



THE
GILES NURSERY
AND
INFANTS'
SCHOOL



Headteacher: Mrs Rouane Mendel
Deputy Headteacher: Miss Lisa Hill
Assistant Headteacher: Mrs Tania Dalton

Durham Road, Stevenage, Herts. SG1 4JQ
Telephone: 01438 359747
Email: admin@gilesinfants.herts.sch.uk
Website: www.gilesnurseryandinfants.co.uk

12.12.2025

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

'There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children.'
Nelson Mandela

Dear Parents/Carers,



It has been the most marvellous, magical, busy week in school. The Year 1 Nativity in All Saints Church was absolutely stunning, and the children looked so lovely and clearly enjoyed the performance from start to finish. They also behaved impeccably and sang with true musicality and gusto. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our tremendous Year 1 team, every child knew every word and enacted a flawless performance. Thank you so very much to all the parents who accompanied the children on their walk to and from the church. Thank you also to the parents, grandparents and relatives who attended – it is greatly appreciated. This is such a very special event.

The Year 2 Christmas play was quite simply jaw-droppingly marvellous – I can honestly say it's the best school production I've ever seen. The entire year-group took part all together and was a feat of organisational perfection! The children looked so happy and the performance was utterly joy-filled from beginning to end. All the

children played their parts beautifully – they all sang with such beauty that there was hardly a dry eye in the house. A huge well done and really immense thanks go to all our staff for their hard work and to our lovely children. This has really set the tone for the season!

The Nursery class concerts were quite simply loveliness itself and we are so very, very proud of our dear youngest children. It was tremendous to share with parents the fabulous work they have done this term, thanks to our incredible Nursery staff. Our Ladybirds all sang so sweetly and everyone who attended felt that this beautiful performance brought the spark of this festive season into all our hearts. Thank you to Mrs Edwards and our wonderful Nursery team.

In this very special week, we also had the inauguration of our new school council. The outgoing councillors were thanked for their hard work, particularly on environmental projects including the solar panels and recycling and compost bins in every class. Thank you Annabelle, Archer and Amelie; Kobi, Sumayyah and Katy; Parth, Isabella and Jamal. The new councillors received their badges and certificates of office. Welcome to our new councillors: Reception – Maeve, Aliyah and Charlie; Year 1 – Albert, Autumn and Ayla; Year 2 – Esther, Ivy and Blaze.

The Rocksteady Concert was phenomenal and huge congratulations are due to all our fabulous Rocksteady band members! The children performed confidently, even though for some it was their first time playing to an audience. For those who have been band members for a little while, it was wonderful to see the progression in their musical skills. And for everyone, the social experience of playing in a band is clearly something they love. Rocksteady band lessons take place on Wednesday mornings. If you would like your child to take part, there is more information at the end of this newsletter.

Children look fantastic in their Christmas jumpers today – thank you to all those who brought in contributions to Save the Children.

Our much-appreciated FROG parents will be coming in next week on Wednesday to decorate the hall in real style for Christmas dinner – and they will also give their time to help out and serve for the duration of the meal. This is so very kind and adds greatly to the children's enjoyment – I know you will all join me in thanking them on behalf of our school!

Do remember that school closes at 1pm on the final day of term – next Friday 19th December.

Athletics after school club closing: *The trainer running this club has just informed me that unfortunately due to personal circumstances she is unable to continue running this club in the new year.*

Christmas Dinner: *On Wednesday 17th December, the children will be having a Christmas dinner. Our fantastic FROG kindly decorate the entire hall so that it is Christmassy and sparkling! Our cook is aware of those children with dietary allergies and will prepare special puddings for those children.*

Christmas Parties: *On Thursday 18th December, we will be holding our class parties. Children may come dressed in party clothes or in a Christmas jumper. It's back to usual school uniform on Friday, however, for the last day of school. Because of allergies, classes are organising party food in different ways this year and children are please to bring a little bag of their*



own party food. If you are unsure about what to provide, please speak to your child's teacher or call the office.

It is just possible that there will also be a special visitor bearing gifts!

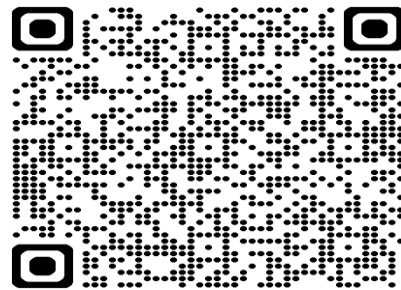
PLEASE NOTE THAT NURSERY IS CLOSED ON THE MORNING OF THURSDAY 18TH DECEMBER AND ALL CHILDREN WILL ATTEND IN THE AFTERNOON. Nursery has also organised a special event for the children.

