

Friday 5th December 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

The schools are certainly feeling festive with the Christmas hoops and trees up in the halls. The hoops look rather fabulous this year, you will be aware that hanging from them is a decoration handmade by each child to give to their parents/carers as a gift. This year, as a change, we have gone for artificial trees, because if you reuse them for many years they are said to be more environmentally friendly.

Speaking of sustainability, our Federation School Manager (Ms Shore/Bev) has been meeting with Hackney Council about making changes to our heating systems to make them more sustainable and eco-friendly. Plans are afoot to fit more solar panels and air source heating systems/heating pumps. We will keep you updated as plans come to fruition!

The second half of Autumn term is always a busy term for governors in the federation as we have the local standards committee meetings for each school. This is an opportunity to look more closely at the academic performance of the schools. Did you know that of the 54 primary schools in Hackney; Orchard, Southwold and Hoxton Garden schools are in the top 10 performing schools for their Key Stage 2 test outcomes? This is such an amazing achievement for the federation.

In the coming weeks we will also be having the nativity shows and sing-alongs. Please do come along if you can make it, but remember to bring your singing voices.... We also have our in-house pantomime for EYFS and Key Stage 1 and the panto at Hackney Empire coming up. This time of year always reminds me of going to the panto at the Hazlitt Theatre in Maidstone when I was little, although I must admit, I was always terrified of being pulled up on stage. A fear that still lives with me!

The dates for all our seasonal events can be found on both the Autumn 2 parent dates and the school websites.

As always, I look forward to seeing you all on the different school gates in the coming weeks.

Kind regards,

Mr Stephen O'Brien - Executive Headteacher



Autumn Term Parents Evening

Thursday 11th December - School closes at 1pm

End of Term Finish Date

Friday 19th December at 1:00pm

INSET Day

Monday 5th January

Children's Start Date

Tuesday 6th January

Work & Enterprise Week

wb Monday 26th January

School closes for Half Term

Friday 13th February at 3:30pm

Children's Start Date

Monday 23rd February

World Book Day

Thursday 5th March

Spring Term Parents Evening

Thursday 19th March - School closes at 1pm

End of Term Finish Date

Friday 27th March - School closes at 1pm

INSET Day

Monday 13th April

Children's Start Date

Tuesday 14th April

Science & Technology Day

Friday 22nd May

Science Fayre

Friday 22nd May

Orchard

In D&T this term, Year 4 created juggling balls! Pupils cut out a felt template and used a running stitch to sew all the pieces together, choosing contrasting colours to make their designs stand out. The finished juggling balls looked brilliant!



Southwold

As part of their Science topic on animals, Year 1 enjoyed a fantastic trip to the farm. The children had the opportunity to see pigs, chickens, rabbits and sheep. The highlight of the day was stroking the friendly donkeys and goats!



Hoxton Garden

Last week, Year 4 enjoyed a workshop with the MET Police. They learned all about how to keep safe, numbers to call in an emergency and what to do when they encounter strangers. They even had the opportunity to sit in a real life police car!

