

Saint Gabriel's Catholic Primary School

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Dear Parents

Mass

Fr. Michael is delighted to have seen so many families back at Mass in recent weeks. Children and families making First Holy Communion and Confirmation next year are encouraged to attend each week.

There is a signing in sheet for these children at the back of the Church.

Fr. Michael looks forward to seeing you.

You can keep up with Parish events at <https://www.stjohnrctamworth.org.uk/>



CHRISTMAS 2021
CHRISTMAS MASSES

Christmas Eve Family Mass (at both Churches) 4.00pm Mass (at Sacred Heart) 7.00pm	Christmas Day Sacred Heart 9.00 am St John's 10.30 am Sacred Heart 12 noon <i>10.30 Mass Livestreamed from St John's</i>
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Reconciliation Service will take place at Sacred Heart on
Wednesday 22nd Dec at 7.00pm

To keep us safe, please book on www.eventbrite.co.uk
or on a list in Church

Confidentially

If any family is struggling or in need, financially or struggling to put food on the table, please approach me in complete confidence. We will always do what we can to try and help.

Attendance

Please see the email sent to all parents on Monday 22nd 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

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

Latest COVID-19 stats for Staffordshire

The COVID-19 case rate is measured on the number of cases per 100,000 of population. The case rate in Staffordshire has increased this week to 486.8 and remains higher than the West Midlands average of 400.2. The England average is currently 512.6.

Tamworth currently has the highest rate in Staffordshire at 615.4

See the latest rates for each district/borough on our website.

We are currently supporting schools to manage more than 300 incidents across the county.

Covid in 5 to 10s

- Cannock Chase: 965.4 (down)
- East Staffordshire: 1082.4 (up)
- Lichfield: 1061.4 (down)
- Newcastle: 1106.1 (up)
- South Staffordshire: 976.5 (down)
- Stafford: 1942.9 (up)
- Staffordshire Moorlands: 1416.6 (up)
- Tamworth: 1732.6 (up)

Key updates to rules in schools

From Tuesday 14 December, the guidance will be:

- **Cases of Covid** must isolate for 10 days starting the day after the onset of symptoms or the day after the date of the positive test if asymptomatic.
- **Contacts of Covid cases who have had both doses of Covid vaccination** need to take daily lateral flow device tests for seven days. If they develop symptoms of Covid they must isolate immediately and take a PCR test. If a lateral flow test result is positive they must isolate immediately and take a PCR test.
- **Contacts of Covid cases who are unvaccinated** must isolate for 10 days.

NHS lateral flow device tests are available for free from pharmacies or via online order.

Testing - GIVEN THE INCREASING VIRUS PRESENCE ALL FAMILIES ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED

Please continue regular Lateral Flow Device testing (LFD) 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 LFD 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.

See our website for [advice on testing and self-isolation](#)

Get the basic principles of virus controls done well as part of your behaviour.

The spread of **ALL** variants will be reduced by:

- **Limiting your mixing**
- **Keeping your distance**
- **Wearing a mask and wearing it properly - fully over your nose**
- **Good hand, nose and mouth hygiene**
- **Good ventilation**

*****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.

Reader of the Week

This week's Readers of the Week are:

RHK	Freya
RJC	George
1KG	Marysia
1NH	Eliza
2JH	Oscar
2NT	Martha
3CC	Natan
3LH	Aubrey
4HA	Lucy
4HB	Grace
5AC	Misha
5SG	Theo
6BF	Lucus
6ST	Sienna



**Well Done Readers
of the Week!**

Winter Reading Challenge



The Reading Agency launched this year's Winter Reading Challenge earlier last 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 1st December and 16th 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>

Take the 12 Days Wild challenge



A post-Christmas dinner stroll, spotting robins in the park, recycling your Christmas tree - your #12DaysWild activities don't have to be big, but they'll make a big difference to your wellbeing! Join us in doing one WILD thing a day for the traditional 12 days of Christmas, starting 25 December until 5 January. You can sign up now to receive lots of inspiration for wild, wintery activities at: www.wildlifetrusts.org/12dayswild

Admissions to Primary Schools - Reception September 2022

The application system will open on 1st 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 1st November 2021. The closing date for applications is 15th January 2022.

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 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 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 school week commencing Tuesday 4th January will be:

Monday:	SCHOOL CLOSED
Tuesday:	Pizza, Pasta and Sweetcorn
Wednesday:	Roast Dinner
Thursday:	Pasta, Beef Bolognese, Broccoli and Garlic Bread
Friday:	Fish Fingers, Chips and Peas



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



Sustainable Season's Greetings

Did you know most plain printed Christmas cards can be recycled?

However, cards with foil, glitter, or 3D objects need to go in your residual bin.

Top tip

Why not try sending an E-card this year or doing a video message for friends and family?



Dates for your Diary

Fri 17 th December	School finishes for Christmas Break 3.20pm
Tues 4 th January	School re opens to staff and pupils
Sat 15 th January	Closing date for Reception 2022 admissions
Fri 28 th January	INSET DAY 3 - School closed to pupils

Christmas Performances

Thanks for the overwhelmingly positive comments from parents regarding the Christmas performances, both in person and online.

The children and staff have had to adapt and improvise in both the approach and use of technology. We can only do our best.

The few negative comments made anonymously and one heard during a performance are upsetting and disappointing.

Being negative about a group of children's efforts is never acceptable.

Thank you to those parents who understand the importance of positively praising the various steps forward taken by your child.

Many thanks for the kind words of appreciation, cards and gifts sent to staff, in recent days. Your kindness is greatly valued. Thank you.

What a challenging and difficult year it has been. The most demanding year, in 30 years for me as a teacher.

I wish you all a peaceful, holy and restful Christmas.

I hope we can all find hope as we start a new year.

Try to keep the Christ in Christmas and remember Jesus is the reason for the season.

God Bless

Yours sincerely



John P Hayes
Headteacher