



St Giles School News

April 2024

'Be the best you can be'

Specialist School for Physical and Sensory

www.st-gilesschool.co.uk

Dear Parents / Carers,

Although a bit belated, welcome back to the Summer Term everyone, it is hard to believe it is this time of the year again already! It always amazes me when I write each monthly newsletter how much has happened since the previous one, and despite a two-week holiday coming in-between, the April Newsletter is certainly not an exception.

We do hope you all had a lovely Easter holiday and are ready for what will undoubtedly be a different but none the less busy Summer Term ahead.

A huge thank you for your support last half term, we certainly could not have achieved what we did without your commitment to St. Giles' School community.

Thank you for your on-going support and for doing your bit for our community with so many of you as parents/carers attending the school's WOW events last term. On this note I will like to advertise the opening of our very own School 'Cool Café' this Friday 3rd May 2024 from 10.00am . This is a great venture being run by Upper school students and staff encouraging the entrepreneurial spirit of our young people. If you are intending to visit this Friday, please contact the school office to support us with logistics.

I would like to thank the Mayor, Jason Perry for visiting the school on Tuesday 23rd April 2024. Please see some of the images below that show his visit to our school earlier this week to see our wonderful students and staff in action. Thank you to the Mayor and his aide for visiting our students this week and seeing St. Giles' School in action (and also thanks to you Chair, Paul Thirkettle and Vice-Chair, Kat Shields for their support on this day as well!).



LOOKING AHEAD - Dates for the Diary

May

Mon 6th: Bank holiday

Tue 7th: Inset day—school closed for pupils

Half term: Mon 27th—Fri 31st May

June

Mon 3rd: term starts

Sat 15th: Summer fayre

Wed 19th: Parents evening

July

Fri 5th: Prom

Wed 24th: last day of term

Summer holidays: Thu 25th July—Tue 3rd September

Hello, my name is Tara Dale and I am the Head of Middle Department at St Giles and Class teacher in Pink Class. During my early career, I spent time working in variety of residential support roles with individuals with learning difficulties and Social Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties due to past trauma.

I had always considered working in education but it wasn't until I took on a role as a teaching assistant working with students with visual impairment and complex needs for the RNIB that I knew my real passion would be teaching in SEN. After I qualified, I became a primary class teacher at an SEN school in Warwickshire and was there for six years before beginning my journey at St Giles in 2021. It has been a privilege to work with our fantastic students who display tenacity, enthusiasm, and a desire to learn alongside a team of highly skilled professionals; both within my department and the wider school community.

In Pink Class every day is different, full of joy and creativity and I am continuously impressed with the progress and achievements of our young people. We provide a varied and individualised curriculum developing our holistic approach with pupils at the centre of all we do in a nurturing environment.

In my role as Head of Department we have had a focus on Wow events this year and it has been great to see so many parents attend and the pleasure that our pupils take from this.

I am passionate about supporting student's communication and believe that empowering an individuals' communications skills will have a positive impact on all areas of their lives. Communication provides students with the tools to express their wants and needs and is a cornerstone in fostering meaningful connections with the world and others around them. This supports the development of self-esteem, self-confidence, regulation skills, cognition and learning skills and enhances access to the curriculum as a whole.

Last year, I was successful in my application to complete a Makaton Tutor Training course and I am now the Makaton Lead for St Giles School. This decision was fuelled by the desire to create an environment where every child, regardless of their communication abilities, feels heard and understood. In this role I have really enjoyed delivering whole school training to the staff team, and successfully enabled the certification of twelve staff in Makaton Level One so far. I have provided support to set up a Makaton lunch time club and I have plans to implement Parent and Carer taster workshops and more. It is wonderful to watch students develop their communication skills and see the impact it has on their access to the curriculum as a whole. The training contributes towards the already extremely inclusive and empowering learning environment that St Giles provides so well to support all our pupils to be the best they can be and make progress.



Zoolab visit



Pupils enjoyed seeing and touching the reptiles and insects.





The launch of St Giles Cool café

Friday 3rd May sees the launch of an exciting new Upper school initiative in the form of a school café.

