



THE
GILES NURSERY
AND
INFANTS'
SCHOOL



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

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22.11.2024

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,

It's been another wonderful week – with a great surprise when children walked to school through magical snow on Tuesday! Year 1 children had a fantastic time at their History of Toy workshop today. In the morning, they had the opportunity to explore toys from the past, looking closely at the materials used to make them, how they were to be used, whether or not they had moving parts and considering if they have similar toys today. In the afternoon they became toy makers, thinking carefully about all that they had learnt about toys in the morning in order to make their own to bring home. The children also had the opportunity to be archaeologists, digging in soil to find fragments of broken toys and then analysing them, again applying all their knowledge from the morning exploratory session. Thank you to Craig from History Off The Page for a superbly inspiring day.



We had a County Inspection on Wednesday with a focus on Art and Design. Mrs Humphrey is our curriculum leader for art and design and is inspiring in her passion, knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject. The inspector commented, "The leadership feels really spot on." Observations took place in Nursery, Barn Owl class, Red Fox class and Puffin class. The inspector also talked with Year 2 pupils who were delighted to share their knowledge, skills and artwork with her. She noted that the children get a "really good diet of art learning." They listened to the teaching with a lot of focus and concentration, safe in the knowledge that they would be given ample opportunity and time for practical work. She reflected, "What we see is children making the very most of their learning opportunities." It was remarkable that the children's use of art

specific vocabulary was very strong – understanding and using the vocabulary precisely and correctly. She noted, “The children take great care of their work” and was impressed with the creative freedom the children are given to produce individual work and “to be their own person developing their own ideas.” She loved our focus on local artists and our participation in Stevenage creative events with Junction 7 and the Westgate Centre – look out for our robins display in the Christmas trail this year! To top it all, the inspector also commented on so many aspects of our school life, including the impeccable behaviour of our pupils, the pride and respect for their school that they demonstrate, the independence and confidence shown by the Nursery pupils, the strong teaching by all staff, the immaculately clean and tidy premises, beautiful and engaging displays and the very well-established routines.



You would have been so proud of your children – in terms of their behaviour, their attitude to learning and the fabulous quality of their work. Art has a really high profile at our school and the inspector was very impressed! Thank you to Mrs Humphrey for her superb curriculum leadership.

Occasional Day: Do remember that next Friday 29th November is our annual Occasional Day and school is closed for the day.

Stevenage Christmas Light Switch On: This will take place this Saturday 23rd November from 12.00-5.30pm at Event Island in Stevenage Town Centre.

Stevenage Old Town Christmas Lights Switch On: Next Saturday 30th November, you may like to go to Stevenage Old Town Bowling Green for the Old Town Christmas Lights Switch On! From 5pm to 6pm, there will be heartwarming carols and choir singers, plus special appearances by Boro Bear and Santa Claus himself! The big countdown to light up the Old Town with beautiful Christmas lights will be at 6pm. There will also be refreshments outside Springfield House to keep you warm and merry.

Children in Need: Thank you for your donations from our non-uniform day last Friday; we have raised a wonderful £187.50.

Flu Vaccinations: These have been 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>

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 26th 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 opened on 1st November 2024 and will 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 is available on the school website.

FROG Christmas Event – Tuesday 17th December: Come and join us from 3.15pm in the main school hall for some exciting Christmas activities organised by our FROG team. FROG would love your tombola donations of items such as candles, chocolate/biscuits, smellies/toiletries, booze and sweets. We are having a Crazy Hair Day on Friday 6th December in support of FROG – please bring your donations to school that morning. Thank you for your support.

Staff vacancies: We are currently advertising for a school caretaker and a class teacher. If you would be interested in applying, please follow this link for the job descriptions and application forms:

<https://www.gilesnurseryandinfants.co.uk/page/?title=Staff+Vacancies&pid=19>

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.

Spare clothing for Reception classes: Reception is in desperate need of spare clothing as they are running extremely low. In particular, they need girls' underwear, girls' tights, and socks and trousers for both boys and girls. If your child has grown out of any of these, the Reception staff will happily accept any donations.

