



# Parent Handbook

---

Created by the Friends of Gillespie, your Parents' Association  
BRINGING PARENTS TOGETHER

**Contents:**

Introduction to FOG

Getting Involved

Annual Events

Lines of Communication including Classlist

Easy Ways to help Fundraising

Other Useful Info

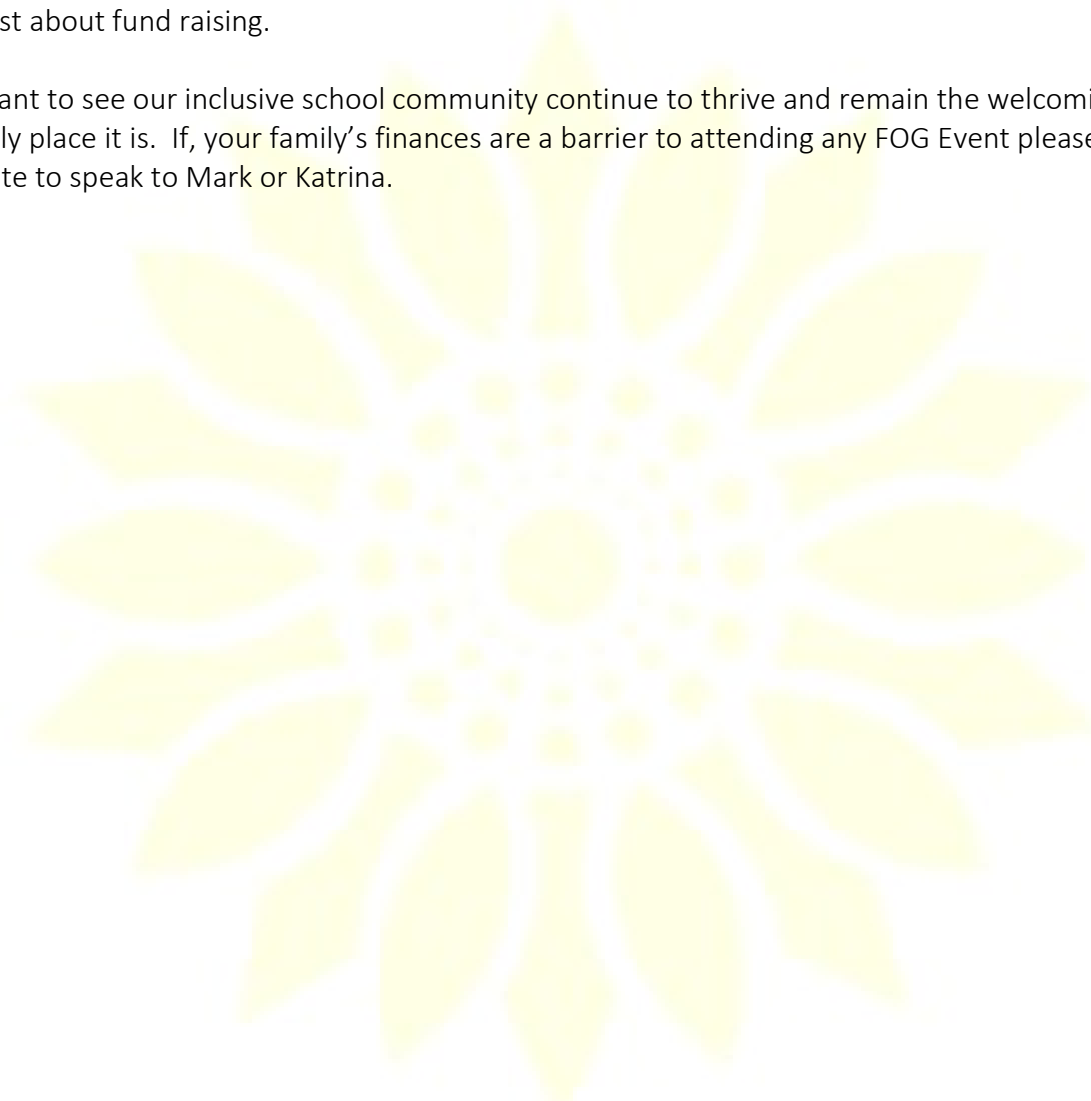
## Welcome to Gillespie Primary School!