In curriculum time a competition was held for students to create a café name and flyer to advertise it. Isaiah B in Hawking class won the competition with the fantastic name – “The Cool café”

The café will run half termly and will provide a community space for staff, parents and friends of the school to sample tea/ coffee, smoothies, cakes, scones and biscuits and enjoy a chat.

All the items for sale will be made in curriculum time by the students and for some will contribute to their accreditation units. It will be ran by the students with the assistance of staff.

The café aims to help students prepare for adulthood and transition. It will also provide a valuable platform for students to complete work experience.

Are you getting the right amount of Universal Credit as a parent carer?



Carer element

Paid if you're eligible for Carer's Allowance (or if you meet the criteria for it but your earnings are too high). You don't actually have to have claimed Carer's Allowance.

Child element

Paid for each dependent child in your family. You won't normally get this for a third or subsequent child born on or after 6 April 2017.

Disabled child addition

Paid (at one of 2 rates) for each dependent child who gets DLA or PIP. If you're eligible but don't receive this addition, add a note to your journal. It should be backdated in full.

Childcare element

Covers up to 85% of your registered childcare costs if you work (any number of hours), up to a certain amount.

[contact.org.uk/uc](https://www.contact.org.uk/uc)

Orchyd Holiday

1st - 8th August 2024



Each year ORCHYD organises a residential holiday for children aged 8 - 12 years with physical disabilities. The children will be staying at St Martin's Church, Ruislip, Middlesex this year and will be taken on outings every day. The holiday is provided free of charge to young people who might not otherwise have a holiday and is financed by local fundraising activities throughout the year.

Hazel will be shortly sending out details and application forms to all 8 - 12

year old pupils.



Peeps is the only UK charity* dedicated to supporting those affected by H.I.E. [HIE](#) stands for hypoxic-ischaemic encephalopathy. It is a lack of oxygen to the brain that can cause injury. Peeps was set up in 2018 by Sarah & Steve. The name came from friends who affectionately referred to their daughter Heidi as “Heidi-Peeps”.

Hypoxic-Ischaemic Encephalopathy (H.I.E.) is where there is a lack of oxygen and blood flow to the brain. It can occur before, during, or shortly after labour. It can happen in older children too. You may also hear the term “asphyxia” or “birth asphyxia”. These mean the same thing.

H.I.E. can cause injury to the brain. The severity of this can vary greatly. You may hear H.I.E. and a grade from 1 which is mild to 3 which is severe.

Tests are often done at an early stage to determine the extent of any brain injury. One thing to remember is that babies have a tendency to do their own thing, despite what any results may suggest!

It’s also important to highlight that parents, as well as the wider family, can be affected by a HIE event, regardless of the outcome. H.I.E. events are often completely unexpected and can be traumatic. Your experience of H.I.E. may be different to others you read about. Your feelings are always valid, and there is support there for you if or when you need it.

The time after a H.I.E. event has been described by parents as a rollercoaster. There will be highs and lows. Certain situations may trigger certain feelings for you, sometimes when least expected. Remember you’re not on your own. Talking about how you feel can be helpful. That might be to your partner, a family member or friend, or a healthcare professional.

Please see our website for more info and support: <https://www.peeps-hie.org/>

We would love to hear from you! Whether it’s to ask a question, offload some concerns, share your story, or find out how to get involved with Peeps.

There are lots of ways you can get in touch with us and we’ll always try and respond as quickly as we can.

Telephone : [0800 987 5422](tel:08009875422) / Text: [07838 197 945](tel:07838197945) / Email : info@peeps-hie.org



Carers Information Service

The Carers Information Service www.carersinfo.org.uk provides advice, information, and support to carers in Croydon who are looking after someone who needs their help to due to illness, disability, or old age.

The Advice Desk at the Carers Support Centre is open 10am – 1pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesdays and Fridays, for carers to drop-in & get advice from our experienced Advice workers!

You can also contact us by calling 020 8649 9339 (opt 1) to speak to one of our friendly team. If we are busy helping other carers you can leave a message or drop us an email on enquiries@carersinfo.org.uk. One of our advice workers will get back to you ASAP!

For more information on the Carers Information Service follow their Social Media accounts: