

Saint Gabriel's Catholic Primary School

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Dear Parents and carers

Mrs Hawker

You will recall that Mrs Hawker has been living with a brain cancer diagnosis for some time. Mrs Hawker has not been in school since May 2022.

Mrs Hawker's condition has deteriorated in the past few weeks. She has been in and out of hospital and is now back at home.

Please keep Jo, her husband Dave, her children and wider family in your prayers. Thank you.

KS2 Carol Service - Tonight, Thursday 14th December 6.00pm at Sacred Heart

The children and teachers in years 3, 4, 5 and 6 will tonight, through music, song and readings tell the story of Christmas. In recent years this has become a particularly memorable experience for all who attend. The atmosphere that has been created in church has been very spiritual. It is important that we all recognise and respect the moments and times of silence needed. They add to the atmosphere. This is not a performance but a religious experience for us all. We look forward to a great event.

YES SOME CHILDREN HAVE INDIVIDUAL READINGS BUT THE BIGGEST WAY OF TAKING PART IS SIMPLY BY BEING THERE.

Thanks to all the staff involved and to the children for their work in preparation.

A collection will be taken towards the local Heart of Tamworth Charity.

****PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU ARRIVE FOR THIS BY 5.40PM****

Reception Nativity A Bundle of Joy

We are looking forward to you joining us on Monday 18th December 2023 at 9.30am in the school hall, for our Nativity, A Bundle of Joy.

We are hoping to raise some money for our local charity "Heart of Tamworth". We have produced a simple Nativity programme that will be available to purchase for £1 or a donation of your choice before the Nativity starts. Any cash donations will be gratefully received. Many thanks in anticipation of your support and we look forward to seeing you.

Reception Staff and children



KS1 Carol Service - Tuesday 19th December - Sacred Heart at 6.00pm

Fr. Michael looks forward to welcoming families from years 1 and 2 into Church next Tuesday 19th. The children have prepared fully for this over the past few weeks.

Thanks to all the staff involved and to the children for their work in preparation. Please be reminded that this is not a performance, but a religious experience. It is important that we create a prayerful atmosphere in Church. We look forward to a wonderful event and a memorable experience for our children in their local Church.

A collection will be taken at the end, with all voluntary contributions going to the local Heart of Tamworth Charity.

Christmas Jumper Day - Wednesday 20th December. Mrs Morgan writes



To coincide with the Christmas Dinner, Wednesday 20th December will be Christmas Jumper Day in school.

The School Council has agreed to partner with Sacred Heart Church to collect selection boxes for the Food Bank, so that local families in need will have a Christmas treat.

Pupils are encouraged to bring a chocolate selection box into school on Wednesday 20th December or make a donation via ParentPay. Thank you.

Girls football match

Children from year 5/6 took part in a playoff football game with Florendine Primary School, on Monday 11th December. The winners would qualify to represent Tamworth at the county finals in January.

The girls all played brilliantly as a team and were able to win the match 2-0 - well done to them all! Many thanks to Mr Fowler for coaching the children at the event. The team was: Celeste, Ella, Jessica, Krystal, Grace, Neive, Georgia, Eva and Neya.

Indoor athletics tournament

Children from year 5 and 6 took part in an indoor athletics heat last Thursday 7th December, at Rawlett High School. The children competed against two other schools and were involved in running, throwing and jumping events.

We will find out next week where we finished overall after all the other heats have been completed. The children did try their very best and encouraged their team mates on and pupils from other schools. Many thanks to Mr Fowler and Mr Birtwistle for training the children and supervising the children at the event.

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.

Parents and Carers are reminded to keep to the gritted footpaths around the perimeter of the school building at all times.

It is imperative that pedestrians do not walk across the car park at any time. During icy weather the footpaths are gritted for your safety. Thank you



Emergency Closures

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

Staffordshire School Closures

St Gabriel's School Closure Procedure

Virtual Advent Prayer Bag – Third Sunday of Advent

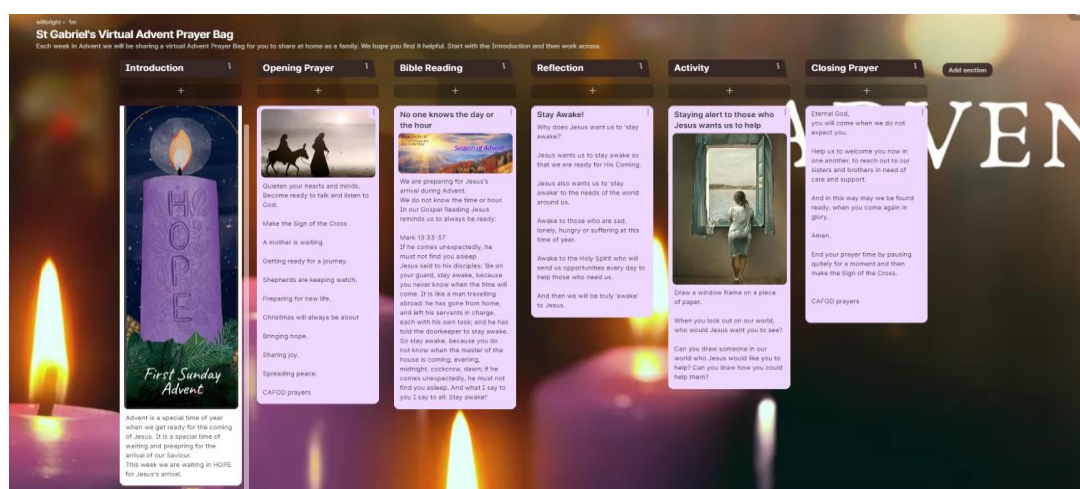
We continue to share our virtual Advent Prayer Bag this week.

