

GILNAHIRK PRIMARY SCHOOL WEEKLY UPDATE



Our School Motto:

'Today's Learning for Tomorrow's World'

Our School Vision Statement...

At Gilnahirk Primary School, we seek to provide a happy and caring learning environment for each child. We hope that by helping them realise their potential, celebrating their

achievements, respecting their differences and encouraging mutual respect, we will foster self esteem and provide a solid foundation for their future.

Dear parent/carer,

I hope you are well.

The end of the school year is fast approaching and the busy time of year is reflected in this week's packed Sway update.

Do try and take some time over the weekend to read through, so that you are up to speed with everything.

STAFFING UPDATES FOR 2026-2027



Please see below for some staffing changes for the new academic year:

Teaching Staff:

- P3 - Mrs. Diane Wallace will finish her one day a week at Gilnahirk to take up a full time post at Cairnshill PS. Mrs Kathy Johnston will resume full time duties in P3.
- P6 - Mr. Peter Scott will finish his maternity leave cover for Mrs. Tate at the end of June. Mr. Glenn Buchanan will cover the remainder of Mrs. Tate's maternity leave (late August - December 2026). Mrs. Tate will return in January 2027.
- P7 - Mr. Craig Knight has been appointed as Vice Principal in Forthill Integrated PS in Lisburn. Mr. David Rice will take up the P7 post at the start of the new school year.

These teaching staff changes will be reflected in the section on class moves below.

Non-Teaching Staff:

- Mrs. Susan Davoren and Mrs. Doris Johnson have been appointed as new Foundation Stage General Assistants. Mrs. Davoren will go to P1H and Mrs. Johnson will go to P2C/P
- Mrs. Rae Montgomery will move from the Foundation Stage to Key Stage 2

- Mrs. Lynn Major, Ms. Laura Murphy and Mrs. Teresa Gordon have all finished with their respective P7 children and will be redeployed in to other SEN roles.
- Mrs. Gail Patterson, Mrs. Debbie Spence and Mrs. Ruth Young will all retire at the end of this school year.

Please note, further details about the above changes, including particular acknowledgement of those who are leaving and information about our new member of the teaching staff (Mr. David Rice) will be included in next week's final Sway of the school year.

CLASS MOVES FOR 2026-2027



Please see below for the class moves for 2026-2027

- P1Hodgen - P2Collins/Pitts
- P1 Gordon - P2Boyd/Fish
- P2Boyd/Fish - P3Johnston
- P2Collins/Pitts - P3McCaffrey/Pitts
- P3Johnston/Wallace - P4King/MacDonald
- P3McCaffrey/Pitts - P4Bennett
- P4King/MacDonald - P5Porter
- P4Bennett - P5Johnston
- P5Porter - P6Buchanan (until Christmas)/Mrs. Tate (after Christmas)
- P5Johnston - P6Nelson
- P6Scott - P7Rice

- P6Nelson - P7Halliday/Dimond

Children will have the opportunity to briefly meet their new teacher on the morning of Friday 26th June.

REPORTING TO PARENTS...



On **Thursday 25th June**, you will receive your child's annual report. Contained in the envelope with the report will be a cover letter that explains our report format and provides some context for Practice Through English (PTE) and Practice Through Maths (PTM) scores for P3-P7.

Also included in the report will be your child's attendance as a percentage for the whole school year. The table below will provide some context for what the percentage rate means for your child's attendance.

This report, along with the two parent teacher interviews, should give you a helpful and informative indication as to the progress your child has made in school this year.

If your child is not in school to receive their report by the end of the term, it will be sent to the office and it can be collected at your convenience. **Please note that the office is not manned for the month of August.**

Attendance rate	Days missed	Attendance category
100%	0 days	Excellent
95%	9 days – 1 week and 4 days of learning missed	Satisfactory
90%	19 days – 3 weeks and 4 days of learning missed	Poor
85%	28 days – 5 weeks and 3 days of learning missed	Very Poor
80%	38 days – 7 weeks and 3 days of learning missed	Unacceptable
75%	46 days – 9 weeks and 1 day of learning missed	Unacceptable

LAST PUSH FOR 'HIKE FOR THE HALLIDAYS'...