Nursery: In Nursery this week, the children thoroughly enjoyed hearing and retelling the story 'Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?' by Bill Martin Jr. They learnt the order of the animals in the story and enthusiastically joined in using Makaton signs. The children learnt the Makaton signs for bear, bird, duck, horse, frog, cat, dog, sheep, goldfish, teacher and children.

In expressive art and design, the children explored painting in the style of the illustrator Eric Carle. Eric Carle used tissue paper to create many of his illustrations and designed the animals in the 'Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?' story using this style too. They were eager to try printing a variety of shapes on tissue paper in bright colours and showed incredible care and control printing on thin paper. The tissue paper was then turned into colourful shapes so they could create wonderful collages. Well done Ladybirds for confidently naming the colours and creating beautiful collages!

The children had a fantastic time creating a brown bear painting using a range of mark making tools, including brushes, sponges and forks. They added one nose, two ears and two eyes. Each bear looks wonderful and unique, and we will have these on display very soon.

The children were fascinated to learn about bears from around the world. They learnt facts about brown bears, sun bears, sloth bears, giant panda bears, polar bears and spectacled bears. The children were amazed to learn that baby pandas are born pink, sun bears have a long tongue to reach honey and black bears have sharp claws. Arlo recalled, "Black bears are good at climbing with their sharp claws." Benjamin was amazed to learn that polar bears have strong legs and large feet with some webbing

between their toes, to help with swimming and walking on ice. Reggie commented, "Polar bears have special skin." Evie remembered, "Polar bears are good at swimming."

In mathematics, the children practised using the vocabulary 'first', 'second', 'next' and 'last' to describe the order of the animals in the story 'Brown Bear, Brown Bear. What Do You See?'. They focused on the number three and learnt to say the following rhyme as they used their finger to write the number, 'Around the tree, around the tree. Now I've made the number three!' The children listened to the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' and counted three bowls of porridge, three chairs, three beds and most importantly three bears!

Next week, we will be celebrating Teddy's 4th birthday. The children can wear party clothes for Teddy's party on Thursday 28th November and they will be eating jam sandwiches. Please let us know if your child has any allergies.

As part of our celebration for Teddy, we will also be looking at old and special bears. The children are welcome to bring in a special bear or teddy to show and talk about from Tuesday onwards. These will be kept in a special place until home time.

Reception: In mathematics, the children focused on numbers to five. They pretended they were at a birthday party and had to match a number of candles to a numeral. Great fun was had by all the children as they made the birthday cakes from playdough and carefully counted out the candles.



In expressive arts and design, the children looked at paintings by the American artist, Al Agnew and used their observational skills to paint the most fantastic pictures of wolves. They looked very carefully at the structure of the wolf's face, the direction of the wolf's fur and the colours of the wolf's fur. The children enjoyed mixing colours needed for their painting. When painting her wolf, Ariella in Barn Owl class said, "I have to flick the brush, so the paint looks just like the wolf's fur on the top of his head."

This week's poem is a traditional nursery rhyme, 'Old Mother Hubbard'.

*Old Mother Hubbard
Went to the cupboard,
To get her poor dog a bone.
But when she got there
The cupboard was bare,
And so, the poor dog had none.*

This month, the Musician of the Month is Sergei Prokofiev. The children have been watching a video of the orchestra playing the musical story of 'Peter and the Wolf'. They have identified the musical instruments which are used to portray the characters and each day they have listened to the story. When listening to 'Peter and the Wolf', Kennedy in Snowy Owl class said, "It reminds me of skating!"

Next week, in understanding the world and literacy the children will be finding out facts about wolves and using a variety of natural resources to create different environments in which wolves live around the world.

In mathematics, the children will be partitioning a number and finding out how many ways they can make five.

Year 1: It has been an absolutely joyous end to the week in Year 1. The children have had a fabulous experience in the toy workshop today provided by History Off The Page. They examined old toys from different eras and compared them with toys today. They learnt that in the days before plastic was available, toys were made of other materials such as wood, porcelain or metal. They made their own toys at a carousel of activities. This day has launched our new history topic on toys old and new.



In outdoor learning the children made beautiful autumnal decorations by using a needle threaded with string and fallen autumn leaves. The children listened to the story 'Don't Hog the Hedge' about a hibernating hedgehog who has to share her cosy nest with lots of other animals seeking shelter from the winter cold. The children then made shelters in the woodland using leaves and sticks. Some made big shelters and some made little dens. Oscar W in Red Fox class declared, "This is the best day ever!"