The Prayer Bag will consist of some simple prayers, bible reading, reflections and activities for families to share together at home.

You can access the Prayer Bag by clicking on the link below:

<https://padlet.com/willbright/st-gabriel-s-virtual-advent-prayer-bag-bdkiaom97vehfnd4>

To find the Third Sunday activities please make sure you scroll down past week one.



The Wildlife Trust – 12 Days Wild



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 The Wildlife Trusts 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

Winter Reading Challenge



The Reading Agency launched this year's Winter Reading Challenge earlier this month. 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 18th February 2024 and can collect rewards along the way. More information is 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>

Online safety

The school has become aware that some children are taking part in various, viral online challenges that are promoted or circulated on social media such as Instagram and TikTok. These challenges usually involve people recording themselves doing something difficult or silly, which they share online and encourage others to repeat. Whilst some of these challenges are harmless, many of them are considered to be dangerous and can cause risks to individuals mental and physical health. Please do talk to your child about this and remind them that anything online that asks them to perform tasks or challenges maybe not be the best thing for them to do; they should always ask permission from a parent or guardian before acting on anything they see online.

For more information please use the following links:

[Internet Matters - Online Challenges](#)

[Childnet - Online Safety](#)

Admissions to Primary Schools - Reception September 2024 - closing date 15th January

The application system opened on 1st November 2023 for September 2024 Reception places. If you/a family member/friend have a child of school age in September 2024, please make sure applications are submitted. The easiest way to apply is online [HERE](#)

The closing date for applications is 15th January 2024.

Make sure you record St Gabriel's as your FIRST PREFERENCE to secure a place. Thank you.

Twitter

IF YOU HAVE NOT TAKEN A LOOK YET, DO PLEASE VIEW @GabrielsPrimary on X formerly Twitter for a range of moments capturing school life.

We currently have 173 followers. If you have a phone... follow us. Thank you.

Coats

Can I ask all parents and carers to make sure your child brings a coat to school?

It is November now and the colder, wetter months are ahead. The number of children without coats in school at times is shocking. THANK YOU IN ANTICIPATION OF YOUR COOPERATION WITH THIS MATTER.

Healthy snacks/lunch boxes

Within our school we aim to promote healthy eating.

All children in Reception and KS1 are provided with a piece of fruit each day, for them to enjoy at break time.

For KS2 we encourage parents and carers to provide children with a healthy snack to eat at break time.

Please ensure that your child has a water bottle to help keep them hydrated throughout the day.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Help and Support

If any family member is ever at the point of crisis, money worries or otherwise, ALWAYS BE BRAVE AND REACH OUT TO US. We will always try to help by signposting to the correct services. Where food provision is a worry - TELL US - we will always try to help.

We will always aim to help you in a DIGNIFIED and CONFIDENTIAL way. Thank you, Mr Hayes.

Reader of the Week

This week's Readers of the Week are:

RJC	Olivia
RHK/AD	Laycie
1KG	Evie
1NH	Logan
2LG	Jaxon
2NT	Lottie
3CC	Noah
3SO	Emilia
4HB	Olly
4LM	Blossom
5VN	Lucas
5SM	Nela
6AC	Max
6BF	Adam



**Well Done Readers of the
Week!**

Special Message from our School Council

At our School Council meetings, we have been thinking about different ways we can help care for God's Creation.

At this time of year, many people will be starting to think about Christmas Cards. To help us minimise paper and card use and help us have a sustainable Christmas, we have talked to our teachers about creating a 'Christmas Padlet' for each year group. The Christmas Padlet will help you wish your friends a Merry Christmas in an exciting, but also sustainable way.

The Year Christmas Padlets will open on Monday 27th November – you will receive a link to your year group padlet.

Christmas is also a time when we think about people who are facing challenging and difficult times.

This year, the Jesuit Refugee Service is asking people to write a Christmas Card for a refugee. The cards will be distributed amongst the people the Jesuit Refugee Service support.

If you would like to support this Christmas project, please put your Christmas Card in our Jesuit Refugee Service box in the porch. We will then send them to the JRS for 8th December. There is some more information about this below.

Thank you for helping us with our projects!

The School Council



Interested in writing a Christmas Card for those we accompany?

As the days start to draw shorter and the weather takes a colder turn, our minds begin to look ahead to Christmas and all the preparations that come with it. For many of us, Christmas is a time spent celebrating with family and friends – surrounding ourselves with our nearest and dearest to share food, gifts and general seasonal joy.