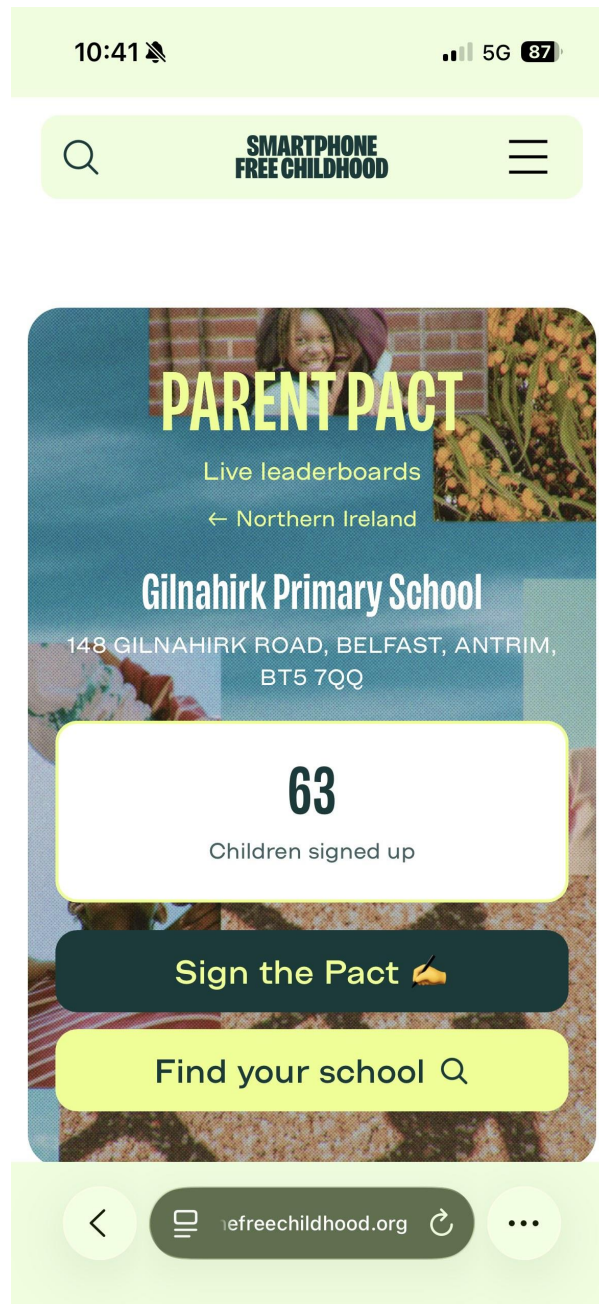
As you may know, this year has been particularly challenging for Mr Halliday and his family, with Caroline, his wife receiving a very difficult cancer diagnosis. Major surgery was followed by a gruelling course of chemotherapy treatment. Mr Halliday acknowledges and deeply appreciates all of the help and support provided by so many over the last few months, including the fantastic folks at Macmillan Cancer.

Some members of the Gilnahirk staff team will take place in a 'Hike for the Hallidays' tomorrow at the North Coast in support of Macmillan Cancer and we'd love you to support this very worthwhile venture by donating [here](#)

Thank you!

A MESSAGE FROM THE SMARTPHONE FREE CHILDHOOD GROUP...





This week the Government announced plans to introduce a social media ban for under 16s. For years, the assumption has been that smartphones are here and social media is here , whether we like it or not.

This announcement represents one positive step towards helping to protect our children and young people and giving them back more of the childhood they deserve. Childhood should be shaped by families, not by actions of tech companies. Hopefully these age limits will create new norms and alleviate some of the pressure parents feel to give their children smartphones at a certain age or allow social media just because everyone else has it.

