



THE  
GILES NURSERY  
AND  
INFANTS'  
SCHOOL



Headteacher: Mrs Rouane Mendel  
Acting Assistant Head: Miss Lisa Hill

Durham Road, Stevenage, Herts. SG1 4JQ  
Telephone: 01438 359747  
Email: [admin@gilesinfants.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@gilesinfants.herts.sch.uk)  
Website: [www.gilesnurseryandinfants.co.uk](http://www.gilesnurseryandinfants.co.uk)

**24.02.2023**

**School Aims: our school is a place where we aim to develop:**

- ▶ Positive attitudes to learning
- ▶ Creativity and a sense of self-confidence and self-esteem
- ▶ Equality of opportunity, independence, individuality, tolerance, sensitivity and cooperation
- ▶ Good relations, respect for others and the environment
- ▶ A broad and balanced creative curriculum
- ▶ Pupil achievement by providing quality experiences

*Dear Parents/Carers,*

*The children have clearly all had a fantastic half-term and I hope very much that you all had a lovely week.*

*As you are all aware, we were greeted in the morning of the first day back with the Ofsted call.*

*I will not be given the finalised result for another two weeks and it apparently takes a further 4-6 weeks before anything can be made public.*

*I want to thank you all for your overwhelming support for our school. The lead inspector told me that in her more than 20 years as inspector she had never, ever encountered anything of the kind. She said, first, that the percentage of respondents was unprecedentedly high and secondly that she had never before seen data like ours. She said that more people than she had previously experienced wrote emails on the special Ofsted line and that ordinarily in a school of our size she would expect to have between 20 and 30 complaints. Instead of this, at our school 100% of respondents emailed her to give the most wonderful, caring, appreciative support for the school.*

*Such a large number of you took the trouble to write in personally and you made comments such as that your children were extremely happy, that the teachers and all the staff were amazing, that you loved the head teacher, that your children loved coming to school and learnt well. The inspectors were deeply impressed by this. Thank you all so much – this truly means the world to me and to everyone at our school.*

*I will write early next week to give you more detailed feedback on the progress of the inspection but at the moment am rather desperately trying to catch up on three days' worth of missed work and missed emails!*

**World book day – Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March:** *Next week is World Book Day. The theme for this year's World Book Day is making it Your World Book Day, so children may come either dressed in comfortable clothes including pyjamas (this could be as the Lost Boys from Peter Pan which is of course set in our own capital city of London) - or else dressed as their favourite character from a book.*

**World Down Syndrome Day – Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March:** Children and staff may wear odd/bright coloured socks to help raise awareness. Donations are welcome.

**Stay and Read for Year 1 and Year 2 - Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March:** Please join us in your child's classroom from 2.45pm – 3.10pm to read with your child or a small group of children, all are welcome.

**Volunteer Positions Available:** Thank you so much to parents who have approached me – it is hugely appreciated! If anyone would be interested in helping out in our Nursery from 11.30am - 12.30pm please let me know as additional help at that time would be very helpful!

Please speak to me or email me on [head@gilesinfants.herts.sch.uk](mailto:head@gilesinfants.herts.sch.uk) if you are interested in doing some volunteer work in our lovely school. We value our volunteers so very much and you add immensely to the children's learning and enjoyment in school. Readers in particular would be very welcome.

**Notifying Us of Your Child's Absence:** Please notify us by 9.15am if your child is going to be absent from school. You can notify us by either calling the school on 01438 359747 and selecting Option 1, or via email to [admin@gilesinfants.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@gilesinfants.herts.sch.uk).

**Nursery School Places for September 2023:** If you are a prospective parent, please make contact with the school office to arrange a visit. Application forms may be downloaded from <https://www.gilesnurseryandinfants.co.uk/prospective-parent-tours/> or by request from the school office.

Please kindly share this message with parents, friends and family where they have a child due to start Nursery in September 2023. Applications opened on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2022, and places are offered on a first come, first served basis.

**Nursery:** The children have had a fantastic week back after the half term break and enjoyed lots of exciting activities linked to Pancake Day. They enjoyed the story 'Mr Wolf's Pancakes' by Jan Fearnley and loved singing the song 'Mix a pancake' by Christina Rossetti. On Shrove Tuesday, the children enjoyed eating delicious pancakes with honey or lemon. Harrie said, "You have to toss the pancake and catch it!" Freddie was excited to share with his friends "I made pancakes with my mummy, I mix, mix, mixed them!"

In phonics this week, the children enjoyed making a trumpet from glossy card. They explored how different sounds are voiced and listened carefully to a sound before re-creating it. The children had a super time experimenting with loud and quiet sounds, trying to make the sound of the sea and a blaring alarm. Hunter said "Listen, it's sounds like a horn!"

