

# **Saint Gabriel's Catholic Primary School**

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2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021

Volume 13 Number 12

Dear Parents

## **Winter Approaching**

The first cold snap of the year is with us. Please be aware that at times the ground, playground and surrounding footpaths can be very icy. Please do remind the children to take care coming to and leaving school. Please always keep to the cleared and gritted pathways.

Thank you.

If for any reason the school has to close due to adverse weather, a text message will be sent to all parents and the school website and the county council website page for school closures will be updated.

Click [here](#) for Staffordshire Emergency School Closures.

Click [here](#) for St Gabriel's Emergency School Closure Procedures.

## **Confirmation Commitment Masses**

It was good to note the 26 children represented by parents and family at Tuesday evening's talk from Fr. Michael. As previously advised, children who wish to be Confirmed are asked to attend one of the Masses on the weekend of 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> December to make their promises of Commitment.

Masses are St John's 12.00 Noon Saturday and 10.30am Sunday

Sacred Heart Saturday 6.00pm and Sunday 9.00am and 12.00 Noon.

## **Attendance**

Please see the email sent to all parents on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2021.

Please assist by:

- Not taking holidays in term-time, no period of leave for holiday can be authorised
- Only request a leave of absence when absolutely necessary
- Book routine appointments where possible outside of school times
- Not taking time off school for minor ailments - ask yourself if you would stay off work for the same
- Be on time for school - lateness disrupts the start of the day for your child and many key interventions take place in the first few minutes of the day
- Remember there are 175 non-school days per year, plenty of time for holidays, visits, days out and routine appointments

Thank you.



SCHOOL  
MEMBER

Headteacher: Mr J P Hayes BEd Hons NPQH  
Deputy Headteacher: Mr W Bright BA PGCE

### Going back to Mass?

It's a great Catholic parish here in Tamworth. Have a look at the parish website at:

<https://www.stjohnrctamworth.org.uk/>

I really want to encourage families to consider going back to Saturday evening or Sunday Mass? You have lots of times to choose.

The Churches at Sacred Heart and St. John's are roomy and social distancing and appropriate safety measures are in place. As you know, the children have been able to have the experience of attending Mass in year groups at school. But as Fr. Michael would say - nothing compares to going to your own Church, to feel the presence of Christ.

Please consider going along to Mass on Saturday or Sunday with Fr. Michael and Fr. Subba. You do not have to book. Just turn up and let me know on the gate how you find it.

### PLEASE SEE SECTIONS BELOW FROM THE COVID SCHOOL UPDATE FROM STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

#### Latest Covid-19 stats for Staffordshire

The Covid case rate is measured on the number of cases per 100,000 of population. The case rate in Staffordshire has increased this week to 460.3, and remains higher than the West Midlands average of 406.9 and the England average of 437.6. **Tamworth currently has the highest rate in Staffordshire at 619.3.**

#### Omicron variant: key updates to rules

On Saturday 27 November, the Prime Minister announced new temporary measures following the emergence of the Omicron variant of COVID-19 in the UK.

The new measures will be introduced as a precaution to slow down the spread of the variant and will be kept under review as more information develops.

The key updates for school settings are as follows:

- **Face coverings** - Face coverings should be worn in communal areas and corridors in all settings by staff and visitors
- **Testing** - All educational and childcare settings should continue to encourage staff and students to test twice weekly using lateral flow device tests (LFT).
- **Contact tracing and isolation** - The current guidance on contact tracing and isolation remains in place. In addition to these, any probable or confirmed close contacts of the Omicron variant will be asked to isolate for 10 days regardless of vaccination status or age. You will be contacted directly and told to isolate.
- **Travel** - Individuals arriving in England from red list countries must follow the red list rules. Schools, out of school settings and colleges will want to consider whether to go ahead with planned international educational visits at this time, recognising the risk of disruption to education resulting from the need to isolate and test on arrival back into the UK.

### **Testing**

Please continue with regular Lateral Flow Testing twice a week. This is the best way to identify anyone who may unknowingly have Covid-19, and prevent any potential further spread in school. Anyone who has a positive LFT test should book a confirmatory PCR test via the national booking system.

People who have one of the main three symptoms, feel generally unwell, or have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive should also take a PCR test.

### **Staffing**

Please be aware that ongoing sickness/illness and impact of Covid means there is a reality of us not having a full work force, from week to week.

St. Gabriel's have had 6 members of staff absent at some point, this week. We are therefore running with less than a full staff team at this time. Please be understanding and patient with us, given the current situations.

### **\*\*\*Online game "Among Us" - SAFEGUARDING WARNING - Mr Fowler advises**

Just to make all parents aware that we have had reports of children who are using the online game 'Among Us', being targeted for grooming and online abuse. Although the game is rated 9 years and over it has a feature where players can chat to each other online whilst playing on the app. Some people using the game are asking other players to contact them via other apps like 'Snapchat' and share personal information and images.

