



Parents' Newsletter

December 2019



Dear parents

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

After the usual exceptionally busy term, it has been good over the last week or so to feel that Christmas is in sight. We still have The Carol Service at St Mary's to look forward to on Wednesday and, with the growing popularity of music at Gillotts, I know it will be better than ever. The whole school will then get an opportunity to hear some of the highlights in final assembly on Thursday – always a lovely way to end the term.

We raised about £150 for our charity Cool Earth by having a bottle tombola at the Henley Christmas Festival. Our stall was really popular! Many thanks to all who donated and especially to Head Students, Kitty and Connor, and Mr Druce, who masterminded the whole event.

The Department for Education has recently published to schools its analysis of the 2019 exam results, which importantly includes measures of the progress made by students from their entry to the school in year 7, to their GCSE grades in year 11. Their analysis is that the progress our students make is 'well above average' which is a great endorsement of the quality of teaching and learning for all students in the school. We are in the top 10% of schools nationally and have the fifth best progress score of the 39 state secondary schools in Oxfordshire. We are committed to providing all our students with a high quality curriculum that supports their progression, whatever route they want to take, and we have worked hard every year to improve the quality of teaching and learning. These outcomes come about because of the day in, day out hard work of all our staff, and I want to record my thanks for their dedication. We also could not do it without the support of all our parents, and the hard work of the students themselves.

Further thanks are due to the Parents' Association who held another very successful quiz night in November. You may be reassured that the staff and governor team secured victory – although whether 'pub quiz' knowledge is exactly what students need for GCSE may be questionable!

I would also like to express my thanks to the many parents who are so generously giving to our School Fund. We have been very touched by the gifts and the supportive messages that so often come with them. I continue to work with Headteachers across the country to achieve fairer funding for students in all Oxfordshire's schools.

Please see the end of the newsletter for our term dates for 2020-21. As an academy, we have the freedom to set our own term dates but we usually match Oxfordshire's. However for 2020-21, there will be one difference:

**Gillotts will work on Thursday 1 April 2021, which will be the first day of the holiday for other Oxfordshire schools.
(The Easter weekend is Friday 2 April to Monday 5 April.)**

I would like to wish you all a very happy and restful holiday, with plenty of time for family and friends. We look forward to welcoming students back for the New Year on Monday 6 January.

Best wishes

Catharine Darnton
Headteacher



Parent View

Parent View is an online questionnaire for parents and carers to feed back to Ofsted on their child's school. It is now the main mechanism that Ofsted use to gather parents' views at the time of an inspection. There are just 12 questions to answer. The questions look at the key areas such as happiness, safety, progress, quality of teaching, behaviour and school leadership. The final question asks if you would recommend the school to another parent. Everyone's responses are put together and are available to view on the Parent View website. In order to minimise the risk of abuse, you are required to register and create a password. We would be very pleased to have your ongoing feedback of what you think of the school – please visit <http://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/>

Not by ourselves alone December 2019 update



This term, our 'Not By Ourselves Alone' programme has been in full flow with various opportunities for students to consider the values of Kindness, Respect and Living without harm to make positive contributions to the school and wider community.

A flavour of some of the things that have been happening can be seen on our Twitter update, and include some of the following:

- A non-uniform day which raised money for planting 729 trees in Africa as part of the JustOneTree charity
- Candy Canes being sold to raise money for charity
- Food parcels and care packages for local people in need
- A tombola at the Xmas fair to raise money for Cool Earth
- Students actively involving themselves in an Eco-week at school, considering the impact on our environment
- The Terracycle Recycling programme starting up again, helping us make positive change to our future

Please do speak to your children about these key values, look out for the logo, and keep up to date with the programme through our school Twitter account [@gillottshenley](https://twitter.com/gillottshenley)

House Competition



At the end of Term 1, Orwell had taken a commanding lead. Results are being collated for Term 2 and will be sent out via Twitter and to students when we return in January!

