Parents' Newsletter

Dear parents

There has been a lot to celebrate at Gillotts this term - in what is my final sixth months at Gillotts, as I will be leaving at Easter 2026.

Although it seems like a long time ago now, it was a pleasure to celebrate the GCSE results of last year's Year 11 with them on results day at the end of August, and then again at Presentation Evening on 6 November. And there was such a lot to be proud of as we were named as the top school in Oxfordshire in the Government's recently published performance tables. There are no Progress 8 scores for the academic years 2024/25. This is because there is no KS2 assessment data available to calculate the baseline for Progress 8 for these years due to Covid-19 disruption. Whilst comparing progress is the fairest comparison, nevertheless we are thrilled to have come top in Oxfordshire on all the key measures. 76% of students achieved grade 5 or better in both English and mathematics, compared with a national average of 45% and an Oxfordshire average of 48%. We are so proud of the success of our students, especially when you consider that the pandemic impacted on them in Years 6 and 7. They have shown incredible resilience.

Year 11 2024-25 Cohort GCSE Presentation Evening

Gillotts' students have as normal been out and about with Year 11 German and History students having the opportunity to travel to Berlin. Rather closer to home, Year 11 also visited the River Pang for their fieldwork for their GCSE. There has also been plenty of sporting success across all age groups.

The Parents' Association Quiz was a fantastic fundraiser for the school, raising over £2000 to support our Climate Action Plan, in particular focusing on making the most of our fantastic environment for our students. It was great to see so many parents there. Huge thanks to the Parents' Association Committee and their band of helpers for the tremendous hard work that sits behind the success of the evening.

For the second year, we had a tree in the Christmas tree festival at St Mary's Church. Our crochet club truly rose to the challenge once again - though we weren't allowed to compete, as we won last year!

After the usual exceptionally busy term, it has been good over the last week or so to feel that Christmas is in sight. The KS3 play, 'The Snow Queen' was wonderfully enjoyable, with so many students in superb costumes supporting the lead roles. It was a highly seasonal hour of entertainment. As I write, we still have the Christmas Concert to look forward to on Thursday. The whole school will then get an opportunity to hear some of the highlights in final assembly on Friday. I do hope that the holidays will allow for some precious time with family and friends and some much-needed rest and relaxation.

See you all again in 2026.

Catharine Darnton,
Headteacher

Uniform

Our uniform at Gillotts is designed to be functional but also appropriate for school. When it is worn as intended, students do look well-presented and their appearance is consistent. Unfortunately, when students try to modify the uniform, its impact is reduced. Here are a few key reminders.

Skirts - please make sure skirts are the best size to achieve a good fit and that all the fastenings are in place and can be done up. The skirt should be worn as designed - please support us by making clear that it is not to be 'rolled'. It is important all students learn to make choices about what they wear, appropriate to context.

Jewellery - No jewellery should be worn except a light chain with a religious symbol, and a maximum of one stud earring in the lobe of each ear.

Hair styles - No extreme hairstyles, or non-natural colours (or combination of colours that are stark in contrast).

Operation Encompass

Our school/educational setting is part of Operation Encompass which is a national scheme that operates jointly between schools and police forces.

Operation Encompass is the method of reporting to schools, prior to the start of the next school day, when a child or young person has experienced domestic abuse.

As a school/educational setting we have ensured that a member of our staff, has been trained in the Operation Encompass procedures allowing us to then use the information that has been shared, in confidence, to support the child/ren in our care.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 identifies children who experience domestic abuse as victims of domestic abuse in their own right.

On 24 May 2024 Royal Assent was granted to The Victims and Prisoners Act. The Act placed Operation Encompass into Law. This places a statutory obligation on police forces to share Operation Encompass notifications with schools/educational settings.

We are keen to offer the best support possible to all our pupils and through Operation Encompass we will be able to provide the best possible support to our children

Anti-social behaviour from students on the way home and out-and-about

We are sorry to have to share that we have had an increasing number of complaints about anti-social behaviour from our students, when not on the school site, some of which have led to police reports. As you will be aware, students' behaviour off the school site is the responsibility of their parents. We would be very grateful if parents would talk to students about expectations for kind and respectful behaviour, wherever they are.

