

Newsletter



Newsletter 3

October 2nd 2026

Assembly themes: Next week – Working together
Following week – We are all important/special

Dear Parents and Carers,

We enjoyed a fantastic service at St. Giles today with Christie – the children sang beautifully and presented their contributions flawlessly. The church looked incredible with the floral displays in full bloom– if you are passing, do drop in to admire them. Thank you very much for your support for our Harvest collection – it is greatly appreciated and will make a difference to people in our community. We will be taking all the items collected to the food bank next week, so if wish to donate something and haven't had time yet, please bring them in on Monday morning.



New Staff Opportunities

Due to the school expansion, we are in the fantastic position of being able to continue to recruit more staff to join various teams around the school. We are now increasing the lunchtime, breakfast and after-school club teams. The opportunities are very flexible, regarding days/times people can commit to, and could also lead to further career developments in the future. Most of our teaching assistants started in these roles and we have two teachers in the school who initially started working with us as lunchtime staff. Staff children attending wrap around care pay a significantly reduced rate, as it is likely they will still need childcare themselves.

If you would like to find out more, please contact the School Office who will be able to provide further details and the opportunity to talk the roles through.



Governors

After over 18 years as our Chair of Governors, Debbie Williamson has now stepped down from the role, although she will remain on the board as a Governor. Debbie has been extremely committed, hardworking and conscientious in the role, showing huge dedication. She has always placed the needs of the children at the heart of every decision and has been a source of wisdom, encouragement and support to all, helping the school to flourish.

We are delighted that Nick Black – longstanding member of the Governing Body, who has chaired the Finance Committee for several years, alongside stepping into a number of other committees as needed – will be the new Chair. There will be opportunities to meet Nick on the school playground and at some of the forthcoming events.

Nick will be ably supported by Su Murley – our very experienced Vice Chair – and Liane Dyson, who will be sharing the role with Su.

Please look out for information in a future Newsletter which will be coming out this half term, including the details and roles of all of our governors.



Screens!

Schools have recently been issued with guidance: 'The Best Start in Life for Children', which includes information around screens in schools and at home. As parents and carers may be aware, there is a lot of discussion regarding screen time in general. Our staff attended an Early Years update this week and were given the following message to share.

For under twos, the only use of screen advocated is for a shared activity such as video calls with family. For children aged two to 5, screen use should be an absolute maximum of an hour a day, but preferably less, or not at all. In school, we have removed technology, such as computers from Nursery and Reception, as they do not fit with the ethos and philosophy of an Early Years curriculum, where evidence shows that young children learn best through play, conversation, exploration and interaction with others.

In Years 1 and above, the Computing Curriculum is taught as a progression of skills, so that the children learn to use technology in a safe and purposeful way – for example, to write a simple program, make a PowerPoint presentation, create a website or use an excel spreadsheet to manage data.

For all year groups, the following guidance has been issued:

- Ensure children get plenty of physical activity, outdoor play, social interaction, reading and hobbies alongside screen use.
- Avoid screens for at least one hour before bedtime to support healthy sleep.
- Keep bedrooms screen-free overnight.
- Have regular screen-free times, such as during meals and family activities.
- Pay attention to the quality of content. Educational, creative and interactive use is generally preferable to passive scrolling or watching short-form videos for long periods.

If you have any questions regarding how to help children develop healthy and balanced screen habits, please do not hesitate to contact us and we can forward your message onto the person best able to help.



Heads' Conference

On Thursday 8th and Friday 9th October, I will be at the Hertfordshire Headteachers' Conference, so will not be in school. Mr Browne, Miss Grainger or Mrs Martin will be pleased to help you with any queries or concerns, as will your child's teacher. Alternatively, I will be pleased to speak to you on my return.



Parent Teacher Consultations

Details will be coming out soon, regarding the forthcoming Parent Teacher Consultations. These will be taking place on Tuesday 20th October (evening) and Wednesday 21st October (morning and after school). One appointment per child is available. I will be available during the afternoon and evening sessions – you can find me on the front desk in the School Office. If needed, appointments can be booked with our SENCO, Mrs Gloyne, at an alternative time, via the School Office.

