



# GEARIES NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2

## Co-Head Message

As another term draws to a close it is amazing to look back and see all that has been achieved over the past seven weeks.

A huge amount of learning has taken place across a whole range of learning experiences. These have been enhanced by visits to performances, sporting competitions and visits to places of worship.

All of these encounters have been rounded off nicely with a hugely successful and enjoyable winter fair, alongside our annual Christmas dinner and Christmas jumper day.

May we take this opportunity to wish you a restful and enjoyable holiday, a Merry Christmas to all of you who are celebrating and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

We look forward to seeing you all again on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January.

Mr Lea and Mrs Dias



# SCHOOL DIARY

## IMPORTANT DATES FOR SPRING 1

### Performance Assemblies

Date	Class	
Thursday 15th January	5A at 9:00am in the Junior Hall	
Friday 16th January	1D at 9:10am in the Infant Hall	4C at 9:00am in the Junior Hall
Thursday 5th February	6A at 9:00am in the Junior Hall	
Friday 6th February	1C at 9:10am in the Infant Hall	3C at 9:00am in the Junior Hall
Thursday 5th March	6B at 9:00am in the Junior Hall	
Thursday 6th March	1B at 9:10am in the Infant Hall	4B at 9:00am in the Junior Hall
Thursday 26th March	6D at 9:00am in the Junior Hall	
Friday 27th March	1A at 9:10am in the Infant Hall	3B at 9:00am in the Junior Hall



# SCHOOL DIARY

## IMPORTANT DATES FOR SPRING 1

### Other Key Dates for this half-term

Event	Date	Timings	
First day of Spring Term 1	Monday 5th January	Usual timings	
Classes 4A and 4D start swimming lessons for the term	Tuesday 6th January	Timings TBC	
Year 5 Movie Night	Thursday 29th January	TBC	
Spring Term 2026	Open Classrooms	Thursday 5th February Y1,3,4	8:40am TO 9:10am
	Open Classrooms	Tuesday 10th February Y5 & Y6	8:40am TO 9:10am
	Open Classrooms	Wednesday 11th February YR & Y2	8:40am TO 9:10am
	Last day of Spring 1 for pupils	Wednesday 11th February	

Please note for the most recent dates, please check the calendar on the school website. This can be found on the 'About Us' section of the drop-down menus. Please click on the link below to take you straight there:

[Calendar | Gearies Primary School](#)



# SCHOOL DIARY

## IMPORTANT DATES FOR SPRING 1

### Other Key Dates for this half-term

	Event	Date	Timings
Spring Term 2026	WHOLE SCHOOL INSET DAY	Thursday 12th February	Whole day
	WHOLE SCHOOL INSET DAY	Friday 13th February	Whole day
	First day of Spring 2	Monday 23rd February	Usual timings
	Parent Consultations	Thursday 12th March	3:45-5:00pm
	Parent Consultations	Wednesday 18th March	3:45-5:00pm
	Last day of term for children	Friday 27th March	Usual timings

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# EVENTS

## Nursery

In Nursery, the children have been busy exploring and learning through play. They have been practising their counting skills, painting a shed and flowers, building tall towers using straws, and creating animals using clay and a range of other materials. It has been wonderful to see their creativity, teamwork, and growing confidence on display.



Through these activities, the children are developing their counting skills, fine motor control, creativity, problem-solving, teamwork and communication.



# EVENTS

## Reception

Throughout the final weeks of the half term, the Reception children have been busy rehearsing the Nativity story. They have worked extremely hard learning their lines, songs and actions, as well as creating props and scenery to help bring the performance to life.

The Reception classes performed the Nativity to their parents, and the children showed great confidence and enthusiasm throughout. They thoroughly enjoyed wearing their costumes and sharing the story in front of an audience.

The performances were a wonderful opportunity for the children to develop their communication skills, teamwork and self-confidence. We are very proud of the effort they put into preparing for the Nativity and the joy they brought to everyone who came to watch.

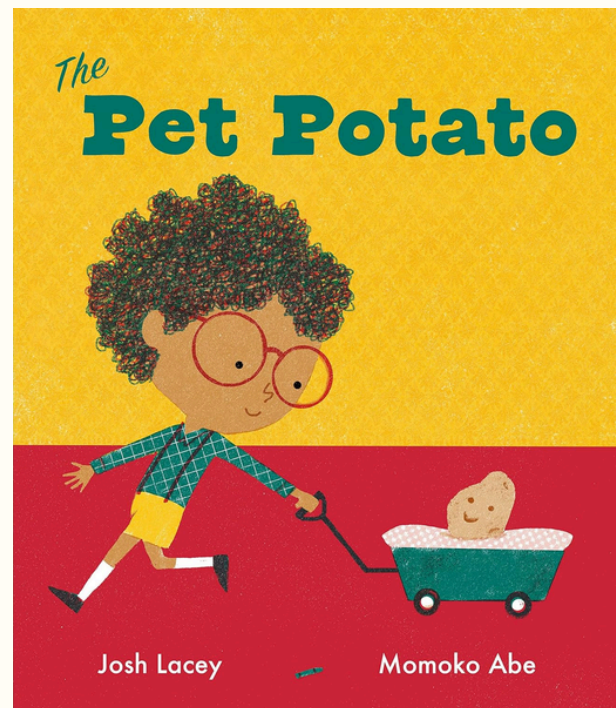




# EVENTS

## Year 1

Children in Year 1 have been reading the book "The Pet Potato." As part of their English learning they were given a potato as a present. Children discussed how they felt about getting a potato as a present.