Friends of Gillespie (FOG) is the Parents' Association at Gillespie Primary School and as your child is at the school you are automatically a part of it.

We developed this Parent Handbook to be informative and helpful. If you have any comments or corrections, suggestions about additional topics to cover please do let us know.

Over the years FOG has helped the school fund many trips and initiatives like Lab 13. But we are not just about fund raising.

We want to see our inclusive school community continue to thrive and remain the welcoming friendly place it is. If, your family's finances are a barrier to attending any FOG Event please don't hesitate to speak to Mark or Katrina.



ALL INFORMATION IN THIS HANDBOOK IS CORRECT AS AT THE TIME OF WRITING (ACADEMIC YEAR 2019).

Friend of Gillespie PTA (FOG) is a registered Charity in England and Wales number: 1113369

## Get Involved -*Big or small – it all helps*

Everyone involved in FOG including the committee is a volunteer so we always need help and we are hoping you will want to get involved. FOG would not work if we did not have parents willing to give up a little bit of their time to help us.

### Class Rep Role

Every class in the School has its own Class rep. They are an extremely valued and essential part of our school community. They act as a liason and extra line of communication between the teacher/school, FOG and parents/carers in your class.

Each class has responsibility for one after school bake sale a year, so your rep will help coordinate this.

Your class rep (or another delegated parent) will also coordinate collections and cards for end-of-term presents for teachers (Christmas and Summer).

From time to time, your Class rep will also circulate specific reminders, requests for help, requests for donations and similar, which they have been asked to circulate by FOG or the School.

### We need you!

Throughout the year there are events organised by FOG where we need help from the wider parent community.

Our key need is for the Halloween Disco, Winter Fair and Summer Fair - even half an hour of your time can be put to good use!



We'll usually put out an appeal for volunteers for a specific event, via our communication channels like Classlist. We have set up groups for different events we need help with on Classlist. Please join any event you can volunteer to help with.

If you have more time and would like become more involved by coordinating a whole event please just let the FOG Committee know. We are interested in hearing new suggestions and ideas and are keen to welcome new FOG Ambassadors - it's a great way to feel more involved in School life, and to make friends across year groups!

### **Please remember... FOG Committee members are all volunteers; and fellow parents!**

Everyone is busy with their own lives. They have kindly agreed to give up some of their time to volunteer for FOG. We hope that fellow parents will properly respect the voluntary nature of the role and understand that they will have many other priorities in their lives, in addition to being active in FOG.

ALL INFORMATION IN THIS HANDBOOK IS CORRECT AS AT THE TIME OF WRITING (ACADEMIC YEAR 2019).

Friend of Gillespie PTA (FOG) is a registered Charity in England and Wales number: 1113369

## Key Events to look out for

Throughout the school year the FOG committee and its army of helpers work hard to organise a mix of social **FUN**draisers. The emphasis is on the **FUN**. There are a mix of family and parent-only events. Look out for announcements throughout the year - we would love you to attend.



We want to see our inclusive school community continue to thrive and remain the welcoming friendly place it is. If, your family's finances are a barrier to attending any FOG Event please don't hesitate to speak to Mark or Katrina in confidence.

## Event Dates

Date	Event
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2019	Lunch to welcome new families to Gillespie
Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	FOG AGM and meeting – All welcome
Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	Year 5 & 6 Back to school Bake Sale
Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup> October	Halloween Disco
Thursday 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2019	Year 4 Spooky Halloween Bake Sale
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> December 2019	Winter Fair
Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> January 2020	FOG meeting – All welcome
Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> February 2020	Year 3 Valentines Bake Sale
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	Parent Only Social – Quiz Night
Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	Year 2 St Patrick's Bake Sale
Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2020	FOG meeting – All welcome
Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2020	Year 1 Bank Holiday Bake Sale
Saturday 4 <sup>th</sup> July 2020	Summer Fair
Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> July 2020	Reception Class End of Term Bake Sale
Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> July 2020	Parent Only Social – Bingo Night

## Costumes and Non-Uniform Days

There are several non-uniform days throughout the year which the school will inform you off. Here are some to be prepared for...



- Christmas Play – costumes may be required (Nursery, Reception, Y1 and Y2 watch the morning performance, the older years watch in the afternoon)
- Halloween Disco
- Class Assembly
- Children in Need – dress in stripes or spots
- Christmas Jumper Day
- World Book Day – dress up as literary character (no tv or comic book characters)
- Comic Relief
- Number Day – dress up in a onesie or in a top with a number on

ALL INFORMATION IN THIS HANDBOOK IS CORRECT AS AT THE TIME OF WRITING (ACADEMIC YEAR 2019).