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 10 questions to answer. The questions look at the key areas such as happiness, safety, behaviour and school communication. 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 https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/

School Fund

Our School Fund is an opportunity for parents to support the quality of education for their children through making regular voluntary contributions to be used directly to provide resources for use in the classroom and at home.

Why do we need your support?

Unlike many schools, Gillotts has not had a tradition of regular individual donations to support the school. However, as you will have seen from media coverage, the financial climate for all schools has become increasingly difficult in recent years. School funding is still below 2010 levels in real terms - in spite of steadily rising costs - so in real terms, our income is falling. This is making it harder for the school to deliver the excellent teaching and learning we aspire to.

How much would we like you to contribute?

There is no obligation or pressure to donate but, if you would like to, we will be grateful for whatever you can afford. Suggestions donations are below.

If you give £10 per month, this would give us £120 per year – with Gift Aid, that is £150!

If you give £1 per day, this would give us £365 per year – with Gift Aid, that's over £450 per year!

How does this work with the support provided by the Parents' Association?

The Parents' Association has provided invaluable support to Gillotts for many years. The Association fully endorses this request for individual regular contributions. However, payments will be through the school, to preserve parents' anonymity.

> "The PA fully supports the school in striving to maintain a high standard of education for our children in the face of reduced income. Donating to the School Fund will be a way of trying to ensure that our children continue to receive the excellent standard of education that Gillotts at present provides. The School Fund is also a way for parents/ carers who do not have time to help with the PA to be involved with the school."

What will we spend the funds on?

We will spend the funds on ensuring all curriculum subjects are well resourced, including with the additional new online resources that we know students and their parents value so much. This will enable us to support students to continue to make the outstanding progress that has become the norm in recent years.

Please give whatever you can – fill in and return the form attached – thank you for your support.

House Award Update

Gillotts House/Not By Ourselves Alone update - December 2025

The Autumn term is always a very busy one at Gillotts. Our school motto of Non Nobis Solum is always at the forefront of trying to ensure the school community upholds our three key values of Kindness, Respect and Not Doing Harm. Giving students the opportunity to demonstrate these values and celebrating them when they do is an important part of school life. Furthermore, it contributes to an important sense of belonging within the school for our whole community.

From a House perspective, the autumn term gives the opportunity for lots of activities to get involved in, as new Year 7s get settled, Inter House sports competitions kick off, and we enjoy all the fun activities, fundraising and community initiatives around Christmas.

So far this term, Houses have participated in:

- Inter House Sports!
- Fortnightly House Quizzes in Tutor Time (physical and mental!)
- Gillotts' Got Talent!
- Nomad Food Bank collections (Biggest collection, Best decorated boxes)
- Whole School Rock Paper Scissors Championships
- Whole School Stare Down, Match Up Championships
- Whole School Tug of War Championships
- Best Xmas themed outfit
- And much more!

Students also continue to accumulate points for their house through their achievements in school, excellent efforts and attendance, and displaying acts of kindness and community spirit around the school site.

Across all the Houses, we have had some change in staffing with new House Administrators in each House! We are delighted to welcome to #teamgillotts

Helen Erceg in Darwin House

Laura Mines in Pankhurst House

Bridget Will in Orwell House

The updated House points score will be revealed at the start of term in tutor time, and also posted on our social media!

The best place to see everything else that is going on is through our school social media pages at Instagram and X:

www.instagram.com/gillottshenley

www.twitter.com/gillottshenley

We are always keen to also hear of achievements and exploits outside of school as well, so if you have any newsworthy stories, please do let us know!

