



THE  
GILES NURSERY  
AND  
INFANTS'  
SCHOOL



Headteacher: Mrs Rouane Mendel  
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)

**20.10.2023**

**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,***

***It has been a wonderful final week to the half term, the highlight of which was of course the spectacular Year 2 Autumn Concerts. The children performed so beautifully and the breadth and depth of the learning that has taken place was incredible. We are so proud of our amazing children and grateful to our inspirational teachers and support staff.***

***Our Governors' Curriculum Committee came into school to do a Learning Walk this week focusing on mathematics in Nursery. I am pleased to report that they were extremely impressed by the high quality of the teaching and interactions with the adults, the vibrancy of displays and the children's engagement, enjoyment, purposeful play and the huge presence of mathematics everywhere throughout the Nursery.***

***I have also been looking at the writing the children produced during the fantastic Big Write last week. The results are stunning. I have looked at samples from every class and will enjoy reading all pupils' work over the break. You will be given your child's Big Write books when they leave our school and I know you will cherish them and be thrilled with the progress your child has made and by the richness and depth of the educational opportunities they have experienced.***

***All in all, it has been a tremendous half term and the exciting learning that has taken place this week has made the most spectacular finale!***

***Thank you also for your harvest donations. Miss Busby will kindly distribute these to Feed Up, Warm Up over the half-term break.***

***Thank you hugely for your contributions to our bake sale – and thank you to our devoted FROG members for organising and running this lovely event. We will notify you soon of the amount raised.***

***PLEASE REMEMBER THAT MONDAY 30<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER IS AN INSET DAY.***

***I hope you all have a really refreshing holiday and look forward to seeing you again on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> October.***

**Head lice:** These are a perennial problem in schools. Please, if everyone can make a special effort over half term to check your child's head for lice or eggs. If you see live lice, please can everyone treat their children over the break. Best practice is for everyone to check children's hair every time it is washed. Please put conditioner on (some say tea tree conditioner is the most effective) and comb your child's wet and conditioned hair with a lice comb to remove eggs before rinsing. Vigilance and regular washing/combining is the key. Thank you everyone for doing your best with this problem. It would be terrific to come back after the break with a 'head lice'-free school!

**ROAD SAFETY: Be Bright Be Seen:** It's that time of the year again and 'Be Bright Be Seen' is an important message for the whole school community.

The Active and Safer Travel Team are continuing to promote this as a key part of the road safety and active travel programme, especially over the autumn and winter months.

As the days are getting shorter, now is a good time to remind everyone of the importance of wearing bright and reflective clothing when out and about, to make them more visible to traffic.

**Parking:** We kindly remind parents not to park on the double yellow lines outside the school as it can make it difficult for the children to see oncoming traffic (and vice versa).

**Stay and Play sessions start after half term for both Nursery and Reception classes:**

- Nursery sessions will be held every Thursday from 8.30am-9.20am (from 2<sup>nd</sup> November), please come and join your child to share a book or other activity.
- Sessions for the Reception classes will be held every Friday from 8.50am-9.20am (from Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> November), please come and share a book with your child.

We look forward to seeing you there!

**Open Evening Thursday 9th November 5.30-7.00 pm:** This is a lovely opportunity for you to come into school with your children and have a good look round not only your child's current class but also previous classes as well as the year-group your child will be in next year. This occasion is a really strong part of transition as the children love visiting their previous teachers and key workers – and it's also a chance for them to have a little visit to next year's classes. You will also be able to have a chat with staff and to celebrate all the fantastic work on the walls, and the fabulous learning environment.

**Children due to start Reception in September 2024:** The application process for Reception year to start in September 2024 will open on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023 and close on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024. Applications can be made via:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/schools-and-education/school-admissions/primary-junior-and-middle-schools/primary-junior-and-middle-school-places.aspx>

We are offering regular tours of Reception - please visit

<https://www.gilesnurseryandinfants.co.uk/prospective-parent-tours/> or call or visit the school office to book a place.

**Children due to start Nursery in September 2024.** Applications/admissions are managed by the school. Applications open on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023. An application form will be available on the school website from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023.

