodle dish, making money wallets, dragon masks and lanterns and also performing a dragon dance in P.E. Our music lessons have been very exciting because we are learning how to use a glockenspiel! We are finding notes on the 'glock' and playing them in time to a piece of music. We are creating a beautiful sound!

Everyone has worked so hard. I am so proud of you all. Have a lovely half term break.



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**Mrs Brown**

**Year 1:**

Year 1 have had a fantastic start to the spring term. We have been very busy learning all about 'Amazing Africa'.

We have been reading lots of African related books in English and writing some super descriptive sentences. We have been reading a very special story, all about Sunny the Meerkat, called 'Meerkat Mail' by Emily Gravett. Sunny, along with his cousin Sammy, have come over from Africa to visit us and have been spending time with us all outside of school! Both meerkats have told their teachers how lovely the Year 1 children are!

In Art, we have been learning all about the skill of weaving and have created our own African weaving inspired by the colours of the different African landscapes. The children worked in pairs and produced some absolutely fantastic pieces of Art thinking very carefully about the colours we might see when the sun begins to set over the Savannah Plains. We have also been finding out about a textile artist named Gunta Stolzl, who created some wonderful pieces of art by weaving. She used colours and patterns inspired from Africa, especially Kente cloth.

Next half term we will be finding out about the animals that are found in Africa and learning all about them. The children have been brilliant and have thoroughly embraced their learning. Thank you, Year 1! We are looking forward to our 'Animal Explorer Day' next half term too!



**Mrs Salmon and Mrs Mandell**

**Year 2:**

**Infant Agility Festival**

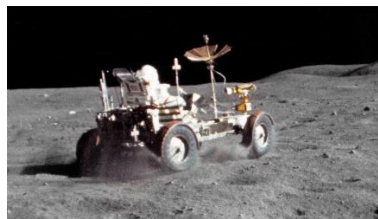
All of the children in Year 2 had a wonderful time taking part in the Solihull Agility Festival at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre and were a credit to both the school and you as parents, showing great perseverance and resilience, as well as many of our School Games Values. Competing in 5 different 'agility' events (Bouncer, Jumper, Thrower, Pitcher and Runner) the children had to aim

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to 'beat their best', tweaking their technique each time to try and improve their own score. The scores were then collated and we now wait to find out how we did, when compared to the other competing schools from the area.



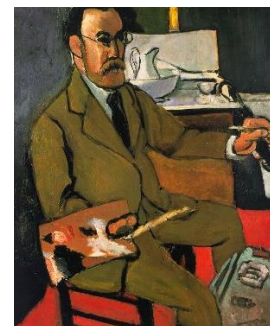
As part of our learning this half term, the children have used their Design & Technology skills to help them design and create their own FANTASTIC Moon Buggies to help 'Bob', the main character in one of our English texts, to do his job of keeping the Moon clean. They've also used their writing skills to produce some wonderful posters and postcards as well. In Maths we have been learning about money and multiplication, enjoying seeing the patterns and relationships between them and finding ways to make different amounts. The children have loved our history topic - The Plague - and finding out how it started, how it spread and what people did to try and stop it. There are too many wonderful things to mention but, throughout all our topics, the children have been so focused, asking great questions and I am so proud of them.



**Mr Bass**

**Year 3:**

This term Year 3 have been looking at the artist Henri Matisse and his approach to art. The children have completed studies of Matisse's life and have also produced a shared piece of art work that can be seen in the main school corridor. The children have enjoyed exploring Matisse's approach to abstract art, looking at the shape, colour and pattern.



During our Geography lessons we have been developing our knowledge of climate zones, looking particularly at the temperatures of deserts. We have been using our maths skills to analyse geographical data and present it in different ways.

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**Mrs Hodge**

**Year 4:**

We have had a super start to the spring term by immersing ourselves in our new History topic, learning about the Mayans. This topic links beautifully to our English unit of work where we have been studying 'The Great Kapok Tree', which in turn links again to our science unit of 'Classification' and learning about animals and their habitats. In our English, we have enjoyed having opportunities to perform drama activities, learn about internal monologues, write persuasive letters, and undertaken our own research on the animals of the rainforest in order to create animal fact files - a super variety of activities to help us develop our writing skills.