Darwin News Tutee of the Term

DGS: Toby Nicholson

DHLS: Lile Maglakelidze

DJLG: Anna Bottoni

DROM/BJB: Lucas James

DCHA: Lucio Lo Monaco and Julia Worowoska

DTWN: Milo McGinn

DHLK: Olivia Vines

DPJY: Jemma Cooper

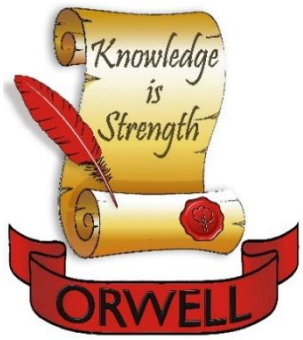
DNMM/AD: Jack Allen

DFMW: Max Karpiuk-Mindrean

DAPM: Ruby Ellery

DSGG: Evan Strong

Orwell News Tutee of the Term



OHJS/SEL: Maisie Edwards

OPCM: Matilda Cupido

OCM: Grace Vickers

OGMO/JWW: Benjy Burfitt

OJJ/AB: Freddie Bertoli-Smith

OHRW: Alex Chater

OTL/NFD: Joy Kemboi

OJRE: Soraya Stender

OCG: Evie Jacob

OADT: Arthur O'Farrell

OACM: Annabelle Kosta-Ford

OCTS/DR: Olivia Wolska

Pankhurst News Tutee of the Term

PSC: Ava Collis

PFLP: Georgia Waldrom

PJH: Ben Freeman

PLS/LJA: Conan Cuzen

PJDS: Jake Meridith

PKLO/CF: Olivia Zyda

PWJH: Flo Hughes

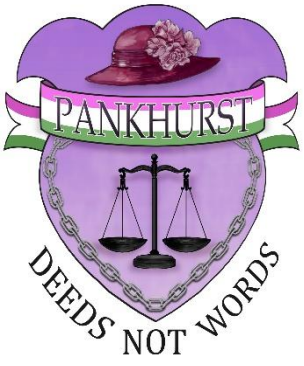
PGDM: Joey Thompson

PSMS/ELD: Caitlyn Farland

PKAP: Finley Smith

PCEG: Lily-May Young

PCJW: Edie Hodges



Geography

Year 11 River Pang Geography Field Trip 15th – 17th September

We took each of the three Year 11 Geography classes to study the River Pang in September. They are required to complete two pieces of fieldwork for their GCSE course, with them having visited Bristol in June for their human geography work.

The trips to the River Pang involved finding out about the formation of the river and its landforms. They learnt about the global significance of the river as one of only around 170 chalk streams worldwide. They also learnt about the local geology and how the interaction between the chalk and clay had led to the formation of the river and its landforms.

We visited three sites and at the second one they took measurements using a range of equipment including the width, depth and velocity of the river. They worked really well in their groups and collected some very accurately measured data.

They will be asked questions about their physical geography field trip in one of their final exams and they are currently being prepared for their mock exam on this subject.

I would like to thank all the Year 11s for being such excellent students out in the field and also the geography and LSA team for helping me with the trip organisation, delivery and for driving the minibus. I would also like to thank Miss Pearson, our wonderful trips administrator, for all her help.

Looking ahead

We now have a bit of a break until mid-May when we will be taking the whole of Year 8 to Lulworth Cove over three days. They will complete investigations into coastal landforms and processes and will be rewarded with a fantastic ice cream at the end of the visit. In early June, we will take the Year 10 GCSE Geographers for a day trip to Bristol which will include the famous boat trip around the regenerated Bristol Docks.

Dr Newbold

Modern Foreign Languages

Year 11 Berlin Trip 19th – 22nd October

In October, forty Year 11 students, accompanied by five members of staff, set off on an exciting four-day cultural and historical trip to Berlin. The group enjoyed a packed itinerary that brought the city's past and present to life.

After an early start, students arrived in Berlin ready to explore. The first evening included photo opportunities at the Brandenburg Gate and a reflective visit to the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe. This was followed by a memorable sunset visit to the Reichstag Building, where they completed a self-guided tour of the iconic glass dome.

Monday's activities began at the Berlin Spy Museum, where students tried out interactive exhibits and learned about espionage throughout the Cold War. A relaxing river cruise on the Spree offered a new perspective on Berlin's architecture and landmarks. The afternoon concluded with an immersive visit to the DDR Museum, giving students a hands-on look at life in former East Germany.

On Day 3 students saw the remaining sections of the Berlin Wall, followed by a tram ride to the colourful and globally renowned East Side Gallery. In the afternoon, the group visited the poignant Stasi Prison Memorial (Hohenschönhausen), gaining insight into political repression in the GDR. The day ended with dinner at a traditional German restaurant, where many students tried Currywurst - a German classic - before returning to the hotel.

On the final morning, we headed to the Fernsehturm (TV Tower) for panoramic views across the city. After taking in the spectacular skyline, it was time to make our way to the airport and say goodbye to Berlin.