*We are offering regular tours of Nursery - to book a place, please visit <https://www.gilesnurseryandinfants.co.uk/prospective-parent-tours/> or call or visit the school office to book a place.*

***Children due to start Senior school in September 2024:** The application process for secondary/upper school places to start in September 2024 opened on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023 and closes on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023. Please see <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/schools-and-education/school-admissions/secondary-and-upper-schools/secondary-and-upper-school-places.aspx> to make an application for your Year 6 child.*

***Recycling Roadshow** - Stevenage Green Network are holding an event in Stevenage Town Centre next week – Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> October. It is a ‘Recycling Roadshow’ – a chance to find out what happens to your recycling, where it goes, and meet their re-processors. You will be able to find out more about reducing food waste, saving money, reusable nappies and more! There will also be a live cooking show delivered by The School Food Showdown.*

***E-Safety:** This week’s E-Safety feature focuses on creating safe and healthy online habits. National Online Safety has produced some useful tips on how to put safety first when online, including reporting and blocking. They also look at digital resilience. Please click on the link to read more [Creating safe and healthy online habits](#)*

***School Photograph Day:** Individual school photographs will be taken during the school day on Wednesday 1st November. Please wear your smartest uniform and bring your biggest smile.*

***Poppy Appeal:** From Friday 20<sup>th</sup> October, we will have poppies and other related items available to purchase from the school office. The children may also bring a donation into class, and they will have the opportunity to visit the school office to purchase an item during school time. There will be stick-on poppies available as well as accessories, such as bracelets and keyrings.*

***Staff Update:** We are happy to announce that Miss Manning and Mr Fenwick have both successfully completed their challenging apprenticeships. They have both been fantastic in their work for our school and we will miss them. We are so proud of our students’ success and wish them both the very, very best for the next step in their lives.*

***Nursery:** Thank you to the parents who joined us for parent consultations this week. It was a pleasure to speak with you and share how well your children have settled into Ladybird class.*

*The Nursery children have taken part in a ‘healthy bodies, healthy mind’ week and have been learning about healthy foods. They looked closely at a range of fruits and vegetables, including a pineapple, a parsnip, a swede, a sponge gourd, a passionfruit, and a coconut. They were fascinated by the coconut, and it inspired fantastic discussions about what was inside and how it could be opened.*

*The children loved our Giles Greengrocers role play area. They took on the role of a customer by writing lists and using coins to pay for different types of fruit and vegetables. Sabin made a list before shopping and commented, “I’m buying pears for my Mummy.”*

*This week the children enjoyed taking part in a fruit themed yoga session. They learnt to bring their hands together and say a secret yoga code word, ‘namaste’. The children*

*stretched into a banana pose, made themselves into a fruit bowl and fluttered their legs like the wings of a butterfly. Super fun Ladybirds!*

*In phonics, the children have continued to practise identifying a wide range of sounds made by percussion instruments and have begun to copy and create patterns of sounds. We have shared the story 'Baby Goes to Market' by Atinuke. The children thoroughly enjoyed counting the fruits in the story and counting down by one each time.*

*In art, the children have learnt about the artist Piet Mondrian. They observed the red, yellow and blue colours used in his art and spotted how he used square and rectangle shapes.*

*Our next nursery rhyme will be 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star', and we will be starting our number of the week, which will be the number one. The children will receive a separate keyring for their book bags, with a new number added weekly.*

*We would like to wish you all a wonderful half term break.*

*Reception: This week, the children have enjoyed participating in activities around the theme of 'healthy minds and healthy bodies'. They talked about what it means to be healthy, looked at the story 'The Carrot Club' and enjoyed tasting a selection of fruit and vegetables. When sampling pink grapefruit, Noah in Barn Owl class said, "I can taste the grape in the grapefruit!"*

*This week the children have practised the poem 'Juiciest Apple'.*

*I'm just a juicy apple,  
Lying on a tree.  
If you're really hungry  
Come and pick me.  
If I am bitten  
Watch the juice squirt out  
Into their lunch boxes  
Into their mouth.  
I'm just a rosy apple  
Red and juicy too  
So come and pick me  
I am so good for you.*

*The children participated in a very energetic PE session with Mr Pullin. They discussed what happened to their body after an activity and put their hands on their chest to feel their hearts beating fast and noticed they were breathing faster and harder.*

*The children enjoyed participating in a lovely yoga session. They practised gentle breathing techniques while listening to meditation music.*

