



St Giles School News

November 2024

Specialist School for Physical and Sensory

'Be the best you can be'

www.st-gilesschool.co.uk

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the end of a busy October, we wanted to take a moment to celebrate the incredible work, achievements, and community spirit that make St. Giles' School such a special place. Our students have been hard at work, and our staff have gone above and beyond to create engaging, inclusive learning experiences. We've seen so many smiles, bursts of pride, and wonderful moments of growth in October 2024, and we're thrilled to share them with you.

Celebrating WOW Events!

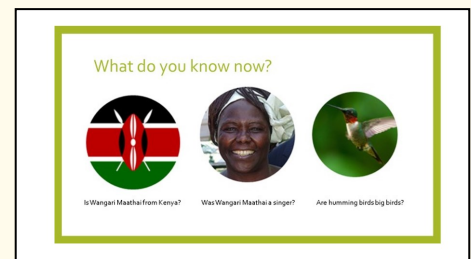
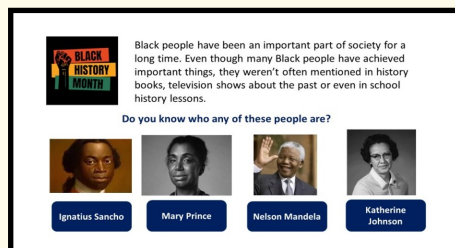
Classrooms/learning spaces have come alive with creative WOW events throughout the term! Teachers have been organising fantastic in-class activities that not only encourage interactive learning but also invite parents and carers to join in on the learning. These events have allowed you to see firsthand the wonderful learning experiences your children are enjoying. Whether it's sensory storytelling, interactive science experiments, or musical performances, your involvement has made these events even more special. Thank you to everyone who joined us and took part in supporting their child's learning journey—we hope to see even more of you at future WOW events!

Harvest Festival Assemblies

October has been a month filled with gratitude and giving. Our Harvest Festival assemblies were a beautiful reminder of the spirit of community. Students gathered to reflect on the importance of giving, and our school came together to support Purley Food Bank with donations of non-perishable items. We were overwhelmed by your generosity—thank you to each parent, carer, and family member who donated. Your kindness and support have made a tangible difference in our local community. The students loved the scarecrow of myself! If you have not seen this please see Mrs. McDougal about this!

Celebrating Black History Month

Our school has been excited to celebrate Black History Month, a time dedicated to recognising and appreciating the contributions of Black individuals to humanity. Through special lessons, stories, and activities, students have explored the impact and achievements of Black leaders, scientists, artists, and everyday heroes, while learning about the importance of respect and inclusion. This ties beautifully into our school value of *Respect*, which reminds us all to honour the contributions and backgrounds of each person. Thank you for your ongoing support in teaching and celebrating diversity, both at school and at home. Please see some of the work and learning below that your son/child experienced over the last month in lessons or assemblies.



Parent/Carer Survey and Parents' Evening

A big thank you to everyone who completed our parent/carers survey and attended our Parents' Evening on October 16th. Your feedback and engagement are invaluable, helping us create a supportive, enriching environment where every student can thrive. We are grateful for your insights and your partnership in making St. Giles' School the best it can be! Below are some of the comments that came from parents/carers evening survey (we know there were items to improve but here is a general flavour of the majority of comments!)

The school is fantastic...

Incredible community...

All excellent: my daughter make so much progress and the St Giles school is a great support.

Upcoming Events and Important Dates

As we look forward to November, we have some exciting dates coming up. Here's what to keep on your calendar:

- **Odd Socks Day – Tuesday 12th November 2024** All students are encouraged to wear odd socks in celebration of Anti-Bullying Week. This simple act helps us all celebrate individuality and kindness and links with our School value of Respect.
- **St. Giles' in Need Day – Friday 15th November 2024** In support of National Children in Need Day, students and staff can wear something spotty or pyjamas for a donation of £1.00 or more. All proceeds will go to *Friends of St. Giles' School* to support programs and resources for our students.
- **Non-Student Day – Friday 29th November 2024** Please note that Friday, 29th November 2024, will be a non-student day. This day is dedicated to staff training, so students will not be attending school.