The students were fantastic throughout the trip - engaged, curious, and a credit to the school. A huge thank you goes to the staff who not only helped to plan and prepare the visit but those who accompanied the group, all helping to make the visit such a success.

Ms Allen

Art GCSE Gallery 2025

A selection of artwork by our GSCE art students from this term

PE

This year we have again been involved in the South Oxfordshire league for both Hockey and Rugby. Unfortunately, in hockey only 3 schools have entered it this year so we have had fewer games - and yet again in Rugby we have had some games cancelled by other schools.

In Hockey we have had a lot less games as many schools haven't entered this league this year - however both the Year 7 and Year 8 A teams are unbeaten and we have had success in the older year groups too.

In Rugby again games have been cancelled by other schools however the year 7's are unbeaten and the Year 10's have had a good run in the Continental Tyres School Vase tournament losing out narrowly last week to St George's School in Hertfordshire in round 4.

Other sporting events this term

Duathlon
We did really well in the Duathlon (consisting of a 2k ergo row and a 2k run) held at Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge School on November 7th.

U14 Girls - 1st - with Zara Tate achieving individual gold and Sophia Price individual Bronze
U14 Boys - 1st - with Ernie Sterjo achieving individual Bronze
U16 Girls - 1st - with Frances Sadler achieving individual Gold
U16 Boys - 3rd
This was a great result for Gillotts -all the students tried so hard and did us and themselves proud.

South Oxfordshire Area Cross Country
This was held at Gillotts on Tuesday 11th November - on what was a very cold and damp day. The results were as follows:

Year 7 Girls - 3rd - with Harriet McLean achieving individual Silver
Year 7 Boys - 1st - with Ambrose Paviour achieving individual Gold and Patrick Woolley achieving individual Silver and our whole team coming in the top 10
Year 8/9 Girls - 1st with Zara Tate achieving Individual Gold - and the whole team coming in the top 10
Year 8/9 Boys - 3rd - with Ted Thommond achieving individual Silver and Irving Paviour achieving individual Bronze and the team narrowly missing out on 2nd place by 2 points
Year 10/11 Girls - 2nd with Frances Sadler achieving individual Silver
Year 10/11 Boys - 3rd

Year 11 Badminton Tournament
This was held on Tuesday 18th November at Icknield - this was a new thing for us to enter and we did it to support more exposure to Badminton for our GCSE PE students - only being allowed to take 4 students - but we won the competition which was great for our first time of entering.

Indoor Ergo Rowing Competition held on Wednesday 26th November
This was another successful event for us with the following results:
U13 Girls - 2nd with Maddie Dennison achieving individual Silver
U13 Boys - 1st with Jax McKinnon achieving individual Silver
U15 Girls - 2nd with Darcy Kenny achieving individual Bronze
U15 Boys - 2nd with Zeno Chiappe achieving individual Gold
Henley Rowing Club have continued to offer ergo Rowing training every Friday lunchtime and we are also lucky enough again this year to have an introduction to Squash in KS3 lessons provided by Henley Squash Club.

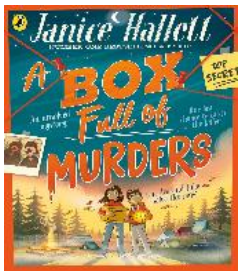
Hayley Rogers
Head of PE

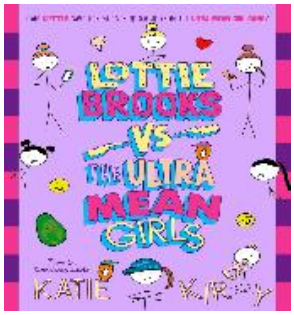
Library News

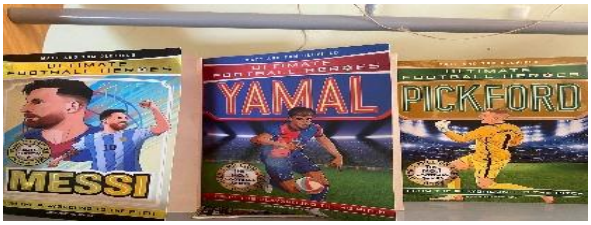
We're excited to share updates about new books, upcoming events, helpful resources, and ways students can make the most of our wonderful space here at **Gillotts.** This is in part written by students. We have begun replenishing our stock of fiction titles, adding Football and Sport related titles and a selection of Manga graphic novels, from our specialised supplier.

