



THE
GILES NURSERY
AND
INFANTS'
SCHOOL



Headteacher: Mrs Rouane Mendel
Assistant Heads: Miss Lisa Hill and Mrs Tania Dalton

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8.11.2024

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,

Children have returned to school after what has clearly been a terrific break for everyone, ready to return to learning and to work hard. It has been a busy learning week for the children in school.

The Year 1 pupils enjoyed a visit from Safari Stu on Wednesday which introduced them to the most extraordinary array of animals – several of which I have never seen before in my life! What a tremendous ‘hook’ into their new animal topic for this half-term.

Year 2 have had a week focused on the Gunpowder Plot and were fascinated to learn about the history behind the celebration of Bonfire Night. The absolute highlight was the Year 2 trip to Mountfitchet to visit “a real castle!” as Kian Marc exclaimed excitedly.

Road Safety: All children in Years 1 and 2 attended a special Road Safety: Be Bright Be Seen assembly led by Miss Hill on Tuesday and this important topic has been taught in class in Reception and Nursery. Please remember to be safe during any firework events you might be attending with your families for Bonfire Night or during Diwali celebrations.

Diwali: Reception classes spent Monday focused on Diwali and had an incredible day – do read below for more details. All classes took part in Diwali assemblies and it was tremendous to be able to hear from our Hindu students how they had celebrated this lovely festival. We wish everyone a very, very happy Diwali.

Poppy Appeal: A Poppy Appeal Assembly was given to the Key Stage 1 children. Do please note that we are selling poppies and other memorabilia in the front office.

Gardening: You may have noticed that we did a lot of gardening before half-term planting winter flowers and spring bulbs. Various planters are dotted around to help to make the school look beautiful. Planting and learning about growth is also a wonderful thing for the children to experience. Thank you for all donations - I know our school will look stunning in the spring!

Harvest donations: Thank you again for your kind and generous donations of food for our Harvest Table. Miss Busby very kindly took all donations to Feed Up Warm Up over the break, where contributions were greatly appreciated. Thank you. If you would like to make any further donations, Feed Up Warm Up are open at the Stevenage Football Club on Mondays from 5-7pm.

Westgate Centre Christmas Trail: This year, for the second time, our school is part of the Westgate Centre Christmas trail event.



Our task was to create one large robin as a whole school or make a collage of lots of robins to represent the robin artwork our children created in school. Every child in the school designed and created their own A5 size robin and Mrs Humphrey glued as many of these as she could to a collage of robins. This collage is now in a shop window in the Westgate Centre. The rest of the robins will be used to decorate the school for Christmas.

The Westgate Centre will be providing trail booklets for families to follow a Christmas trail around the shop windows in the Westgate Centre and find clues to solve a puzzle. Once completed the booklet needs to be posted in a special box in the Westgate Centre and each completed puzzle is entered into a prize draw. We hope you have fun taking part.

FROG AGM: Thank you to our fabulous FROGS; a lively and highly productive AGM was held on Wednesday – thank you to all who attended.

Governor Meeting: Our Governors attended a twilight session and were presented to by Mrs Brown, who represented the Forest School training she is currently undertaking and all the fantastic events and opportunities that are planned for PE this year. Mrs Dalton then informed governors of developments in mathematics over the past year. Miss Stanton explained everything that has been put in place to ensure that our safeguarding systems are meticulously kept and followed through in order to keep our pupils safe. Finally, Mrs Ballard and Miss Hill spoke about development in SEND and new exciting provision that has been put in place for Orca class. Governors were thoroughly impressed. Thank you to all our dedicated staff.

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 for Nursery classes: Nursery sessions will be held every Thursday from 8.30am-9.20am (from 14th November), please come and join your child to share a book or other activity. We look forward to seeing you there!

Reception stay-and-read sessions will begin after Christmas; a separate letter is going out to Reception families.

Open Evening Wednesday 13th November 5.30pm to 7.00pm: 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 having 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.

Additional dates (added to list at bottom):

Friday 6th December – Crazy Hair Day to support FROG: please bring something for the tombola.

Flu Vaccinations: Rescheduled for Tuesday 26th November 2024 from 8.30am. If you do not consent for your child to have the vaccination, please use the link below to inform the NHS:

<https://eastanglia.schoolvaccination.uk/flu/2024/hertfordshire>

Please note that this programme is run by the NHS and school is only involved insofar as we allow the NHS to administer the vaccinations from our premises.

