William Gilpin School

Newsletter

27th November 2026

Courage, Compassion, Community

Headteachers Update

Our Collective Worship theme this week has been the British Value of individual liberty, a principle that sits particularly close to my heart. We are all individuals, with different strengths, interests and aspirations, and we should celebrate the freedom to be ourselves. As educators, our role is to help children discover who they are and what they are capable of becoming.

An important aspect of education is recognising and measuring progress. This week, children have completed standardised assessments in aspects of Maths and English. These termly assessments enable us to track individual progress closely, celebrate achievements and identify next steps in learning.

Talking of progress, Ofsted will be visiting us next week for our first monitoring visit. We are very much looking forward to sharing with the inspector the progress the school has made. Thank you to those of you who have taken the time to complete the parent survey.

There has been plenty of curriculum enrichment this week. Our Year 6 children have been developing essential road safety skills through Bikeability. I was incredibly proud of their listening skills and determination to succeed, whatever their starting point. They demonstrated grit, a character trait that I value enormously: the ability to persevere when something is challenging.

This same quality was evident at the cross-country event. Although our teams did not secure a placing this time, there were some impressive individual results. Congratulations to all our runners. Success is not always measured by medals, but by the effort, determination and personal progress made along the way.

And speaking of grit, it was fascinating to welcome explorer and author Jo Gambi to William Gilpin this week. Jo and her husband Rob have climbed the highest peak on each continent. Jo, whose book Holding On: A Story of Love and Survival recounts their experiences, gave our Saplings children an extraordinary insight into life in Antarctica. Several were inspired to tell me that they definitely wanted to follow in her footsteps. Whilst I was equally inspired, I think I am rather happier in warmer climes.

Providing opportunities to meet inspirational people, discover new interests and embrace challenges is such an important part of education. We want our children to have both the freedom to dream and the determination to pursue those dreams.

I am sure many of you are looking forward to hearing our choir sing at Winchester Cathedral on Wednesday and coming together as a school community for our Christingle Service on Friday afternoon. Two lovely occasions to mark the beginning of Advent.



Elizabeth Cox
Headteacher

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Class Updates

Acorns

In Acorns Maths this week we have been learning about 2D shapes and how we can use them to make pictures. We have also been starting to learn the names of 3D shapes and how we can use them in our construction activities. We are continuing our topic on materials by looking at the properties of materials and sorting them into different groups. We have had some amazing descriptive language coming from this as the children hide the objects in a feely bag and the others have to guess by description of smooth, rough, hard soft etc. Nativity practice continues and the children's acting skills are really developing as they get into character!



Acorns learning about properties of different materials

Saplings

This week in Saplings, we held a democratic vote to choose our new Anti-Bullying Council member. Congratulations to Harry C! All candidates presented their own speeches and flyers, explaining why they would be a great fit for the role. The class then cast their votes, placing their slips into a sealed ballot box and demonstrating the British Value of democracy. In Science, we have been exploring melting and freezing, investigating how materials change state. The children used thermometers to measure and record temperatures during their experiments, developing their understanding of how temperature affects changes in the state of matter.


Saplings had a visit from Jo Gambi to talk about Antartica

Oak

Another busy week in Oak. As well as our English and Maths progress assessments, we investigated air resistance in Science, timing how long it took parachutes with different sizes of canopy to fall from the balcony. The Year 6 pupils took part in Bikeability on Thursday, learning lots of new skills about riding and being safe on the roads. We also took a team of ten to Priestlands for a cross-country event on Wednesday. All the children tried incredibly hard in very cold conditions!


Well done Year 6 for completing your Bikeability training

Children and Families Worker Update



Christmas Services and Events

Would you like to find out more about the different church services and events taking place across our Benefice over the Christmas period? These include opportunities to sing carols, a fun and family-friendly 'dress-up' Crib Service, as well as a Blue Service offering a quieter, reflective space for anyone who may find Christmas a more challenging time.

If you would like to know more about what's happening, please do get in touch with me. I'd be very happy to share the details!
CFW@brockenhurstchurch.com

School Christmas Lunch

There is still time to order Christmas Lunches for children. Please use the survey link Christmas lunch order

After School Club Update


Felt Mice


Sausage and Cheese Pinwheels


Christmas Chocolates

NEXT WEEK

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
Mince Pies	Pom pom Snowmen and Snowballs	Cheese and Tomato Pinwheels	Pom pom Snowmen and Snowballs	Film Night

Photograph orders



Your school photos are now ready to order!

Please order before the deadline date below
to get free back to school delivery:

Monday 7th December 2026

After this date you can still order
but with direct home postage only.

Cardwell & Simons
The School Photography Specialists



To streamline the ordering process, please place your orders online at the provided link: https://ordering.cardwellandsimons.co.uk/login.

If you encounter any issues, such as being unable to locate your access code, please don't hesitate to contact the school office for assistance.

Little Squirrels Forest School



Upcoming FroWGS Events

With hotdogs by FroWGS, plus cakes, hot drinks, pizzas, gifts, vintage clothes, science corner, photography and art, as well as live music across the afternoon.



Upcoming FroWGS Events





Local Events & Information









Local Events & Information



Hampshire County Council
Library Service

Inspired By... Classic Book Activity

The Magic Faraway Tree

Lymington Library

Thursday 3 December
3:15-4:30pm



Join us to celebrate the magic of the Faraway tree! Make your own spinner to decide which fantastical land you'll journey to.

Suggested donation £1 per child
Parents/Carers must stay with children under 8

St Barbe Christmas HAF

Mon 21 December
FAMILY DAY
Science Magic - Magic Science!
11-16 year olds are welcome to attend the family days without a parent of carer.

Tues 22 December
11-16 YRS DAY
Winter Woodland Adventures – A Creative Outdoor Workshop for Teens

We are running booking sessions to assist with bookings see website!

If you have any questions or require any assistance,
please contact Joanne Ainslie on
joanne.ainslie@stbarbe-museum.org.uk




ST BARBE MUSEUM ART GALLERY LYMINGTON

Free School Meals Changes from September 2026

All Households Receiving Universal Credit
Eligible for Free School Meals from September 2026

Targeted FSM	Expanded FSM
Household income: **£7,400 or less**	Household income: **More than £7,400**
✓ Receives Free School Meals	✓ Receives Free School Meals
✓ Attracts Pupil Premium	✗ Does **not** attract Pupil Premium
✓ Attracts other disadvantaged funding	✗ Does **not** attract disadvantaged funding
✓ **Eligible for HAF free holiday places**	✗ **Not eligible for HAF free holiday places**

Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme

Only children receiving **Targeted FSM** are eligible for free HAF places.

Children receiving **Expanded FSM** are not eligible for HAF-funded places.

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