In science this week, the children learnt about the key features of reptiles and identified animals that are reptiles.

In art, they experimented with placing primary and secondary colours next to each other to see how they interact. They mixed the paint to make their secondary colours. They learnt that some combinations, such as blue and orange, can make the colours seem brighter, whilst blue and green next to each other can be calming to look at.

Our Book of the Week was 'The Elephant and the Bad Baby' by Elfrida Vipont, illustrated by Raymond Briggs. The children enjoyed trying to remember the list of all the shopkeepers and joining in with the refrain "rumpeter, rumpeter, rumpeter."


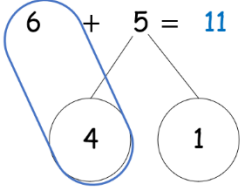

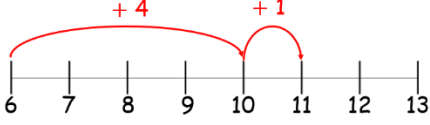
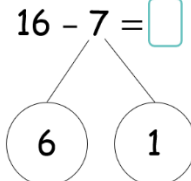

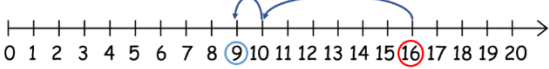
The children continued to research hedgehog facts in English. They learnt to find the answer to a question and record the keywords on a mind map. Then they practised writing a sentence using the keywords and remembering finger spaces and full stops. Some children challenged themselves to use 'and' to include two answers in one sentence, for example; 'Hedgehogs eat slugs and snails.' This week in phonics the children have learnt the digraph 'wh' which can sound /w/ in 'wheel' or /h/ in 'whole'. They learnt an easy way to remember the two sounds it can make – the clue is in the letters! They also learnt 'ph' like in 'phone' and 'ew' like in 'screw'.

In mathematics the children learnt about fact families. They enjoyed trying to make all eight addition and subtraction facts for a number bond. They also practised subtraction by crossing out to find the difference.

Next week the children will finish their hedgehog fact files in English and learn about using a number line to work out subtraction calculations in mathematics. They will start to learn some Christmas carols in preparation for our visit to church for a nativity celebration on Tuesday 10th December. Please look out for a separate letter about the trip to the church. Please return the permission slip to your child's class teacher as quickly as possible and by Monday 2nd December at the latest.

Year 2: It has been a lovely week in Year 2. The children have really enjoyed starting our new unit of work in English, which focuses on the 'Katie Morag' stories by Maire Hedderwick. They are really engaged with the stories and have been watching the 'Katie Morag' television series, which is available on BBC iPlayer. The series helps the children to visualise island life and consider how it differs from life in Stevenage, which links to their work in geography.

In mathematics, the children continued to learn about addition and subtraction. They learnt some different strategies to solve addition and subtraction problems, focusing on adding to the next ten, adding across a ten and subtracting across a ten. These strategies rely on children's knowledge of the bonds to ten (pairs of numbers to ten) and builds on their work last week, when they learnt how to 'look for ten'.

<p>An example of adding to the next ten:</p> <p>Rosie is adding to the next 10</p> $82 + \boxed{8} = 90$  <p>Rosie</p> <p>I will use $2 + 8 = 10$ to help me find the missing number.</p>	<p>An example of adding across a ten:</p> <p>Sam uses bonds to 10 to complete the calculation.</p> $6 + 5 = 11$  $10 + 1 = 11$  <p>Sam</p> 
<p>An example of subtracting across a ten:</p> $16 - 7 = \boxed{}$  $16 - 6 = 10$ $10 - 1 = 9$  <p>Amir</p> <p>I can partition 7 into 6 and 1</p> 	

In geography this week, the children continued to learn about the countries of the United Kingdom. They focused on Wales and Scotland, learning what the country flags look like, what the weather is like, what the landscape is like (physical features) and what landmarks they might see (human features). In RE, they recalled the Christian creation story and shared their understanding of what Christians do on Sundays.

