THE
GILES NURSERY
AND
INFANTS'
SCHOOL

Headteacher: Mrs Rouane Mendel
Deputy / Acting Headteacher: Miss Lisa Hill
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06.11.2026

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

Reception	***Key Stage One***
BARN OWL CLASS	***PENGUIN CLASS***
97.5%	***98.9%***

FANTASTIC ATTENDANCE – WELL DONE!



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.

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 Castle. The children had the most incredible time and our pupils' behaviour was terrific! We are so proud of them. Please see the website and Year 2 page below for more details.

Throughout the school, we have been focusing on Bonfire Night, the history and of course we have had a lot of artwork and music on fireworks. I hope you all stayed safe yesterday and that you enjoy any celebrations you may be attending over the weekend.

We have also focused on Divali and please note in particular the Nursery section of the newsletter below where engagement has been a real joy. We wish all those in our school community who celebrate this beautiful festival a bright and happy Divali.

Next week is Well-Being Week; a really delightful programme has been organised by Miss O'Regan and Mrs Humphrey and, amongst a range of events, all children will participate in yoga sessions next week.

Years 1 and 2 will also have our pre-Christmas treat, a Sleeping Beauty pantomime, performed by a professional theatre company on Monday afternoon in school.

Absence Procedures: ***Please remember to call the school or send a message via Arbor first thing in the morning if your child will not be in school. This applies to Nursery***

and Infant children and should be done each day of a child's absence. We have a safeguarding duty to follow up on unexplained absence. Chasing up parents takes up a lot of staff time, so we would very much appreciate you leaving us a short message to keep us informed. Thank you.

School Day Start Time: *Classroom doors open at 8.45am and close at 8.55am for registration. If you arrive after 8.55am, please bring your child into school through the school office. Registers remain open until 9.00am. A child arriving after this time will be marked as 'late'. If your child is late on several occasions, your child's class teacher will arrange a meeting to discuss in the first instance. This will be followed up with a meeting with our Attendance Lead if no improvement is seen.*

We are here to help and support you to bring your child to school on time, so they can benefit from all the learning opportunities in the day. Please do speak to your child's class teacher if you are experiencing difficulties with this.



Value of the Month: *Our new value of the month is friendship.*

Non-Uniform Day for Children-in-Need: *This will be on Friday 13th November. Please note this change of date. The FROG tombola contribution day will take place instead on Friday November 27th. We thought it would be fun and a bit different to have this as a 'Crazy Hair Day' rather than a non-uniform day.*

Poppy Appeal: *Do please note that we are selling poppies and other memorabilia in the front office.*

Remembrance Day: *All children will take part in special assemblies and events appropriate to their age.*

Mrs Wyatt, mother of Bear in Penguin class and Rocky in Tawny Owls class, has very kindly offered to share information with our Year 2 classes about a real sweetheart brooch that she discovered in an antiques shop which was sent by a World War I veteran to his bride. Our Year 2 pupils are looking forward to this -thank you Mrs Wyatt for helping to bring this period alive for our children.

Mrs Scantlebury has been working on an absolutely beautiful display in the dining hall with our dear Breakfast Club children. We hope to be able to include a photograph of this next week.

FROG Events: *Our fabulous FROG team will be running a Christmas fete for our children on Thursday December 3rd from 3.15-4.15. They will also set up beautiful tables and serve our children their Christmas meals at our Christmas dinner on Wednesday 16th December. If anyone is interested in assisting at either of these fun and exciting events, or for more information please email gilesfrog@gmail.com.*

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.*

ROAD SAFETY: Be Bright Be Seen: *All classes are delivering a Be Bright Be Seen assembly for children this week – and we are delighted to announce that the campaign uses our very own Lollipop Lady! The children were so excited to see her in the resources and it has encouraged them all to make sure they wear something bright and visible now the weather is dark!*

Stay-and-Play / Stay-and-Read: *Today was the first Stay-and-Read session in our three Reception classes. We hope you enjoyed spending time with the children in their classrooms.*

Nursery sessions will be held every Thursday from 12th November, from 8.30am-9.20am. Please come and join your child to share a book or other activity.

