

NEWSLETTER



Headteacher Message

It has been a fantastic start to the autumn term! It is always wonderful to welcome the children back and hear all their summer holiday news. The children have settled well into their new classes and are enjoying being back with their friends.

Thankfully, the building work is all complete, and we have a lovely new school roof, ensuring our building is well looked after. We also have a new trim trail which the children absolutely love! Our new reception class has made a great start to school life. Both Mrs Cregan and I are so impressed with how they have adapted to the Gilthill way. They are in safe hands with our outstanding early years team, who are dedicated to nurturing their development.

This year, our priorities in school continue to centre around oracy and how we can develop our oracy school culture. We are also focusing on how we can support our disadvantaged children and how our subject leaders are making our curriculum even more exciting!

This half term, our focus is on resilience. I have already seen numerous examples of the children demonstrating this quality, from trying new foods at lunchtime to embracing fresh concepts in their new year groups. I cannot express how proud I am of the children and their ability to remain resilient in the face of new challenges.

At Gilthill, we believe that effective communication is vital for fostering a robust school-home partnership. We want parents to feel informed and engaged in the exciting journey our school is undertaking. This letter aims to celebrate our achievements and keep you in the loop! We will continue to use Dojo for regular updates, and please feel free to call, email, or pop into the school office if you have any questions—we're here to help!

Additionally, don't forget to visit our new school website, which features dedicated class pages outlining valuable curriculum overviews for each year group. These overviews give you a sneak peek into what your child will be learning this term, helping you stay involved in their education and support their progress. Follow the QR code to find out more.



Afterschool Clubs

As in previous years, we are committed to providing a variety of sporting afterschool clubs for all our children. This year, we're excited to continue to offer four afterschool clubs each week! Two of these clubs will require a small fee, so please keep an eye out for a ParentPay link that we'll provide for your convenience. Spaces are limited, and you'll receive a letter ahead of each block to help you secure a place.

Alongside our sporty offerings, we're continuing with a range of non-sporting clubs throughout the year. Look forward to our art and craft sessions, cross stitch, choir, recorders, and, of course, our very popular gardening club, which will be back in full swing this spring term. We'll share more details about these exciting clubs later in the term, so stay tuned!

We're excited to announce that this year we are trialling sports clubs during lunchtime! Children will have the opportunity to join different clubs over the four lunchtimes that we have a sports coach on site. This is a fantastic chance for them to try their hand at new sports and enjoy an active playtime with friends. We will be organising these clubs internally. Let's get moving and have some fun!

Half Term	Monday *Paid	Tuesday * Paid	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Autumn 1	Capture the flag Y1 & Y2	Nerf Wars Y3 & Y4	Golf Y3 & Y4 *	Football Team KS2 Team	Football skills Y5 & Y6
Autumn 2	Nerf Wars Y5 & Y6	Handball Y3 & Y4		Gymnastics YR	Dodgeball Y1 & Y2
Spring 1	Nerf Wars Y1 & Y2	Handball Y5 & Y6		Dance YR	Dodgeball Y3 & Y4
Spring 2	Capture the flag Y5 & Y6	Darts Y3 & Y4	*Chance to Dance – C.W*	Netball Y5 & Y6	Football skills Y1 & Y2
Summer 1	Capture the flag Y3 & Y4	Darts Y5 & Y6		Athletics Team KS2	Tag Rugby Y1 & Y2
Summer 2	Tennis skills Y1 & Y2	Short tennis Y5 & Y6		Multi Sports YR Running Y3 & Y4	Football skills Y3 & Y4

*More year groups to be scheduled later in the academic year

Communication and Safety

As we continue to strive for the best communication with you, we kindly ask that you keep us informed of any changes to your contact details, including telephone numbers, addresses, and email addresses. This information is crucial for ensuring we can reach you with important updates and in the event of an emergency. In today's fast-paced environment, having up-to-date contact information is more important than ever. Please let the office know of any changes at your earliest convenience.

