

‘Achieving Excellence through Leadership’

GILES JUNIOR SCHOOL

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"Excellence in Leadership"

Headteacher: Miss. L. Whitby

Thursday, 16 April 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Birthday Treats in School

At Giles Junior School we always want to celebrate the special moments in children's lives, including their birthdays. However, we are writing to inform you of an important change to our current practice regarding birthday celebrations in school.

From Monday 12th May 2025 we kindly ask that **parents no longer send in sweets, cakes, or other food items** for children to share with classmates on their birthdays.

This decision has not been made lightly, but is based on several key concerns:

1. **Allergy Risks** – As highlighted by Hertfordshire County Council and Anaphylaxis UK, even trace amounts of allergens can cause serious, potentially life-threatening reactions in children with allergies. Incidents have occurred in schools where children were unknowingly given food that contained allergens. We have a duty of care to ensure all children are kept safe, and food sharing significantly increases this risk.
2. **Inclusion and Cultural Sensitivity** – Many sweets contain gelatine or other animal-derived ingredients. Children who follow religious or cultural dietary rules (e.g. vegetarian, Halal, Kosher) may be excluded from these treats, leading to feelings of disappointment or isolation.
3. **Financial Pressures** – With the rising cost of living, we recognise that the expectation to provide birthday treats can place unnecessary pressure on some families.

Instead, we will continue to celebrate children's birthdays in inclusive and meaningful ways – such as singing in class, making a birthday badge or card, or allowing them to be a special helper for the day.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support in keeping our school safe, inclusive, and healthy for all children.

Warm regards,

Miss L. Whitby
Headteacher