- We hope we can grow the momentum here in Gilnahirk PS to delay giving smartphones/ social media to children. For those in Key Stage 2, SFC have brilliant alternatives to consider if you're at that stage: <https://www.smartphonefreechildhood.org/alternatives>
- We now have 63 parent pacts signed in Gilnahirk PS- you can read more about what the parent pact is here: <https://www.smartphonefreechildhood.org/parent-pact>
- Please consider joining our group ' GPS Parents Managing Technology' - ironically on WhatsApp! There are 71 parents in the group so far. The group acknowledges this is a broader issue and hopes as a community to help support parents with all devices wherever they are on the tech journey.

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/JyGLPChkIOC8a8iOSCDPeG?s=cl&p=i&ilr=4>

Miranda Livingston, Janet McNeice and Rachel O'Reilly

PE KIT - SIZING/PURCHASING OPPORTUNITIES...

If your child is starting P4 in September or is currently in P4-6 and has outgrown their current PE kit, please see below for information regarding PE kit sizing and purchasing...

Please note, due to family circumstances, Steven from Crawford Embroidery will now only be available for sizing/purchasing on Thursday 25th June and Friday 26th June from 8.30am - 9.30am in the Morrow Hall.

This is an opportunity for you to come and get your child sized up for the kit. You can also buy on those mornings. The cost of the quarter zip and T-shirt bundle is **£35**

If you already know the size of PE kit you want, you can go directly to the online shop and order from there. The link to the shop is: <https://uniformstoreni.co.uk/school/gilnahirk-primary/>

PURCHASING OF UNIFORM/PE KIT FOR NEW SCHOOL YEAR...

At this time of the school year, thoughts begin to turn to uniform for the new school year. Please see the following points which reflect the **recent legally binding guidance published**

by the Department of Education: (guidelines can be found at <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/school-uniforms-guidelines>)

- School jumpers and cardigans with the Gilnahirk crest can be purchased via SchoolMoney (in the Shop section). Depending on size, prices vary from £14.50 to £17.00 for the jumpers and £15.00 to £17.50 for the cardigans.
- Please note, we operate the uniform sales to break even - no profit is made for the school.
- As per the recent guidance, there is no obligation on you to purchase the school crested jumpers/cardigans. Plain grey cardigans and jumpers can be purchased from a range of outlets.
- As school is the only official stockists for school ties, they must be purchased from the online shop on SchoolMoney at a cost of £3.50 for junior ties (elasticated) and £4.00 for senior ties.
- As with previous years, grey trousers and skirts can be purchased at a range of outlets - we do not sell these from school.

IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON ORDERING UNIFORM FROM SCHOOL...

*If you are ordering jumpers, cardigans, ties and other items from school, you should do so through the Shop section on SchoolMoney by **Friday 10 July**. If you order later than this date, we cannot guarantee that you will have the item or items in time for the new school year, due to staff shortages over the summer break.*

FINAL CALL FOR MILK ORDERS FOR FIRST HALF TERM OF NEW SCHOOL YEAR...



If you wish your child to take milk in school, this is a reminder that milk orders for September-October 2026 should be placed on SchoolMoney by **19th June 2026**. Orders placed after that time will not be processed.

IEP INFORMATION...



If your child currently has an Individual Education Plan (IEP), you will receive a reviewed copy included in the envelope with your child's end of year report. This is a copy for you to keep and does not need to be returned to school.

LAST DAY OF SCHOOL ARRANGEMENTS...