Supply cleaner: If anyone is interested in this role and helping to keep our beautiful school clean when the agency cleaners are ill or we need a bit of extra help and you need a few extra pennies, please come in and speak to the office.

After School Club: We would like to remind you that at the end of each term when school finishes at 1pm, there is no After School Club so please remember that it will not be open on Friday 19th December.

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).

Prospective Parent Tours: Applications are being accepted for Nursery places to start January/September 2026. Applications with Hertfordshire County Council for Reception places to start September 2026 close on 15th January 2026.



Tours of our Nursery and Reception classes available by appointment on Thursday 8th January from 3.45 to 4.30pm. Please use the QR code to book your tickets or call us on 01438 359747.

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: It has been a wonderful week in Nursery, continuing with Advent celebrations whilst the Christmas tree shines bright and Christmas music plays. The children showed tremendous effort practising singing songs and actions ready for their special concerts. They were all fantastic and we are so proud of them all! We hope you enjoyed the Christmas concerts as much as we did.

The children enjoyed making Christmas cards for you and these will be inside their special folder with their wonderful work from this term. They worked carefully stamping their special Christmas folders, showing skill and control when printing.



The children were excited to explore the Santa's workshop in our role play area this week. They enjoyed wrapping presents, writing gift tags and making cards for their friends. Reuben said, "Here'd you go Santa. Wrap it up for you." Mila then shared, "My elf has been sitting in my smelly socks!"

The children are all looking forward to the Christmas party on the afternoon of Thursday 18th December. There is no morning Nursery on that day. Please can everyone arrive in party clothes at 12.30pm.

Reception: *This week, the children have listened to versions of the Nativity story. They created Nativity story maps and used their maps to retell the story in their own words. Harry in Barn Owl class said, "Mary got told she was going to have a baby called Jesus. She told the father. There was no more room, so they went round the back." Billy in Snowy Owl class said, "The angel told Mary, she is going to ride on a horse to have her dinner!" George in Tawny Owl said, "There's no room, you can go in the back garden," and Lucas also in Tawny Owl class called the shepherds, "sheep mans".*

Our poem of the week is the children's carol, 'Away in a Manger'.

*Away in a manger,
No crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus
Laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky
Looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus
Asleep on the hay.*

Please encourage your child to read or sing this to you, a member of their family or a family friend. These weekly poems are to aid your child's fluency in reading. The children really enjoy learning the poem each week.

This week in phonics, the children have learnt the digraphs 'ur', 'ow', 'oi' and the trigraph 'ear'. Please see below the patter the staff use to help the children form the letters correctly.

'ur' – Start at the top, come down and curve. Go back up, come down and flick. Lift. Start at the top, come down, bounce back up and over.

'ow' – Make a curve, go all the way round. Lift. Slope down, slope up, slope down and slope back up.

'oi' – Make a curve, go all the way round. Lift. Start at the top, come down and flick. Lift and dot.

'ear' – Start with a loop then make a curve. Lift. Make a curve, go up to the top, come back down and flick. Lift. Start at the top, come down, bounce back up and over.

In mathematics, the children focused on position and played the game 'Where's my toy?' The children had to position a toy in different places; for example, under a log, next to a rock or in between two trees. Then they had to say where the toy was situated.



Next week in mathematics, the children will sort a selection of pictures into the categories of 'day' and 'night'. Throughout the week, the children will participate in Christmas activities, listen to many Christmas stories and sing lots of Christmas themed songs.

Thursday 18th December is party day. The children can come dressed in party clothes. Please would you provide your child with a named bag of party food; for example, a sandwich, a packet of crisps, a snack bar plus a carton of drink.

Year 1: What a beautiful and special day we had on Tuesday! Thank you for joining us for our Christmas at Church celebration which forms part of the RE and music curriculums. Walking around our local area to landmarks is also part of the geography curriculum. It was wonderful to see so many family members there. The children walked safely to and from All Saints Church at The Oval. Thank you if you walked with your child. We were blown away by their tuneful singing of Christmas carols. The children who had speaking parts spoke clearly and confidently and the actors fulfilled their roles wonderfully well. All the costumes were splendid. It is a huge achievement for the children to perform to such a large audience, in a venue that is not their own school hall and wearing costumes. Well done Year 1!

This week in English, the children learnt about performance poetry. They learnt that there are lots of different types of poems and that the author of a poem is called a poet. The children learnt that when they read a poem, it is helpful to think about the tone of voice to use, any actions that might express the ideas in the poem, and the setting of the poem. They learnt the poem 'Peppermint Stick' by an unknown poet and practised using an excited voice, a secretive voice, and a cheeky voice to recite it, whilst also using facial expressions and actions. They performed the poem to their peers.

