



SUMMER NEWSLETTER



Thursday 16th July 2026

Newsletter 517

Dear Parents/Carers,

Thank you, thank you, thank you!

I want to thank all parents especially those involved in the FoG events and FoG foundation committees for the incredible fundraising over this last school year that has helped sustain and strengthen our school. In particular I cannot stress what an impact the funding of two additional teaching assistants this year has had on supporting interventions with pupils across the school from Nursery through to key stage 2. I very much hope that we are able to sustain this level of fundraising so that we can continue to employ the two additional TA's in the next academic year. As parents know, your funding supports so many areas including our additional strings teacher, forest school and increased resources that class teachers can use to support their classes. We cannot tell you how appreciative we are!

I am also delighted by the response initiated by our Gillespie parents to the recent heatwave in raising funds to quickly purchase fans for all classrooms and to start building a reserve of money so we can plan how better this school can be resilient in times of great heat in the coming years.

I also want to thank all of our parent volunteers who roll up their sleeves to support the school in a number of different ways. In particular I want to thank Sean for his continued leadership of the FoG events team and Amelie who has continued to run our library so successfully this year and organises our used uniform stall with such efficiency and imagination. We want to thank all our reading volunteers, library volunteers and parent volunteers who support us on trips. Thank you to green fingered parent volunteer Vincent who has been supporting gardening in conjunction with Megan and the green team and keeping the garden watered in this incredibly dry summer.

I'm very proud of our Gillespie governors, many of whom are Gillespie parents who have done a brilliant job in supporting and challenging the school this year.

I want to thank all of our wonderful Gillespie staff who have made such a difference yet again this year. I am delighted that all of our teachers will remain at the school another year at least- they are such professionals and committed to the school. All of our support staff including teaching assistants, our fantastic office staff and our premises manager, catering and cleaning staff all work very hard to ensure that we remain a vibrant and unique school in Islington.

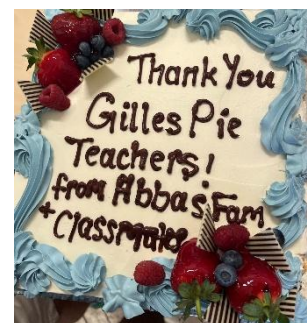


This has been a very successful year at this school. Looking forward I'm particularly pleased that we will be able to offer all year-round provision for nursery and reception children fully from September 2026. I am looking forward to the coming year! I wish all of our parents, carers, children, staff and governors a wonderful summer. School begins back for children in Years 1-6 on Thursday 3rd September.

Congratulations and farewell year 6

Last week year 6 performed an amazing version of Bugsy Malone full of wonderful dance and song routines, brilliant individual and ensemble acting. The show was enjoyed by everybody and was a lovely way to show how together our year 6 class are after their long journey at Gillespie School. We are very proud of this dynamic and diverse class of children who have brought so much to our school over the years. We will miss them all but know that they are well prepared for their next adventures both in education and life and wish them the best of luck!

I am very proud of the hard work of our Year 6 class and of all the staff who have worked with them. This year, Class Teacher Shelley and TA Mariam have supported the pupils very effectively! We are very proud that our end of year 6 national test results are well above the national average and demonstrate the impact our school has supporting our children's learning and achievement.



	Gillespie percentage	National average
Reading	97%	75%
Writing (teacher assessment)	86%	73%
Maths	97%	75%
Grammar, Punctuation and spelling (GPS)	100%	74%
Science (teacher assessment)	97%	82%

Farewell Jas- gymnastics coach

Farewell to Jas our marvellous gymnastics teacher who has been teaching gymnastics to children across the school for the last 5 years through our partner Calypso. In this year we saw the fruits of her brilliant work with the children when many year groups won the Islington gymnastics competition outright, an incredible feat for a one form entry school. Jas is moving on to pastures new, setting up her own dance company. We wish her well.

Survey based on Ofsted questions – results

Thank you to the families who completed our survey recently. This gives us really important feedback as we look to improve the school. We are happy to report that the great majority of respondents, usually over 90%, agreed or strongly agreed with questions about how well the school does, how their child feels at school and how issues are dealt with. Those related to bullying and children with SEND also received a positive response. We will feedback this information back to staff and governors and use it to inform our professional development moving forward.