Attendance update

Research has shown that regular attendance and good punctuality are crucial factors in students achieving their full potential at school. We consistently work with parents/carers to support positive attendance and are always seeking your full support in ensuring that your child attends Gillotts every day and on time. You may have noticed that our emails from the Attendance address now show the impact of attendance on learning. Students also now have a section where they update their weekly attendance percentage in their planners to remind them of the importance of attendance.

We strive towards 100% attendance for all students.

If your child is ill, please contact the school with a reason for absence on the first day of absence and any subsequent days if illness/absence continues. The telephone number is **01491 636812** or email attendance@gillotts.org.uk

If you wish to check that your child has arrived at the school, contact the Attendance Administrator. She will inform you if your child has been registered.

If no contact is received regarding the absence, it is recorded as **unauthorised**. Ultimately the school is responsible for deciding if the absence is acceptable or not. Only genuine absence will be authorised. You will be asked to provide evidence of reasons for absence if your child has a poor attendance record.

Ensure that medical appointments are made outside of school time.

Please make sure you respond to school letters or telephone calls regarding attendance and punctuality.

Finally, can we remind you that **NO** student should contact a parent directly if they are unwell. If you are contacted by your child during the day asking to be collected, please can you contact your child's housebase in the first instance and do not arrive at school unannounced. The school does have dedicated medical first aiders who can provide assistance where necessary.

Gillotts Twitter update 2019

Please follow us at @gillottshenley

Please also remember you can follow our other school accounts:

[@GillottsOLC](#)
[@GillottsCT](#)
[@GillottsPE](#)
[@GillottsScience](#)



Gillotts School
 @GillottsHenley

Looking forward to [#AntiBullyingWeek](#) 2019 next week. Wear [#OddSocks](#) on Tuesday 12th Nov, celebrate individuality and willingness of [#tolerance](#) and [#compassion](#) for others [#changestartswithus](#) [#Henley](#) [#community](#)
[@ABAonline](#)



Gillotts School
 @GillottsHenley

Another star in our midst...well done to Maddie who was competing in the iconic Ballroom hub of Blackpool over the weekend! 🎉 [#Henley](#) [#Ballroom](#) [#strictlyfuture](#)



12:28 PM · Nov 7, 2019 · [Twitter Web App](#)

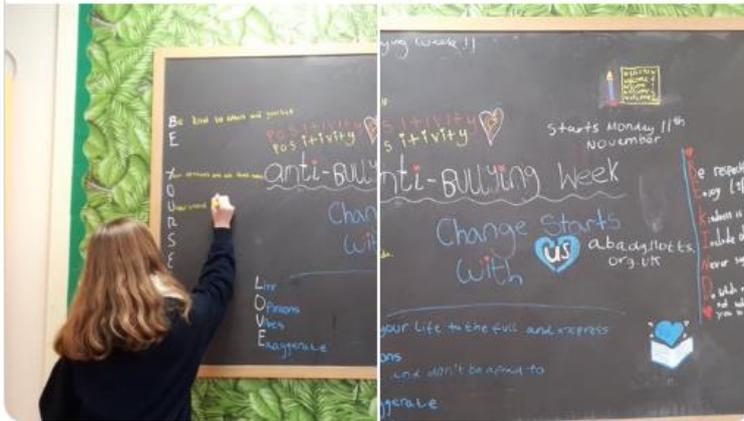


Gillotts School @GillottsHenley · Nov 11

#AntiBullyingWeek #changestartswithus

Gillotts Library @GillottsOLC · Nov 11

Marking @ABAonline at Gillotts this week. Year 7 and 8 library helpers have been writing acrostic poems on themes of kindness.