If children need to come too, they should stay with you, bring something quiet to amuse themselves with and wait outside the classroom during the appointment. It is not possible for them to play in the hall as there will be books set out there. Meetings may not be recorded.

These meetings are an excellent opportunity for you to find out how your child has settled into their class, their successes and areas for further development. Should you have any queries or concerns, this is a good opportunity to discuss these, but we would always urge you to speak to your child's teacher as soon as these arise, rather than feeling you need to wait.



Cross Country

Last week we took part in the Stevenage Sporting Futures cross country running and broke all school records, with our most successful meet ever! There were over 100 runners in each race, so the children's results are particularly impressive! As well as the Year 6 girls and boys teams finishing in 3rd place – just a few points away from 1st, and the Year 5 girls and boys teams finishing 1st, we had a record number of top five finishers too! Leo (Y6), Jacob (Y5) and Elisa (Y5) came 1st in their races, with Selin (Y5) 3rd, Ruby (Year 5) 4th Harrison W (5) 4th and Ben (Y6) 3rd.

The children were a great team together – really encouraging and supporting each other and we celebrate the success of all of the other children who contributed to this result – Year 6: Oliver, Henry, Laurence, Bohdan, Libby, Erin, Scarlett and Julia. Year 5: Lochie, Henry, Hank, Harris, Annabelle, Jessica and Esme.



Golf

The children enjoyed a great morning at the Stevenage Sporting Futures Golf Festival, where they had the opportunity to develop their skills, coached by a pro, playing alongside teams from other schools. Henry, from Year 6, even got a hole in one – something which has never before been achieved at this event!

Mr Loughman and Mrs Brown were extremely proud of the children – their manners and positive attitudes were even commended by other staff there; they were unanimously chosen to receive an award for 'Treating others politely and with understanding and accepting life's ups and downs with grace'. Well done to all the children and thank you to the staff for their encouragement, positivity and care.



Football

We are also very proud of our Girls' Football Team who represented the school in the Stevenage Schools Football Tournament. They played extremely well as a team and were very strong in defence, holding their own in the games they played. As a few other schools had dropped out, they missed a couple of games, which was a shame, and narrowly missed out in progressing to the next stage of the competition due to a last-minute goal, from the last team played. Mr Browne was extremely impressed with their attitude, positivity and enthusiasm.



Lost Kits

Please can everyone search their cupboards if they may have any school kits at home. Unfortunately, due to kits not being returned, we do not now have any full kits for any of our sports teams – including the three football teams, netball team and maypole dancers. This week, the girls had to play in a combination of two different coloured kits.

Any items can be returned to the school office, no questions asked – we would just love to have them back!

Please remember that I am always happy to discuss any issues with you. Thank you for reading this newsletter.

Yours sincerely,

Liz Pollard
HEADTEACHER



St. Giles News



CODICOTE JAZZ CAROLS COLLECTIVE...

WHO/WHAT: Calling all musicians - young and old - whether you need to dust off your violin, or are raring and ready to go...St Giles would love you, and your family and friends to join us with your instruments to make a joyful noise to celebrate Jesus' birth at our Christingle service

WHEN/WHERE: Sunday 6th December (service at 4pm, with run-through at 2pm) @ St Giles Church

HOW: To give everyone a chance to practise, music is available NOW! To sign up (children super welcome but please come with a responsible adult on the day!)/if you have any questions, please drop Katie Wynne-Thomas a message on 07858221103...

PS. We are looking to get together a more **experienced "core" band** (particularly looking for some percussion/guitar, but all instruments welcome!!) to help lead the ensemble on the day - if you would be interested in this and would be available for an additional rehearsal or two to get in gear, would love to hear from you!



Cafe Church on 4th October will mark world Animal Day and the feast of St Francis, patron saint of animals. The cafe opens at 10am in the Peace Memorial Hall with delicious refreshments on offer and lots of fun linked to the theme. All are welcome.