Just a quick note to ask for your help, please. When dropping off your children in the morning, could you remind them to be safe around the school site? We've had a few reports of children climbing the trees on the driveway. We want everyone to arrive safe and sound, so let's work together to prevent any accidents! Thank you!

First Aid Training

This year, we have continued with our first aid training in school. Over the past year, we've successfully woven first aid training into our curriculum to complement our two-year topic cycle. This initiative specifically targeted children in Years 1, 3, and 5, ensuring that all our children have the chance to gain essential first aid knowledge throughout the cycle.

Incorporating first aid training into our curriculum reflects our commitment to providing a well-rounded and holistic education. We truly believe that equipping our children with these life-saving skills not only prepares them for emergencies but also contributes significantly to their personal and social development.

On Monday, 15th September, we had the pleasure of hosting Felicity and Maria from Mini First Aid, who led the training sessions. They had wonderful things to say about our children, noting how sensible and well-behaved they were. It was fantastic to witness their engagement and enthusiasm during the sessions, making it a thoroughly enjoyable experience for all involved. We look forward to continuing this valuable training in the future!



Harvest Festival

We're excited to announce that this year, our Harvest Festival assembly will take place on Tuesday, 7th October. Reverend Barbara has kindly agreed to lead the assembly once again, and we're looking forward to a wonderful celebration. As in previous years, we're collecting donations for the local food bank in Eastwood, and we would love your support! Please consider donating bags of shopping to help those who are most vulnerable in our community. You should have received a letter outlining the suitable items for donation. If you haven't seen it, please check the letters home section on our website. Unfortunately, due to the limited space in the school hall, parents won't be able to attend. Don't worry though—we'll capture plenty of pictures to share on Dojo and next month's newsletter.

Trips

As part of our enrichment plans, we are dedicated to providing the children with fun and engaging educational trips and experiences that complement our curriculum. We encourage you to refer to the enrichment plans available on our school website for more details.

We believe that it is crucial for our children to experience three residential visits during their time at Gilthill, as these opportunities are specifically designed to develop essential life skills and create lasting memories. In Year 2, we are excited to offer our children the chance to participate in a one-night sleepover at school during our Year 2 Camp. This experience not only provides a taste of independence but also fosters valuable social interactions among peers. We will communicate the specific date for the Year 2 Camp later in the year, so keep an eye out for that!

Moving on to our Year 4 students, we've arranged a fantastic one-night, two-day residential trip to Mill Adventure. This trip is set for the 30th April and 1st May 2026, and parents should receive information about it shortly.

Lastly, our Year 6 children will have the incredible opportunity to embark on a five-day residential visit to Cloughton from the 22nd to the 26th of June 2026. This highly anticipated trip will provide an immersive outdoor experience, promoting personal growth, resilience, and teamwork. Parents of Year 6 children should have already received some initial information about Cloughton in preparation for next year.



Open Classroom Event

We're excited to announce that Year 6 will be hosting our very first open classroom event of the academic year! These special occasions were introduced following requests from parents keen to engage in their child's learning journey. What better way to connect than by witnessing the children share their learning experiences? Parents are warmly invited to join us and see what life is like in our Year 6 classroom, along with the fantastic work completed so far. The event will take place on Wednesday, 8th October, starting at 2.45pm. Please enter through the main reception, and we can't wait to welcome you!

Parents evening - Save the Date!

This term, our Parents' Evening consultation meetings are being held on Tuesday 14th October and Wednesday 15th October. Appointments will be available from 3.40 – 6.10pm. As in previous years, a letter will be sent out shortly with further details and with the link to book your appointment slot. I look forward to seeing you there.

Updated Policies

It is at this time in the new school year that we update key school and Trust policies. Please follow the QR code to the policies section of our website where you will find our updated Safeguarding policy and Parent and Visitor Code of Conduct policy plus a few more to keep you in the loop.