*The children looked at the importance of maintaining a good level of hygiene and enjoyed the story 'Supersoap' and singing the song to accompany the story. The children loved having 'paint' germs on their hands and singing a rhyme whilst washing to ensure all the germs had disappeared. Lola in Barn Owl class said, "I stroked a cheetah and a cat, and I didn't even bother to wash my hands after touching the cheetah, so I must give my hands a super wash with soap!" Harrie in Snowy Owl class said, "You wash your hands with soap to get rid of the germs." Remi in Tawny Owl class said, "Wipe the germs off and scrub-a-dub!"*

*The children looked at the importance of cleaning their teeth and loved using toothbrushes and toothpaste to clean a set of teeth. Andrew in Tawny Owl class said, "Brush your teeth, eat healthy food and go to the dentist." The children also made a smile showing off their pearly white teeth and had their photograph taken. These photographs will be made into a colourful display.*

*The children also focused on the importance of getting lots of sleep, to rest and repair their bodies. The children loved playing with the soft toys and taking part in preparing them for bed. They pretended to bath the toys, clean their teeth, and wrapped them up in a blanket. The children either sang a lullaby to their doll or read them a bedtime story and finished off by giving their soft toy a goodnight kiss.*

*This month the Musician of the Month has been Louis Armstrong. The children have learnt a range of facts, such as Louis Armstrong played the trumpet and was the leader of a band. He had several nicknames such as 'Pops', 'Satchmo' and 'Ambassador Satch'. The children have listened to Louis Armstrong singing his most famous song 'What a Wonderful World' and other hit songs such as 'We have All the Time in the World' and 'Dream a Little Dream of Me' with Ella Fitzgerald.*

*After the half term holiday, the children will be writing a caption in a speech bubble linked to the big bad wolf. In mathematics, the children will be making three in different ways and recording their addition calculations. In understanding the world, the children will be using icing sugar to create a cement-like mixture to join biscuits together to build a simple house.*

*Year 1: Year 1 have had a wonderful week, focusing on the natural world. In English, the children listened to the song 'What a Wonderful World', sung by Louis Armstrong, and heard the story of 'The First Musician' by Amanda Graham. The children thoroughly enjoyed working as a team to select instruments to match the events in the story. They worked in groups to compose a musical soundtrack to accompany a narration of the story. The groups then took turns to perform in front of each other.*

*As part of this unit of work, the children also went outside to see what other wondrous signs of nature they could discover. They practised using rich, descriptive vocabulary to discuss how things looked, felt, smelt, or sounded. Back in the classroom, the children rehearsed the skills they learnt last week and generated wonderful captions based on the natural world.*

*In phonics, the children have been learning how to read polysyllabic words such as 'shampoo', 'giftbox', 'helpdesk', 'sandpit', 'helper', and 'shelter'. These types of words contain two or more syllables. They have been clapping the syllables and using a phoneme frame to record the sounds they hear. The children have also been reading the high frequency words 'children' and 'help' and spelling the words 'my', 'here' and 'his'. Our Book of the Week has been 'Beautiful Oops!' by Barney Saltzberg. The children loved having the opportunity to make a picture from a torn piece of paper, a folded corner or a splodge of paint. If you would like to listen to the story, please click on the link to hear a sung version - [Beautiful Oops!](#)*

*In mathematics, the children have begun to think about comparing groups by matching. They have used the vocabulary 'fewer', 'more' and 'the same' to solve a range of word problems.*

*Science was very exciting this week. The children learnt all about the biologist Laura Brown Buck who won the Nobel prize in 2004 for her work on the sense of smell. They had great fun investigating their sense of smell with a smelling test. They had to identify the aromas of peppermint, lemon, orange, coffee and vanilla. They were*

*encouraged to reflect on whether or not they liked the smells and what adjectives came to mind to describe them.*

*In computing, the children enjoyed using 2Count in Purple Mash to create a class chart to show their favourite fruits. They learnt why collecting data can be beneficial and ways it can be displayed. The children also had the opportunity to find the tool 2Explore and created musical masterpieces.*

*In physical education, the children have continued with their team building module, learning how to communicate effectively with their peers. They have also been practising their skipping skills in their fitness sessions and developing their knowledge of how exercise makes you feel.*

*New homework will be coming home today. The theme is based on our new topic for after half term – animals. Please complete the homework and return to school by Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November.*