The Pet Potato is a fun and imaginative story about a child who brings home an unusual pet – a potato. As the child looks after it like a real pet, the story celebrates creativity, kindness and imagination, showing how something very ordinary can become special through play.

The book encourages children to value caring for others and highlights how imagination can turn everyday objects into something magical.



# EVENTS

## Year 2

Children in Year 2 had the opportunity to visit the Redbridge Drama Centre to watch the Pantomime of "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz."

The children had an amazing time watching the performance and shared how inspired they were while watching it.



Watching Drama Centre performances helps children in many ways. It supports their understanding of stories, develops listening and concentration skills, inspires creativity and imagination, and gives children the opportunity to experience live performances in an engaging and enjoyable way.



# EVENTS

## Year 3

Year 3 have been exploring the book titled "A Pebble in My Pocket", which takes readers on a fascinating journey through millions of years of Earth's history.

Through the story, the children have learned how the world has changed over time, from ancient oceans and dinosaurs to the Ice Age and early humans. They have discussed different time periods, explored how landscapes and living things evolved, and used the book to inspire their own non-chronological reports, focusing on the journey of the pebble across different eras.



The children have practised using technical vocabulary, writing in present tense, and organising their ideas clearly using headings and paragraphs. The children have also worked on comparing and contrasting different time periods, editing their writing, and improving the clarity of their explanations.

This unit has supported both their historical understanding and their non-fiction writing skills, helping them to write with confidence and purpose.



# EVENTS

## Year 4

As part of Anti-Bullying Week, Year 4 had fun taking part in anti-bullying drama workshops where they considered the role of the bully, the victim and the bystander and what they could do to stop it.



They also learned about the importance of kindness, empathy and respect, and how their words and actions can affect others. The workshops helped them develop confidence in speaking up, understanding how to seek help, and recognising positive ways to support others and challenge bullying behaviour.



# EVENTS

## Year 4

Year 4 have taken part in a range of exciting and enriching experiences this term. They visited the Barbican, where they had the incredible opportunity to perform alongside the London Symphony Orchestra.



The children also took part in a London Symphony Orchestra workshop, where they explored music in more depth and learned from expert musicians. Year 4 also visited a synagogue, which helped deepen their understanding of the Jewish faith.



# EVENTS

## Year 5

In Year 5 Design and Technology lessons, the children learned a range of embroidery techniques while creating a garden-themed design dedicated to their grandparents. They carefully planned and stitched their designs, choosing colours and patterns to suit their ideas.



A special part of the project involved stitching their grandparents' names in their own language, allowing children to celebrate their families and cultural backgrounds. Through this work, the children developed their sewing skills, creativity and attention to detail, and were very proud of their finished pieces.



# EVENTS

## Year 6

The Red Man and Green Man Road Safety Show visited our Year 6 classes. The performance taught the children important road safety skills. Children took part by role-playing different road-crossing situations.



Year 6 went to the local Gurdwara as part of their Sikhism learning in RE. They were welcomed by the community leader and the children enjoyed being immersed in the Gurdwara. Questions were answered and a langar of chips and beans was offered. It was an excellent trip!

Year 6 also had their movie night! It was an excellent success and it was well attended.



# EVENTS

## Year 6

As part of their Design and Technology topic, Year 6 designed and baked their own gingerbread men. The entire process was carried out by the children, from carefully mixing the ingredients to rolling out the dough and shaping the biscuits.



Year 6 also took part in a hands-on science experiment to explore how the digestive system works by creating their own model intestines using plastic tubing and bananas. This practical activity helped the children understand how food is broken down and moved through the body. By squeezing and manipulating the model, they were able to clearly see how digestion happens, making the learning engaging, memorable and easy to understand.



# EVENTS

## Sporting Events

This term, children have enjoyed taking part in a variety of sporting opportunities, including the Girls Football League, Judo at Caterham, LSSN Multi Skills at Cranbrook, Panathlon at RSC, and Sports Hall Athletics at Mayfield. These events gave children the chance to stay active, try new sports and represent the school with enthusiasm.



The Year 5 & 6 Girls Football team showed great determination, grew in confidence with every match, and finished a strong 3rd in a competitive league despite limited experience at the start – well done girls!



Twelve children from Years 5 and 6 visited Caterham High School for a Judo training event, learning how to grapple, throw and land safely, and were excited to meet GB Judo athlete and Olympic bronze medallist Chelsie Giles.



On Thursday 13 November, children attended the Local Schools Sports Network Multi-skills competition at Cranbrook Primary School, taking part in events testing speed, agility, accuracy and coordination, and finished an impressive 3rd overall, proudly collecting their medals.



