



Newsletter 26-27 - Autumn 1 - 25th September

The Week Ahead

Monday 28th September:

PE: 1 Donaldson and 5 Leonard

Clubs: Mini-Athletics, Football Squad (Invite Only)

Tuesday 29th September:

PE: 2 Jeffers, 4 Morpurgo, 6 Anderson

Clubs: Artikids

Wednesday 30th September:

PE: Reception Ladybirds, 1 Donaldson, 3 Dahl, 5 Leonard

Clubs: Minecraft Club, Cookstars

Thursday 1st October:

PE: 2 Jeffers, 4 Morpurgo

Clubs: Prime Sports Coaching - Football

Friday 2nd October:

PE: 3 Dahl, 6 Anderson

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Welcome to our weekly school newsletter.

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Awards and Certificates



Values Awards

Noah W, Eloise B, Louis H, Alfie T, Lani P, Grayson F, Cleo H, Cain P

PE Stars

Ronnie R, Noah M, Amber-Louise C, Lukas S, Karum A-E, Antoni L

Handwriting Awards

Barnaby J

Clubs Awards

Lola M

House Points

Yellow Eagles - 105

Green Falcons - 159

Blue Hawks - 107

Red Kestrels - 82

Congratulations to **Green Falcons** who are this week's winners!

Mrs Shanks - Assistant Headteacher

Those of you with us last year will remember me writing to you to explain that I was reducing my days of work to three per week and Mrs Honeybourne would become Co-Headteacher for the remaining two days.

In order to strengthen the leadership team even further, we advertised for a new 'Assistant Headteacher' for our school and we are delighted that Mrs Shanks was successful in her application. Mrs Shanks remains as our SENCo and Inclusion Lead but being Assistant Headteacher recognises the important work she does throughout the school with children, families and staff.

Congratulations Mrs Shanks!

Reception Open Day



GILLINGHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

OPEN DAYS 2026

Come meet our amazing team, tour our buildings and grounds and experience the joy of learning at our school!

TUESDAY 6TH OCTOBER

 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM AND 1.30PM – 3.00PM

SATURDAY 10TH OCTOBER

 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

If you're considering a place for your child, we warmly welcome you to attend. No need to book - just turn up during the times listed above.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call - 01747 823245

email: office@gillinghamprimary.dorset.sch.uk

Hello Yellow



On Friday 9th October, we will be taking part in Hello Yellow, to raise funds for Young Minds. Pupils can come to school wearing a yellow item instead of one item of their uniform in exchange for a donation! Donations can be made online at <https://fundraise.youngminds.org.uk/s/11182/12282> or with cash in school

Parents' Evening



We will be holding our Autumn Term parents' evenings on Thursday 15th October and Tuesday 20th October, from 3:30pm - 6:30pm on both nights. Instructions for booking a slot will be sent home in the near future.

School Photos



We have our individual and sibling school photographs scheduled for Thursday 15th October. Please send your child to school in full school uniform (not PE kit) and looking their best in preparation for these.

Harvest Festival



We will be holding our Harvest Festival on Wednesday 21st October in school time, and will be collecting donations for Gillingham Food Bank. Please send your child to school with any donations in the morning. Please see the below message from the Food Bank for a guide to what would be most useful.

We remain well stocked for beans, pasta, soup, cereal and tinned vegetables, but would appreciate any other non-perishable food items. We would also appreciate other necessities such as shampoo & conditioner, shower gel, toothpaste, liquid soap & bars of soap, deodorant, tissues and toilet rolls.

OPAL





















We are delighted with the early success of our OPAL programme, which is already having a hugely positive impact on playtimes across the school. The new Large Loose Parts area has quickly become a favourite, with children demonstrating impressive creativity, teamwork and problem-solving skills as they build, design and invent together. Our mud kitchen has been buzzing with activity, providing wonderful opportunities for imaginative play, collaboration and communication. It has been fantastic to see children of all ages engaged in purposeful, child-led play, developing confidence and friendships as they explore the new resources.