*We wish you all a happy and peaceful half term and look forward to welcoming you back on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> November for some animal fun!*

*Year 2: It has been a fabulous week in Year 2, with all classes putting on a fantastic autumn concert. The concerts provided a glimpse of all the amazing work the children have completed since the start of the year – and what a lot of work that is! We are all very proud of the children and their achievements. Thank you for coming along to the concerts and for your support this half term.*

*As well as rehearsals for their autumn concerts, the children have had a busy week learning about harvest. As part of the RE curriculum, they learnt how and why harvest is celebrated in the Christian and Jewish faiths. The children learnt where some of our food comes from and designed a growing garden, including different fruits and vegetables. They enjoyed some harvest crafts, making a harvest wreath and a scarecrow.*

*In mathematics, the children practised counting in twos, fives, tens and threes. They completed missing numbers on number tracks, counting forwards and backwards. They spotted patterns when counting in twos, five and tens and used this knowledge to spot numbers that should not appear in a sequence.*

*In science, the children learnt that it is important to wash hands regularly to prevent the spread of germs. They investigated the best way to get rid of germs, which is to use soap and water.*

*When we return after half term, the children will learn about Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot. They will learn about the features of non-fiction books, including the contents, index and glossary. In art and design, the children will learn shading techniques to sketch a portrait of Guy Fawkes, and quilling techniques to create a firework silhouette picture.*

*In mathematics, the children will start a new unit focusing on addition and subtraction. They will recall the bonds to ten, which they learnt in Year 1, and build their fluency to recall the bonds easily. The children will then explore addition and subtraction bonds within 20, learning strategies to work them out quickly.*

*The children will start new units in PE, focusing on yoga and fundamental skills. In RE, the children will learn how nature is important across religions and will be encouraged to make links between religions. In PSHCE, the children will start a new unit called ‘celebrating difference’. Our first lesson will explore how people make*

*assumptions about girls and boys and some ways in which they are different. In computing, the children will continue to explore coding before starting a new unit of work learning how to create music digitally.*

*We have not set homework for the half term break. The children have worked incredibly hard and deserve a good rest! If you would like to continue with some work over the holiday, please read with your child, either their school reading book or library books. If you would like to work on developing your child's mathematics skills, please log on to Numbots.*

*Thank you all for your wonderful support in this first half term. We wish you all a fantastic half term break. Enjoy!*

**CLASS ATTENDANCE TROPHY**

**TROPHY-BEARING CLASS WITH THE BEST ATTENDANCE FOR THIS WEEK**

***PELICANS CLASS***

***FANTASTIC ATTENDANCE – WELL DONE!!***



### STARS OF THE WEEK

<b>Ladybird Nursery Classes</b>	<b>Ayla</b>	<i>for excellent participation in yoga.</i>
	<b>Henry</b>	<i>for brilliant Mondrian style artwork.</i>
	<b>Heidi</b>	<i>for super participation in yoga.</i>
	<b>Kai</b>	<i>for fantastic behaviour at lunchtime</i>
	<b>Alfie J</b>	<i>for showing independence and confidence.</i>
	<b>Arlo</b>	<i>for super Mondrian style artwork.</i>
<b>Snowy Owls</b>	<b>Luca</b>	<i>for being a kind friend when someone was feeling sad.</i>
	<b>Cormac</b>	<i>for being kind and sharing toys with his friends.</i>
<b>Tawny Owls</b>	<b>Luka</b>	<i>for fantastic letter formation during phonics.</i>
	<b>Zoe</b>	<i>for demonstrating her excellent teeth brushing skills as part of keeping healthy.</i>
<b>Barn Owls</b>	<b>Jesica</b>	<i>for trying her best in PE and joining in with the activities.</i>
	<b>Lola</b>	<i>for super knowledge about how to keep healthy in different ways.</i>
<b>Red Fox Class</b>	<b>Kara</b>	<i>for a fantastic caption in English.</i>
	<b>Ellie</b>	<i>for super problem solving in mathematics when talking about more and fewer.</i>
<b>Big Cat Class</b>	<b>Charlie</b>	<i>for excellent skipping in PE.</i>
	<b>Zachary</b>	<i>for writing a super caption in English.</i>
<b>Walker Bear Class</b>	<b>Isaac</b>	<i>for remembering to use finger spaces when writing a sentence.</i>
	<b>Alexander</b>	<i>for using the language of 'fewer', 'more' and 'same' in mathematics.</i>
<b>Pelicans</b>	<b>Amelia</b>	<i>for always helping and acting kindly towards others.</i>
	<b>Finn</b>	<i>for projecting his voice so loudly in our class concert.</i>
	<b>Everyone</b>	<i>for a super performance in our class concert.</i>
<b>Puffins</b>	<b>Everyone</b>	<i>for a super performance in our class concert.</i>
<b>Penguins</b>	<b>Everyone</b>	<i>for a super performance in our class concert.</i>