The children revisited some of the concepts they learnt in mathematics this term and practised their fluency of number. We are really proud of the fabulous progress the children have made in mathematics this term.

In science, the children learnt all about fish during their animal classification work. They researched types of fish and their characteristics and discussed how they are different to the other animal groups learnt so far. They learnt that a jellyfish is not a fish even though it has the word 'fish' in its name.

The children enjoyed listening to the story 'Stick Man' by Julia Donaldson in Forest School. They made their own stick person and had a wonderful time making up adventures for it in the woodland area.



Next week, it is our class Christmas parties on Thursday. Please provide your child with their own named bag of party food. As some children have allergies, please do not include any nuts or foods with nut-based ingredients. If your child has a packed lunch normally, they will need that too. Please put their party food in a separate bag. The children may wear party clothes on Thursday.

Please note, there will be no Forest School next week. Forest School will restart the second week after the holiday – week commencing Monday 12th January. It will be very wintry. Please ensure your child has warm winter outdoor clothes and a spare change of shoes (the boots get very muddy!) on their Forest School day: Mondays – Big Cats and Walker Bears; Thursdays – Red Foxes.

Finally, we have a special plea to make. We are very short on spare clothing in school. If you are having a clear-out, we would be extremely grateful for any donations of pants, socks, tights, leggings, trousers or jogging bottoms in suitable sizes for Year 1 children.

We wish you all a wonderful weekend and look forward to a very exciting last week of term!

Year 2: What a fantastic week it has been in Year 2! The children put on an incredible Christmas concert that absolutely wowed the audience, performing it not once, not twice, but three times over the week, twice for their families, and once for the Year 1 children. All the Year 2 classes came together for the performance and what an amazing job they did, listening carefully to directions, remembering their lines and places, and kindly helping each other if anyone got a little stage struck. We are so very proud of every single one of them!



The children have enjoyed lots of Christmas themed activities and crafts, including some surprises that they will bring home next week.

Next week is another busy one! The children will hear some festive stories and enjoy some Christmas crafts. They will finish off their topic work for this half term and the

English work they have been doing based around 'The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe' by C. S. Lewis.

Wednesday is Christmas dinner day, kindly supported by the FROG team.

Class Christmas parties will take place on Thursday afternoon, and we hope to see a special visitor on his rounds! Children can come to school in party clothes for the day. Please can each child bring in a named individual bag of party food, to avoid any problems with allergies. This should be in addition to a packed lunch if your child has one. We suggest a sandwich, a savoury snack and a sweet treat.


School closes at 1.00pm on Friday for the Christmas break. There is no after school club on this day.

We wish you a restful weekend.

Kindest regards

*Rouane Mendel
Headteacher*

CLASS ATTENDANCE TROPHIES
TROPHY-BEARING CLASSES WITH THE BEST ATTENDANCE FOR THIS WEEK

<i>Reception</i>	<i>Key stage one</i>
Barn Owls	Big Cats
96.5%	96.5%
FANTASTIC ATTENDANCE – WELL DONE!	
	

STARS OF THE WEEK

Ladybirds Class	<i>All the children in Ladybird class for fantastic singing and a wonderful concert.</i>
Snowy Owl Class	<i>Muriha for making fantastic progress with learning phonic sounds and applying them when reading.</i> <i>Aaryan for using prepositions to describe where teddy is.</i> <i>Roman for making good progress with learning Phase 2 phonics sounds.</i>
Tawny Owl Class	<i>Sia for brilliant singing of our Poem of the Week.</i> <i>Alora for a fantastic retelling of the Christmas story using her story map.</i> <i>Xavier for trying very hard with his writing in phonics.</i>
Barn Owl Class	<i>Florence for super sequencing of the Nativity story map.</i>

	<i>Evie for super letter formation during phonics.</i> <i>Jiyan for fantastic telling of the Nativity story.</i>
Big Cat Class	<i>Everyone for singing beautifully at our Christmas at Church celebration.</i> <i>Brayden for always trying his best with his learning.</i> <i>Jaxon for fantastic phonics.</i>
Red Fox Class	<i>Everyone for singing beautifully at our Christmas at Church celebration.</i> <i>Ayla for super listening this week.</i> <i>Alex for drawing and sharing super knowledge about fish.</i>
Walker Bear Class	<i>Everyone for singing beautifully at our Christmas at Church celebration.</i> <i>Elijah for a wonderful musical performance on the drums in the Rocksteady concert.</i> <i>Eliza for producing some marvellous homework throughout this term.</i>
Pelican Class	<i>All the children for a fantastic performance in the Christmas concert.</i>
Penguin Class	<i>All the children for a fantastic performance in the Christmas concert.</i>
Puffin Class	<i>All the children for a fantastic performance in the Christmas concert.</i>

