



Friday 13th February 2026

Newsletter 502

www.gillespie.islington.sch.uk



Dear Parents/Carers,

Children's Mental Health Week Stop, Understand and Consider

Today's whole school assembly was a sea of green and yellow to celebrate children's mental health week!

Safer internet day

It was Safer Internet Day on Tuesday this week. This year's theme was 'Smart tech, safe choices – Exploring the safe and responsible use of AI'. We had a whole school assembly on this on Monday and then classes completed online safety activities during the week. Some classes took part in a live lesson along with other schools across the country. They explored the careful decisions behind responsible AI design, from selecting reliable, accurate and unbiased training data to writing system prompts that prevent 'bad' AI behaviour. They worked together to program an actual AI chatbot which can simulate a conversation with a critically endangered Hooded Vulture. 'Digiduck' stories helped our younger children learn about online safety. You can use these with your child at home too: <https://www.childnet.com/resources/digiduck-stories/>



Of course, keeping our children safe online is something we focus on throughout the year. We follow a '2BeSafe' scheme which meets the guidance set out within the Department for Education's 'Education for a Connected World'. Throughout their time at Gillespie your child will focus on eight key areas to equip them for digital life and the digital world:

- Self-Image and Identity
- Online Relationships
- Online Reputation
- Online Bullying
- Health, Wellbeing and Lifestyle
- privacy and security
- Managing Online Information
- Copyright and Ownership

[Parenting in a digital world booklet](#)

We were also treated to the School band's rendition of Surfing the USA.



Year 2 Learning

Y2 had a wonderful opportunity to perform a dance at Sadler's Wells at their Primary Associate Dance show. They had their own dressing room, a backstage tour to learn about the history of the theatre and then performed their dance to other schools.



Nursery learning

We've had a busy half term in the Nursery rounding off with making Valentine's Day biscuits and reading in our new and improved cosy reading corner thanks to FoG's donations!



Attendance

Class	Attendance WB 09/02/26
Reception	92.33%
Year 1	95.67%
Year 2	94.33%
Year 3	99.67%
Year 4	88%
Year 5	99.33%
Year 6	91.33%
Total	94.38%



Attendance Cup
Winner
WB 09/02/2026

Year 3!

Important dates

WKBG 16th February	Half term
Tuesday 17th February	Chinese New Year and Ramadan begins
Thursday 5th March	World Book Day
Friday 27th March	End of term (school closes 1pm)

Gillespie children and smartphones survey 2026

We would love to hear your views on children and smartphones. Year 3 parents Mary and Victoria are carrying out a survey on this topic, following our 2024 survey and panel event. We aim to develop a conversation for Gillespie families to support one another in navigating this complex issue. The survey will take just 5 minutes to complete.

Please [share your views here by 28 February](#). Thank you!

Wishing families a restful half term break.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Owen,
Headteacher

YEAR 4

Night Lights

We spent a week planning, making and evaluating our very own nightlights.



We had to carefully consider which materials would be best suited for the light.

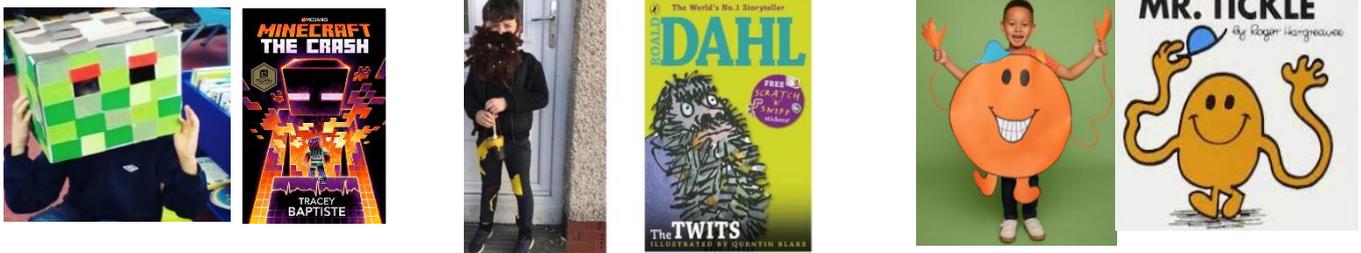
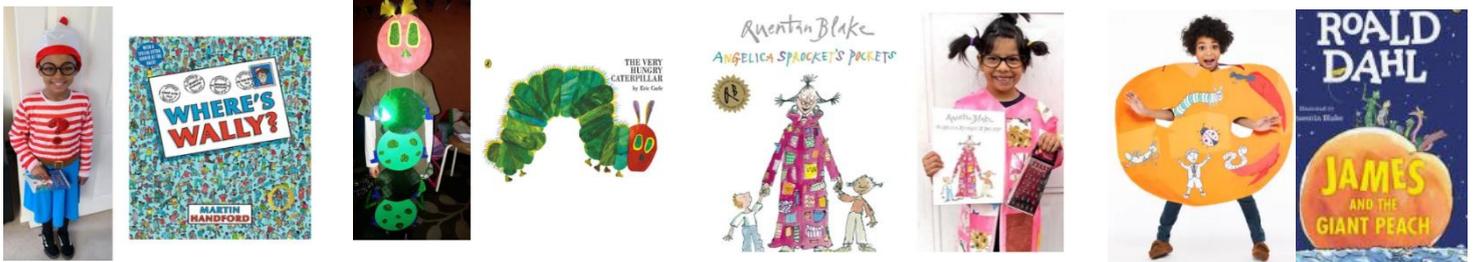
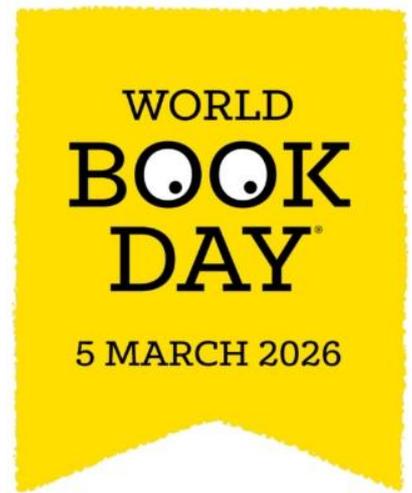
We used our knowledge of electrical circuits to ensure the bulbs would work!

We even included a switch so the light can turn off and on!



World Book Day

It's time for this year's World Book Day. On Thursday 5th March, we would like all children and staff to come to school dressed as either their favourite book character or author. Please don't feel you need to buy any brand new costumes. There are often many things lying around the house that you can use to make a costume and charity shops can have bits that you could use to make part or all of the costume. Here's some ideas of homemade costumes.



This year, many classes will be visiting Waterstones in Angel during the week beginning 9th March to pick up the pre-ordered World Book Day books in exchange for the £1 book token. If your child's class doesn't visit Waterstones, they will still receive their chosen book. Your child will bring home this book the day they visit Waterstones. This is theirs to keep forever; they do not need to bring them back into school.