Reception and Nursery Tours: We are offering tours of Reception and Nursery approximately every other Tuesday, with the next one taking place 3.45pm to 4.30pm on Tuesday 19th November. If you have a child entering these classes next September (or know anyone else who does!), please visit [The Giles Nursery and Infants' School - Prospective Parent Tours](#) to book a place or call or visit the school office.

Children due to start Reception in September 2025: The application process for Reception year to start in September 2025 will open on 1st November 2024 and close on 15th January 2025. Applications can be made via [Primary, junior and middle school places / Hertfordshire County Council](#).

Children due to start Nursery in September 2025: Applications/admissions are managed by the school. Applications opened on 1st November 2024. An application form will be available on the school website from this date.

Volunteer work in school: We appreciate our volunteers so greatly and it is a role that in turn can give those who volunteer in school a lot of happiness. Our children are so fantastic and the teaching staff so incredible – it's an opportunity to make new friends and to pick up new skills at the same time as supporting our children's learning. Please speak to me if you are interested in doing some volunteer work in our school. Some volunteers also go on to do apprenticeships with us so if you are interested in this, do please speak to me.

Nursery: The children have thoroughly enjoyed a week filled with firework activities. They learnt to sing the rhyme 'Five Little Rockets' with great enjoyment, eagerly counting back from five each time, ready for blast off. The children described their experiences of fireworks and used fantastic describing words. Reggie shared, "Me see fireworks they louder." Freya R said, "Fireworks goes whoosh bang!"

In the creative area, the children enjoyed making rockets and firework pictures using glitter and powder paint. Murray commented, "I made a rocket, they go boom." Outside in the garden, the children have been running, hopping and jumping like rockets on the number tiles. They used bells, ribbons and streamers to add colour and movement.

In understanding the world, the children learnt Diwali is a festival of lights and to celebrate, people wear their finest clothes, spend time with friends and family, decorate their houses and share special foods and gifts. They made a diva lamp from modelling dough and painted it in a bright colour. The children made some wonderful rangoli patterns from coloured rice and paint and decorated beautiful lanterns.

In mathematics, the children have been introduced to the number of the week and an activity sheet was given to each child with optional activities for you to enjoy. They learnt a rhyme to say as they wrote the number one, "A downward stroke, my that's fun. Now I've made the number one!" The children looked at a variety of items and noticed how there was one of each item: one paintbrush, one duck, one car etc.

Next week, we will have Stay and Play on Thursday from 8.30am-9.20am. Please come and join your child to share a book or other activity. Our next rhyme is 'Twinkle

Twinkle Little Star'. The role play area has been transformed into a night-time wonderland which the children can explore using torches to make shadows and find night-time animals.

Reception: Throughout Reception, the children thoroughly enjoyed creating a biscuit house for a little pig. They used icing sugar as a cement-like mixture to support the walls and the roof. Some children even attempted to construct a pitched roof with varying degrees of success. It was good to see the children persevering when faced with the challenges of ensuring the walls stayed upright or making sure the pitched roof did not collapse. When Finley in Tawny Owl class was making his biscuit house, he said, "My house needs a roof, or it will flood."

In mathematics, the children looked at paintings by the artist Wassily Kandinsky which focused on circles and triangles. The children discussed the properties of these shapes and used them to create their own artwork in the style of Kandinsky.

On Tuesday morning, some children were discussing the power cut which affected many homes on Monday evening. Some children said their parents had lit candles, whilst others said they used torches to light up their homes. Some children said it was quite scary sitting in the dark. When Wolfie in Barn Owl class was reflecting on the power cut, he said, "Maybe God needed the power."

When talking about fireworks, Shiva in Snowy Owl class said, "I love Diwali; I had fireworks!"

This week's poem is 'Fireworks' by Tony Mitton.

*Wait for the evening, cool and dark.
Wait for the fizzle, wait for the spark.
Whizz, crackle, bang, just watch us go.
Golden rain and sparkling snow.
Whizz, crackle, bang, in the big, blue night.
Making colours for your delight.
Whizz, crackle, bang, as we rush up high.
Exploding colours across the sky.*

Next week in literacy, the children will be writing a caption in a speech bubble for the *Big Bad Wolf*. In mathematics, they will be focusing on 'one less' linked to the song 'Five little ducks went swimming one day' and in expressive arts and design, the children will be using 2D shapes to create a wolf.