Friend of Gillespie PTA (FOG) is a registered Charity in England and Wales number: 1113369

## Lines of Communication

There are many lines of communication at the school.



Please sign up at [www.Classlist.co.uk](http://www.Classlist.co.uk) and download the app. There is a verification process to ensure only parents/carers with children in the school can sign-up.

---



The school Calendar is available online

<http://www.gillespie.islington.sch.uk/news-events/calendar/>

---



Facebook Address: **FOGillespie**

\*\*Please note this is a closed group. This means only those who ask to join and are from Gillespie School can access. The general public cannot see any of the content.

---



Twitter Address: **@FOGillespie**

---



School newsletter

Look out for FOG news in the school newsletter that is sent out every 2 weeks. If you can't find the letter in the bottom of your child's school bag it can be found online on the school website. <http://www.gillespie.islington.sch.uk/news-events/newletters/>

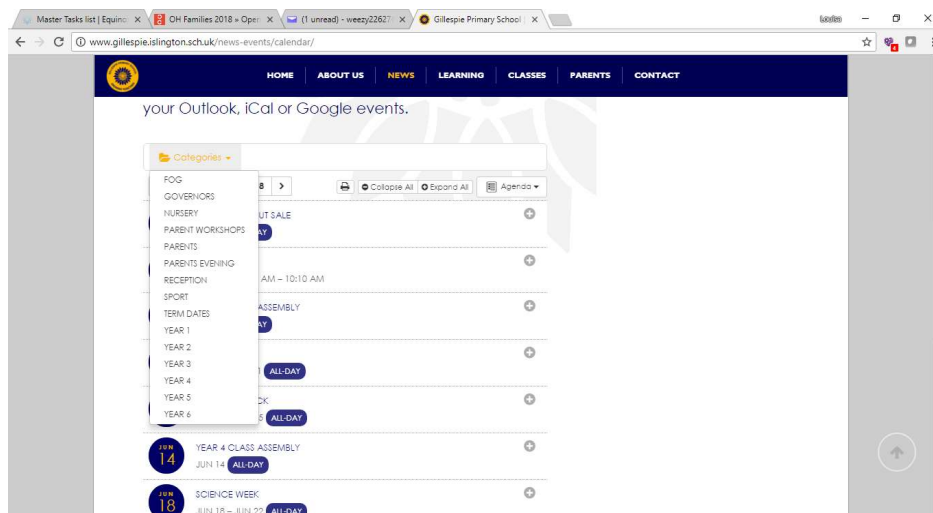
## The School Calendar

The School publishes a calendar online with key school dates and you can add this to your own online calendar.

If you subscribe to the School's calendar all term dates, inset days, FOG events and your year group's activities will automatically be added to your own online calendar. You can forget about manually adding term dates, trips, assemblies, sports days or school wide socials whenever the newsletters comes around, with this you'll have everything that matters for the whole school year in just one go.

### How to add the School Calendar to yours:

1. Go to the Gillespie School calendar page here <http://www.gillespie.islington.sch.uk/news-events/calendar/>
2. You can either add all calendar events or you can select those relevant to you. If you want everything then proceed to step 3, if you want to be more selective then pick the **Categories** you want. For example, you may want term dates, FOG, parents, parents evening, sports, and relevant year group:



3. Click the **Subscribe** button at the bottom right of the calendar section
4. Select the type of calendar you have:
  1. If you're on your phone, it's probably either Apple or Google (for Android phones)
  2. If you're on a computer then it depends what you use: Outlook for Windows, Apple for Macbooks, or Google if you use Gmail and Google Calendar
5. The link will open the Calendar app / page - follow the instructions from there

Bonus: If there are any changes to the school calendar the changes will automatically sync with your calendar!

ALL INFORMATION IN THIS HANDBOOK IS CORRECT AS AT THE TIME OF WRITING (ACADEMIC YEAR 2019).

Friend of Gillespie PTA (FOG) is a registered Charity in England and Wales number: 1113369

## Classlist - parent to parent communication system

We realise that for many parents it can be difficult to stay in touch with what is happening at school let alone engage with other parents in your class.