Tuesday 30th June is the final day of this school year. Please see below for the arrangements:

- Non - uniform day
- No packed lunches or dinners
- Children should bring the usual mid morning snack for break
- School finishes at 12.00pm for P1-4 and 12.05pm for P5-6 (P7 final day is Thursday 25th June)

REMINDER OF SCHOOL HOLIDAY DATES FOR 2026-2027

Date	Details
Thursday 27th August 2026	School resumes for all children. Early finish
Friday 28th August 2026	Second day of term. Early finish
Monday 31st August 2026	School closed for bank holiday
Tuesday 1st September 2026	First full day of school
Friday 25th September 2026	School closed for TransformED staff development
Friday 23rd October 2026	School closes for half term break
Monday 26th October 2026 to Friday 30th October 2026 (inclusive)	Autumn half term break.
Monday 2nd November 2026	School resumes for all children
Friday 18th December 2026	School closes for Christmas holidays
Monday 21st December 2026 – Friday 1st January 2027 (inclusive)	Christmas holidays
Monday 4th January 2027	School closed for Staff Development
Tuesday 5th January 2027	School resumes for the spring term
Monday 25th January 2027	School closed for TransformED staff development
Friday 5th February 2027	School closes for half term break
Monday 8th February 2027 – Friday 12th February 2027 (inclusive)	February half term break
Monday 15th February 2027	School resumes for all children
Wednesday 24th March 2027	School closes for Easter holidays
Thursday 25th March 2027 – Tuesday 6th April 2027 (inclusive)	Easter holidays
Wednesday 7th April 2027	School closed for Staff Development
Thursday 8th April 2027	School resumes for the summer term
Monday 3rd May 2027 – Wednesday 5th May 2027 (inclusive)	School closed for Early May Bank Holiday/TransformED staff development day/normal staff development day
Monday 31st May 2027	School closed for late May Bank Holiday
Wednesday 30th June 2027	School closes for summer holidays. Early finish

GILLY'S GILNAHIRK VALUES...



Don't forget, our final Gilly's Gilnahirk Value for the school year is RESPECT.

KS2 HOUSE COMPETITION...



The scores for the month of May are in - lots of points awarded last month. Winning House for the month of May is STORMONT

Stormont - 1700

Donard - 1410

Scrabo - 1270

Lagan - 740

Overall placings below - big month for Stormont who have leap frogged Scrabo in to the overall 1st position. Things are getting exciting with only June to go!

1st Place - Stormont - 2620

2nd Place - Scrabo - 2420

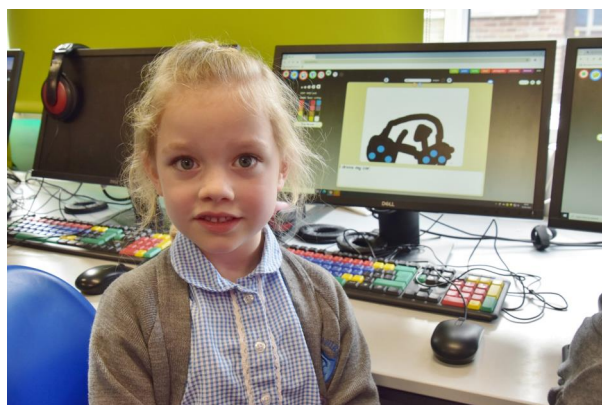
3rd Place - Donard - 2140

4th Place - Lagan - 1600

SCHOOL LIFE THIS WEEK...



P1 DIGITAL ARTISTS...





P2 DINOSAUR DAY...













P2 PASTEL DINOSAURS...





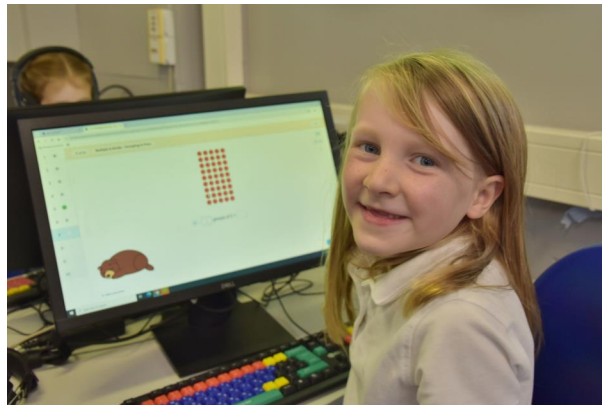


P3 FATHERS' DAY CARDS...