Check out our latest New Books:

- **Lottie Brook Vs the Ultra Mean Girls** - Popular Diary Genre title
- **Yamal, Pickford, Messi - Football Heroes Series** - popular Football heroes series
- **A Box Full of Murders -** Mystery detective offering from the ace crime write Janice Hallett
- **The Summer I turned Pretty** - Popular YA Read from the US.







Authors visiting - Philip Kavvadias UK children's author is visiting during World Book Day week in March to run creative workshops with us https://philipkavvadias.com/
Games - Chess and Scrabble and other board games always available at lunchtimes for students use (*Chess Club takes place Week B Friday lunchtime*)

Clubs in the Library

Friday lunchtime Week B Chess club. Any parents with chess boards they can donate? We would love to receive them.

Eco Club - every Thursday lunchtime in the library.
During November Gillotts was invited by Greener Henley greenerhenley.org.uk to the Science Fair at Henley College; Year 7 students demonstrated their sustainability projects and got their photo in the Henley Standard. At Eco Club in addition, we take part in whole school activities, helping to achieve some of the aims and objectives of applying for our Green Flag Award. A morning of activities organised by Greener Henley involved our students, as well as those from other local secondary schools, leading some eco experiments with primary school children. Our Eco Club members were a wonderful example to the community of what fantastic work is going on at Gillotts with regard to climate change awareness projects.

We have also been checking on the Quad planters and doing some pruning activity, as well as identifying some bird song and plants and collecting leaves and pine cones.
On cold/wet days, we have an informal group discussion in the library about the environment and recycling, whilst making eco decorations for display. One week, students were enjoying some of the inspiring eco books in the library and creating posters based on the books.

Students attending the Science Fair in Henley College, organised by Greener Henley
www.greenerhenley.org.uk

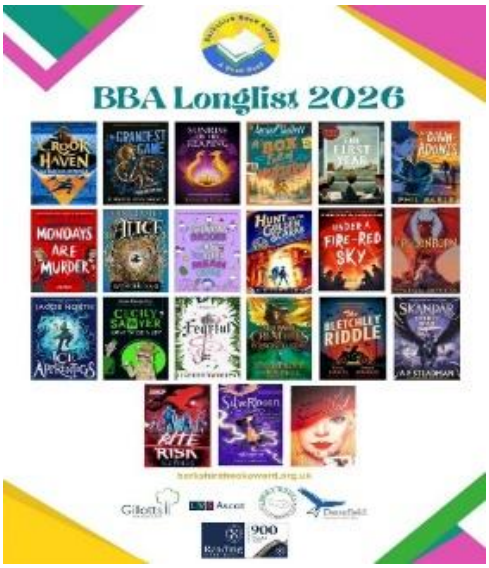
Monday Lunchtime - Library Helpers session - Certificates awarded during last week of term.

Italian Club - Starting from January 2026. Conversational Italian and quizzes regarding all aspects of life in Italy.

Book Awards We Follow

The Berkshire Book Award was launched in 2004 to celebrate the best, recently published books written for young people. This Award is the first of its kind in Berkshire and is unique because young people both nominate the titles and select the winner. Thousands of young people from over 70 Berkshire schools have taken part. **Gillotts** whilst being in Oxfordshire, still participates in the Award as its Founder has strong links to the school. Year 7s are on the judging panel this year; we will be visiting Reading School on 4th February for the Shortlist ceremony - details to follow.

Fiction Titles on the Awards Longlist:



Performing Arts

Our Student Leaders have shared some thoughts on the start of the year in Drama and Music.

The Snow Queen - Erin Nilsson - Drama Captain

The Snow Queen performed by KS3 on the 8th and 9th of December was a huge success with exceptional acting and fabulous performance skills. Myself and five other Drama Captains, Isla, Isobel, Izabela, Lorelei and Ruby helped direct the performance along with Mrs Alder. Mr Grice was on tech along with Tech Club and there has been amazing feedback from parents and students on the play. So much love and creativity was put into this play from the directors but just as importantly the cast who all came together after school every Monday from September to put the play together. Such a lovely community was formed from the Snow Queen and on behalf of all the Drama captains thank you so much for the opportunity.