Congratulations

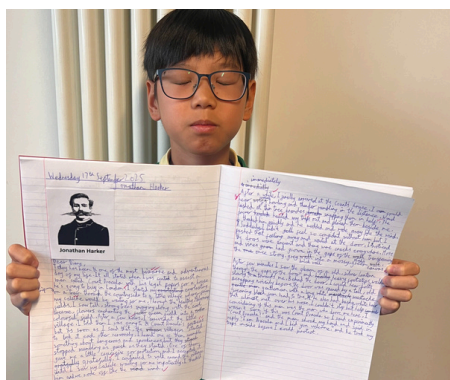
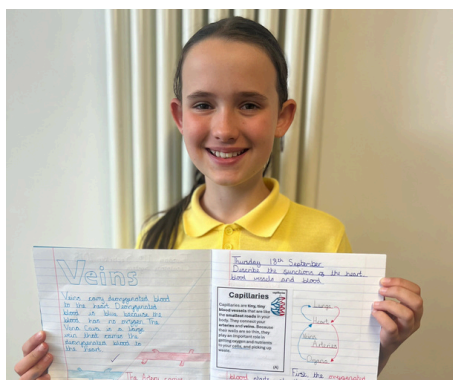


Earlier this month, Miss Bruce got married! The Reception children celebrated in class with their own confetti shower!" We wish her all the best in her life together with her new husband. From now on, she will be known as Mrs Day. Congratulations, Mrs Day! Enjoy this exciting new chapter!

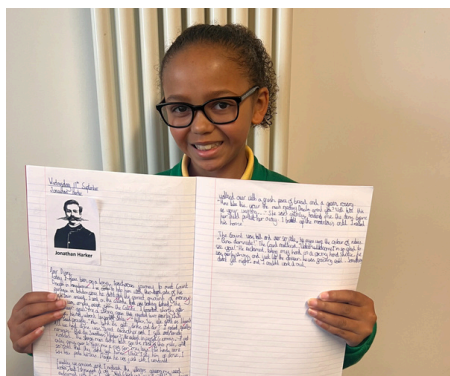
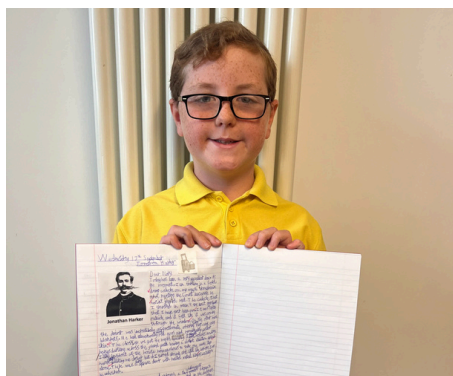


In the summer holidays, Miss Bult tied the knot and had a lovely celebration surrounded by her family and friends. She's currently on maternity leave, but when she returns, she'll be known as Mrs McKie! I'm sure she had a magical day, and I can't wait to hear all about it when she's back. Wishing her all the best during this wonderful time!