P3 MATHLETICS...





P4 PERSUASIVE WRITING...







P5 EGYPTIAN DAY...







P6 BOYS CODING AT ASHFIELD BOYS' HIGH...











P7 LEAVERS' PICNIC...







P7 LINK WITH STRANMILLIS PS...





SCHOOL COUNCIL DINGBATS COMPETITION WINNERS...





THANK YOU...



This week, we took the opportunity to thank Julie, another of our Time to Read volunteers, who came in once a week to support children's reading. We are, as always, indebted to the support given by all of the volunteers - thank you!

THE GILNAHIRK GALLERY OF GREATNESS...



1 - Some super poetry writing in P3 from Irene, Mimi, Corin, Mabel, Faye, and Daniel.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS...



If you are involved in any community linked activities and would like to promote them through our weekly update, please feel free to send to me via email

dcorbett546@c2kni.net



GIVE  BLOOD
Save Lives

Book online today
www.NIBTS.org



Joseph

AND THE AMAZING
TECHNICOLOURED DREAMCOAT

by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice

SUMMER MUSIC SCHOOL

A week-long singing school for children

Ages 5-15 | £200

27 - 31 July, 9am - 4pm (daily)

Strathearn Prep School

Joseph

AND THE AMAZING
TECHNICOLOURED DREAMCOAT

Ages 5-8 Songbirds Course | Ages 9-15 Junior Course

Monday 27 - Friday 31 July, 9am - 4pm daily

Strathearn Prep School

157 Belmont Church Road, Belfast BT4 2TD

The Ulster Consort Foundation is very excited to present Strathearn Preparatory School as the venue for the Children's Summer Singing School 2026! Children, ages 5-15, will receive expert daily tuition provided by some of Northern Ireland's leading musicians, whilst having great fun preparing music for a grand finale concert on the final evening. Strathearn Prep provides a fantastic location for a week of music-making, and is ideal for easy drop off and pick up by parents/guardians.

Cost: £200, which includes:

- all musical tuition
- daily lunch box
- all snacks
- group activities and crafts
- a branded top

To book please scan this QR code
or visit ulsterconsort.org



Grand Finale Concert for family and friends
Friday 31 July, 5pm

ulsterconsort.org



STRATHEARN
PREP

DRAMA, MUSICAL THEATRE AND PERFORMING ARTS FOR AGES P3 TO YEAR 14



SUMMER SCHOOL



SCAN HERE
TO ENROL
FULL AND HALF
SCHOLARSHIPS
AVAILABLE
Contact
info@youthlyric.co.uk
Youth Lyric -
Charity no. 102546

GLENMACHAN CHURCH YOUTH HALLS

Glenmachan Road Belfast BT4 2NN

20-24th July - 9am to 2pm

Cost £110 per child

ANTRIM GRAMMAR SCHOOL

10 Steeple Road, Antrim, BT41 1AF

27th-31st July - 9am to 2pm

Cost £100 per child



SUMMER HOCKEY CAMPS

BELFAST | LISBURN

JULY 6 th - 10 th	£130 FULL CAMP	9AM - 5PM
JULY 20 th - 24 th	£230 TWO CAMPS	AGES 8 - 15
AUGUST 10 th - 14 th	£330 ALL CAMPS	FREE GOODY BAG
	£30 PER DAY	

BOOK ONLINE AT [BOOSTHOCKEYACADEMY.COM](https://www.boosthockeyacademy.com)