In mathematics, the children practised their superhero skill of subitising. They looked at a group of pancakes and said how many pancakes there were in the group without counting. The children love to play with numbers and thoroughly enjoy opportunities to count, Ibrahim shared "I've been practising, I can count to 20."

In expressive art and design, the children have enjoyed making pancakes from playdough. Evelyn commented "I squashed it and put it in the pan, now I need to toss it and catch it." They were excited to practice pouring, scooping, and mixing with gloop this week, Mya-Jae said, "It's runny, I poured it on my fingers."

The children were incredible taking part in their sponsored move and count this week. They followed the moves beautifully and tried their absolute best with each move. Ivy

*commented "My favourite was the star jumps." Kobi and Teddie showed fantastic strength and control as they bent their knees seven times. Well done Ladybirds!*

*Next week we will be reading 'The Hungry Caterpillar' by Eric Carle, learning about the life cycle of a butterfly and practising the days of the week. We will be celebrating World Book Day by listening to a range of stories and participating in fun activities. Our dressing up day will take place on Thursday. Children may come either dressed in comfortable clothes including onesies or pyjamas - or else dressed as their favourite character from a book.*

*Thank you for all your support and kind comments this week. Have a lovely weekend everyone.*

*Reception: This week in English, the children wrote a list of the ingredients needed for baking gingerbread men. They used their phonic knowledge to sound out each ingredient. It is so lovely to see the children listening carefully to the sounds and using a phonic mat to check which sound they need to write. In each class, the children worked together as a group to follow a recipe. Whilst the gingerbread men were baking, the children compared the similarities and differences between uncooked and cooked dough. Isabelle in Barn Owl class said, "This one is uncooked. It looks so soft and squishy! This gingerbread man is hard because it went in the oven. It will burn if it stayed in there any longer," and Ava in Barn Owl class said, "This one is very squishy and that one is hard. Someone ovened it."*

*In PE, the children have continued to develop their skills in gymnastics. This week, they jumped into the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. The children loved using different apparatus to travel along the branches of the beanstalk, jumping out of the frying pan, travelling over the basket of golden eggs, and travelling towards the castle. After carefully crossing over the basket of golden eggs, Leo in Barn Owl class said, "I was lucky as I fell on the last golden egg, but I didn't break it!"*

*In PSED, the children have begun to talk about the importance of exercise and keeping healthy in different ways. Milla in Snowy Owl class said, "You need exercise to be healthy and strong," and after completing some exercises, Aoife in Snowy Owl class said, "I am sweaty and hot!"*

*In music, the children listened to the song 'Lovely Day' by Bill Withers, Evie in Tawny Owl class said, "This music makes me feel relaxed."*

*Next week the children will be celebrating World Book Week by participating in activities linked to some traditional tales and tales from around the world. Some of the activities the children will be participating in include spider web weaving, creating shadow puppets and growing a balloon turnip. Thursday is a non-uniform day and children may come dressed as characters from their favourite book and if wished bring in their book to share.*

*In RE the children will be listening to the Creation story and a piece of music linked to the story. They will be discussing how the piece of music made them feel and what natural wonders they saw when watching the video clip.*

*In PSED, the children will be discussing which foods are healthy and not so healthy and how they can make healthy eating choices.*

*Year 1: In English, the children have enjoyed retelling the story of Goldilocks. They have learnt a Goldilocks song with actions and enjoyed performing it with their peers. They have made story maps of the key events in their books, learning how to include pictures, arrows and keywords or phrases.*

*Phonics this week has continued with alternative pronunciations. The children have revisited the digraph 'er.' They recalled the unstressed vowel sound known as a schwa 'er' as in letter and farmer and learnt that it can also make the alternative stressed sound as heard in the word herb. Similarly, they also learnt that the 'ch' in chip can alternatively sound like /sh/ in chef and /c/ in Christmas.*

*In mathematics, the children have investigated doubles and halves using a range of manipulatives including Cuisenaire rods and Numicon. They have understood that two halves must be equal. The children have also looked for patterns and discovered that the total is always an even number.*

*The children began their new topic in science this week. The focus is everyday materials. They enjoyed showing their teachers what they already knew about materials, before moving on to learning to name an object and the material it is made from. The homework this week is all about materials. We hope you enjoy choosing an activity to complete with your child.*

*In geography, the children have been learning all about the local area and Stevenage. They have looked at maps and a globe to locate the UK (United Kingdom) and learnt the key vocabulary village, town, and city. They have discussed all the amazing facilities Stevenage has and designed posters to celebrate.*

*In design and technology, the children have begun painting their puppet theatres, which will be used as a prop for retelling the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears.'*

