



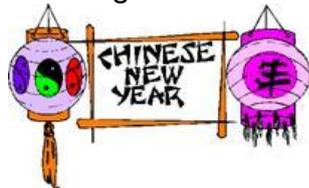
In 2018, the Chinese New Year begins on Friday 16 February and ends on 2 March. This is the Spring Festival, which ends with the Lantern Festival on 3 March 2018.

15 February is the Chinese New Year's Eve There is traditionally a reunion dinner, the most important meal of the year. Children then receive red envelopes, also known as red pockets; these are filled with lucky money. The family stay up late and wait for the New Year. On 16 February, Chinese New Year, firecrackers start off a day of greetings and blessings between neighbours. There are no specific activities other than celebrating the New Year. The ancient Chinese, record and analyse the weather, stars and moon to predict the fortunes of the year. It is forbidden to sweep or clean on this day, else good fortune will be swept away.

On 17 February it's "To the in-law's" On this day, traditionally a married daughter must bring her husband and children to her parent's home. She must bring a gift bag of crackers and candies, which her mother will divide between neighbours. This simple gift shows that "it's the thought that counts" and expresses the daughter's longing for her hometown.



Each day of the Chinese New Year celebrations focusses on a specific subject e.g. Day of the Rat; Day of the Horse; Day of the Human; Day of the Millet etc. Each day has specific activities and traditions including prayers, food and superstitions. From 27 February to 2 March preparations are made for the Lantern Festival. In the mong dynasty, the festival lasted for ten days; now it is five days. Creating lanterns is the most important activity during the festival.



Lantern Riddles is a game played by writing riddles on lanterns. The Kongming Lantern named after Confucius, is especially important during the Lantern Festival. People write down wishes on each side of the lantern and let it fly to the heavens, hoping their wishes will come true in the new year.

The colour red is much loved by the Chinese in general as it represents happiness and good fortune. Some popular decorations used to create festivity for the celebration includes paper cutting, a folk craft that is especially prominent during the Spring Festival. Usually seen on windows, the “window flower” will be created and pasted on using sticky rice glue. These decorations are usually of auspicious symbols and words. Images include fish, peaches, grains, dragons and more. Some, such as fish, are puns for blessings. Others, like dragons and peaches, are symbols from folktales and legends. Grains and related images, on the other hand, represent hopes for a good harvest.

Chinese people decorate by hanging up certain words. The most common word is “fu” which means happiness and good fortune. It is written with calligraphy onto a square piece of red paper. These can then be pasted onto walls, doors or windows.

At SHS, 3 tenants have advised that they are Chinese and 1 person’s preferred language is Chinese.