Open Evening Thursday 26th November 5.00pm to 6.30 pm: *This is a lovely opportunity for you to come into school with your children and have a good look around not only your child's current class but also previous classes and 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 celebrate all the fantastic work on the walls and the fabulous learning environment.*

Prospective Parent Tours: *Applications are being accepted for Nursery places to start January/September 2027. Applications with Hertfordshire County Council for Reception places to start September 2027 open on 2nd November 2026 and close on 15th January 2027.*

If you missed the tours this week, please note the following dates:

Nursery tours by appointment only on Tuesday 10th November and Monday 7th December from 3.45 to 4.30

Reception tours by appointment only on: Monday 9th November, Wednesday 9th December and Wednesday 6th January – 3.45 to 4.30pm.

To book your tickets, call us on 01438 359747. www.gilesnurseryandinfants.co.uk

Phonics sounds: *we are so fortunate in our school that all our families are so keen to help the children read at home. We also know that phonics sounds can be a little confusing! On our website there are a couple of phonics videos that may help to clarify correct pronunciation and some of the terminology used. Please look here: The Giles Nursery and Infants' School - Phonics*

Kindest regards
Rouane Mendel
Headteacher

Nursery: ***This week in Nursery the children celebrated Diwali, a festival of light. They found out how Hindus and Sikhs around the world celebrate this festival with their families. They loved the book of the week, 'Lighting the Lamp' by Jonny Zucker, and were very interested in how families decorate their homes.***

In expressive arts and design, the children made collage diyas using a range of craft materials. They loved adding autumnal sequins to make their diyas sparkle in the light.

In maths, Miss Smith had drawn a wonderful large scale rangoli pattern and the children worked together in small groups using 2D and 3D shapes to decorate it. When decorating a section of the rangoli patterns with colourful pom-poms, Shubham said, 'It looks like a flower.'

In literacy the children enjoyed a mark-making sensory picture discovery activity using rice. The children had to choose a mark making pattern and use their finger to create it in the rice. This allowed them to discover which Diwali themed picture was hidden beneath.

Next week the children will focus on bears by listening to and participating with actions to the book of the week, 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt' by Michael Rosen. The children will act out the story in the Nursery garden by pretending to squelch through mud and stumble over twigs before entering the bear cave! In expressive arts and design, the children will use collage materials to create a bear's face and in mathematics the children will focus on subitising. This is knowing an amount without having to count. The children will be creating poppies to commemorate Remembrance Day on Wednesday, and these will be displayed in the Nursery window. The rhyme of the week will be 'Twinkle, twinkle little star' and the Makaton sign will be 'toilet'.

Next week will be the first Nursery Stay and Play session of the year from 8.30 to 9.15am. The theme is World Nursery Rhyme Week. Please come and join your child in some lovely activities linked to this event.

Stars of the week

Alice for settling into Nursery life so well.
Abigail for great participation during our Diwali activities.
Mannie-Lee for super counting at snack time.
Rosie for taking part in a wonderful mark-making sensory activity.

Reception: ***On Friday, the children in Reception celebrated Diwali, the Hindu festival of light. They listened to and watched different versions of the story of Rama and Sita and enjoyed participating in many activities linked to this festival. The children also had a go at bhangra dancing. 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 James in Tawny Owl class was making his biscuit house, he said, 'I stacked them up and used icing to stick them together. Here's my door!'***

This week the children began Phase 3 phonics. They will learn more phonemes and, in a few weeks, they will be introduced to the terms 'vowel digraphs' and 'trigraph'. A trigraph is three sounds snapped together to make one sound, for example 'igh' as in 'night'. The handwriting patter for this week is as follows:

j - start at the top, come all the way down and curve to the left. Lift and dot.
v - slope down, slope back up.
w - slope down, slope back up. Slope down again and slope back up.
x - slope. Lift and slope across.