Thank you once again for your continued support, participation, and positivity. Together, we are building a warm and inspiring school community where every student is celebrated for their unique contributions and growth.

With warmest regards,

Stephen Hehir

Headteacher, St. Giles' School

Swimming Department

My name is Lesley and I am the Swimming Instructor at St Giles. I first came to St Giles in 2001 as a temporary 1-1 support assistant in the classroom which I loved, and realised what a special place St Giles was. My Mum, Janet, had been the swimming teacher since the school had opened so I had spent a lot of my early life in water and qualified as a Swimming Teacher when my 2 children were young. Janet decided to reduce her days at work and I was asked to cover those days. Once she fully retired, I took over on a full-time basis. My job apart from teaching includes the upkeep and maintenance of the pool including chemical testing. We are extremely lucky to have the pool as a facility for all of our students and we have a very full timetable to try to maximise its use.



I could not manage day to day without the support of my team. Wendy has been a swimming assistant with both Janet and myself for many years and therefore has a vast experience of swimming at St Giles. Karan and Lisa make up the rest of the team and they do the changing and personal care for all students following all of our moving and handling guidelines on a daily basis.

Our aim during swimming lessons is one of three:

- 1 - to teach students to swim if they have the capability
- 2 - to offer a physio type session to those who need to be held in the water
- 3 - to offer a sensory session with our sensory lights and music into the pool

The benefit of water for our pupils is enormous and include some of the following:

Exercise - Stretches on muscles are easier in the water and are often tolerated better than on land. The water can help improve muscle tone, gross and fine motor skills, coordination and strength

Building confidence and independence - these are skills which can be learnt in the water and transferred out

Calm and relaxation - Many pupils find the water a calming influence-some relax so much they fall asleep! The water gives the freedom of movement for a whole body experience.

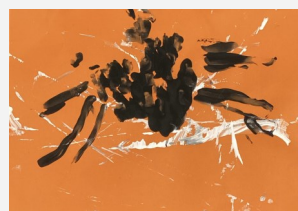
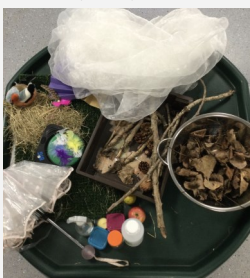
I feel very lucky and privileged to be able to give all of our pupils an experience in the water that they may not have the opportunity to do so otherwise. The benefits are huge and can be seen by the happy faces we see on a daily basis. Everyone can achieve something in the water whether it be large or small!

Indigo Class

In Indigo class we have been exploring Autumn and the changes we see in the weather and our environment. We explored an Autumn poem using natural materials, props and actions to bring it to life.

We have also been exploring Spooky Spiders in Indigo class. The students have participated in the interactive sensory story 'Aaaargghh Spider!'. We have also created some art pieces and even did some cooking related to this theme.

The students were fully immersed in the topic and have learnt to anticipate parts of the story by pressing the repeated phrase on a switch! In indigo class we approach all of our learning in a sensory way to ensure all the students can access and experience it in a way that works for them and their needs.



Here are the food donations we received for Harvest Festival. These were donated to a very grateful Purley food hub.



Attendance and Absences

Regular attendance is vital to your child's success at school. We aim to ensure that every child reaches their full potential, and attending school consistently plays a significant role in this. If your child is unwell or unable to attend school for any reason, it is crucial that you inform the school office by 8:00 AM on the day of the absence with the reason and date of return to school if you know this. You can do this by emailing and/or calling the school office on

absence@st-giles.croydon.sch.uk
/0208 680 2141

LOOKING AHEAD—Dates for the Diary November 2024

Fri 29th Nov—
Inset day (non school day for students)

December 2024

Fri 6th— Old Scholars

Wed 11th—
Christmas dinner

Fri 13th —
Christmas jumper day & class parties

Christmas holidays —
Mon 23rd
Dec—Fri 3rd
Jan