We are excited to continue developing our OPAL provision and look forward to sharing more of the children's adventures and achievements in the coming weeks. As our mud kitchen continues to grow in popularity, we would be very grateful for any donations of old kitchen utensils, pots, pans, jugs, mixing bowls, herbs, spices or other suitable items that could help enrich the children's imaginative play experiences.

Dates For Your Diary



Here you will find information regarding upcoming dates to be aware of. Further dates for later in the year can be found on our website calendar.

- Friday 9th October - Hello Yellow - mental health day
- Thursday 15th October - School Photos
- Thursday 15th October - 3:30pm-6:30pm
- Tuesday 20th October - 3:30pm - 6:30pm
- Wednesday 21st October - Harvest Festival
- **Monday 26th October - Friday 30th October - Autumn Half Term**
- **Monday 2nd November - INSET DAY**
- Friday 13th November - Children In Need
- Thursday 10th December - Christmas Lunch and Christmas Jumper Day
- Thursday 17th December - Class Christmas Parties
- **Monday 21st December - Friday 1st January - Christmas Holidays**
- **Friday 12th February - INSET DAY**

- **Monday 15th February - Friday 19th February - Spring Half Term**
- **Wednesday 3rd March - Friday 5th March - Year 5 Residential**
- **Friday 26th March - Bank Holiday**
- **Monday 29th March - Friday 9th April - Easter Holidays**
- **Monday 12th April - INSET Day**
- **Monday 3rd May - Bank Holiday**
- **Friday 28th May - INSET Day**
- **Monday 31st May - Friday 4th June - Summer Half Term**
- **Wednesday 21st July - Last day of school year**

Safeguarding at Gillingham Primary School



Gillingham Primary school is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for children, staff and visitors and promoting a climate where children and adults will feel confident about sharing any concerns, which they may have about their own safety or the well-being of others.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in our school is the responsibility of the whole school community. All adults working in this School (including visiting staff, volunteers and students on placement) are required to report instances of actual or suspected child abuse or neglect to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is a member of the school's leadership team.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Mrs Sue Preston (Headteacher)

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Mrs Ashlee Honeybourne (Deputy Head) Mrs Cathryn Cosh (Parent Support Worker) and Mrs Tamar Shanks (SENCO)

Resources and Information



Come and meet us !

New Access Wellbeing drop-in spaces are open in North Dorset offering free mental health and wellbeing support to anyone aged 18 and over, with no appointment needed.

The new drop-in services in North Dorset are provided by Dorset Mind, as part of a collaborative partnership with other charities and the NHS. Visit: [Access Wellbeing Dorset](#)

Whether you are looking for support or simply an informal chat, drop in and see how we can help you improve your wellbeing – completely free of charge. You can find us at the following venues:

Blandford - Contact Kat on mob: 07367 449737
Blandford Leisure Centre, Milldown Road DT11 7DB
Every Tuesday and Thursday from 10am till 3pm

Gillingham - Contact Clare on mob: 07366 686096
RiversMeet Leisure Centre, Hardings Lane SP6 4XH
Every Monday from 10am till 4pm
And at the Citizens Advice, Newbury Court SP8 4QX
Every Thursday from 10am till 4pm

Shaftesbury - Contact Laura on mob: 07367 465944
St Peter's Church Hall, 5 Gold Hill, Shaftesbury SP7 8LY
Every Wednesday from 10am till 4pm

Sherborne - Contact Alex on mob: 07366 687333
Digby Hall, Hound Street DT9 3AA
Every Tuesday from 10am till 4pm
Every Thursday from 10am till 1pm

Sturminster Newton - Contact Millie on mob: 07307 318124
The Vale Family Hub, 22a Butts Pond Industrial Estate DT10 1AZ
Every Tuesday from 10am till 4pm

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

You are the expert of your child

You Are Not Alone - Every 1st Tuesday of the month - 7.00pm - 8.30pm

A free monthly online drop-in for parents & carers

The **You Are Not Alone** community is a friendly and safe space run by Erik & Sally Wagter where you can come and learn about autism & PDA, ask questions, connect with like-minded people or simply listen and learn from other people's conversations.