*Have an absolutely wonderful half term!*

*Kindest regards,  
Rouane Mendel  
Headteacher*

### **School Dates – Autumn 2023**

<b>OCTOBER 2023</b>	
<b>MONDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> – FRIDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> HALF TERM – SCHOOL CLOSED</b>	
<i>Monday 30th</i>	<i>INSET DAY – children not in school, staff training</i>
<i>Tuesday 31st</i>	<i>Children return to school</i>

<b>NOVEMBER 2023</b>	
<i>Thursday 2nd onwards</i>	<i>EVERY THURSDAY morning 8.30-9.20am, Stay and Play in the Nursery. Come in &amp; join your child to share a book or other activity in the Nursery. All welcome.</i>
<i>Friday 3rd</i>	<i>Gunpowder Plot online broadcast for KS1 – 9.30-10.30</i>
<i>Friday 3rd onwards</i>	<i>EVERY FRIDAY morning 8.50-9.20am, Stay and Read in all Reception Classes. Share a book with your child, all welcome.</i>
<i>Thursday 9th</i>	<i>Open Evening, Prospective Parents, 5.30 – 7.00pm</i>
<i>Friday 10th</i>	<i>Remembrance Assembly</i>
<i>Monday 13th</i>	<i>Diwali Assembly &amp; activities, in school, pupils only</i>
<i>Wednesday 15th</i>	<i>FROG AGM – 9.00am</i>
<i>Wednesday 15th</i>	<i>Stay and Share your Child's Work – Year 1, 2.45-3.10pm. All very welcome</i>
<i>Thursday 16th</i>	<i>Stay and Share your Child's Work – Year 2, 2.45-3.10pm. All very welcome</i>
<i>Friday 17th</i>	<i>Non-uniform day in support of Children in Need. Small donation requested.</i>
<i>Tuesday 21st</i>	<i>SEN/Inclusion team Drop-In, 8.50-9.30am. If you have something you would like to discuss with our specialist team, do drop by for coffee.</i>
<i>Friday 24th</i>	<i>OCCASIONAL DAY – School Closed</i>
<i>Monday 27th</i>	<i>Guru Nanak's Birthday Assembly in school, pupils only</i>
<i>Wednesday 29th</i>	<i>Advent Assembly, in school, pupils only</i>

<b>DECEMBER 2023</b>	
<i>Tuesday 5th</i>	<i>Year 2, Virtual Christmas Festive Journey, all day</i>
<i>Tuesday 5th</i>	<i>Reception Christmas Concert – BARN OWLS, 9.15am</i>
<i>Wednesday 6th</i>	<i>Reception Christmas Concert – TAWNY OWLS, 9.15am</i>
<i>Thursday 7th</i>	<i>Reception Christmas Concert – SNOWY OWLS, 9.15am</i>
<i>Wednesday 13th</i>	<i>Christmas Concerts: Year 2 9.30</i>
<i>Thursday 14th</i>	<i>Christmas Concerts: Year 2 6pm</i>
<i>Thursday 14th</i>	<i>Nursery Christmas Concerts, 10.00am and 2.00pm</i>
<i>Monday 18th</i>	<i>Christmas Dinner – FROG to decorate tables etc.</i>
<i>Monday 18th</i>	<i>Hanukkah Assembly, pupils only</i>
<i>Tuesday 19th</i>	<i>Afternoon Christmas Parties. Nursery closed in the morning and all Nursery children to come for the afternoon. A Surprise Visitor!</i>
<i>Wednesday 20th</i>	<i>Last Day of term – finish at 2pm</i>

**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]**

**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**

**[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**  
**[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**