The Families at Gillespie Primary use an online system called Classlist to connect families and keep them informed. This is not a system just for FOG. It is for the whole school community. All parents and carers can sign up and keep in touch with their class group as well as school events. Plus, it complies with the new data protection laws.

We hope this will help stop those problems like lost letters and invites at the bottom of school bags.

### How to sign up to Classlist?



You can also register via the Classlist website at [www.classlist.com](http://www.classlist.com) - just search for “Gillespie Primary School”. There is a verification process to ensure only parents/carers with children in the school can sign-up.



If you have more than one child at the School, you should register each child against their appropriate year/class within the Classlist system. If you have already registered one child, then have another of your children join the School subsequently, you just add that next child via “My Profile” on Classlist - there is no need to register again for the next child.



There is a Classlist app available for your smartphone, for both IOS and Android systems. We recommend downloading the app to your smartphone, to get the most out of the Classlist system.



Classlist operates on an “opt in” basis, so that only those details that you are happy to be shared with other parents in your year group are available to others. You can manage what information you share via your profile page on Classlist.



If you need any additional help feel free to ask your Class Rep.

ALL INFORMATION IN THIS HANDBOOK IS CORRECT AS AT THE TIME OF WRITING (ACADEMIC YEAR 2019).

Friend of Gillespie PTA (FOG) is a registered Charity in England and Wales number: 1113369

## Other cool features in Classlist

### *Private messaging*

You can communicate with any parent in any year group directly via the “private message” feature - this operates like the Facebook Messenger function, with conversations happening within the app, so no private contact information is visible. You can send private messages to just one parent, or to multiple parents on the same message. can be used to arrange play dates and parties which can be tricky as not every parent can be at the school gate

### *Events*

Classlist has an “Events” feature, which you can use to send out invites to a birthday party.

### *Marketplace*

The marketplace feature is a bit like a small ads column. You shouldn't advertise your business or other commercial venture via marketplace, but you can advertise eg if you've had a bit of a clear out and have stuff to sell on. There is also a “lost and found” category in marketplace. Please use only the Marketplace feature and not e.g. general posts for these purposes. Any posts in there get collated by Classlist into an email that is sent to parents once a week.

### *Parent Map*

This is a standalone opt in feature. If you opt in, your name and address are visible to other users on a map, with pins showing roughly where you live (the system is pretty accurate but not 100%). This can help if eg you are looking for people to share the school run with. (There may still be other parents near you, as not all parents choose to opt in to this feature.)



## Guidelines for using Classlist, Facebook and Twitter

Please make sure to read our **Privacy and Social Media Policy** before posting on any of our two-way communication channels (Classlist, Facebook, Twitter). We hope this goes without saying but don't share contact information without specific consent, and please "play nice" - if you wouldn't like it said about you or your child, please don't say it about someone else!

### What is this policy and why do we need it?

This policy covers activity on FOGs two-way communication channels including Classlist, Facebook and Twitter. We use these as a means of sharing information about FOG and School activities and events and to encourage the school community to become involved in the life of the school. The policy exists to ensure that our social media output is as good as it can be, and doesn't do anyone any harm.

### Who can post to social media?

Our social media site is managed by FOG appointed administrators and will post all updates. Members of the broader community are able to react to the information and post messages and comments.

### How is this monitored?

The social media output of the PTA is monitored and moderated by the administrators. FOG reserves the right to delete that does not adhere to our policy (see below).

**What is inappropriate content?** Inappropriate content is defined as, but not restricted to, the following:

- Criticism of school policy, practices, staff or other individuals connected with the school (directly or implicitly)
- Obscenity, nudity, defamation or hate
- Comments/posts that threaten to harm individuals, groups or organizations
- Endorsement or encouragement of illegal activities
- Multiple off-topic posts or repetitive posts that are copied and pasted
- Personal information including but not limited to e-mail addresses, telephone numbers, mailing addresses.

### What are the consequences for breaching this policy?

We do monitor posts and will delete any we think are not suitable, but we can't be on the system 24/7. If you do see a post that you feel shouldn't be up and/or that breaches our guidelines, please let one of the FOG ambassadors know. In extreme circumstance we will block your access to our two-way communication lines and inform the school.