*Next week, the children will be investigating materials in Forest School. Please note the change in timetable. Walker Bear children will attend Forest School on Tuesday next week so that on Thursday, they can come to school dressed up for World Book Day.*

*Also, next week in English, the children will be learning to use exclamation marks, as they finish their Traditional Tales topic. In mathematics, they will explore odd and even numbers.*

*Thank you to all those parents who were able to attend the phonics screening workshop in the week. If you were unable to attend, a copy of the presentation is available on our website to read:*

*<https://primarysite-prod-sorted.s3.amazonaws.com/giles-nursery-and-infants/UploadedDocument/cc0f4f79-9872-41c7-9540-6cb00ee3f909/year-one-screen-check-presentation-1.pdf>*

*Your child will also be bringing home today a selection of real and alien words given out at the meeting. Please feel free to explore these words together. Your child may like to colour the alien as you decode them.*

*We hope you all have a lovely weekend.*

*The Year 1 Team*

*Year 2: It's been a busy but wonderful first week back after half term and the children have really immersed themselves into our new topic about the indigenous people of America.*

*In English this week, the children have begun to learn about the life of indigenous people. They began by watching the Disney version of Pocahontas, to give an insight into the life and history of indigenous people of America. The children then looked at a non-fiction book about Pocahontas and her life story and used the index to find the answers to important questions. The children finished the week by learning about*

*alphabetical order and how to use a dictionary to find the definitions of key vocabulary.*

*In English next week, the children will explore non-fiction books and begin to research the lifestyles and traditions of indigenous people of America, in preparation for writing their own non-fiction book.*

*In mathematics, the children have been learning about 3D shapes and their properties. They started by comparing 2D and 3D shapes and finding their similarities and differences. They thought about the 3D shapes that we see around us and identified party hats as cones, dice as cubes, buildings as cuboids and balls as spheres. The children learnt how to describe and sort 3D shapes using their properties, counting how many faces, vertices and edges each shape has.*

*Next week in mathematics the children will begin to learn about multiplication as repeated addition.*

*In science, the children used their knowledge of different materials and their properties to design a coat that would be suitable to wear on an expedition to Antarctica. They explored a range of fabrics, while thinking about the qualities their coat would need, such as being waterproof, soft and warm.*

*In history, the children looked at photographs of indigenous people of America to see what they could discover about their lives. They discussed what they could see in the photographs, if anything surprised them and if they had any questions. In geography, the children drew some amazing sketch maps of the Year 2 playground and learnt about mapping features such as a compass, symbols and key.*

*In computing, the children started to learn about effective searching on the internet, with a focus on how to complete searches safely and successfully.*

*The children took part in their sponsored spell this week, and each child has received a certificate to celebrate their amazing efforts. It's now time to collect any sponsorship money and make sure it is returned to your child's class teacher, or the school office, before 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023.*

*Next week we will celebrate World Book Day on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023 and would like to encourage the children to dress up as their favourite book characters to celebrate. The children will enjoy lots of book themed activities throughout the day. It is a highlight of the year and we can't wait to see the children dressed up.*

*Have a great weekend,*

*The Year 2 Team*

### **STARS OF THE WEEK**

<b>Ladybird Nursery Classes</b>	<b>Ladybird class</b>	<b>for trying their best in the sponsored count and move</b>
<b>Snowy Owls</b>	<b>Kian-Marc</b>	<b>for being able to independently create a complex repeating pattern.</b>
	<b>Roman</b>	<b>for applying his phonic knowledge to write a list of ingredients for making a gingerbread man.</b>
<b>Tawny Owls</b>	<b>Charles</b>	<b>for demonstrating a brilliant understanding of repeating patterns.</b>

	<b>Amelia</b>	<i>for fantastic shopping list writing in literacy.</i>
<b>Barn Owls</b>	<b>Kairi</b>	<i>for lovely imaginative chatting whilst writing her list in literacy.</i>
	<b>Yamihle</b>	<i>for fabulous reading of a new book.</i>
<b>Red Fox Class</b>	<b>Bobby</b>	<i>for practising hard for the sponsor spell and achieving full marks.</i>
	<b>Emma</b>	<i>for drawing a fantastic story map for the story Goldilocks and the Three Bears.</i>
<b>Big Cat Class</b>	<b>Sol</b>	<i>for amazing words in maths on doubles.</i>
	<b>Wednesday</b>	<i>for making a detailed story map to retell the story of Goldilocks.</i>
<b>Walker Bear Class</b>	<b>Holly</b>	<i>for super knowledge of doubling.</i>
	<b>Leon</b>	<i>for always contributing in lessons.</i>
<b>Penguin Class</b>	<b>Chloe</b>	<i>for designing a great poster for World Thinking Day.</i>
	<b>Noah</b>	<i>for asking excellent questions in history.</i>
<b>Pelican Class</b>	<b>Cleo</b>	<i>for her excellent geography skills-drawing a detailed sketch map of the school playground and using a key.</i>
	<b>Meadow</b>	<i>for using her knowledge of materials and their properties to design a coat for Antarctica.</i>
<b>Puffin Class</b>	<b>Rain</b>	<i>for fantastic understanding of 3D shapes.</i>
	<b>Ronnie</b>	<i>for trying his best with phonics.</i>