In this community we talk about all sorts of things such as:

- helping your child regulate their emotions & feelings
- understanding autism and PDA
- navigating school and EHCPs
- Supporting your child with friendships
- understanding and managing challenging behaviour
- managing sensory needs
- developing a positive relationship with your child (family dynamics)
- exploring EOTAS or home education
- looking after your well being
- and so much more



Here's what parents have said:

"My husband Jamie was saying that in the last few sessions, he has learned so much more about autism and PDA than he has over the last year"

Jo (parent)

"Thank you so much for the group this evening. I can't tell you how grateful I feel and I really do feel less alone and more validated. My hope is back"

Louise (parent)

"Thank you so much for your support. I nearly chicken out in speaking but I'm glad I did. These sessions have been really helpful and I don't feel so alone"

Emma (parent)

If you would like to join the **next drop-in on Tuesday 6th January**, please send an email to sallywagter@gmail.com and we will send you the Zoom link.



Additional Support Courses for Parents

Three new courses offered by FACE, separate from the school membership.

Full access to all three courses for £6.99/month

Complete at your own pace, cancel anytime.



Building Emotional Resilience

Work through six stages of directed exercises to help your child (and yourself) improve emotional resilience.



Facing Defiance

A specific strategy aimed at supporting parents of children aged 5 to 12 with ADHD, ODD or just very challenging behaviour.



You & Your Teen

A skills building course for one parent and one teen (12 years old and above) to learn how they can both improve their communication with each other.

www.facefamilyadvice.co.uk
Online Courses for Parents page
info@facefamilyadvice.co.uk





September Timetable

All regular sessions delivered live online via zoom. 90 minutes long

£24 each or FREE with School Membership

Book online at facefamilyadvice.co.uk

Recordings available for 48 hours

Facing Defiance	1 Sep 10am
Cannabis & Ketamine Awareness	1 Sep 7pm
Supporting Healthy Sleep	7 Sep 10am
Raising Self-Esteem	7 Sep 7pm
Introduction to OCD	8 Sep 10am
Decreasing Depression	8 Sep 7pm
What is ACT?	14 Sep 10am
Improving Family Communication	14 Sep 7pm
Supporting a Child with ADHD	15 Sep 10am
Understanding Addictive Behaviour	15 Sep 7pm
Understanding the Teenage Brain	21 Sep 10am
Understanding Anger	21 Sep 7pm
Autism: Improving Communication	22 Sep 10am
Supporting Healthy Screen Use	22 Sep 7pm
FREE - Masking Awareness	24 Sep 7-8pm
Anxiety Explained	28 Sep 10am
School Anxiety	28 Sep 7pm

Gillingham
Family Hub
Network Point

✉ northchildrenscentres@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
🖱 dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/find-a-family-hub



📅 From 7th September term time only 📍 Gillingham Library SP8 4UA
📞 Book in advance FREE - donations welcome 📍 Riversmeet SP8 4HX

Autumn Term Programme

Tuesday

10am - 11.30am

Learning Together for 0 - 5's drop in at **Gillingham Library**

A play-based group based on PEEP principles, focusing on social interaction and school readiness, including language and speech development. Access to the building is via the garden through the car park at the back of the building.

Wednesday

1.30pm - 2.30pm

New Baby group for 0 - 6 months at **Riversmeet**

If this is your first baby or your third, come along, meet other parents/carers and learn about different topics each week to support you and your little one. [Email us with your phone number to book a place.](#)



Part of Dorset's
Family Hub
network



Dorset Parenting Support
Service



“Behaviours that challenge us” Information Session

**Free one-off session for parent/carer(s) living in BCP and Dorset
with children aged between 5 and 11 years**

Join our one-off information session to find out more about how you can support and understand your child's challenges and difficulties. Session is delivered by a Child Clinical Psychologist.