In art and design, the children continued to learn about pointillism. They explored a range of media to decide which was best for mixing colours on the page. In history, the children looked at a range of castles, ordered them on a timeline and explored how and why they changed over time. They had lots of fun recreating attack and defence strategies using soft dough!

Next week, the children will continue to look at the 'Katie Morag' stories by Maire Hedderwick. They will learn how to use the possessive apostrophe and use the conjunction 'and' to join two sentences. In mathematics, they will continue to learn different strategies for addition and subtraction. In geography, the children will learn about the physical and human features of Northern Ireland and in RE, they will learn how the Buddhist faith promotes animal welfare through stories. In PSHCE, the children will look at how we are all unique and why it is important to celebrate differences.

Next week, each class will visit St Nicholas Church to take part in the Festive Journey, which forms part of our Religious Education curriculum.

- *Pelican class will attend on Tuesday 26th November 2024 with Mrs Trott.*
- *Puffin class will attend on Wednesday 27th November 2024 with Miss Wright.*
- *Penguin class will attend on Thursday 28th November 2024 with Miss Hill and Mrs Humphrey.*

The children will walk to the church. They will depart school at 12.30pm and return at approximately 3.00pm. Please can we ask you to ensure your child is dressed warmly and wearing appropriate footwear for the walk to and from the church.

We need volunteers to help us walk the children to and from the church and stay with a group whilst we are there. If you are able to volunteer, please let your child's class teacher know.

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

97.3%

FANTASTIC ATTENDANCE – WELL DONE!!



STARS OF THE WEEK

Ladybird Nursery Classes	<p><i>Hallie for brilliant retelling of 'Brown Bear, Brown Bear. What do you see?'</i></p> <p><i>Marnie for a fantastic week and an amazing brown bear painting.</i></p> <p><i>Zohaam for lovely listening to the story 'Brown Bear, Brown Bear. What do you see?'</i></p> <p><i>Rose for playing imaginatively in the home area.</i></p> <p><i>Freya B for playing imaginatively in the home area.</i></p> <p><i>Murray for a wonderful painting of a brown bear.</i></p>
Snowy Owls	<p><i>Ellis for painting a wonderful wolf.</i></p> <p><i>Shiva for being a kind and caring friend.</i></p> <p><i>Ella Rose for being a helpful friend.</i></p>
Tawny Owls	<p><i>Gracie for brilliant matching of a number to an amount when putting candles on a birthday cake.</i></p> <p><i>Sabin for creating a fantastic, detailed painting of a wolf.</i></p>
Barn Owls	<p><i>Misha for fantastic art skills when painting a wolf.</i></p> <p><i>Joshua for super observational skills when painting a wolf.</i></p>
Red Foxes	<p><i>Ishanvi for fantastic effort with your homework.</i></p> <p><i>Oscar M for super mathematics taking away numbers.</i></p>
Big Cats	<p><i>Reggie for writing a wonderful sentence about where hedgehogs live.</i></p> <p><i>Alice for showing great determination during outdoor learning.</i></p>
Walker Bears	<p><i>Jacob for super work learning how to record your research on a mind map in English.</i></p> <p><i>Ayla-Kaye for fabulous work finding eight related addition and subtraction facts for a fact family in mathematics.</i></p>
Pelicans	<p><i>Leo for an amazing piece of homework on pointillism.</i></p> <p><i>Connor for hard work and perseverance in all your work this week.</i></p>
Puffins	<p><i>Hollie for always helping others during learning time.</i></p> <p><i>Lauren for taking great care in your presentation.</i></p>
Penguins	<p><i>Livia for creating a wonderful art piece on the iPad using the technique of pointillism.</i></p> <p><i>Fatima for being a fantastic role model in all aspects of school.</i></p> <p><i>Samuel for always putting your hand up to answer questions in lessons.</i></p>

I hope you all have a wonderful weekend.

Kindest regards,

*Rouane Mendel
Headteacher*

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   

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

SCHOOL DATES AND EVENTS AUTUMN TERM 2024-25

8.30 Tuesday 26th November – Flu Vaccinations

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

3.45-4.30 Tuesday 26th 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

3.45-4.30 Tuesday 3rd December Nursery Tour of parents applying for a September 2025 place

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/Nursery 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
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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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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
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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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
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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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
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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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)

