



Friday 19th December 2025

Newsletter 496

www.gillespie.islington.sch.uk



Dear Parents/Carers,

A huge thank you!

A huge thank you to all of our staff, governors and parents on the PTA and Foundation whose enormous efforts have made the first term of this year better than I could have hoped for. Everything you do has given our children the best possible start to this year and we look forward to the spring term with hope and optimism. We wish all of our community a joyful holiday and a happy new year!

Autumn term roundup

Well done to all the children for their fantastic effort during the shows on Tuesday. Twice performing 'The Muppet Christmas Carol', delighting audiences with their confidence, enthusiasm and hard work. We are incredibly proud! A special thank you to our music maestro, Orlando, for his expert direction and support in bringing the performances together.



Fatma and her wonderful Caterlink team cooked up a truly festive Christmas feast today, serving up turkey with all the trimmings, followed by no fewer than four marvellous dessert options of fruit cake, chocolate yule log with custard, jelly & ice cream or fresh fruit!

The hall was filled with Christmas cheer and seasonal spirit, beautifully enhanced by the generous decorations provided by the fantastic FoG team – thank you!

Despite the rain outside, the afternoon was full of song, laughter and festive cheer, making it a thoroughly joyful celebration for all; rounded off with a visit from the main man himself, all the way from the North Pole!



Update from your Resident Scientist

Key Stage 2 STEM Club pupils persevered to make brush bots and enjoyed looking at plant and insect parts through microscopes. I was delighted to welcome parents to the last STEM Club session to join in. **STEM Committee** put together some lovely goody bag prizes for the winners of the Black STEM Person/Scientist poster competition. STEM Committee pupils enjoyed making light up circuit festive cards. **Eco-Committee** made sustainable festive decorations using oranges and spices. They planted broad bean seeds and raised the seedlings in Lab_13. They have now planted these in some tubs in the Key Stage 2 playground and have supported them with bamboo sticks. Fingers crossed; they will survive any cold weather over the break. In November, some of our Year 5 and 6 pupils led, and participated in, activities at a **Climate Change Event** run by myself. Noorin Khamisani, a Gillespie parent, and Sustainable Fashion Designer and Academic and Oliver Knight, co-founder of a clean energy startup, inspired our pupils and pupils from five other Science for Life schools. Pupils really enjoyed the chance to ask them questions and were very interested to hear the answers. I look forward to beginning STEM Club with Key Stage 1 pupils in January and I wish everyone a safe and happy break. Meg, Resident Scientist and Lead of Science for Life



Attendance Matters

Attendance Cup Winner
Autumn term 2025

Year 5!

Well done to Year 5 for being our Autumn term cup winners. We hope you enjoy spending your class voucher.



Important dates	
Monday 5th January	INSET Day (school closed)
Tuesday 6th January	First day of spring term for pupils
Friday 6th February	NSPCC Number Day
WKBG 9th February	Children's Mental Health Week
Tuesday 10th February	Safer Internet Day
Wednesday 11th February	Class photos (full school uniform)
WKBG 16th February	Half term

We look forward to seeing you all back on Tuesday 6th January.

Yours sincerely,
Mark Owen,
Headteacher



Merry Christmas

AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

from Mark and team at Gillespie



Gillespie Carol Singing - The best year yet!



What an amazing evening! With carol singers, children, candles, buckets, Santa Claus and even a festive Unicorn (!) we were able to deliver yet another fantastic experience for the Gillespie Community. Passing fans were so generous and supportive (we even bumped into one of the governors who was responsible for recruiting Mark as the Headteacher!) that we are delighted to share with you that this year's efforts raised a whopping **£1,600** for the school! Just incredible!

A special thanks to Anna Payne for her tireless organisation and singing, as well as all of you donation collectors and Carol Singers - you guys can really hit some notes!



Wonderful Winter Fair 2025 - Well done everyone!!!

Tuesday was choc-a-block with festive fun, with the children performing an amazing winter show (special shout to Orlando for the production and extra special set design) and the everyone rolling straight into the annual Gillespie Winter Fair. With new stalls including cupcake decorations, the snowball game, guess the keys in the jar and the Pokemon Challenge, we were really able to step things up and give everyone a warm wintery feeling as we approach the holiday break.

A massive thank you has to go out as usual to all of our class reps and volunteers for making the fair a success, and all you donors, supporters and spenders on the day - every offering allows us to go from strength to strength in our support for the school. Not forgetting the fantastic FoG Events team, and especially **Jacqui Barrett** for her herculean efforts arranging the Parent Pledge Auction. Numbers are still being finalised, but initial takings suggest that **we have managed to raise close to £4,700!!!** What an amazing way to end 2025, and here's to more successes and achievements in 2026!

Ways to Support Friends of Gillespie and the school community

1. **Financial donations:** A monthly direct debit donation of any amount you choose can be set up [here](#) in less than 5 mins, or you can use this QR code to access the site.
2. **Item donations:** Speak to your class rep about delivering the items, or simply drop them in the front office for a FoG member to come and collect them. Easy!
3. **Time donations:** If you would like to help out in this way then please do get in touch with your class rep or a FoG Committee member - we will certainly have something for you to do!

