

GILES JUNIOR SCHOOL

Telephone: 01438 353374 email: admin@gilesjm.herts.sch.uk Website: www.gilesjm.herts.sch.uk



"Excellence in Leadership"

Headteacher: Miss. L. Whitby

Wednesday, 09 September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are very much looking forward to welcoming the children back to school on **Thursday 3 September 2026**.

Six weeks can feel like a long time, particularly for families who are new to Giles Junior School, so we have included some useful reminders below. We have also provided updates on the improvements and changes that have taken place over the summer holidays.

School Improvements

Toilet upgrade

The much-needed refurbishment of the pupil toilets is now complete. We are delighted with the improvements and look forward to the children benefiting from this modernised space.

New school website

We have a new school website! As part of the transition, we will be reviewing each page to ensure that all the information is accurate and up to date. A number of staff will be involved in this process, so some updates may take a little time.

Please [click here](#) to take a look.

Arbor and the School Shop

Please note that Arbor information will not become visible for new Year 3 pupils until the first day of term. A range of items is available to purchase through the School Shop on Arbor, including good-quality pre-loved uniform, stationery and ready-made pencil cases.

The Arbor app can also be used to access:

- Attendance information
- Details of upcoming trips, including payments and permissions
- Breakfast and After School Club bookings (Smiles@Giles)
- Bookings for extra-curricular clubs
- The School Shop
- Additional tickets and donations for events such as discos and fundraisers



School Readiness

Last term, we asked families who are able to provide their child with a pencil case containing basic stationery to do so. Individual stationery items and ready-made pencil cases are also available through the School Shop on Arbor. Any items purchased will be given directly to your child.

Providing a pencil case is entirely voluntary. Pens, pencils and other essential equipment will always be available in school for any child who needs them.

School uniform

We would like to thank parents and carers for supporting the school by ensuring that children follow our uniform policy. While we will always consider reasonable adaptations where there is an identified need, in consultation with our SENCO where appropriate, we believe it is important that pupils take pride in belonging to Giles Junior School and feel proud to wear our school uniform and logo.

To support families, we sell good-quality donated uniform through the School Shop on Arbor. This is an affordable and environmentally friendly option, particularly for purchasing spare items.

Attendance

We continue to follow the national attendance requirements set by the Department for Education. Family holidays during term time cannot normally be authorised, as holidays and other leisure-related absences are not considered exceptional circumstances. We recognise that attendance procedures may not be applied consistently by every school; however, Giles Junior School follows the national framework. Our INSET days and term dates are published well in advance to help families plan holidays outside term time.

Under the national framework, Hertfordshire County Council may consider issuing a penalty notice where a child accumulates **10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks**. Ten sessions are equivalent to five school days. A four-day absence during a shortened school week would ordinarily amount to eight sessions and would not, by itself, meet the national threshold. However, any other unauthorised absence within the same rolling 10-week period may also be counted. All term-time holiday requests must still be submitted to the school in advance, and each request will be considered in accordance with the relevant statutory guidance.

Medication

All medication was sent home with children at the end of the last school year.

Medication must be **signed in through the school office**, with the appropriate form completed. It must be provided in its original packaging, with the dosage instructions and the child's name clearly visible. The school can administer prescribed medication where it is required during the school day. Short-term pain relief, such as Calpol, may also be administered where this has been agreed with the school and the appropriate consent form has been completed.

Please check that all medication—particularly **adrenaline auto-injectors and asthma inhalers**—is in date before bringing it into school.

A member of staff will be available at the office on the first morning of term to receive and sign in medication. All medicines must be handed directly to the school office and must not be given to class teachers or left in children's bags.

Communication

At Giles Junior School, we strive to be approachable and solutions-focused whenever concerns or queries are brought to our attention. To ensure matters are addressed promptly and effectively, it is important

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that parents contact the most appropriate member of staff. In most cases, this will be your child's class teacher.

We kindly ask that lengthy conversations are not held at drop-off or collection times. During these busy periods, teachers and teaching assistants need to focus on welcoming children into school or ensuring that they leave safely.

Instead, please contact the school office at admin@gilesjm.herts.sch.uk or by telephone. The office team will be happy to arrange a suitable time for a meeting or telephone call.

Parents will be aware that **Miss Khan, our Deputy Headteacher, has returned from maternity leave** and will not be working on Fridays. As **Mrs Masvimbo and Miss Ajazi are completing leadership qualifications**, they will provide additional leadership support on Fridays. Queries that cannot appropriately be resolved by the class teacher may be referred to one of these members of staff.

We are also fortunate to have **Mrs Smith, our Family Support Worker**, who offers a wealth of support to families. She is always happy to arrange a telephone call or meeting to explore how she may be able to help. This may include signposting families to relevant services, offering financial guidance, supporting mental health and wellbeing, or helping families access wider services to benefit their child.

New Staff

We are delighted to welcome two new members of staff:

- **Mrs Cela** will be joining Mrs Brown in the school office. She is looking forward to meeting our families and helping with queries.
- **Miss Begum** will be joining us as a class teaching assistant and will provide cover while Miss Francis is on maternity leave.
- **Mr Ryall** will be supporting Mr Glennon teaching PE.

We hope you have found this information helpful. We look forward to welcoming everyone back and to another happy and successful year at Giles Junior School.



Miss L Whitby
Headteacher