Meet the Teacher events

We hope to see you all in the first full week of term at the meet the teacher events. These are an opportunity for you to meet your child's class teacher, hear about the year ahead and ask any questions you may have. These will take place in your child's classroom.

	3:40-4:10pm	4:30-5:00pm
Tuesday 8 th September	Year 1	Year 2
Wednesday 9 th September	Year 3	Year 4
Thursday 10 th September	Year 5	Year 6

Waving on stairs – notice for families for September

In recent years many children and families have engaged in a ritual of waving to children on the stairs and at various windows. We have found this routine can often make drop off more challenging for some children. Our advice to families right from Nursery/Reception onwards is that a quick, simple and fast parting is the best way to support children in getting used to the drop off routine to school. We know that many families including those of older children do wave at the window and it is not a problem, however we ask you to consider our advice to help children who do find it difficult in separating. Thank you.

Congratulations and thank you, Stanley!

TGJones ran a nationwide competition for UK primary school children and primary schools, in partnership with National Literacy Trust called Bitesize Bookworms, with a prize value of over £17,000. They asked primary school children across the country what they love about their favourite book and to tell them in 25 words or less. Competition entries were split across three primary school age groups, with one winner and three runners-up from each group.

We're delighted to be informed that Stanley from Year 4, is a TGJones Bitesize Bookworms winner, and has won a school prize bundle of books and stationery worth £4,000 for our school.

They said "we really enjoyed Stanley's humorous review of The BFG by Roald Dahl: "the bfg is the most whizzpopping, funbuntious book. the bfg is funtastic. i like his silly langwitch. i also like sophie, she seems really nice."

Well done Stanley and thank you for winning this incredible prize for our school.



Summer STEM Committee Event

Congratulations to all the pupils in the STEM Committee who led a fabulous selection of STEM activities in the playground on Tuesday afternoon. After planning and trialling the activities in committee meetings, they agreed on the most appropriate ones for the day. They demonstrated excellent leadership skills and worked really well together to challenge members of the school community to do the following: make a balloon car; make a lime take a high dive; shoot projectiles into tubs with a catapult; make music with water in glass jars; make paper aeroplanes and investigate acids and alkalis using purple cabbage water. Thank you to everyone who came along in the heat. The STEM Committee made me very proud. Meg Scientist in Residence.



Ready Set Stage After School Clubs– Things to Look Forward to Next Term!

www.readysetstage.co.uk

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we head into the summer holidays, we wanted to share a few exciting things to look forward to when we return next term!

Performing Arts & Singing Club

Next term, we'll be working towards our very first original mini musical, *Drizzles and Bumbles and the Present Puzzler*. We can't wait to bring this exciting story to life with our students. Please see the attached poster for a first look!

Chess Club

Our Chess Club will be introducing end-of-term tournaments, giving students the opportunity to put their skills to the test in a fun and friendly competition.