On Tuesday 18 November, Gearies children attended the Panathlon multi-skills competition at Redbridge Sports Centre, enjoying a range of games that used skills practised in PE lessons and proudly finishing in the top five overall.



This half term, we welcomed GB Rhythmic Gymnast Saffron Severn, who led a whole-school fitness circuit and inspired pupils by sharing her journey, challenges, and successes as an elite athlete. The event was a huge success, with children fully engaged and nearly £4,000 raised through sponsorship.

On Wednesday 10 December, children attended the Redbridge Borough Sports Hall Athletics competition, competing enthusiastically in a range of events and finishing a strong 10th place, just a few points off 9th.



# EVENTS

## The Winter Fair

Thank you to all of the families who supported this year's Winter Fair, which was a huge success. We are extremely lucky to have such a hardworking and dedicated PTA who have put huge efforts into ensuring that this year's fair was as enjoyable and fun of an experience for all. A huge thank you to all of the members of staff who also gave up their time to help run the games stalls.

An incredibly impressive £6,314 was raised at this event. This money will be used to make further improvements to the playground as well as subsidising educational visits and funding visiting workshops for the children. Thank you again for all of your support.



The PTA would like to thank the following vendors for their support and donations, which helped to make the Winter Fair such a success:

**Your Favourite Chicken, Cakes and Bakes, Domino's, Dimension Estates, Grameen Grocery, Nagina, Saffron Street, Chicken Hut, Baynes Local – Dagenham, and Tas Cake Corner.**



# Online Safety

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many games which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

## What Parents & Carers Need to Know about ROBLOX

Roblox is one of the most popular video games on the market. By 2020, the game's makers were claiming that more than half of children in the USA play it. As a 'sandbox' title, Roblox offers a huge amount of creative freedom: it lets players create their own gaming experiences with the Roblox Studio to build custom levels and games, which can then be shared with other players online. Roblox fosters creative thinking and enjoys a robust online community of fans.

**WHAT ARE THE RISKS?**

**CONTACT WITH STRANGERS**  
Roblox encourages players to communicate online (including a group chat facility). This could expose children to risks such as scammers, online predators, harassment, griefer and more. The in-game chat has some filters, but isn't perfect: players can still send harmful messages to others – such as general hostility – while predators can reach out to children directly.

**ONLINE DATERS**  
These are also called 'ODers' and are quite common in Roblox. An ODer is an individual who joins a game with the intention of finding someone to date online – and eventually meet in person. Such online dating is against the Roblox community guidelines, but this usually doesn't deter ODer. Some player-built Roblox game worlds have even been designed with online dating specifically in mind.

**PUBLIC SERVERS**  
Roblox has private or VIP servers which allow people to play exclusively with their friends, but this costs money. Most Roblox players will instead be on public servers that anyone can join. Servers can host games which focus on all kinds of aspects, including direct player interaction. Some games and servers, therefore, will put children more at risk of contact from strangers than others.

**IN-APP PURCHASES**  
Roblox is actually free to download and play, but bear in mind that there are some hidden costs. Players are encouraged to make purchases in the game, for example, using real money. People can also buy extra Robux (the in-game currency) to spend on cosmetic items in the game, and some private or VIP servers also have a cost.

### Advice for Parents & Carers

**SET PARENTAL CONTROLS**  
Roblox comes with several parental control options, which are explained well on the game's official website. It's essential to enter the correct date of birth for your child, as that allows Roblox to automatically apply the appropriate chat filters. The game also allows parents and carers to set monthly spending restrictions and monitor their child's account.

**DISABLE PRIVATE MESSAGING**  
Roblox's private messaging function raises the risk of children being contacted by people they may not want to speak with – potentially leading to bullying, harassment, toxicity and scam attempts. The game allows you to disable messages from anyone who hasn't been added as a friend on your child's account.

**PRIVATE SERVERS**  
If your child has some genuine friends to play Roblox online with, paying for a private or VIP server decreases the risk of contact from strangers. Even then, however, some players could invite other people – who might not necessarily be child friendly – into the private server, if your child is a Roblox fan. It's important to talk with them regularly about who they are playing the game with.

**MONITOR SPENDING**  
If they don't understand they're using real money, it's easy for children to accidentally spend a sizeable amount in the game. Using parental controls to place limits on their spending will help avoid any nasty financial surprises. Ensuring that you have two-factor authentication on your payment accounts also makes it harder for your child to spend money inadvertently.

**DEALING WITH STRANGERS**  
At some point in their development, your child will need to learn how to deal with strangers online. Show them how to block and report any users who are upsetting them or asking uncomfortable questions. Talking to them about what's OK to discuss – and what they should never tell a stranger online – will help them understand how to communicate with other people online safely.

**Meet Our Expert**  
Clare Godwin (a.k.a. Lunawolf) has worked as an editor and journalist in the gaming industry since 2015, providing websites with event coverage, reviews and gaming guides. She is the owner of Lunawolf Gaming and is currently working on various gaming-related projects including game development and writing non-fiction books.

**National Online Safety**  
#WakeUpWednesday

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