## Easy Online Fundraising

---

**Amazon Smile** - <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/>



Amazon donates 0.5% of the net purchase price (excluding VAT, returns and shipping fees) of eligible purchases to the charitable organisation of your choice. It is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service.

Friends of Gillespie are registered with AmazonSmile. If you are an Amazon supporter, support us by using [smile.amazon.co.uk](https://smile.amazon.co.uk) instead.

---

## The Giving Machine – the free way to raise money



If you are an online shopper you can help easily help us raise money for FOG. We're not asking you to bake or make. We are just asking you to click.

just asking you to click.

Anytime you purchase something online - insurance, holidays, Christmas presents, anything really - just go through The Giving Machine online portal or the **Shop & Give** app to your website of choice and you could be raising free cash for FOG and ensuring we can continue to fund school trips and more.

It is all totally free, your shopping doesn't cost any more than normal, it is money for nothing for FOG!

All you need to do is sign up [www.thegivingmachine.co.uk](http://www.thegivingmachine.co.uk) using sign up code: **143920** then every time you shop go through **The Giving Machine website** or the **Shop & Give** app before you shop and they will donate money to **Friends of Gillespie**. They even have a widget.

---

## Direct Donations via wonderful.org

We must stress there is absolutely no obligation or pressure from FOG or the school to donate any money ever but we are often approached by some families who would like to give on a more regular basis, separately from our regular fundraising events.



All donations will be completely confidential, only the FOG Treasurer will have access to this information and is bound not to divulge the details of anyone whom makes a donation.

If you would like to do this you can set this up very easily either as a one-off or a regular donation via <https://www.wonderful.org/>

---

ALL INFORMATION IN THIS HANDBOOK IS CORRECT AS AT THE TIME OF WRITING (ACADEMIC YEAR 2019).

Friend of Gillespie PTA (FOG) is a registered Charity in England and Wales number: 1113369

---

## Company Matching

Many companies will match charity donations made by their employees. So, if you think your company does this it is worth asking them the question. A parent who works at Barclays got us £1000 in charity matching!



---

## Estate Agent Board

Occasionally we will secure sponsorship from a local Estate Agent who will donate a certain amount of money to FOG for each board they can put up outside your house.

This is an easy hassle-free way to raise money for the school. Each board earns about £40 for the school/FOG and the home owner doesn't have to do anything. Even if you rent or live in flats often you can just ask the landlord or other tenants if it is ok. Neighbours and friends can also have them if you they would be willing. The Estate Agent will do all the work. They will put the board up and take it down the boards which will be up for 5 weeks.



If you are willing to have an Estate Agents board outside you house advertising our Winter and/or Summer Fair please let your Class Rep or school office.

## Other Useful Info



- Lost and Found** If you think your child has lost something please ask them to have a really good look before you assuming it actually is as could be in their tray.  
If it is lost please ask the School (office, class teacher or TA) to check lost property for you. You can also use the 'Marketplace' feature in Classlist and post under the 'Lost & Found' category.
- Naming uniform** Please try and name all your child's uniform and belongings coming into school. We recommend sticky name labels or a Sharpie permanent marker to name trickier items such as shoes, bags & water bottles.  
  
An easy way to name clothes can be a rubber stamp.  
FOG will receive some funding if you purchase one from Stampastic ([www.stampastic.co.uk](http://www.stampastic.co.uk)) using this Code: **N51LH**
- Second hand uniform** Dates for second hand uniform sales will be publicised in advance via the newsletter and Classlist. If you have any uniform you no longer need, we'd be grateful for the donation - please leave your donation at the office.  
  
If we get any uniform donations that we don't think are resaleable, we will donate these items to a suitable charity or otherwise dispose of them appropriately and responsibly.
- Parent Consultation** These usually happen twice a year and the dates for these will be set out in the School calendar, and you will be sent information by the School about how to book a time slot with your teacher. The process can vary depending upon the year group.  
  
Note that your child should not come with you for the parent/teacher consultation meeting.
- Safe Guarding – Signing-in/Signing-out** If you need to be on School Premise for any reason other than at pick-up and drop-off, you must sign in via the office. When you leave, you should sign out. This is for pupil safeguarding reasons.

ALL INFORMATION IN THIS HANDBOOK IS CORRECT AS AT THE TIME OF WRITING (ACADEMIC YEAR 2019).

Friend of Gillespie PTA (FOG) is a registered Charity in England and Wales number: 1113369