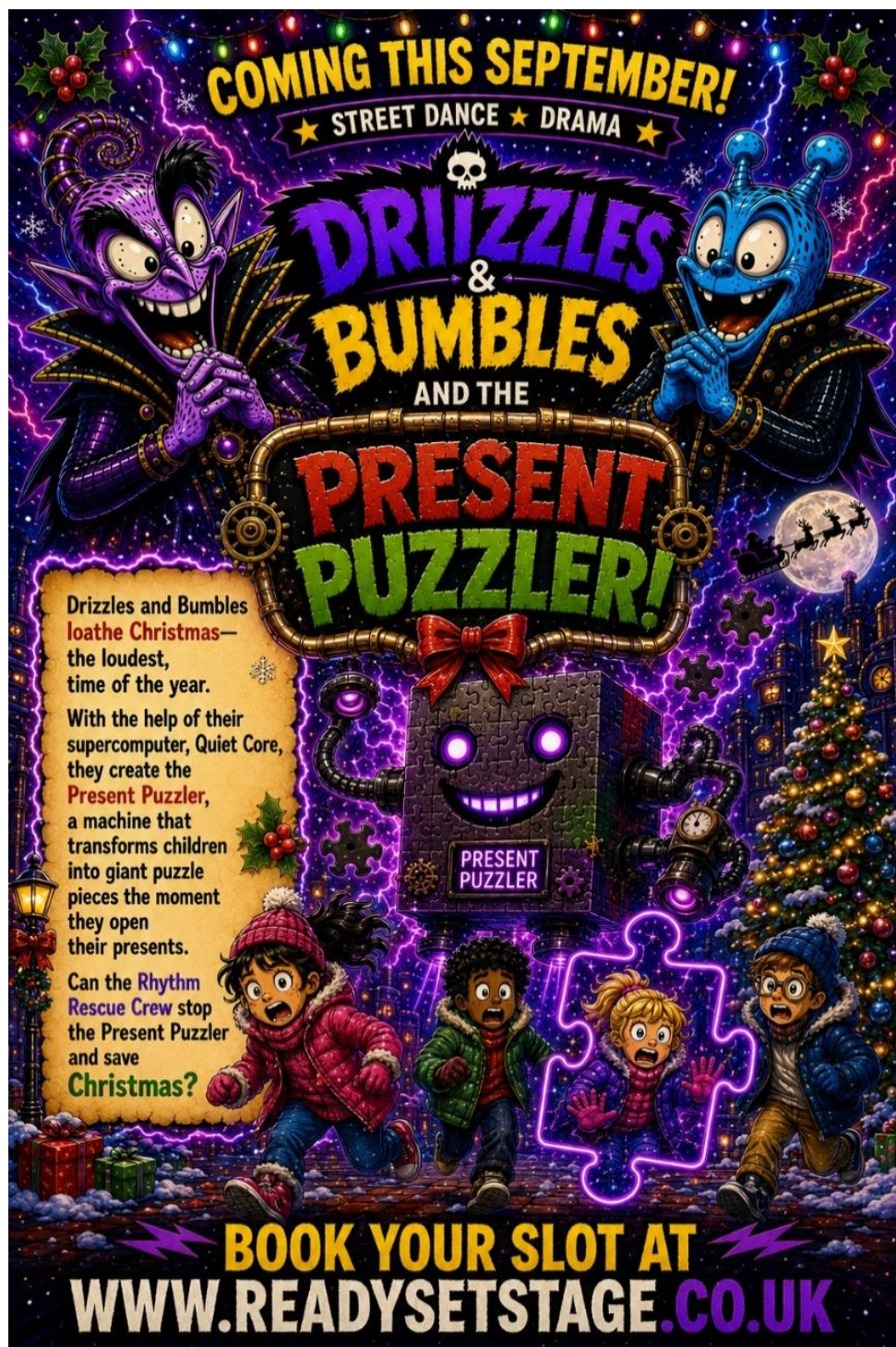
Arts & Crafts Club

Students will be creating props, scenery and other creative pieces that will be used in our mini musical, helping to bring the production to life.

Sports Clubs

We also have some exciting news planned for our sports clubs, which we'll be sharing with you all when the new term begins.

We can't wait to welcome back our returning students and meet all of our new students in September. Until then, have a wonderful summer, and we'll see you next term!



Autumn 2026			
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Performing Arts (Rec – Year 6)	Arts & Craft (Rec – Year 6)	Singing (Rec – Year 6)	Gymnastics (Years 1-6)
Football (Years 3-6)	Chess club (Years 3-6)	Football (Rec - Year 2)	Chess (Rec-Y2)



A Fantastic Summer Fair yet again - Huge thanks to everyone!

Well the sunshine definitely didn't let us down this year! A massive thank you to all of you who braved the heat and made the 2026 Summer Fair another memorable day for the Gillespie Community. Whether it was painting faces and cups, or munching hot dogs and cookies, everyone was clearly 'all in' on the day and it showed!

The live music was great, the raffle was yet another success, the Arsenal artwork was a lovely new feature and of course everyone's favourite dinosaur was on cracking form. Because of all the hard work of your class reps, willing parent volunteers and of course our indefatigable teaching staff, we are delighted to share with you all that the fair was able to raise over **£6,000** for the school. That amount alone would cover the cost to renovate the **Creation Station**, upgrade all of the **musical equipment** in the school and fund the **Reading Roadmap scheme** for another year! Unbelievable effort and another brilliant event to show our support for Gillespie Primary School.



MoreSpace Summer Fair Boards - Huge thank you for support

Going from strength to strength! Thanks to so many willing volunteers, we are delighted to confirm that as a result of Jacqui Barrett's incredible effort (as if the raffles and auctions weren't enough!) the Summer Fair boards has raised £3,400 for the school! Combined with the takings for the fair itself we are looking at close to £10,000!!! That amount alone could cover the cost of a Teaching Assistant for the whole Autumn term.