Now the colder weather is fast approaching, we are encouraging the children to have a go at putting their coats on by themselves. An easy way for a child to do this is to place the coat on the floor; ask your child to stand behind the hood or collar of the coat; then get your child to place their hands into the coat sleeves and flip the coat over their head. Please would you show your child how to pull their coat sleeves if they are inside out and encourage them to have a go at doing up their coat zip.

Year 1: What a fantastic start to the new half term the children have had, with the Year One WOW Day! The children were so excited to meet Safari Stu and to see all the wonderful animals that he brought with him. He talked about each animal, explaining where it would be found in the wild, its habitat, diet, lifespan, and classification. They encountered hissing cockroaches, a lesser tenrec, a tortoise, a royal python, a sand boa, a chuckwalla, a common tenrec and the most beautiful chameleon.



Myla in Big Cats said, "I loved having the snake around my neck. It was fantastic!" Ella-Rae in Red Foxes said, "Safari Stu is amazing! I love the animals. The tortoise is my favourite. I love its small face." Mason in Walker Bears wanted to know, "When and where does the chameleon change colour?"

Please visit the Year 1 page on our school website under children / class pages / photographs to see some wonderful photos from Safari Stu's visit and other learning that has taken place since September:

Walker Bear Class: [Walker Bear Class Photos Autumn 2024](#)

Red Fox Class: [Red Fox Class Photos Autumn 2024](#)

Big Cat Class: [Big Cat Class Photos Autumn 2024](#)

Safari Stu's visit launched our new science topic for this term on animals. The children have reflected on what they already know about animals. Next, they will begin to learn about the animal classifications including mammals, reptiles, amphibians and fish.

In English, the children have learnt where to use a full stop. They have identified full stops at the end of sentences. They have listened to their teacher reading aloud some animals facts and identified where the full stop would come. Finally, they have written their own sentences remembering to put a full stop at the end. They were also encouraged to leave spaces between their words, consolidating their learning from last term.

Our Book of the Week has been 'Something Else' by Kathryn Cave. This story provided the children with a lovely discussion about tolerance and the importance of celebrating differences.

In phonics, the children have begun their phase 5 topic, learning the digraphs 'ay', 'ou', 'ie' and 'ea'. They have been reading a selection of words and using their robot arms to segment and blend to decode the words.

In mathematics, the children have learnt about addition. They have been tackling word problems and using different resources such as counters, tens frames and rekenreks to help them see the mathematics.

The children have begun a new topic in PSHCE, celebrating similarities and differences. This week, the children worked with a partner to identify similarities between them.

Next week, the children will continue to explore animal classifications in science. In English, they will be learning to do some non-fiction research about hedgehogs in preparation for writing their own fact file. They will also learn about using full stops to punctuate the end of sentences.

Year 1 pupils will also be starting their outdoor learning sessions. Please make a note of which day your child's class has their turn:

Monday – Walker Bears

Thursday – Red Foxes

Friday – Big Cats

Please look out for a separate email, containing information about our outdoor learning and the clothing your child will need.

New homework will be coming home today. Please complete the homework and return to school by Wednesday 20th November.

We wish you all a wonderful weekend.

The Year 1 Team

Year 2: It has been a fantastic return to school for the Year 2 children after the half term break.

The week began with a day of learning all about Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot. The children began the day by comparing pictures of Guy Fawkes, talking about what they noticed and discussing the similarities and differences in the pictures. They also thought if they could travel back in time, what would they ask the person in the pictures? The children thought of some excellent questions, including, "When were you alive?", "Why are you wearing those clothes?" and "What is the building behind you?"

The children went on to learn all about the Gunpowder Plot and the reason we celebrate Bonfire Night. They were excellent 'fact finders', using an information text to answer some key questions about the Plot. In the afternoon, the children learnt how to use shading in art to add detail to a drawing, before creating some amazing sketches of Guy Fawkes.

The children's learning in English this week has also focused on the Gunpowder Plot. The children have learnt how to identify key words about a topic, and how to use a contents and index page in a non-fiction book.

In mathematics, the children started a new unit focusing on addition and subtraction. They revised the bonds to ten, which they learnt in Year 1, and explored addition and subtraction bonds within 20, learning strategies to work them out quickly.

The highlight of the week was the Year 2 trip to Mountfitchet Castle, a stunning start to our new topic, 'Life in the UK – Then and Now'. It is the first time we have taken a group of children to this venue, and it was a resounding success.