SUMMER 2026 MULTISPORT & FOOTBALL CAMPS

**RISING STAR
SPORTS**

Week 1: 6-9 July (4 days £60) • Hillsborough Village Centre • 6-10 July Gilnahirk Primary School	Week 2: 20-24 July Crewe United Football Club (10am - 2pm £60)
Week 3: 27-31 July St Aloysius Primary School	Week 4: 3-7 August Hillsborough Village Centre
Week 5: 10-14 August Crewe United Football Club (10am - 2pm £60)	Week 6: 17-21 August GIRLS ONLY Crewe United Football Club (10am - 2pm £60)

TIME: 9am - 2pm • **PRICE:** 5 day camps **£70**
 ✓ 5 day camps **£70** • Day rate £15 • Week 1 (4 days) **£60**

MULTISPORTS CAMPS WILL INCLUDE:
 FOOTBALL, DODGEBALL, ROUNDERS, LASER TAG, EUROHOC

**TO BOOK A SPACE, CONTACT
 MATTHEW (COACH) ON
 07702646828**

OPEN TO ALL CHILDREN AGED 4-12

Dramarama

Performing Arts Academy

SUMMER SCHEME 2026

📍 BELMONT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
34 SYDENHAM AVENUE,
BELFAST, BT4 2DT

📅 20TH - 24TH JULY 2026

🕒 MON - THURS: 9AM-2:30PM
FRI: 9AM-3:30PM

💰 £140 PER CHILD
£130 PER SIBLING

TO BOOK A SPACE OR FIND OUT MORE CONTACT US

Sarah Steen-Calderwood: 07885243386
dramaramaperformingarts@gmail.com
facebook.com/dramaramaperformingarts

★ JOIN US FOR A FUN-FILLED SUMMER OF PERFORMANCE! ★

CONFIDENCE BUILDING
PERFORMANCE SKILLS
IMPROVISATION
SCRIPT DEVISING
DRAMA GAMES
DANCING
ARTS & CRAFTS



BOOK NOW

Join us for our 11th year of Dramarama Summer Scheme!

We strive to make each year our best yet! We take so much pride in spreading joy and helping our young people build their confidence and enjoy performing.

Our week-long program is open to all children aged 4-12, and will culminate in a showcase for parents & loved ones on the Friday afternoon.

Our talented coaches are passionate about making sure all our pupils have a wonderful week and get the chance to shine and grow their talent in a supportive and safe environment. From the movie stars of tomorrow, to those who want to build a bit of confidence and have a lot of fun - everyone is welcome at Dramarama!

PLACES ARE LIMITED!
BOOK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO ENSURE YOU ARE NOT DISAPPOINTED!

TO BOOK, SIMPLY GET IN TOUCH VIA PHONE, TEXT, WHATSAPP, EMAIL OR FACEBOOK!



CLAYFUL MINDS SUMMER CAMP

Early bird discount-book before May 1st!

All Out Summer! | Clay Modelling | Water Fun Days | Baking
Yoga | Indoor & Outdoor Activities | Mindfulness & Meditation

WEEK1 July 17th - 21st | **WEEK2** August 10th - 14th

Bloomfield Presbyterian Church | Beersbridge Rd, Belfast BT5 5DW

Ages 4-12

£39.50 per day £185 per week

Sibling discount available for full week bookings

Limited Spaces Available- Book Early!

07919371505
rebekah@clayfulminds.co.uk

www.clayfulminds.co.uk
clayful.rebekah



MAIN DATES FOR TERM 3...



- **Tuesday 23 June** - P7 Leavers' Party - 7pm
- **Thursday 25th June and Friday 26th June (8.30am - 9.30am in the Morrow Hall)** - Sizing and purchasing for PE kit (see information above)
- **Thursday 25 June** - P7 Leavers' Service at Gilnahirk Presbyterian - 7pm
- **Tuesday 30 June** - School closes for summer break - 12.00pm finish

With kind regards

D Corbett

Principal.



**HAVE A
GREAT
WEEKEND**