Tech Club - Isobel Moore - Drama and Tech Captain

As we wrap up another amazing performance, Gillotts Tech Club has been growing a lot over the last couple of months and we have been so excited to welcome all the new members who've joined us. It's been awesome getting to work with many new people who have an interest in lighting, sound and all of the behind the scenes that help bring our school performances to life! We're looking forward to taking on bigger productions and to continue expanding our skills as we move forward!

Mary Poppins - Tijen Mercangoz - Music Captain

My name is Tijen and I am a music captain alongside Penny. I am very excited to let you know that the preparations for Mary Poppins are coming along very well! This is of course all thanks to all our organized staff and enthusiastic students meeting up and taking part in rehearsals at lunch. With a bit more time and hard work, I have no doubt that the musical will come to life beautifully and I hope you all will be able to enjoy watching your children on stage soon.

Drama Clubs - Ruby Ahara Miller - Drama Captain

Our Drama clubs at Gillotts are incredibly successful and have continued to grow each term! Starting in September we hold clubs for year 7s, 8s and 9s which have created a great space to explore, build confidence and practise Drama. Over the terms our Drama clubs have made a vibrant community, where students have made great friendships. As well as expressing their love for acting beyond lesson time. For our Year 7s especially, the club has been a wonderful place to meet new companions and settle into school life.

Music Clubs - Penny White - Music Captain

This academic year has been buzzing with activity in the Music Department. Many days - at breaktime and lunch - as you walk past the practice rooms, you can hear the beautiful melodies of the pianos being played, or the impressive beats of the drumkits. The music rooms often have clubs going on, from choir, to ukulele club, to jazz band - there's something for all ages and different musical interests. I have participated in a vast range of these clubs over the years, and have thoroughly enjoyed the introduction to music and instruments that Gillotts can provide, and would highly recommend joining the clubs to any new or existing students!

Choir - Preparation for the Christmas Concert - Isla Hallett- Drama Captain

Learning new songs and being able to sing them together is a wonderful treat. Especially in main events like the Christmas Concert. At first, like with every new song you sing, it's hard to get a grip on it, people mess up notes and it goes quite slow. But once you get going it sounds harmonious and I for one really enjoy it. This year the choir is singing 'Where are you Christmas?' from Dr. Seuss' 'How the Grinch stole Christmas', for the Christmas Concert. It is a lovely song with an amazing feel to it and it perfectly reminds me of Christmas. There are always two parts when learning these songs and learning harmonies is no easy task. I think the choir can all agree with me in saying that Ms King is brilliant at helping us learn these parts, without her, Choir would definitely not be as spectacular. But still, as we prepare to sing our hearts out this year, I for one can't wait for everyone at school to listen and enjoy.

Crochet Club

Christmas Tree Festival St. Mary's Church

Gillotts Crochet Club once again had the opportunity to decorate a Christmas tree for the festival taking place in St. Mary's Church, an initiative in partnership with the Henley Herald. Many Churches around the UK hold these during December and invite members of the community to purchase a tree and decorate it for others to then visit and admire. The festival aims to raise money for the church. All the trees were supplied by the Tree Barn along with a donation to the church. This year Gillotts Crochet Club has the honour of holding the golden star for the winner of 2024! The theme they chose this year was 'Mischievous Elf has taken all the laundry from the washing line'. The Crochet Club made little jumpers, socks, hats and trousers that formed the main decoration for the tree and Katy Greene the Crochet Teacher made ELF who sits proudly on the top, carrying the winning star on his back! Between December 2nd and 12th, visitors to the church were invited to choose their favourite tree and vote for it.

Duke of Edinburgh Award

Our 300th Bronze DofE award at Gillotts!

Our 300th student has just completed their Bronze award at Gillotts. We are so very proud of all the students for the hard work and contribution they make by volunteering in the local community when completing their DofE awards.

This year there are 109 year 9 students taking part in Bronze award and 15 signed up to do Silver award.

Important dates:

Bronze Training Day 24th January in school. Details will be emailed in the new year.