*kindest regards,  
 Rouane Mendel, Headteacher*



### School Dates

FEBRUARY 2023	
w/c Monday 27 <sup>th</sup>	<b>BOOK WEEK</b>

MARCH 2023	
Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	World Book Day - non-uniform day, children dress as their favourite character, donations for charity
Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup>	Holi Assembly, Hindu Festival of Colours, pupils only
Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup>	Nursery Open Evening, 4.30-5.30pm for children due to start September 2023
Friday 17 <sup>th</sup>	Red Nose Day
Monday 20 <sup>th</sup>	SEN/Inclusion team Drop-In, <b>8.50-9.30am</b> . If you have something you would like to discuss with our specialist team, do drop by for coffee.
Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Stay and Read, <b>Years 1 and 2, 2.45-3.15pm</b> . Parents come into class to read with their child or small group of children. All very welcome.

Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup>	World Down Syndrome Day (Wear odd/bright socks), donations welcome
Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Assessment and SATs presentation for Year 2 parents, <b>3.30-4.30pm</b>
w/c Monday 27 <sup>th</sup>	Easter activities throughout school
Monday 27 <sup>th</sup>	Easter assembly in school, pupils only
Week of 27 <sup>th</sup> Week of 27 <sup>th</sup>	Parent Consultations <b>SCIENCE WEEK</b>
Tuesday 28 <sup>th</sup>	Year 2 – Native American Dance workshop
TBC	<b>FROG / PTA Easter Stay and Play, 3.30-4.30pm</b>
Friday 31 <sup>st</sup>	Easter Bonnet Parade, whole school, pupils only
Friday 31 <sup>st</sup>	Last day of term – finish at 2pm

### **TERM DATES 2022-23**

***Spring Term: Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2023 – Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023***

***[Half Term: Monday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2023 – Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2023]***

***Children return to school on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2023***

***[Easter Holidays: Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2023 – Friday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2023]***

***Children return to school on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023***

***Summer Term: Monday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023 – 21<sup>st</sup> July 2023***

***[Half Term: Monday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2023 – Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2023]***

***Children return to school on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2023***

***School finishes on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> July at 2.00pm***

### **INSET DAYS 2022-23**

***Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022 INSET Day SCHOOL CLOSED***

***Monday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022 INSET Day SCHOOL CLOSED***

***Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2022 OCCASIONAL Day SCHOOL CLOSED***

***Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2022 INSET Day SCHOOL CLOSED***

***Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023 INSET Day SCHOOL CLOSED***

***Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023 INSET Day SCHOOL CLOSED***

### **Term Dates 2023-24**

***Autumn Term: Friday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023 – 20<sup>th</sup> December 2023***

***Friday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023 INSET Day SCHOOL CLOSED***

***Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023 INSET Day SCHOOL CLOSED***

***Children return to school on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023***

***[Half Term: Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2023 – Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2023]***

***Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2023 INSET Day SCHOOL CLOSED***

*Children return to school on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023*

*Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2023 OCCASIONAL Day SCHOOL CLOSED*

*School finishes on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December at 2pm*

*[Christmas Holidays: Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> December – Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2024]*

*Monday 25<sup>th</sup> December 2023 Bank Holiday SCHOOL CLOSED*

*Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> December 2023 Bank Holiday SCHOOL CLOSED*

*Children return to school on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2024*

*Spring Term: Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2024 – Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024*

*Monday 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 Bank Holiday SCHOOL CLOSED*

*[Half term: Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024 – Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024]*

*Children return to school on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024*

*School finishes on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March at 2pm*

*Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2024 Bank Holiday SCHOOL CLOSED*

*Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 Bank Holiday SCHOOL CLOSED*

*[Easter Holidays: Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March – Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2024]*

*Children return to school on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024*

*Summer Term: Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024 – Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2024*

*Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2024 Bank Holiday SCHOOL CLOSED*

*Monday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2024 Bank Holiday SCHOOL CLOSED*

*[Half term: Monday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2024 – Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024]*

*Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024 INSET Day SCHOOL CLOSED*

*Children return to school on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2024*

*Monday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024 INSET Day SCHOOL CLOSED*

*School finishes on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> July at 2.00pm*