The children were so enthralled, exploring the various rooms inside the castle and the different houses within the fort. They loved having a go at using a catapult, a cross bow, archery (using tennis balls) and a siege tower. They had the opportunity to try on helmets, ride a wooden jousting horse and use a mill stone. It was a fantastic start to our new topic as the children had first-hand experience of castle life. They were impeccably behaved and wonderful ambassadors for our school. Well done children! Thank you to the adults that helped on the day and for your contributions that made the trip possible.



Photographs of the trip, and of other learning activities that the children have enjoyed this term, are available to view on our website: [Photographs - Autumn Term 2024](#)

Next week, the children will learn about the importance of Remembrance Day and the people it commemorates. In mathematics, the children will continue to learn about addition and subtraction, focusing on the bonds to 100. In geography, they will start to learn about the countries of the United Kingdom, focusing first of all on England. In design and technology, the children will look at the features of a castle and in art and design, they will be introduced to the style of pointillism.

The school Open Evening is taking place next Wednesday from 5.30-7.00pm. This is a great opportunity for you to come into the Year 2 classrooms and see some of the work the children have completed this term. We look forward to seeing you then.

We hope you have a wonderful weekend.

The Year 2 Team

CLASS ATTENDANCE TROPHY

TROPHY-BEARING CLASS WITH THE BEST ATTENDANCE FOR THIS WEEK

PENGUIN CLASS

98.1%

FANTASTIC ATTENDANCE – WELL DONE!!



STARS OF THE WEEK

<p>Ladybird Nursery Classes</p>	<p><i>Bear for wonderful drawings and exploring more art and craft activities.</i></p> <p><i>Andrew for amazing subitising and confidently showing numbers to five.</i></p> <p><i>Avlin for showing kindness to her peers and always smiling.</i></p> <p><i>Bertie for fantastic counting and recall of numbers to five.</i></p> <p><i>Mahum for a beautiful firework picture using glitter.</i></p>
<p>Snowy Owls</p>	<p><i>Isaac-Jay for joining in with PE.</i></p> <p><i>Autumn for creating a wonderful picture using triangles and circles in the style of the artist Wassily Kandinsky.</i></p>
<p>Tawny Owls</p>	<p><i>Myles for fantastic segmenting and blending during phonics.</i></p> <p><i>Finley for thinking carefully about why different parts of a house are needed when building a biscuit house.</i></p>
<p>Barn Owls</p>	<p><i>Bertie for persevering when making a biscuit house.</i></p> <p><i>Gracie for creating a wonderful picture using triangles and circles in the style of the artist Wassily Kandinsky.</i></p>
<p>Red Foxes</p>	<p><i>Shaineha for trying her best in phonics.</i></p> <p><i>Emmie for super independent mathematics.</i></p>
<p>Big Cats</p>	<p><i>Albie for making a wonderful Christmas card.</i></p> <p><i>Olaf for super independent writing in phonics.</i></p>

Walker Bears	Noah for wonderful excitement for learning all about animals with Safari Stu. Lola for always working hard to do your best learning.
Pelicans	All the children in Pelican class for being an excellent representative of our school on our trip to Mountfitchet Castle.
Puffins	All the children in Puffin class for being an excellent representative of our school on our trip to Mountfitchet Castle.
Penguins	All the children in Penguin class for being an excellent representative of our school on our trip to Mountfitchet Castle.

I hope you all have a wonderful weekend.

Kindest regards,

Rouane Mendel
Headteacher

Roarrrsome Dinosaur Fun!

Meet Pete, from the Travelling Natural History Museum.

See and handle some fabulous fossils and models, join in games and activities.

Perfect for families with under 7s.

Saturday 9 November

Sessions at 11am, 12noon, 1pm, 2pm and 3pm

£7.50 per person (£6.25 concessions) £25 for a group ticket (up to 4 people)

Book at Art tickets!

Scan here to book

POP-UP PLAY!

Introducing our new Play Café!

The Lecture Room will be open, as well as the existing play spaces around the museum - lots of opportunity for play of all kinds!

£3 PER CHILD INCLUDES A DRINK FOR YOU AND YOUR LITTLE ONE - AS WELL AS LOTS OF PLAY!

Check the website for dates and times as we can't offer the full range of play if we have another event on. As this is a drop in, you can pay on the day! Phone 01438 218 881 or email museum@stevenage.gov.uk

OPEN

MOST FRIDAYS, 10-11.30AM AND 2.30-4PM

MOST SATURDAYS, 10AM-12NOON

PLUS ONE THURSDAY A MONTH, 12.30-3PM.