AUTUMN TERM

Event	Date	Time
Hanukkah (Jewish) Assembly – children only	Sunday 14/12/25 – Monday 22/12/25	
Orca Christmas Celebration	Tuesday 16/12/25	1.00pm
Christmas dinner	Wednesday 17/12/25	
Afternoon Christmas parties	Thursday 18/12/25	
Nursery closed in the morning	Thursday 18/12/25	NURSERY CLOSED AM
Nursery Christmas party	Thursday 18/12/25	12.30pm-3.10pm
END OF TERM	Friday 19/12/25	School closes 1.00pm

ROCK
STEADY

ROCK AND POP BAND LESSONS!



BOOK TO START
LESSONS IN JANUARY!

IGNITE THEIR INNER SPARK!

- Children learn to play an instrument in their very own band.
- Fun and inclusive in-school band lessons. No music theory involved.
- Follow their musical journey in your Backstage account.
- Exam-free, Ofqual-regulated Trinity music qualification.
- Instruments provided and no experience necessary.



0330 113 0330 (Mon-Thurs 8am-9pm, Fri 8am-9pm, local rate)

rocksteadymusicschool.com

LEARN TO PLAY MUSIC IN A BAND THAT'S FOR EVERYONE.

Choose from: Drums, guitar, bass, keyboards or vocals.

Inclusive and hassle-free!

Takes place in school, instruments provided and no experience necessary!

Have fun and learn by playing

Children work their way through a curriculum of up to 300 musical skills.

Taught by professional musicians

Rocksteady band leaders are highly trained musicians who make learning music fun.

Much more than music

Improves wellbeing, confidence, social skills and academic achievement.

Progress at their own pace

Your child can achieve an exam-free, Ofqual-regulated Trinity music qualification!

End every term on a high note

Watch your child shine as they perform in their end of term concerts.

£14.88 per month (no payment in August). Money back guarantee for the first month. Cancel at any time.

"His confidence in music, in just over a year, is incredible to see!"
Minal

"It keeps encouraging us to do more, so it teaches us to never give up."
Rocksteady pupil

"Socially, it's great - learning skills, performance confidence - the list is endless."
Maxine

BOOK YOUR CHILD'S
PLACE ONLINE!



0330 113 0330
(Mon-Thurs 8am-9pm, Fri 8am-9pm, local rate)
info@rocksteadymusicschool.com

TRINITY
MUSIC
SCHOOL
OF QUALIFICATION
OF QUALIFICATION
OF QUALIFICATION

ROCK
STEADY

TERM DATES 2025-26

Autumn Term: Thursday 4th September 2025 – Friday 19th December 2025

School finishes on Friday 19th December 2025 at 1.00pm

[Christmas Holidays: Monday 22nd December 2025 – Friday 2nd January 2026]

Monday 5th January 2026 – INSET Day SCHOOL CLOSED

Spring Term: Tuesday 6th January 2026 – Friday 27th March 2026

Children return to school on Tuesday 6th January 2026

[Half term: Monday 16th February 2026 – Friday 20th February 2026]

School finishes on Friday 27th March 2026 at 1.00pm

Summer Term: Monday 13th April 2026 – Thursday 23rd July 2026

Monday 4th May 2026 Bank Holiday SCHOOL CLOSED

Monday 25th May 2026 Bank Holiday SCHOOL CLOSED

[Half term: Monday 25th May 2026 – Friday 29th May 2026]

Monday 1st June 2026 INSET Day SCHOOL CLOSED

Children return to school on Tuesday 2nd June 2026

Friday 3rd July 2026 INSET Day SCHOOL CLOSED

School finishes on Thursday 23rd July 2026 at 1.00pm

2025 / 26 School Calendar

September '25						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
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	31				

October '25						
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	31		

November '25						
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

December '25						
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	31				

January '26						
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	31	

February '26						
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	31			

March '26						
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	31					







April '26						
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			

May '26						
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	31

June '26						
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					

July '26						
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	31		

August '26						
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
31						

-  = Term Time
-  = 24/25 Pupil Holidays
-  = Bank and Public Holidays
-  = 2025/26 Pupil Holidays
-  = Inset Day - school closed to pupils
-  = Occasional Day - (school closed to pupils)