Tuesday 2nd June 2026
10:00am - 12:00pm

Face to Face session, venue in BCP area

Wednesday 1st July 2026
10:00am - 12:00pm

Virtual session via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday 22nd September 2026

07:00pm - 09:00pm

Virtual session via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday 3rd November 2026

10:00am - 12:00pm

Virtual session via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday 19th January 2027

10:00am - 12:00pm

Virtual session via Microsoft Teams

To book your place, please visit our website:
actionforchildren.org.uk/dorset or scan the QR code



WORKING IN
PARTNERSHIP
WITH:

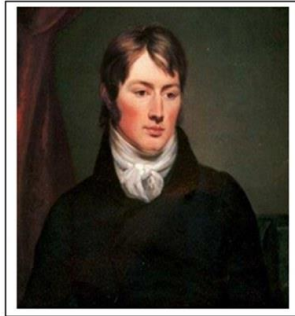


Action for Children, registered at 3 The Boulevard, Ascot Road, Watford WD18 5AG and registered as a charitable company limited by guarantee in England and Wales under number 04764232. Registered charity numbers 1097940/50038092.

Community News and Events

Sam Woodcock Presents an Illustrated and Imagined Conversation with John Constable

**Milton-on-Stour Church, Friday 25th September
7:00 for 7:30 p.m. start**



**We are delighted
that Sam will be
conversing with
John Constable to
find out what
brought him to
Dorset in 1823, and
to Milton in
particular.**

All Welcome

Admission is free, but funds are needed to help pay for urgent damp-proofing repairs to the church; so there will be a retiring collection for welcome donations. Repair costs are considerable, so generous donations would be welcome.

Refreshments are provided: including wine and a raffle

*Parking alongside at Milton School (SP8 5QD),
just follow the road sign.*

PRIMARY SPORTS & EDUCATION

LEWESTON HAF CAMPS

HOLIDAY FUN FOR AGES 5-13

SWIMMING ON ALL DAYS!

FOOTBALL
 LASER TAG
 GLOW SPORTS
 ARTS & CRAFTS
 INFLATABLE ASSAULT COURSE
 SWIMMING

LOTS MORE ACTIVITIES INCLUDING...

- Nerf Wars
- Dodgeball
- Capture the Flag
- Street Dance
- Tennis
- Cricket
- Archery
- Gardening/Horse Grooming
- Baking & Pizza Making
- Board Games
- Silent Disco
- Film & Popcorn
- Team Games
- Arts & Crafts
- ...and much more!

HAF DAY 9:00am - 1:00pm FREE FUN, ACTIVE & INCLUSIVE SESSIONS FULLY FUNDED FOR ELIGIBLE CHILDREN	STANDARD DAY 9:00am - 3:30pm £10 A FULL DAY OF ACTION-PACKED ACTIVITIES	EXTENDED DAY 8:00am - 5:30pm £15 MORE TIME MORE ACTIVITIES MORE FUN!
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CHILDREN WITH FREE SCHOOLS MEALS COME FOR FREE

BOOK NOW
<https://www.primary-sports.co.uk/events/2026/10/26/leweston-ultimate-activity-haf-camps-october-half-term-2026>
 07903 347412
ed.doble@primary-sports.co.uk

LEWESTON SCHOOL
 Sherborne, Dorset
 DT9 6EN

PLAY | LEARN | MAKE FRIENDS | BE ACTIVE

Contact Us



If you need to contact the school, there are several ways to do so. You can drop into reception when you drop your child off in the morning, or you may find it easier to contact via phone or email as it can get busy at drop-off and pick-up.

Gillingham Primary School

School Road

Gillingham

Dorset

SP8 4QR

01747 823245

office@gillinghamprimary.dorset.sch.uk

Visit us on the web at www.gillinghamprimary.dorset.sch.uk





