Music update... our musical skills have been developing well over the last half-term. We have now mastered a number of pieces, learnt different techniques of bowing and have even started to read music. It is amazing to see how quickly the children have progressed on their musical journey. A huge thank you to The Fentham Trust for funding this opportunity each year.

The children have also enjoyed taking part in the NSPCC Number Day. It was lovely to see everyone in their number themed clothing and to enjoy some slightly different maths activities. We created some times table flowers to help us with our trickier times tables and we also drew some mazes and wrote some directions for the quickest routes from start to finish.



**Mrs Briggs and Mrs Gibbons**

**Year 5:**

Wow, hasn't this term flown by so quickly? Year 5 have continued to work hard. They have been studying the work of Henri Rousseau in art and worked collaboratively to produce an amazing display. They should be super proud of their paint blending skills and their team work.



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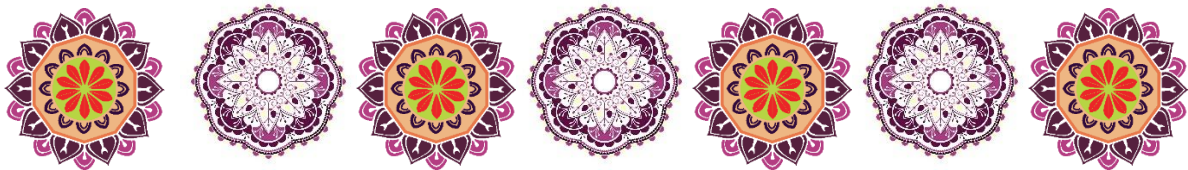


Year 5 have also been busy practising the songs for Young Voices; it is lovely to see their excitement and confidence building. In addition, we have also been performing poetry and working hard on multiplication - it's been tricky but our perseverance is paying off. It is wonderful to see the children all making the most of their learning opportunities. Well done!

**Mrs Bradburn and Mrs Kermode**

**Year 6:**

Year 6 kick-started this term's topic, India, through analysing and creating the most wonderful pieces of Indian-style paintings. They really are very talented! Linked to this, the children have been exploring and performing Indian dance and learning all about the location and geological features of India within their Geography lessons.



In English, the children have been enjoying the text, 'Broken Glass' by Sally Grindley. They have written play-scripts, non-chronological reports, monologues, character descriptions and formal letters linked to the chapters we have read so far. I have been very impressed with the effort they have made to up-level their writing through the use of cohesion and higher-level punctuation. In their Science lessons, Year 6 have been learning about the circulatory system. They carried out an experiment that looked at how exercise affected their heart rate and why. They also made their own model lungs which showed how inhaling and exhaling works within the body.

Good luck to the Playground Heroes who are going to run activities and support at an interschool athletic competition soon. Enjoy the opportunity!

**Miss Timothy and Mrs Bailey**

**School Sports**

**Active Play Heroes:** Congratulations to Amy, Frankie H, Freya, Abi and Claudie who have earned their 10 sessions badge. Your games and friendly faces really do make a difference. Keep up the good work!

**Clubs:** After school and Lunchtime clubs will continue to run as planned after the half term - no need to sign up if you are already participating. We do have a few spaces available so please contact the office if you would like to join. We were delighted by the response for KS2 dodgeball. Because of the uptake, we have now split this into a year 3/4 club and a year 5/6 club. The 3/4 club is currently running and the Year 5/6 club will start just before Easter.

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**School Council**

This half term, our School Council have been working on a particular project related to our Anti-Bullying Policy. The policy is being reviewed as part of our rolling programme of policy development. As a group, we have been answering big questions such as: 'What is Bullying?' 'What does Bullying look like?' and 'What would you do if you saw it happening?'

The children's input will then form part of our reviewed policy which we look forward to sharing with you.