Funded by UK Government

Stevenage BOROUGH COUNCIL

STEVENAGE MUSEUM

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

SCHOOL DATES AND EVENTS AUTUMN TERM 2024-25

Monday 11th November Remembrance Assembly and silence in school, pupils only

Week of 11th November – Year 1 outdoor learning sessions start

8.50-9.50 Tuesday 12th November INCo Coffee Morning

9.30 – 11.00 Wednesday 12th November Positivity with Pudsey – Reception

Wednesday 13th November PM Peter Pan Pantomime Year 1 and Year 2

5.30-7.00 Wednesday 13th November – OPEN EVENING

Thursday 14th November – Nursery Stay and Play begins – 8.30-9.20 every Thursday

November 15th Non-uniform day for Children In Need

Friday 15th November Guru Nanak's birthday celebrated in school, pupils only

Tuesday 19th November KITTLE individual photos

Tuesday 19th November Bridge Builders Advent Assembly in school, pupils only

Friday 22nd November Year 1 History of Toys Day

8.30 Tuesday 26th November – Flu Vaccinations

1.00-2.30 Tuesday 26th November Festive Journey off-site Pelican class

3.45-4.30 Monday 25th November Nursery Tour of parents applying for a September 2025 place

3.45-4.30 Tuesday 26th November Reception Tour for parents applying for a September 2025 place

1.00-2.30 Wednesday 27th November Festive Journey off-site Puffin class

1.00-2.30 Thursday 28th November Festive Journey off-site Penguin class

Thursday 28th November Advent Assembly in school, pupils only

Friday 29th November – Occasional Day – SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS

9.15 Tuesday 3rd December – Barn Owl Christmas Concert

9.15 Wednesday 4th December – Tawny Owl Christmas Concert

9.15 Thursday 5th December – Snowy Owl Christmas Concert

Friday 6th December – Crazy Hair Day to support FROG: please bring something for the tombola

Tuesday 10th December – Year 1 Nativity in Church

3.45-4.30 Tuesday 10th December Reception Tour for parents applying for a September 2025 place

9.30 Wednesday 11th December Year 2 Christmas Concert

6.00 Wednesday 11th December Year 2 Christmas Concert

10.00 Thursday 12th December Nursery Christmas Concert – by invitation

2.00 Thursday 12th December Nursery Christmas Concert – by invitation

1.00 Tuesday 17th December Orca class invites parents in for Christmas celebration

3.15-4.30 Tuesday 17th December FROG Christmas Event

Wednesday 18th December – Christmas Dinner

Thursday 19th December – Christmas Parties with possible surprise visitor

***Friday 20th December – END OF TERM
SCHOOL CLOSSES 1.00 PM***

TERM DATES 2024-25

Autumn Term: Monday 2nd September 2024 – 20th December 2024

Friday 29th November 2024 OCCASIONAL Day SCHOOL CLOSED

School finishes on Friday 20th December 2024 at 1.00pm

[Christmas Holidays: Monday 23rd December 2024 – Friday 3rd January 2025]

Children return to school on Monday 6th January 2025

Spring Term: Monday 6th January 2025 – Friday 4th April 2025

[Half term: Monday 17th February 2025 – Friday 21st February 2025]

Children return to school on Monday 24th February 2025

School finishes on Friday 4th April 2025 at 1.00pm

[Easter Holidays: Monday 7th April 2025 – Monday 21st April 2025]

Children return to school on Tuesday 22nd April 2025

Summer Term: Tuesday 22nd April 2025 – Wednesday 23rd July 2025

Monday 5th May 2025 Bank Holiday SCHOOL CLOSED

Monday 26th May 2025 Bank Holiday SCHOOL CLOSED

[Half term: Monday 26th May 2025 – Friday 30th May 2025]

Monday 2nd June 2025 INSET Day SCHOOL CLOSED

Children return to school on Tuesday 3rd June 2025

Monday 30th June 2025 INSET Day SCHOOL CLOSED

School finishes on Wednesday 23rd July 2025 at 1.00pm



2024 / 25 School Calendar

September '24						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

October '24						
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28	29	30	31			

November '24						
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December '24						
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

January '25						
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20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

February '25						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		

March '25						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

April '25						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
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28	29	30				

May '25						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

June '25						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

July '25						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

August '25						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

- = Term Time
- = 23/24 Pupil Holidays
- = Bank and Public Holidays
- = 2024/25 Pupil Holidays
- = Inset Day - school closed to pupils
- = Occasional Day - (school closed to pupils)