Gillotts School @GillottsHenley · Nov 12

Well done to Oscar in Y7 who recently traveled to Switzerland for the British Alpine Rifle Championships, coming 3rd in the Agincourt, winning further medals in the pistol shooting competitions. #Henley #futurestar #eliteperformer



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Gillotts School @GillottsHenley · Nov 12

A couple of #OddSocks from today. Thanks to all who took part, particularly in Y7 and Y8! #AntiBullyingWeek #Henley



Gillotts School @GillottsHenley · Nov 14

It's our second PSHE day today, and Y9s have been visited by Mike Dix, Schools Liaison Officer for @tvpsouthandvale @ThamesVP to talk about the dangers of #CountyLines. Really powerful, relevant stuff. Thanks Mike #Henley #education





Gillotts School @GillottsHenley · Nov 18

#ecoweek is up and running in school, with plenty of signage around to remind us of the daily themes!
[@EcoSchools](#) #Henley #ecoschools #environment #Sustainability



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Gillotts School @GillottsHenley · Nov 20

Hot on the heels of #EcoWeek, the Student Council have restarted the [@TerraCycleUK](#) [@TerraCycle](#) Recycling programme. We are looking for crisp packets, Oral care products, and Pens. To support, please drop items at reception. #Henley #studentleadership #Sustainability @EcoSchools



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Gillotts School @GillottsHenley · Nov 28

Many thanks to @DarbonMel for coming to Gillotts yesterday to meet our Y8s and 9s! #Henley #inclusionmatters



Gillotts Library @GillottsOLC · Nov 28

Some lovely memories of our fantastic day meeting @DarbonMel @GreatSchLibs #inclusionmatters



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Gillotts School @GillottsHenley · Dec 2

Thanks to our Head students and Student Council for running the tombola at Henley Xmas Fair on Friday. We raised around £135 for @coolearth, our school charity this year. 🍷🍷🍷 #Henley #Christmas #schoolcharity #coolearth



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Gillotts School @GillottsHenley · Dec 6

Thank you to our student who brought in some traditional Dutch spiced biscuits for staff, to celebrate Sinterklaas St Nicolas. Lovely! #Henley #community #NBOA



You Retweeted



Gillotts Library @GillottsOLC · Dec 9

We are celebrating the lead up to Christmas with kindness calendars and Christmas gift tag tasks.





Gillotts School @GillottsHenley · Dec 12

Really looking forward to finally working with @realMarkLloyd after a lot of time trying to get something together! 🍴🍷 #Henley #schoolinners #lifeskills #makeadifference



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This year's 80 Bronze and 24 Silver award students have made a good start on their different sections with a wide variety of activities underway with some wonderful volunteer work in the local area, including helping at old people's care homes, clubs for the disabled, cubs and brownies, local libraries, sport clubs and charity shops.

It is a good time for a couple of reminders

- the deadline for the second payment was 12 December, so any outstanding payments must be paid urgently please.
- 2 of the 3 sections need to be well underway before the deadline of 21st February.
- The expedition training day is on 18 January at school, from 9.00 am until approx 4.00 pm. Further details of this day will be sent out after the Christmas break.

If you have any queries, please email Mrs Michael and Dr Omar DofE@gillott.org.uk

Food

Year 10 students have produced fantastic work this term, particularly when making Christmas star breads. Well done to all!



A selection of 'CHEF OF THE MOMENT'

 <p>Freddie W Year 7 Macaroni cheese</p>	 <p>Rebeka Cintra Yr8 Burger styling</p>	 <p>Jemima Butterworth Year 7 Jam tarts</p>	 <p>Nina Govett Year 7 Bread rolls</p>
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Robotics

Well done to our Gillotts robotics team who have worked extremely hard, making great progress this term alongside STEM ambassadors Simon Crombie and Dominic Barton on their Core Values project, robot design and completing missions for the 2020 First Lego League 'City Shaper' tournament.

Mr Crombie has been fantastic in advising the year 7, 8, 9 & 10 team members on their robot design, programming and strategies for completing missions.



Mr Barton has guided our year 7 team members with brilliant research ideas for this year's Core Values project. The theme is architecture and students have had to identify a problem with a building or public space in our community. The team identified the need for a covered outdoor teaching area on the school site and have been busy designing prototypes of shelters for a selected area. They will be sharing their ideas with students and staff in the new year to gain feedback. We'd be grateful for feedback from parents too! If you have any thoughts or ideas on this subject please email them to fwakefield@gillotts.org.uk and they will be passed onto the team.

The Oxford First Lego League tournament will take place on 15th January 2020, at the [Rutherford Appleton Laboratory](#), Harwell Campus, Didcot. We wish the team all the best and lots of luck with this!