**Online Safety Committee and Safer Internet Day**

During our sessions we have planned for Safer Internet Day, which took place on Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> February, and included the whole school (please see separate letter sent out). We have also looked at the ideas the Committee have for raising the profile of Online Safety and now have a clear action plan. We will be sharing our first activity & competition with you after half term.

Please check out the Online Safety page on our school website, using the link below.

<http://www.georgefenthamschool.co.uk/online-safety.html>

**Eco-Council**

Our Eco-Councillors have truly hit the ground running this half-term. In what has been a really short period, they have managed to organise two eco initiatives that will hopefully contribute to the school receiving an eco-award for this school year.

Our first initiative was 'Bird Watch Week'. This is an initiative that has proven extremely popular over the last few years but takes a great deal of commitment from our conscientious Councillors. During the week beginning 29<sup>th</sup> January, our Councillors organised a playground activity that saw children from every year group being given the opportunity to become bird watchers. Complete with binoculars, clipboard and tally chart, our birdwatchers were tasked with counting and identifying the birds in our local environment.

Our data will contribute to a larger count organised by the RSPB, details of which will be fed back to all involved at some point in the future.



Our second initiative was a task that we are asking our children to complete over the half-term holiday. All children have been tasked with helping to reduce their carbon footprints by making simple changes to their usual practice (from walking instead of taking the car, having a four-minute shower instead of a bath or even making sure that rubbish is correctly recycled at home). Every little helps with reducing our carbon footprints!

Never to be idle, our Eco-Councillors already have some very exciting ideas planned for next half term... watch this space!

**Mental Health Week**

The final week of spring term 1 has seen us taking part in Children's Mental Health Week in school. This year's theme is 'My Voice Matters'. This is about empowering the children by providing them with the tools they need to express themselves. At the start of the week we launched the theme with a whole school assembly, where the children were reminded why it is important for them to speak up and out about things that are important to them.

In classes we have been encouraging the children to work together to create a positive change for their mental health and wellbeing. As a school, we want all children and young people to be able to say - and believe - "My Voice Matters."



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**NSPCC Number Day 2024**

On Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> February we all took part in the NSPCC's Number Day. Our children looked fabulous wearing something with a mathematical theme to raise money for charity. Thank you to everyone who donated raising a total of £212.

During the day children worked through a wide range of fun and engaging mathematical activities using all of their investigative and problem solving skills. It was lovely to see their perseverance and resilience, even when the problems were tricky!



**Music**

Since half term, the KS2 children have been focussing in our Music assemblies on famous musicians - we have so far explored the music and history of Hildegard of Bingham (a medieval pioneer), Ladysmith Blackmambazo (a contemporary South African vocal group) and Antonio Vivaldi (a Baroque period master). Special thanks to the children who followed up with and completed the music quizzes after each assembly using the knowledge organiser to answer the questions. They each got, and deserved, their Music prizes. Well done!

This half term we have also had a visiting Brass musician in school who demonstrated a variety of instruments, including the trombone, euphonium and trumpet. The children were blown away by the different sounds and timbres the instruments could make. Mrs Kermode also demonstrated her flute, piccolo and alto flute and we discussed the pitch of each instrument and how the size and shape of the instruments affects their pitch e.g. smaller instruments have a higher pitch than larger instruments. It was fantastic to see so many children take away information about Solihull Music Service and instrumental lessons. We do hope more of our children decide to take up an instrument and benefit from the variety of skills and sense of enjoyment that comes with this!

Aside from this, instrumental and singing lessons have continued this half term and we love hearing the children perform when they have the confidence - please encourage your children to sign up to perform in assembly so that we can continue to enjoy their progress. They do not have to be learning an instrument in school. We already have a number of children wanting to perform after half term which is brilliant.

If your child is a budding musician and would like to learn an instrument, please sign up using the Solihull Music information which came home via Parent Pay. If you would like to discuss financial support or instrumental hire, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Kermode or the School Office to find out more. Solihull Music can be contacted on: [solihullmusic@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:solihullmusic@solihull.gov.uk) or 0121 704 6500.