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 these shapes to create their own artwork in the style of Kandinksy. When looking at artwork by Kandinsky, Emilija in Snowy Owl class said, 'He uses lots of circles and triangles!' and Lilly in Barn Owl class said, 'Making airplane!'

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.

On Thursday, the children discussed Firework Night and firework safety. They talked about different ways they can be safe with their grown-ups when watching fireworks and using sparklers at home. The children had fun making lots of firework artwork throughout the day.

Next week in literacy, the children will write a caption in a speech bubble linked to the big bad wolf. In mathematics, they will focus on one less linked to the song, 'Five little ducks went swimming one day' and in expressive arts and design, the children will use 2D shapes to create a wolf.

Now the colder weather is fast approaching we are encouraging the children to put their coats on by themselves. An easy way for a child to do this is to place the coat on the floor, get your child to stand behind the hood or collar of the coat, then 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.

Stars of the Week

Snowy Owls
Rome for creating a beautiful piece of art based on Kandinsky artwork.

Tawny Owls
Archie for making an amazing picture of a dinosaur using circles and triangles in the style of the artist, Wassily Kandinsky.

Barn Owls
Artina for your wonderful Kandinsky style 2D shape picture of a cat.

Year 1: *It has been a very beautiful autumnal week in school, and what better way to mark this season than by starting Forest School! The children had an absolutely marvellous time in our woodland. They learnt the rules for staying safe and had a wonderful time playing with friends. Reggie in Walker Bears was digging for 'diamonds' (flintstones), and several parents have commented to us how their children talked eagerly about the experience when they went home. Thank you for equipping your children so well with appropriate clothing and footwear. In other*

learning, the children have been talking about signs of autumn, looking for signs of autumn and exploring using descriptive language to describe the season. They have learnt about using finger spaces when writing to separate words. They made their own finger-spacer by decorating a lollipop stick. Then they practised using it to write a short caption with spaces between words. In phonics, the children practised reading and writing words with three-consonant strings, for example in the word 'strict', 'str' is a three-consonant string. In mathematics, the children have tackled addition problems. They have been helped to read a word problem and then to solve the calculation by turning it into a number sentence. In PE, the children started their new units of learning: yoga and fundamental skills. In yoga, the children concentrated really hard to keep their balance in a pose and to use their muscles to hold a pose. They learnt to move mindfully through the poses. The musical moment this week was Handel's 'Music for the Royal Fireworks'. In Reception last year the children appreciated the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's work 'Messiah'. The story of the week was 'Something Else' by Kathryn Cave. It is a lovely story about being inclusive and starts our new PSHCE topic of Celebrating Difference really well.

Next week the children will learn about the relationship between addition and subtraction and how they are inverse operations. They will be using part, part, whole models and cubes to practise this. If you would like to support your child at home, you could help them to practise the number bonds for numbers up to 10. You might like to download the free White Rose 1 Minute Maths app and play the 'Bonds to 10' challenge. Alternatively, your child could use their Numbots account. Their log-in details are inside their reading record. In English, the children will continue to write descriptive captions, remembering to leave spaces between words. It will be Nature and Nurture Week and the children will be studying the bulbs you have so kindly donated before planting them. They will also take part in a special yoga workshop on Tuesday, amongst other activities. The children will take part in a Remembrance day activity and the musical moment will be 'The Last Post'.

We hope you have a lovely weekend. Happy Diwali to all families celebrating.

Stars of the week:

Big Cat Class
Zohaan for fantastic jumping in PE.
Marley for writing a wonderful sentence about autumn.
Alora for trying your best with your learning.

Red Fox Class
Myles for super perseverance in writing your numbers.
Bear for fantastic independent writing.

Walker Bear Class
Ottilie for always doing your best learning.
Reggie for using your imagination in Forest School.