Computing

We have an exciting new coding club starting in January 2020! This is primarily for girls who are interested in coding, however boys are welcome too. Please see Mrs Wakefield in T3 or email fwakefield@gillotts.org.uk to sign up for it. We will be sending out more information in the new year.



Here on site, we're now running a **computer science Club for all girls** aged 11-18!

Girls Who Code is changing the face of technology around the globe - **Join us!**

What will I learn?

- Teamwork
- Time management
- Confidence
- Communication
- Functionals
- Conditionals
- Variables
- Loops

Clubs teach you about:



Sisterhood



Code



Impact

Topics can be:

- Art
- Fashion
- Sustainability / environment
- Games
- Music
- Storytelling
- Anything you like!

Mel Darbon visit 27th November

Years 8 and 9 had the opportunity to meet the author Mel Darbon. They had been prepared for the visit with information, displays and library copies of her book available beforehand. Mel is the author of 'Rosie loves Jack', her first book. Mel lived in Henley for many years; her children came to Gillotts School. Mel's book is based on her experiences with her brother, who is severely autistic and has needed full time care for all of his adult life. She also worked with students with Down syndrome at The Henley College; Rosie in the book has Down syndrome. She is a very feisty heroine, who goes on a big and scary adventure looking for her boyfriend, who has been sent away from home to deal with anger issues after a violent incident at college.

Mel gave inspiring talks to both year groups. She spoke movingly about the importance of being inclusive and caring about all human beings whatever their abilities and backgrounds. She gave many examples of influential people in our society who have Down syndrome or other disabilities and have achieved greatness. Students in both year groups had the opportunity to ask questions. At lunch-time Mel was available to talk to students and sign copies of her book which we sold with the collaboration of the Bell Bookshop, our excellent, friendly and knowledgeable independent bookshop in Henley.

In the afternoon Mel ran two workshops for years 8 and 9 with a smaller number of students who had expressed an interest in developing their creative writing skills. The year 8 group was over 35 in number; the session was lively and animated with students creating a character of their own. The year 9 session was with a much smaller group, which gave Mel the opportunity to do more one-to-one work with students.

There are some pictures of the day below, including some examples of the characters created in the workshops.



News from the Library

This term we have a team of helpers in the library from years 7 and 8. The year 8 helpers all joined the team last year and were keen to carry on and help to make the new students feel at home. They come along for one or two tutor times a week and help to create themed displays. This term's themes have included anti-bullying, Halloween, autumn, National Poetry Day and our author visit (Mel Darbon). They also help to put on display all the work created by year 7 classes when they come to their library lessons. We have been very excited by our blackboard, purchased this term. This allows for really spontaneous displays. Students are encouraged to add words to the board on whichever theme we are working on. We have had acrostic poems created on the themes of kindness and anti-bullying. At the moment there are some Christmas messages being posted. Next term the library helpers will be helping to plan events for World Book Day in March.

We are very lucky at Gillotts that the library takes part in two book award schemes. The children's book award (<https://fcbg.org.uk/childrens-book-award/>) involvement includes having a regular supply of new books for students to read and review. Students have also been voting for books for the Berkshire Book Award: <https://www.berkshirebookaward.org.uk/>. For both of these awards all of the voting is done entirely by young people, unlike some of the other book awards.

We also have our annual mini Christmas trees on display at the moment with gift tags for students to take home with ideas of tasks to complete over the holidays. We are also handing out kindness calendars for December. These have tasks for every day of the month and are available for every month of the year: <https://www.actionforhappiness.org/calendars> Students who take home a gift tag task or happiness calendar are rewarded with mini chocolate books. We also have a tradition of recycling tatty books by turning them into Christmas trees, angels and hedgehogs. Students have been making these either to leave on display or to take home. Old books are always available for those who do not have books at home which need to be destroyed! See some examples in our pictures below.



