



# THE GILES NURSERY AND INFANTS' SCHOOL



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Dear parents and carers,

In this, our first letter to you as co-chairs of the governing board, we'd like to welcome you back after what we hope was a lovely summer break. Looking back on last year, we are delighted to report that 2024/5 was highly successful for the Giles Nursery and Infants School. The school is in a secure financial position, well-resourced and has an enviable reputation throughout Stevenage for its caring and inclusive approach to the education of all children.

Governors are always impressed by the quality of the staff at the Giles, their enthusiasm, diligence and hard work which, combined with the school's ethos gives all children the best start they could hope for from any school. Classroom displays are always lively colourful and largely created by the children themselves, while you only need to spend a few minutes in the school during teaching hours to see the engagement and enthusiasm all children have for what they are being taught. Indeed, the school is the very realisation of a quotation from Thomas Wolsey, from the 16<sup>th</sup> Century that "Pleasure should mingle with study so that the child may think learning an amusement, rather than a toil."

There is ample evidence for the effectiveness of the school's approach, particularly in the results the children achieve in various assessments, the 'value added' to their attainment over the three years from reception to the end of year 2, and the verdict from three visits from our HIP (Herts Improvement Partner) in the last academic year. During these visits three areas of activity were investigated in some detail, namely Early Years, Reading and Art and Design. All three were rated outstanding. The school is also always judged outstanding in its education and care of children with SEND. It is no wonder that The Giles is bucking the trend within Stevenage in being over-subscribed, with full classes in all three years, and a thriving nursery.

Two major building works were completed this year, notably the installation of over 250 solar panels on the school roof. These will supply the school with much of its electrical power over the coming years, thereby reducing annual electricity bills and releasing funds that can be spent on your children's education. In addition, we completed the provision of covered areas for the year 1 playground, allowing all weather outdoor play for year 1 pupils. And, while on the subject of the outdoors, our Forest Schools provision goes from strength to strength. The new Forest Schools lead is now fully trained and keen to develop this facility further. Governors consider the outdoors to be an important aspect of education, given our increasingly urbanised society and separation from nature. Introducing children to the outdoors from an early age is critical for developing their awareness of the environment and helps develop many skills, such as making and recording observations and teamwork, that are important in later life.



On a more personal note, we were delighted to appoint Miss Lisa Hill to the role of Deputy Head, starting in September of 2025. Lisa is a highly-regarded, well-liked and experienced teacher with an intimate knowledge of the school. She will be an excellent managerial support to Mrs Mendel and well able to help lead the school to continued success in the future. Meanwhile we congratulate Mrs Mendel in the birth of her first grandchild. Speaking of Mrs Mendel, we would like to say a huge thank you for your amazing dedication to the school. From the staff to the children, you do not forget about anyone and always ensure everyone is taken care of. The school is very fortunate to have such a loving, kind and committed headteacher.

Finally, the governors regard it as a privilege to be involved with The Giles. All schools face many challenges, not the least being education funding and demands from Westminster. But whatever is thrown at the Giles the resilience and resourcefulness of the staff and children invariably means the School continues to thrive. Long may it continue.

Nick Rogers and Badrun Khanom  
Co-Chairs of the Governing Board  
The Giles Nursery and Infants School  
September 2025

Kindest regards,

Rouane Mendel  
Headteacher