Year 2: *It has been a fantastic return to school for the Year 2 children after the half term break. Throughout the week, the children learnt about Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot and the reason we celebrate Bonfire Night. They looked at features of a non-fiction book and created their own version all about the Gunpowder Plot with a front cover, contents page, index and glossary. They were excellent 'fact finders', using an information text to answer some key questions about the plot. In art and design, the children learnt how to use shading to add detail to a drawing, before creating amazing sketches of Guy Fawkes. In mathematics, the children continued to learn about addition and subtraction. They learnt how to use number bonds to 10 to add and subtract across 10, e.g.: 7 + 5 = 7 + 3 + 2 = 10 + 2 = 12.*

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'. 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. Freya from Puffin class said, 'This is the best castle ever!' and Ariella said, 'If I was Queen of the castle, I would say play everyday!' Mia from Pelican class loved the whole day and Marissa loved seeing the animals. Calliope from Penguin class said she was nervous before she went but at the end she was very glad she did. 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.





Next week, the children will learn about the importance of Remembrance Day and the people it commemorates. In design and technology, the children will look at the features of a castle and in geography they will continue to learn about the countries of the United Kingdom. The children will also take part in Nature and Nurture Week to learn the importance of looking after the world around us as well as ourselves. We are looking forward to enjoying a yoga workshop on Friday. We are aware that Friday is a non-school uniform day, please may we request that children try to wear clothes suitable for yoga where possible. Thank you!

<u>Stars of the Week</u>
<u>Pelican Class</u>
Raffaele for a fantastic speaking and listening.
Ava for drawing an amazing sketch of Guy Fawkes.

<u>Penguin Class</u>
The whole of Penguin Class for a fantastic trip to Mountfitchet Castle.
Naomi for writing a fabulous factbook about Guy Fawkes.
Ellis for colouring a brilliant fireworks picture. Well done!

<u>Puffin Class</u>
Ayla for creating fantastic firework art in school.
Freddie for always trying your best in mathematics.

The Giles Nursery and Infants' School

Donate

your unwanted christmas jumpers to our



FROG

FRIENDS AND RELATIVES OF GILES

Until the 3rd December.
Drop off at reception.

The Giles Nursery and Infants' School

FROG
FRIENDS AND RELATIVES OF GILES

TEXTILE RECYCLING

Raise money for our school!



If you planning a sort out during half term,

save them for us!

DATE TO BE CONFIRMED

REDUCE WASTE | HELP THE PLANET | SUPPORT OUR SCHOOL | A GREENER FUTURE FOR OUR CHILDREN

Calling all Parents

Do you have a child with SEND?

FREE DROP IN SESSION



Come along to meet other parents, have a coffee/tea and hear about support and advice available in the SEND world

no booking or appointment needed

- Find out about local services
- Meet other families
- Advice and support

SERVICES ATTENDING:-

Herts MIND
Supporting Links
Step2Skills
Phoenix
Angels
ADDvance
Family Centre
Messy Minds
Tracks
Lending Space
Home Start
SET Family Support
Well Being Junction
Herts Parent Carer Involvement

DATES & VENUE:

24th November 2026
Lodge Farm School

23rd March 2027
Mossbury Primary School

15th June 2027
The Leys

Tel: 01438 233900 | Email: dspl2@peartreesprings.herts.ac.uk

Families First
Early help, brighter futures

DSPL2
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Inclusive Family Support