For those accompanied by JRS UK, however, Christmas and New Year – as with any large celebration throughout the year – can be a much more difficult time as it is often a reminder of the people and communities that they are separated from. Feelings of isolation and loneliness that many experience may increase over this time, especially our friends who will continue to be indefinitely detained over Christmas and New Year.

We would therefore like to invite you to take part in this year's Christmas Card Appeal and help us to send a Christmas card and message of solidarity and support to all those supported by JRS. We hope that these messages might bring small bit of comfort, connection and encouragement at this time.

If you would like to take part in JRS's Christmas Card Appeal, please place your Christmas Cards in the JRS Christmas Card Appeal Box in the school porch by Wednesday 6th December 2023

Here are our Top Tips: Use a friendly, generic initial address such as 'Dear Friend'.

1. Some of those we accompany will be victims of torture or trafficking, others will have fled conflict zones or their homes to seek asylum in the UK, and all will be going through a difficult and isolating time. Your message should be one of solidarity and accompaniment for those who are going through this particularly difficult time.
2. We meet and accompany people of all faiths and none, so don't assume your card will be received by a Catholic or Christian. We advise you not to include any overtly religious messages that could be alienating to someone depending on their faith or nationality.
3. However, wishing someone a Merry Christmas or telling someone that you will remember them in your prayers is more than OK.
4. Please don't include your full name or contact details in the card

Parking at Belgrave Club

We will notify you once new parking permits are made available to purchase. In the meantime, please continue to display last year's permit.

Belgrave Club have asked us to remind parents and carers that if the car park is full they need to seek alternative parking off site & not use staff spaces, disabled spaces & yellow gridded areas. We would also ask that you park according to the Club rules, as requested. The parking facility at Belgrave Club is a valuable service to school and we would hate to lose this facility due to inconsiderate parking. Thank you for your ongoing co-operation.

Parking

The council have now placed wooden posts on the grass verge on the side of Wilnecote Lane to prevent parking there.

You will also note that Staffordshire Police have provided us with some signage to encourage parents and carers not to park on or block Wilnecote Lane and the school driveway.

- **Please continue to be aware of the need to park responsibly in the local area and around the school. 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 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.**

We have received complaints from several businesses situated on the Seaton Industrial Estate: *"Over the past several months, we have noticed an increase in parents parking their vehicles on our industrial estate while dropping off or picking up their children from St Gabriel's School. While we understand the importance of ensuring the safety of students, the overflow of vehicles onto our property has become a persistent problem. This unauthorized parking disrupts our daily operations in several ways:*

- 1. Restricted Access: Parents' vehicles block access to our service entrances and parking spaces designated for our employees and clients. This impedes the timely delivery and shipment of goods, leading to delays in production and customer service.*
- 2. Safety Hazards: The additional traffic and congestion caused by parked vehicles on our estate create safety hazards for both pedestrians and drivers. This jeopardizes the well-being of our employees and visitors.*
- 3. Business Disruption: The disruptions to our operations have a negative impact on our productivity, and it also reflects poorly on our reputation when we are unable to meet our commitments to clients due to these parking issues."*

Please do not park on the Industrial Estate.

Local councillors continue to be involved and taking an active interest because of irresponsible driving behaviour by a small minority. Thank you to the majority of our parents and carers who continue to park lawfully and sensibly.

Catholic Virtues - ATTENTIVE and DISCERNING

This half term, the children and staff at St. Gabriel's are growing to be Attentive and Discerning.

Pupils and staff are growing to be ATTENTIVE to their experience and to their vocation; and DISCERNING about the choices they make and the effects of those choices.



Dates for your Diary

Thurs 14 th December	KS2 Carol Service at Sacred Heart Church 6.00pm
Fri 15 th December	DFE Condition Survey x 2 Surveyor in school 8.00am (5 hours)
Mon 18 th December	Reception Christmas Nativity in School Hall 9.30am
Tues 19 th December	KS1 Carol Service at Sacred Heart Church 6.00pm
Weds 20 th December	Christmas Jumper Day Christmas Dinner as produced by school kitchen
Fri 22 nd December	Mass for End of Term in School Hall 9.15am NOTE - School <u>CLOSES</u> at 1.30pm. EARLY CLOSURE TODAY BY RULING OF GOVERNING BODY
Mon 8 th January	School re opens for all
Fri 12 th January	Whole School Mass for start of new term 9.15am
Mon 15 th January	<u>Closure</u> of application for Reception school places September 2024
Sun 4 th February	Sacred Heart School Led Mass 9.00am
Tues 6 th February	PARENTS EVENING 3.40pm-6.30pm
Thurs 8 th February	PARENTS EVENING 3.40pm-6.30pm

Last Sunday was the second Sunday of Advent.

We lit the second Advent candle which represents FAITH.

"He will take care of his flock like a shepherd;

he will gather the lambs together

and carry them in his arms"

Isalah 40:11

God Bless

Yours sincerely

John P Hayes

John P Hayes

Headteacher