

Saint Gabriel's Catholic Primary School

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Dear Parents

Advent

The season of preparation for the birth of Christ starts on Sunday next. The children will bring home an Advent Calendar. Consider putting this up at home and refer to it each day.

It is also a good time to think about going back to Mass if you have not been able to attend for a while. See below. Thank you.

Confirmation Enrolment and Commitment Masses

For parents of children at St Elizabeth's and St Gabriel's who are Catholic and wish to be Confirmed in June/July there is an **Enrolment meeting and short service on Tuesday 30th November at 6.00pm at Sacred Heart**. Please bring your completed enrolment forms with you. The Children are also asked to attend one of the Masses on the weekend of 4th/5th 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 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.

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.

"Up to You" campaign

Staffordshire Council has launched the "Up to You" campaign. The aim is to promote the continued threat from Covid 19 and encourage all of us to take individual responsibility and make sensible decisions to reduce the spread of the virus and to protect each other.

Key messages are:

- Choose to protect yourself and others by following guidelines
- Get tested regularly, especially if meeting others
- Being vaccinated is your best defence

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 5 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.

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

Testing

Everyone is encouraged to take a Lateral Flow Test (LFT) twice a week. A third of people who have the virus show no symptoms, so regular testing is the best way to identify more people who may unknowingly have Covid-19. 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. See our website for [advice on testing and self-isolation](#).

To help tackle the increase of cases in high schools, a Mobile Testing Unit is currently being deployed across the county, offering precautionary PCR tests to students. The PCR tests are more accurate than the LFT and results are sent to the labs for analysis.

*****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.

*****"Squid Game" - SAFEGUARDING WARNING*** - Mr Fowler advises**

There have been some concerning reports recently about children and young people playing "Squid Game" at schools across the county. It is also being viewed on platforms such as YouTube and Tiktok. This Netflix series is rated at 15. Children SHOULD NOT be watching this. The show is graphic with a lot of violent content. Please talk to your children about why it is not appropriate and/or ensure parental control settings are correctly in place on devices used at home.

Red Wednesday

On Wednesday we marked **Red Wednesday**.

Red Wednesday is an annual event organised by Aid to the Church in Need. Red Wednesday aims to promote awareness of the plight of persecuted Christians around the world.

We marked Red Wednesday in school by wearing red and having a (virtual) assembly where we learnt more about the work of Aid to the Church in Need and prayed together for people around the world who are being persecuted or discriminated against because of their beliefs. We prayed as a school that they take comfort from the words of St Paul that 'No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.'

Thank you to everyone for taking part and, especially, wearing lots of very eye - catching red clothing! If you would like to find out more about Red Wednesday and the work of Aid to the Church in Need, please visit - <https://acnuk.org/>

Christmas Jumper Day - Wednesday 8th December

To coincide with the Christmas Dinner, Wednesday 8th 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.

Reader of the Week

This week's Readers of the Week are:

RHK	Florence
RJC	Tommy
1KG	Freya
1NH	JJ
2JH	Eva
2NT	Helena
3CC	Hugo
3LH	Gian
4HA	Jessica
4HB	Olivia
5AC	Anton
5SG	Logan
6BF	Seb
6ST	Owen



**Well Done Readers
of the Week!**

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.

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 from 30th September or one online on Zoom- day and time to be confirmed. 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 week commencing Monday 29th November will be:

Monday:	Pizza, Doughballs, Carrots and Sweetcorn
Tuesday:	Chicken Pie, Mash and Peas
Wednesday:	Roast Dinner
Thursday:	Spaghetti Bolognese, Garlic Bread and Sweetcorn
Friday:	Fish Fingers and Chips

The Christmas Dinner this year will be on Wednesday 8th December, the menu is attached for your information.

A separate letter was sent out on Wednesday with booking information, please send your replies back by Tuesday 30th November 2021 at the latest. Thank you.



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



Turn your Black Friday green

Black Friday is approaching and it can be very tempting to go and buy lots of new things. Here's some top tips on how to have a more sustainable Black Friday.

- Take reusable bags if you're going out shopping.
Make a list. Do you actually need what you're buying? Would you be buying it if it wasn't on sale?
- Buy second hand if you can.
- Check if you can **recycle any items** that you're getting rid of.
- If you're buying electrical items, you can drop off any broken ones to be sent to prisons and get repaired and reused. [Find out more here.](#)

Dates for your Diary

Tues 30 th November	Enrolment meeting for parents of children wishing to be Confirmed Sacred Heart Church 6.00pm
Tues 7 th December	Reception Christmas Celebration 2.00pm (weather permitting)
Weds 8 th December	Christmas Dinner/Christmas Jumper Day
Thurs 9 th December	Year 6 Christmas Celebration 2.00pm (weather permitting)
Fri 10 th December	Year 5 Christmas Celebration 2.00pm (weather permitting)
Mon 13 th December	Year 2 Christmas Celebration 2.00pm (weather permitting)
Tues 14 th December	Year 1 Christmas Celebration 2.00pm (weather permitting)
Weds 15 th December	Year 3 Christmas Celebration 2.00pm (weather permitting)
Thurs 16 th December	Year 4 Christmas Celebration 2.00pm (weather permitting)
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

All powerful God,

As we start this Advent season, increase our strength of will for doing good.

We pray that Christ may find an eager welcome at his coming and call us to his side in the Kingdom of heaven, where he lives and reigns, for ever.

Amen

God Bless

Yours sincerely

John P Hayes

John P Hayes
Headteacher