Practice expedition 9-10 May

Assessed expedition 20-21 June

It is a good idea to let sports teams. rowing clubs etc know students will not be available these weekends.

Email DofE@gillotts.org with any queries.

We would like to thank the members of the community supporting Gillotts students to complete their award. The DofE awards rely on people helping in this way, it is much appreciated.

Details of how to complete an assessor report can be found here DofE.org/assessor/

Food Technology

In food this term year 10 have been working hard. The cheese cobbles and coloured pasta is always a favourite double lesson for all and this year Zeno Chipappe made it onto the food wall of fame earning chef of the moment for the key stage 4 category with his yellow and green bows. Meanwhile Noah Sartin has earned himself chef of the moment for his perfectly wrapped enchiladas which is a year 9 recipe for the key stage three board. We have been learning about healthy eating, sugar, fibre, food safety and lots more in key stage 3 and the year 7's have been doing very well and have built up their skills and the latest dish they have been cooking has been the macaroni and cheese. It's nearly Christmas as I write this which means puff pastry Christmas trees, chocolate truffles and decorated biscuits for key stage three followed by star bread in year 10. Meanwhile the year 11's are doing very well plugging away at their course work and I can't wait to see what they all cook in their final exams. Happy Christmas everyone.

Careers

It's been a busy first term for Gillotts students where Careers and Post 16 activities are concerned! Year 11 students continue to receive one to one appointments with Charlotte, our independent Careers Advisor. In addition, Charlotte runs a drop in, no appointment needed, **Careers Clinic every Tuesday from 12:35-13:05** in the Careers Office (located in Mansion Block). All students from any year are welcome to come and speak to her. She has a wealth of knowledge and can help with anything from advice for Work Experience to choosing post 16 subjects for future career paths. In addition, there have been 3 PSHE days since September for Year 7, 9 and 11 - more information below.

Year 9 PSHE day: Career Bites

On Wednesday 1st October, Year 9 were lucky enough to receive talks from a range of professionals in careers including: journalism, photography, TV production, CID and marketing. Thank you to those parents and friends of the school who volunteered their time to come and talk to our students; it was so great to bring careers 'alive' in the classroom. The Head of Years 12 and 13 at Piggott School, along with 2 ex Gillotts students who now attend their sixth form, also came to school in the afternoon to talk to Year 9 about choices for GCSE and what their sixth form offer is.

Year 11 Post-16 evening

On Thursday 9th October, Year 11 students and their parents were invited to a post-16 information and revision evening. Following the talks by Mr Druce and the Heads of Houses, parents and students were able to explore fifteen post-16 provider marketing stalls including Piggott, Borlase, Henley College, BCA, Reading College and Oxfordshire Advanced Skills - UK Atomic Energy.

Windsor Colleges Group Coffee Morning

On Tuesday 4th November parents were invited to school to attend a coffee morning hosted by Community Partnership Manager, Poonam, from the Windsor Colleges Group. It was an opportunity for parents to hear about what the Colleges offer at Post 16 and also to find out more about the application process and ask questions.

Year 10 Cambridge Workshop

On Friday 7th November, 60 Year 10 students participated in a workshop run by an outreach coordinator, Eponine Wong, from the University of Cambridge. Students learned about the colleges at Cambridge, Russell Group universities and how A-level choices can affect your future career. The main take-aways were the importance of 'super curriculars' and the importance of transferable skills.

Year 11 PSHE day: Henley College

On Thursday 13th November, Year 11 spent the day at Henley College as part of their school partnership day. Students attended subject taster sessions, chosen in advance, to gain an insight into A-levels, BTECs, T-Levels and vocational diplomas. Students enjoyed their day and left feeling more confident about their post-16 choices.

BCA, Piggott and Henley College Assemblies

Throughout this term, BCA (Berkshire School of Agriculture), The Piggott School and Henley College have delivered assemblies to many year groups. These focussed on the range of options available when students leave Gillotts as well as giving students something to aspire to.

Year 7 PSHE day: Skills and Careers

During this day, students started with a session on skills we develop in school which can be transferable to the world of work in the future. They also worked together in small groups on a problem-solving activity, 'the Quandary' to carefully consider the skills of fifteen crew members on a mission to Mars. Students had to discuss and decide, by unanimous consensus, which four people were the most essential for the initial phase of establishing a habitable base on Mars. The day ended with students completing a 'Future Skills Questionnaire'. This is a set of questions designed for young people in schools to help them to think about their skills, strengths and what they might like to do in the future.