Please talk to children about the dangers of playing with complete strangers online or people they or you have never met. If they find themselves in a situation where they feel scared or pressured to do something by someone online, they should stop playing with that person and speak to you or a responsible adult.

### **Athletics tournament - Mr Fowler writes**

Children in year 6 took part in an athletics tournament on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> November at Rawlett High School. The team performed very well and competed in various events such as throwing, jumping and sprinting. We will find out next week where we placed overall but the children should be very proud of their combined efforts. Our captain Daniella said "The team was very good and tried their best - I hope we have done well." The team was: Daniella P, Cherry E, Freya W, Maisie S, Erin J, Jessica M, Quinn M, Gracie C, Evie N, Maisie C, Isabelle C, Owen R, Mason P, Alfie K, Charlie G, Lucas T, Sebastian H, Lucas S, Tomasz S, Sam S and Josh R.

Thank you to Mr Fowler for his organising and work to give our children such opportunities.

### **Christmas Jumper Day - Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> December**

To coincide with the Christmas Dinner, Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> December will be Christmas Jumper Day in school.

We will be accepting voluntary donations all to be made via ParentPay (apologies but we can no longer accept any cash in school). All donations received will be going to a charity, to be decided by the School Council.

## Parish Christmas Fayre

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2021 10.00am-2.00pm SACRED HEART CHURCH

Have a late breakfast with us or join us for lunch. There will be lovely food available and it is all to support your parish. Please spare us an hour after Mass next Sunday.

**Santa will look forward to seeing the children. Raffle tickets can still be bought until the draw; please return sold tickets so we can fold them in plenty of time.**

**Christmas jumpers:** we often have good quality jumpers that our children & adults have outgrown or we won't wear again. Rather than people paying out lots of money for new ones, why not bring yours in (washed please) and people can then buy a cheap one from us for this Christmas - good for the environment too!

**Christmas Baubles / Tree Decorations** - have you got any baubles or tree decorations that you no longer use? Bring them in so we can recycle them.

**Can you help? What else do we need?**



**Bottles of wine or spirits** and can you bring your bottle in an old bottle bag too? Any old bottle bags welcome please.

**Those gifts** you've never used for our gift tombola.

**Chocolate**

**New Toys**

**Can all you great bakers please bake some lovely cakes to be brought on the day?**



**Can you help on the day? Or setting up the day before?**



## CAFOD Light of the World Assembly

The children joined the latest CAFOD national assembly for primary schools this morning (Thursday) to hear how children have been showing love in action this year, and to find out how they can be a light in the world this Advent too.

If you would like to find out more about CAFOD's Light of the World project and / or watch the assembly again please go to <https://cafod.org.uk/News/Events/National-assemblies>

## **Reader of the Week**

This week's Readers of the Week are:

RHK	Eddie
RJC	Sofia
1KG	Oliver
1NH	Natalia
2JH	Edward
2NT	Rosa
3CC	Orla
3LH	Jacob
4HA	Neya
4HB	Haiham
5AC	Tymek
5SG	Dexter
6BF	Holly
6ST	Evie



**Well Done Readers  
of the Week!**

## **Winter Reading Challenge**



The Reading Agency launched this year's Winter Reading Challenge earlier this week. The Winter Reading Challenge follows a similar format to the very popular Summer Reading Challenge - children are challenged to read at least three books between 1<sup>st</sup> December and 16<sup>th</sup> January and can collect rewards along the way. Lots more details are attached to this newsletter email. The Winter Reading Challenge is a fantastic way to encourage children to keep reading over the holidays - please do take a look!

<https://summerreadingchallenge.org.uk/news/general/winter-mini-challenge-2021>

## **Admissions to Primary Schools - Reception September 2022**

The application system will open on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021 for September 2022 Reception places. If you/a family member/friend have a child of school age in September 2022, please make sure applications are submitted. The easiest way to apply is online and a link to the online system will be available from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021. The closing date for applications is 15<sup>th</sup> January 2022.



### **Parking**

Please continue to be aware of the need to park responsibly in the local area and in and around the school. Thank you to the majority of parents who continue to park lawfully and sensibly.

Parking is not allowed in front of the school gates, the yellow lines and zig zags are there to stop people parking there and to protect and keep all of our children safe.

Please never park up on the footpaths in the surrounding roads. You are also asked to please show consideration to local home owners and do not block garages and driveways. Please do not become abusive to local home owners.

Parking on the grass verge along Wilnecote Lane has been raised as a COMPLAINT with local police. We have been asked to advise all parents not to do this. Parking on the grass verges is dangerous and causes blockage for neighbours. Local police will be following this up.

We again ask you take this advice and requests on board.

Thanks to those parents who were supportive of PCSOs and PCs present at the school recently.

### **Home Start Family Group**

Home-Start Tamworth is a local charity which supports ordinary parents in and around Tamworth, Staffordshire, who are going through challenging times. They are running a Family Group on Thursday mornings during term time at Sacred Heart 9.30am-11.00am.