Wow Work



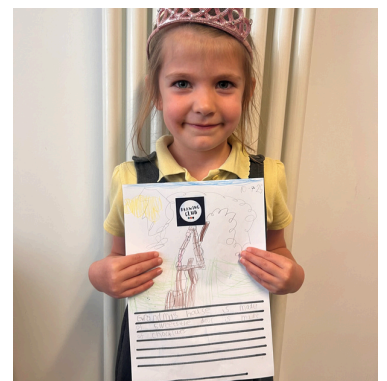
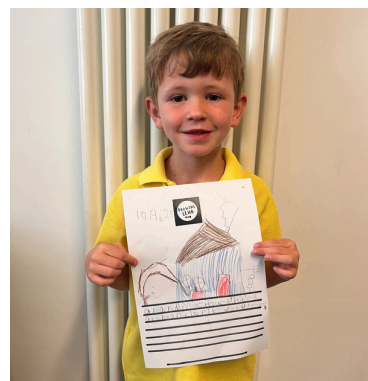
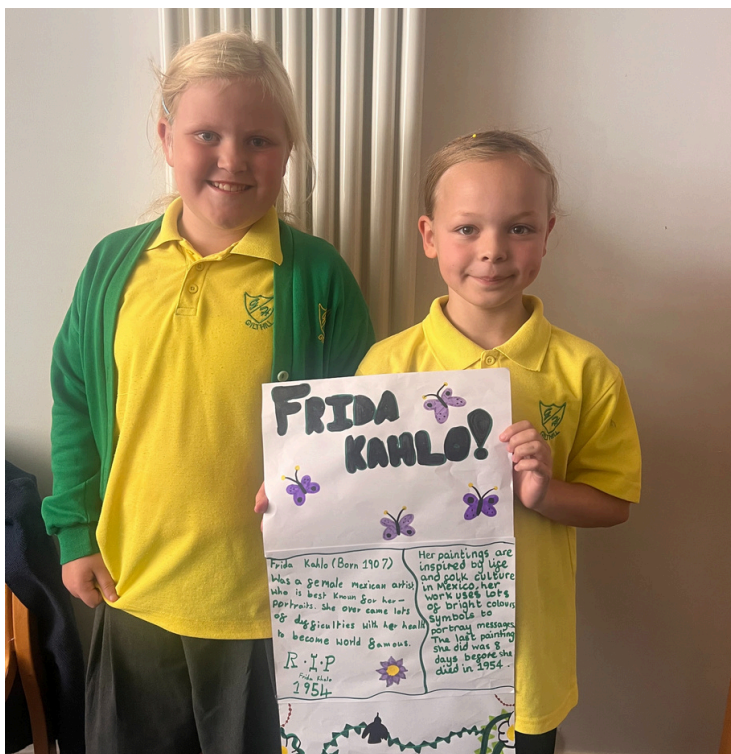
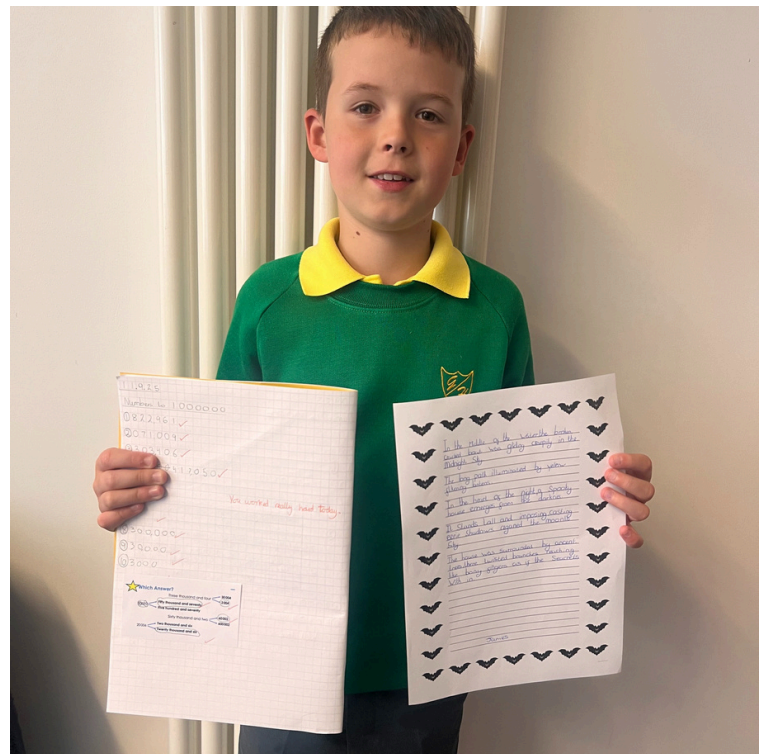
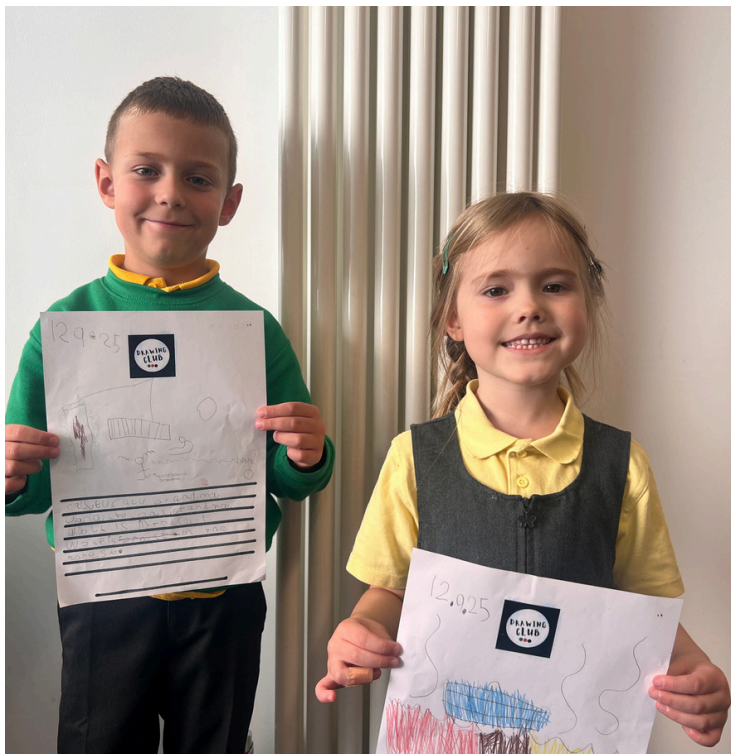
This month, Year 6 have really impressed us with their super writing based on the Dracula story. Elizabeth, Jenkins, Sidney, and Mia are absolutely loving their new topic and are getting thoroughly engrossed in the tale. Their diary writing is simply brilliant! Also, a huge shoutout to Arlo in Year 3 for achieving his third Blue Peter badge! What a superstar!