Year 10 Career Development Workshops

On Tuesday 9th December, invited students in Year 10 had the first of 6 workshops on Careers Development, all designed and led by Rhian from Aspire2Be. On average we work 90,000 hours in our lifetime so one key message we all took away from the first session was the importance of trying to make sure we can find a career which we will enjoy doing.

Thank you to those parents who have signed up to volunteer to deliver a careers talk / event at Gillotts. If you would like to volunteer to come into school, please do contact me via lallen@gillotts.org.

Ms Laura Allen

Parents' Association

Many thanks to all those involved in organising our annual Quiz Night a couple of weeks ago. It was a great turn out and a great evening. More importantly, the evening raised £2100!

Term dates for 2025 - 2026

The dates set out below are the confirmed school term and holiday dates from September 2025.

Term	Dates	Number of days
Autumn Term	01 September – 24 October	40
October half term	27 October - 31 October	
Autumn Term	03 November - 19 December	35
Christmas holiday	22 December - 02 January	
Spring Term	05 January - 13 February	30
Spring half term	16 February - 20 February	
Spring Term	23 February - 27 March	25
Easter Holiday	30 March - 10 April	
Summer Term	13 April - 22 May	29
Late Spring half term	25 May – 29 June	
Summer Term	01 June - 20 July	36
Total		195

INSET days
The school will be closed to students on:
Monday 1 September 2025
Friday 26 September 2025
Thursday 23 October 2025
Friday 24 October 2025
Monday 5 January 2026
Monday 20 July 2026
Note that only Year 7 and Year 10 (and Year 11 Leaders) are required to attend on Tuesday 2 September 2025. The remainder of the school returns on Wednesday 3 September 2025.

Monday 4 May 2026 is the May Day Bank Holiday.

Early closures (12.30pm)
Thursday 25 September 2025 Staff and students preparation for Open Evening
Friday 19 December 2025
Friday 17 July 2026

Term dates for 2026 - 2027

The dates set out below are the confirmed school term and holiday dates from September 2026.

Term	Dates	Number of days
Autumn Term	01 September - 23 October	39
October half term	26 October - 30 October	
Autumn Term	02 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 - 25 March	24
Easter Holiday	26 March - 9 April	
Summer Term	12 April - 28 May	34
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 2026
Friday 25 September 2026
Monday 19 July 2027
Tuesday 20 July 2027
Wednesday 21 July 2027
Note that only Year 7 and Year 10 (and Year 11 Leaders) are required to attend on Wednesday 2 September 2026. The remainder of the school returns on Thursday 3 September 2026.

Monday 3 May 2027 is the May Day Bank Holiday.

Early closures (12.30pm)
Thursday 24 September 2026 Staff and students preparation for Open Evening
Friday 18 December 2026
Friday 16 July 2027

Term dates for 2027 - 2028

The dates set out below are the confirmed school term and holiday dates from September 2027.

Term	Dates	Number of days
Autumn Term	02 September - 22 October	37
October half term	25 October - 01 November	
Autumn Term	02 November - 21 December	36
Christmas holiday	22 December - 04 January	
Spring Term	05 January - 11 February	28
Spring half term	14 February - 18 February	
Spring Term	21 February - 7 April	35
Easter Holiday	10 April - 21 April	
Summer Term	24 April - 26 May	24
Late Spring half term	29 May - 2 June	
Summer Term	05 June - 21 July	35
Total		195

INSET days
The school will be closed to students on:
Thursday 2 September 2027
Friday 3 September 2027
Friday 1 October 2027
Monday 20 December 2027
Tuesday 21 December 2027
Note that only Year 7 and Year 10 (and Year 11 Leaders) are required to attend on Monday 6 September 2027. The remainder of the school returns on Tuesday 7 September 2027.

Monday 1 May 2028 is the May Day bank holiday.

Early closures (12.30pm)
Thursday 30 September 2027 Staff and students preparation for Open Evening
Friday 17 December 2027
Friday 21 July 2028