Hertfordshire

AUTUMN TERM		
MEETING	**DATE**	**TIME**
Nature and Nurture week	09/11/26 – 13/11/26	
Sleeping Beauty pantomime for Key Stage 1 children only	09/11/26	
Reception Tour - For Prospective New Families	Monday 09/11/26	3.45pm
Nursery Tour - For Prospective New Families	Tuesday 10/11/26	3.45pm
Nursery Stay and Play Starts	Thursday 12/11/26	8.30am
Non-Uniform Day for Children in Need	Friday 13/11/26	
School council assembly – school councillor families only	Wednesday 18/11/26	2.40pm
Kittle Individual Photo	Thursday 19/11/26	
Open Evening	Thursday 26/11/26	5.00pm- 6.30pm
Crazy Hair Day for FROG tombola contributions	Friday 27/11/26	
History of Toys Workshop Year 1	Friday 27/11/26	
Flu Vaccinations	Monday 30/11/26	
Year 2 Puffins Festive Journey	Tuesday 01/12/26	1.00pm-2.30pm
Barn Owls Christmas Concert	Tuesday 01/12/26	9.15am
Christmas Activities - FROG	Wednesday 02/12/26	3.15pm-4.15pm
Year 2 Pelicans Festive Journey	Wednesday 02/12/26	1.00pm-2.30pm
Snowy Owls Christmas Concert	Wednesday 02/12/26	9.15am
Year 2 Penguins Festive Journey	Thursday 03/12/26	9.30am-11.00am
Tawny Owls Christmas Concert	Thursday 03/12/26	9.15am
FROG Christmas Fete	Thursday 03/12/26	3.15pm – 4.15pm
Occasional Day – SCHOOL CLOSED	Friday 04/12/26	
Nursery Tour - For Prospective New Families	Monday 07/12/26	3.45pm
Rocksteady Concert – Invite Only	Wednesday 09/12/26	9.30am
Reception Tour - For Prospective New Families	Wednesday 09/12/26	3.45pm
Nursery Christmas Concert	Thursday 10/12/26	11.00am and 2.00pm
Year 2 Christmas Performance	Date to be confirmed	Time to be confirmed
Big Cats Christmas Performance	Tuesday 15/12/26	9.15am
Walker Bears Christmas Performance	Tuesday 15/12/26	10.30am
Red Foxes Christmas Performance	Tuesday 15/12/26	2.30pm
Orca Christmas Celebration	Tuesday 15/12/26	1.00pm
Christmas Dinner - FROG	Wednesday 16/12/26	
Christmas Parties	Thursday 17/12/26	PM
Nursery CLOSED AM- Party in the afternoon for ALL children	Thursday 17/12/26	12.30pm-3.30pm
LAST DAY OF TERM	Friday 18/12/26	Finish at 1pm

TERM DATES 2026-2027

Friday 4th December 2026 Occasional Day SCHOOL CLOSED

School finishes on Friday 18th December 2026 at 1.00pm

[Christmas Holidays: Monday 21st December 2026 – Friday 1st January 2027]

Monday 4th January 2027 – INSET Day SCHOOL CLOSED

Spring Term: Tuesday 5th January 2027 – Thursday 25th March 2027

Children return to school on Tuesday 5th January 2027

[Half term: Monday 15th February 2027 – Friday 19th February 2027]

School finishes on Thursday 25th March 2027 at 1.00pm

[Easter Holidays Friday 26th March 2027 – Friday 9th April 2027]

Summer Term: Monday 12th April 2027 – Thursday 22nd July 2027

Children return to school on Monday 12th April 2027

Monday 3rd May 2027 Bank Holiday SCHOOL CLOSED

Monday 31st May 2027 Bank Holiday SCHOOL CLOSED

[Half term: Monday 31st May 2027 – Friday 4th June 2027]

Monday 7th June 2027 INSET Day SCHOOL CLOSED

Children return to school on Tuesday 8th June 2027

Friday 2nd July 2027 INSET Day SCHOOL CLOSED

School finishes on Thursday 22nd July 2027 at 1.00pm

2026 / 27 School Calendar

September '26						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
24	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				

October '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	

November '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						

December '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			

January '27						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February '27						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
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22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March '27						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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29	30	31				

April '27						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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26	27	28	29	30		

May '27						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
					1	2
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

June '27						
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 '27						
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 '27						
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
- = 2025/26 Pupil Holidays
- = Bank and Public Holidays
- = 2026/27 Pupil Holidays
- = Inset Day - school closed to pupils
- = Occasional Day - school closed to pupils

Silver Eco-Schools Silver Award

Stevenage SFT Sporting Futures Team

Healthy Schools Hertfordshire Spring 2014

Hertfordshire Quality Standards 2016

Youth Sport Trust Bronze Quality Mark

Green Tree School Platinum Award