Wow Work

A huge well done to Robert and Sophie in Year 1 for their wonderful Drawing Club work! Mr Clarke was so impressed with how they utilised the code! Mrs Shaw has also been thrilled with how well James has settled into Year 5. He has truly demonstrated how ready, respectful, and safe he can be—keep it up, James!

Abigail and Isabelle in Year 5 took it upon themselves to create their very own Frida Kahlo fact file after learning about the artist in their art lesson. Great independent work, girls! Albie and Sophie in Year 1 had some fantastic ideas in Drawing Club related to Grandma's house in Little Red Riding Hood—such creative designs! Charlie in Year 3 crafted a wonderful place of worship in his RE lesson, and finally, Bobby in Year 2 proudly showed off his letter formation. What superstars we have!



Wow!

Sports superstars

What a fantastic result for Abbie in Year 5 for winning the first prize trophy with her swimming club! Well done, Abbie! A big shout-out to the children in Years 5 and 6 who took part in their Bikeability training at the beginning of September. It's so important for our children to stay safe on the road, and learning how to safely ride a bike is our top priority. It was brilliant to see our pupils listening so well to the instructors, who praised them for their courtesy and respect. This month, our new reception children have been honing their gross motor skills on the balance bikes—what a great way to practice balance and coordination!



SUPERSTAR

Online Safety & Wellbeing

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

RECOGNISING & MANAGING STRESS

According to recent studies, over 60% of young people report feeling regularly overwhelmed – with stress impacting their learning, emotional wellbeing and social connections. If left unaddressed, stress can lead to more serious concerns such as anxiety, depression or disengagement. This guide offers ten practical, evidence-based strategies to help children and young people recognise, manage and recover from stress in healthy ways.

1 SPOT THE SUBTLE SIGNS

Look out for changes in mood, behaviour, or energy levels, such as irritability, withdrawal, clinginess, or frequent headaches. These may indicate that a child is feeling overwhelmed. By tuning into these cues early and offering a calm, non-judgemental space to talk, adults can help children feel heard and supported before issues escalate.