Please refer to the website where you will find a full list of my recommended reading books

www.gillotts.org.uk

Darwin News

Tutee of the Term

DABY Chloe Catt	DCJW/CF Lexi Whitehouse-Scott
DJAS/CEC Freddie Hodges	DGS Ella Hanley
DHK Charlotte Harris	DPJY Charlie Griffiths
DFMW Henry Allingham	DROM/DGB Olivia Lloyd
DHJR/DS Tom Francis	DLCM Vanessa Rosado
DJLG Kimberley Ellery	DRD/NFD Evie Hammant



Orwell News

Tutee of the Term

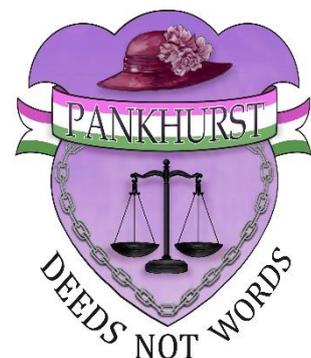


OPCM/EJB Ailish James	OCG Izzy Collins
OBEG Mark Gledhill	OTWN Georgia Catlin
OLEP Ceejay Richardson	OGMO Alexandre Khoury
OJDG Reuben Hough	OCH Alexandra Andreescu
OJSK Lottie Sarson	OACM Felix Wilson
OHRW/CST Charlotte Groom	OGDL/ELD Lucas Waller

Pankhurst News

Tutee of the Term

PKLO/LOA Reese Price	PCE/JFP Kate Hunt
PHJ/JJB Noah Mercer	PCD/LS Daisy Green
PGDM Ben Wilkinson	PACF Millie Goodall
PSMS/HLM George Moore	PFH/HJS Oliver Pilcher
PTAG Natalia Chochlinska	PREA Amy Havers
PSJW Eden Kent	PFLP Jackson Meredith



Term dates for 2019 - 2020

The dates set out below are the confirmed school term and holiday dates from September 2019.

Term	Dates	Number of days
Autumn Term	02 September - 25 October	40
October half term	28 October - 01 November	
Autumn Term	4 November - 19 December	34
Christmas holiday	20 December - 03 January	
Spring Term	06 January - 14 February	30
Spring half term	17 February - 21 February	
Spring Term	24 February - 03 April	30
Easter Holiday	06 April - 17 April	
Summer Term	20 April - 22 May	24
Late Spring half term	25 May - 29 May	
Summer Term	01 June - 21 July	37
Total		195

INSET days

The school will be closed to students on:

Monday 2 September 2019

Friday 27 September 2019

Friday 3 July 2020

Monday 20 July 2020

Tuesday 21 July 2020

Note that only Year 7 and Year 10 (and Year 11 Leaders) are required to attend on Tuesday 3 September 2019. The remainder of the school returns on Wednesday 4 September 2019.

Friday 8 May 2020 is the May Day bank holiday. (Note this has been changed from Monday 4 May.)

Early closures (12.30pm)

Thursday 26 September 2019

Staff and students preparation for Open Evening

Thursday 19 December 2019

Friday 17 July 2020

Term dates for 2020 – 2021

The dates set out below are the confirmed school term and holiday dates from September 2020.

Term	Dates	Number of days
Autumn Term	01 September - 23 October	39
October half term	26 October - 30 October	
Autumn Term	2 November - 18 December	35
Christmas holiday	21 December - 01 January	
Spring Term	04 January - 12 February	30
Spring half term	15 February - 19 February	
Spring Term	22 February - 01 April	29
Easter Holiday	02 April - 16 April	
Summer Term	19 April - 28 May	29
Late Spring half term	31 May - 4 June	
Summer Term	07 June - 21 July	33
Total		195

INSET days

The school will be closed to students on:

Tuesday 1 September 2020

Friday 25 September 2020

Monday 19 July 2021

Tuesday 20 July 2021

Wednesday 21 July 2021

Note that only Year 7 and Year 10 (and Year 11 Leaders) are required to attend on Wednesday 2 September 2020. The remainder of the school returns on Thursday 3 September 2020.

Monday 3 May 2021 is the May Day bank holiday.

Early closures (12.30pm)

Thursday 24 September 2020

Friday 18 December 2020

Friday 16 July 2021

Staff and students preparation for Open Evening