**Attendance**

To support us to secure good attendance for all of our pupils we are continuing to work with Central School Attendance and Welfare Service Ltd (CSAW) after half term.

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Every day, attendance registers are rigorously scrutinised to identify any attendance issues. Your child may be referred to a CSAWS Attendance and Welfare Officer if attendance or punctuality is causing concern. They will then contact you by phone, letter or carry out a home visit to discuss how attendance and punctuality can be improved.

### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION: Reporting Absence and Leave of Absence Forms**

Schools have a duty to account daily for all children registered at the school. Therefore, if your child is absent due to sickness or other unexpected circumstances, it is critical that you let us know by 8:30am on that day. This can be done via our phone line on 01675 442800 option 1, or through emailing the school office at [office@george-fentham.solihull.sch.uk](mailto:office@george-fentham.solihull.sch.uk).

Please be aware, if we have not received a reason for your child's absence, we will work through your child's contact list to try to establish the reason for this absence. If after doing everything possible we are still unable to establish why your child is absent, we may escalate this to a safeguarding concern.

**Parents / carers are asked to complete a Leave of Absence Form, in advance, for every absence.**

Please note this includes planned absences or short notice absences due, for example, for medical appointments during the school day. Forms are available by contacting the school office.

### **Holidays in School Time**

Headteachers are only allowed to grant leave of absence in very exceptional circumstances and where the application has been made two weeks in advance. This does not include family holidays, therefore, we ask that you do not book holidays in school time as these will be unauthorised and could lead to a referral to the Local Authority Enforcement Team for a fixed penalty fine or prosecution.

Should you require any further information, or wish to discuss a leave of absence request please contact the school office.

### **Medicines in School - REMINDER**

Our Medicines in School and Administering Medicines policy are both on our school website, along with the permission forms for prescribed and over the counter medicines.

Should your child require any medication during the school day, please complete the relevant form and bring this, with the medicine, directly to the school office. **Medicines must not be sent in with children.**

It is really important that your child's medicine has the prescription label on it and that your instructions exactly match the dosage prescribed.

### **Medical, Dental & Optician Appointments**

Following advice from CSAWS, we would like to ask for your support in organising medical, dental and optician appointments outside of the school day. Please note if there is no alternative, you may be asked to show a copy of your appointment letter or card to the school office and complete a leave of absence request.

### **Dietary Requirements / Food Allergies**

Please note it is the responsibility of Parents/Carers to advise the school office, in writing, of any dietary requirements or food allergies for each individual child. This is not required for food preferences but for medical conditions such as allergies or religious beliefs. This information will be stored on your child's record throughout school.

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**Healthy Schools: Break time Snacks and Water Bottles**

**Snacks**

As part of our Healthy Schools approach, we ask for your support in **only sending in pure fresh or dried fruit and vegetables for morning snack. No other snacks are permitted.** Please note fresh fruit or vegetables are provided by school for all children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. Key Stage 2 children should be provided with a fruit or vegetable snack from home.

**Water Bottles**

Children have access to their water bottles during the day and are regularly reminded to drink. Please encourage your child to do this and **ensure that drinking bottles contain water only.** Should you wish your child to have milk at break time details are available from the school office.

**No Nuts in School**

We have a number of children in school who have a severe nut allergy. These allergies can be life threatening. **In order to keep all of our children safe, please ensure that you do not send any nuts or products containing nuts into school with your child, at any time.**



**The BASE**

The BASE provides before and after school care and Nursery wrap around care during term time. The BASE is not run by school, but by a completely separate Voluntary Management Committee. If you have any queries regarding this provision, please contact Mrs Tina Coley directly on 01675 443913.

**And Finally**

As you can see from our Newsletter, although this has been a short half term, we have had a very busy time in school and the children and staff have been working incredibly hard! We wish you a restful and enjoyable half term and look forward to welcoming everyone back to school on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February.

**Mrs J Gaughan**  
Headteacher