### **Alpha - In person or Online**

A choice of two Alpha courses. One on Thursday evenings at Sacred Heart 7.30-9.00pm or one online on Zoom. So it's meeting up or Zooming in? The choice is yours. Watch an inspiring video and follow with discussion! Why not give it a try? Please book so that we know numbers via email [alex@tamworthrc.church](mailto:alex@tamworthrc.church) or phone 01827 769403

### **Journey in faith**

Are you, or do you know anyone else, interested in becoming a Catholic or finding out more about the Catholic Faith? Please get in touch with us soon as the course starts at the end of September. Email [alex@tamworthrc.church](mailto:alex@tamworthrc.church) or phone 01827 769403 to speak with Fr Michael or Alex Parker to book a place and find out more.

### **Message from the kitchen**

The school lunch menu for the week commencing Monday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021 will be:

Monday:	Pizza, Paste and Sweetcorn
Tuesday:	Jacket Potatoes with Cheese and Beans
Wednesday:	Christmas Dinner
Thursday:	Sausage, Mash, Peas and Gravy
Friday:	Fish Fingers and Chips

**Please note that there will be NO sandwiches available on Christmas dinner day, Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> December. Thank you**



Unfortunately we had no classes achieving 100% Attendance last week.



### It's a wrap

Did you know that most wrapping paper can't be recycled?

For those of you who have got your presents already, try and make sure you use wrapping paper that can be fully recycled - just check the label in the supermarket before you buy.

You can also try and save any gift bags you are given and use them for next year!

#### Top tip

Avoid paper that has glitter or a shiny film on it.



### Christmas Events - Reminder

As previously shared, these will not be performances; they will be simple celebrations of the real meaning of Christmas, appropriate to the children's ages, with 2 or 3 carols and perhaps a few readings. They will be 20-30 minutes in length and no more.

On the day, children will take part in a whole day of Christmas activities in school.

Children in reception may be asked to wear a nativity costume. Look out for more info from teachers.

All other children may wear a Christmassy costume or outfit (Christmas jumper, decorations or a nativity costume) but please remember that they are outside so will need to be warm as well as Christmassy! Please send scarves, hats and gloves too if the day of their celebration is going to be cold as we will go ahead if at all possible.

If the weather is completely inclement, (torrential rain) we will have to cancel the outside event but the children will still complete their celebration inside and we will try to publish some photographs on the website. Unfortunately, parents will not be able to attend in that case.

The events have to be risk assessed and this risk assessment will have to be reviewed close to the day of each event itself based on the prevalence of Covid 19 in the community and any outbreaks in our setting.

Measures in place will, with your help, include:

- Reduced capacity in setting to allow spacing and prevent overcrowding - only 2 adults maximum per child, to come onto the grounds.
- Visitors attending to take Lateral flow tests before attending the events.
- Visitors **must not attend if they have any of the 3 main symptoms or have household members positive to prevent risk of Covid spread to the setting or disruption to education.**
- Asking you to wear face coverings while on site to protect others.
- Asking you to sanitize hands on entry/exit.
- Following all signs and verbal directions as you enter and leave.
- Not arriving at the school until 1.30pm at the earliest.

Date	time	Year group
Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> Dec	2.00 pm -KS1 playground	Reception
Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup> Dec	2.00 pm-KS2 playground	6
Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> Dec	2.00 pm-KS2 playground	5
Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> Dec	2.00 pm-KS1 playground	2
Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> Dec	2.00 pm-KS1 playground	1
Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup>	2.00 pm-KS2 playground	3
Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup>	2.00 pm-KS2 playground	4



### Dates for your Diary

Sat 4 <sup>th</sup> December & Sun 5 <sup>th</sup> December	Confirmation Commitment Masses @ Sacred Heart and St John's
Tues 7 <sup>th</sup> December	Reception Christmas Celebration 2.00pm (weather permitting)
Weds 8 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Dinner/Christmas Jumper Day
Thurs 9 <sup>th</sup> December	Year 6 Christmas Celebration 2.00pm (weather permitting)
Fri 10 <sup>th</sup> December	Year 5 Christmas Celebration 2.00pm (weather permitting)
Mon 13 <sup>th</sup> December	Year 2 Christmas Celebration 2.00pm (weather permitting)
Tues 14 <sup>th</sup> December	Year 1 Christmas Celebration 2.00pm (weather permitting)
Weds 15 <sup>th</sup> December	Year 3 Christmas Celebration 2.00pm (weather permitting)
Thurs 16 <sup>th</sup> December	Year 4 Christmas Celebration 2.00pm (weather permitting)
Fri 17 <sup>th</sup> December	School finishes for Christmas Break 3.20pm
Tues 4 <sup>th</sup> January	School re opens to staff and pupils
Sat 15 <sup>th</sup> January	Closing date for Reception 2022 admissions

Dear Jesus

I praise your name, because your sun shines on the righteous and the un righteous.

Teach me to love, serve and forgive everyone, even my enemy.

Amen.

God Bless

Yours sincerely

*John P Hayes*

John P Hayes

Headteacher