2 KEEP CONVERSATIONS FLOWING

Make time for open, informal check-ins – whether it's during car journeys, over dinner, or in quiet classroom moments. Let children know it's okay to talk about what's bothering them. Regular, low-pressure conversations create a safe space where emotions are validated, not dismissed.

3 MAKE MOVEMENT PART OF THE DAY

Physical activity can dramatically reduce stress hormones while improving mood and focus. Encourage movement through activities children genuinely enjoy – from team sports to dancing around the kitchen. Even light activity like stretching or walking the dog can help us all unwind.

4 SUPPORT HEALTHY SLEEP PATTERNS

Poor sleep makes stress harder to manage. Establish a calming evening routine that avoids screens before bedtime and promotes winding down, such as reading, listening to music, or chatting quietly. Good sleep hygiene helps reset mood, enhances concentration, and boosts emotional resilience.

5 PRACTISE MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness doesn't have to mean long periods of meditation. A few slow breaths before lessons or short family meditation sessions before bed can make a real difference. These simple habits help children ground themselves, reduce emotional reactivity, and build inner calm over time.

6 SET DIGITAL BOUNDARIES

Excessive screen time, especially before bed or on social media, is linked with higher stress levels. Set clear expectations for when and where devices can be used and suggest screen-free alternatives like crafts, nature walks, or board games to promote digital balance and reduce overstimulation.

7 NURTURE SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

Strong relationships act as a buffer against stress. Whether it's a trusted adult, a sibling, or a good friend, ensure children have people around them they can talk to and spend quality time with. Help them build those bonds through shared activities and meaningful interaction.

8 PROGRESS OVER PERFECTION

Set realistic goals and praise effort, not just outcomes. When children feel pressured to be perfect, stress naturally follows. Celebrate small wins and help them reframe setbacks as learning opportunities. This helps build confidence and reduces the fear of failure.

9 TEACH EVERYDAY PROBLEM-SOLVING

Use real-life scenarios to build resilience. Encourage children to identify problems, consider possible solutions, and choose a plan of action. Practising these steps builds a sense of control and reduces the helplessness that often accompanies stress.

10 BE THE MODEL THEY NEED

Children notice how adults respond to challenges. Model healthy coping strategies such as taking breaks, asking for help, or calmly expressing frustration. By showing how you manage stress constructively, you help normalise these behaviours and encourage children to do the same.

Meet Our Expert

Anna Bateman is Director of Halcyon Education Ltd, Director for Wellbeing and Family Services at Leigh Trust, and lead expert for mental health at The National College. Anna specialises in strategic mental health solutions for schools, supporting educators and families to improve resilience, emotional literacy, and overall wellbeing for children across the UK.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College®



Dates for your diary



Here are the initial dates for the diary for the Autumn Term 2025. Additional dates will be added, and some dates may be amended closer to the time if necessary. We will, of course, give parents plenty of notice of any date changes. Thank you for taking the time to read this month's newsletter. Your ongoing support is always very much appreciated.

Date	Event
3.10.25	Individual school photos
7.10.25	Harvest Festival Assembly
8.10.25	Year 6 open classroom event *2.45pm
10.10.25	INSET Day
14.10.25	Parents Evening
15.10.25	Parents evening
17.10.25	Break up for half term
3.11.26	INSET Day
12.11.25	Train With Us Workshops *Year groups to be confirmed
12.11.25	KS 1 Local Walk
19.11.25	Year 5 Open Classroom event from 2.45pm
9.12.25	EYFS Nativity 9.30am
10.12.25	KS1 Nativity 2.30pm
12.12.25	Christmas Jumper day
15.12.25	Whole school Panto trip
16.12.25	Christmas Dinner Day
19.12.25	Carols in the classrooms from 2pm
19.12.25	Last day of term.