Keep Gillespie Cool Campaign - Wow!

Hot on the heels of the Summer Fair, this week saw the launch of the 'Keep Gillespie Cool' fundraiser... and what an incredible response! In a very short period, the campaign was able to raise over **£4,000** for this initiative, which will see some much needed investment into both short and long term measures to ensure the comfort and safety of everyone at the school during periods of extreme heat.

An obvious shout out needs to go to **Tiffanie Lee** for pulling the whole campaign together, but also to those parents who championed this issue and contributed so much of their own time to achieve such an impressive outcome. A huge thank you from the FoG Team and everyone connected to the school.



School partnership with HotBlack Desiato

Throughout 25/26 Gillespie Primary has been in a formal partnership with the local Estate agent HotBlack Desiato. This sponsorship (to the amount of £500.00 a month for 12 months) has provided a fantastic boost to the existing FoG offer. If that wasn't enough, they have also **committed** to making a **£1000** donation to the school for any sale that the partnership generates, and **£250** for a rental that is secured, but you have to contact them directly - don't use RightMove!



Gillespie Primary School has applied to take part in the Big Give initiative... but we need pledgers...

Now we know there have been a number of asks for 📧 recently but we have a really exciting opportunity we wanted to share with you...

🎄 FoG have applied to be selected for The Big Give Christmas Challenge and we need your help .

👤 What is it?

The Big Give Christmas Challenge is the UK's largest collaborative fundraising campaign made from crowd & match funding. It takes place annually for 7 days in the first week of December.

? How does it work?

The campaign operates on a pledge and match funding model. Prior to the challenge participating charities need to secure 25% of their target through their supporters ('pledgers'). The following 25% is then matched by Big Give's match funders and the final 50% is raised through donations in the December campaign week; The Christmas Challenge.

🎁 Any funds raised will go towards activities, experiences and opportunities that children love and families value at Gillespie.

👤 What do we need from you?

We are seeking Big Give Pledgers. We need to raise a total of 2k in pledges by the 28th August. If you think you can be a FoG Big Give Champion we'd love to hear from you. Every pound you pledge will be matched, effectively doubling your donation.

! It is important to note that those who pledge cannot also donate in December so we are hoping for a smaller group of larger donation pledges rather than lots of smaller donations. Of course all donations are brilliant but there will be time for those in December during the campaign, should we be successful. The minimum pledge amount is £100.

✉ Please contact FoG Foundation Chair Flo Buckeridge at friends.of.gillespie@gmail.com if you think you can pledge an amount to help us reach £2k by the end of August.

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!



Community pages

The Big Future survey

Rachel de Souza, Children's Commissioner is asking families to support their children in completing her survey to ensure that the voices of children and young people are heard.

She will take your views to the Government, to help them make life better for children.

The survey can be completed here: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/TheBigFuture/>



Incredible Years Parenting Groups

14-week course for parents of children aged 1-3 and 3-6 years.

- Would you like to share and learn new parenting skills?
- Do you want to be a more confident and happier parent?
- Would you like to learn more about how you can support your child's development?

Increase your confidence in parenting your children and learn new skills in a relaxed and friendly environment

Creche will also be available for this group.

Parents are required to meet facilitators for an assessment before being offered a place in the group.

To register interest, please scan the QR code



Tuesdays
(1-3 Year olds)
29 September 2026 - 19 January 2027
(Term-time only)
Best Start Family Hub Central at
New River Green Children's Centre
N1 2SX

9:30AM - 12:00PM

Fridays
(3-6 Year Olds)
2 October 2026 - 22 January 2027
(Term-time only)
Ambler Children's Centre
N4 2QX



N4Library
ReadLearnConnect

SUMMER CRAFT EVENT



Make fun dancing paper people!

Friday 14 August, 2pm

Suitable for families with children of all ages.

N4 Library, 26 Blackstock Road, N4 2DW
020 7527 7800

N4Library
ReadLearnConnect

SUMMER CRAFT EVENT



Make a microphone & sing along to your favourite tunes!

Monday 24 August, 2pm

Suitable for families with children of all ages.

N4 Library, 26 Blackstock Road, N4 2DW
020 7527 7800