

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

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Dear Parents and Carers

## **Y2 Mass - Friday 10<sup>th</sup> February @ 9.15am**

Parents and carers of Year 2 are invited to attend Holy Mass tomorrow in the school hall led by Year 2 and celebrated by Fr. Ramesh.

## **Whole School Mass - Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> February at Sacred Heart Church**

It was wonderful to see many of you at the Sacred Heart Church on Sunday morning.

You have a vibrant and active Catholic parish in Tamworth with so many groups to be part of. Make it something you do.

Taking part in attending Mass on a Saturday evening or Sunday is a great way to get away from the busy world we have and stop - and think - in the presence of our Lord.

Keep up to date with parish events [HERE](#)

## **Parents Evening Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> February**

Your child should bring home a confirmation note of date and time today. Thank you.

## **Catholic Virtues - Eloquent and Truthful**

This term the children and staff at St. Gabriel's will be growing to be **ELOQUENT** and **TRUTHFUL** in what they say of themselves, the relations between people and the world.



## **High levels of flu, Covid and scarlet fever**

Flu and Covid are currently circulating at high levels and are likely to continue to increase in the coming weeks. High numbers of scarlet fever, which is caused by group A streptococcus, also continue to be reported.

Professor Susan Hopkins, Chief Medical Adviser at the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), said: "It's important to minimise the spread of infection in schools and other education and childcare settings as much as possible. If your child is unwell and has a fever, they should stay home from school or nursery until they feel better and the fever has resolved.

Helping children to learn about the importance of good hand hygiene is also key, so practice regular handwashing at home with soap and warm water. Catching coughs and sneezes in tissues then binning them is another simple way to help stop illness from spreading.

Remember that the flu vaccination is the best protection against the virus. Getting your child vaccinated protects them and others they come into contact with, and it's still not too late."



SCHOOL  
MEMBER



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

## CAFOD World Gifts

Following our fundraising last term we managed to raise over £350 for CAFOD World Gifts!

This has enabled us to buy a Marvellous Moo Cow, TWO Terrific Toilets, a School Starter Pack and a Teach Some to Read pack!

### **A Marvellous Moo Cow!**



### **A School Starter Pack**



### **TWO Terrific Toilets**



### **A Teach Some to Read pack!**



Thank you to all our very generous children, parents, family members and staff members for supporting us with our fundraising!

THANK  
YOU!

## Children's Mental Health Week



Children's Mental Health Week - running from the 6<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> February, this week - is an annual event organised by Place2Be (Children's Mental Health Charity). The aim of the Week is 'to shine a spotlight on the importance of children and young people's mental health.'

This year the theme of the Week is Let's Connect:

'Human beings thrive in communities, and this connection is vital for our wellbeing, and our survival. When we have healthy connections - to family, friends and others - this can support our mental health and our sense of wellbeing. And when our need for rewarding social connections is not met, we can sometimes feel isolated and lonely - which can have a negative impact on our mental health.'

In school we have been looking at different ways we are all connected, exploring ways we can support our own mental health and celebrating being a part of our community! Families can also access more information and resources relating to Children's Mental Health Week at <https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/families/>

## Safer Internet Day

Mr Fowler writes: Children have been learning about how to be safer online this week, as part of Safer Internet Day which was celebrated on Tuesday. There are lots of photos of the children doing various activities on the school Twitter page, so please do check them out. After speaking to lots of the children, it is great to hear that the vast majority can identify some of the dangers that can be found when using online devices and many knew to speak to a responsible adult, if they face any of these issues.

Many children in KS2, mentioned that they own a mobile phone or have regular access to one and many of these do not have any parental controls placed on them. As a father of a 13-year-old daughter, I still insist that these parental controls are on her mobile phone to ensure her safety. If you would like to find out more information about setting up parental controls on your child's phone, please click to visit the following websites:

[INTERNET MATTERS](#)

[USWITCH](#)

[APPLE](#)

## Is your child safe with a mobile phone?

The UK boss of Samsung said he would not give his daughter a smart phone before she was 11. I agree with this. But it is a personal decision. Whatever age - it is so important to make sure children are safe alone.

If your child does have a phone - make sure you have all the proper protections and limits on it.

I would not be comfortable with any primary child having unlimited access and measures should always be in place to limit children being able to view adult content.

## Reader of the Week

This week's Readers of the Week are:

RHK	Violet
RJC	Tola
1KG	Joel
1NH	Zach
2BL	Marcel
2NT	Austin
3CC	Lauren
3LH	Bentley
4HB	Rosie
4LM	Mia E.
5SM	Nikola
5ST	Adam
6AC	Evie
6BF	Riley



**Well Done Readers of the  
Week!**

## World Book Day - Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023 - Mrs Hughes writes

World Book Day takes place on Thursday 2 March, and we hope you'll join us as we come together to celebrate our World Book Day in school. Every year on World Book Day we are overwhelmed by the enthusiasm of our school community. We know that this year many families will find themselves in a difficult financial situation and we don't want our celebrations to be an additional burden. In light of this, we are inviting children to come to school wearing their pyjamas/ loungewear so that we can all relax with a book. Children are still more than welcome to come to school dressed as their favourite book character if they have a costume and would prefer to do so.



As part of our celebrations, we would like to invite parents/carers/grandparents to come into school to share a story with their children on World Book Day. Please see the timetable below for your child's year group story time.

Story Time - Hall Timetable			
Year Group	Time	Year Group	Time
<b>Reception</b>	9:30 - 9:55	<b>4</b>	1:20 - 1:45
<b>1</b>	10:00 - 10:25	<b>5</b>	1:50 - 2:15
<b>2</b>	10:30 - 10:55	<b>6</b>	2:20 - 2:45
<b>3</b>	11:00 - 11:25		

Please don't worry if you are not able to make it to this session, we will make sure there will be somebody to share a book with all of our children. If you have children in multiple year groups but can only make one of the sessions, simply choose the most convenient time and we will invite all siblings to join you at this session.

In the interests of encouraging reading for pleasure, we are also planning for children to take part in a book swap (in their own year group) during the day. If your child has any unwanted books, books they have grown out of or one they have simply read too many times, they can bring it into school and swap it for another book of their choice from one of their school friends. Not only does this encourage our children as readers, the sharing and recycling of books is an excellent way for us all to contribute towards our Live Simply pledge here at St Gabriel's.

We will also be setting a World Book Day related Home Learning task next week, to be completed over the half term holiday, the results of which the children will have the opportunity to share with one another on World Book Day. The creator of the winning Book in a Box from each class will be rewarded with a book prize which have very kindly been purchased for us by the Friends of St Gabriel's. A huge thanks to all those involved in the Friends of St Gabriel's and to all parents/carers for their ongoing support of the events they organise for the children.

In school children will also be taking part in the Design a National Book token competition and the two winning designs from each class will be entered into the national competition.

We're very much looking forward to celebrating World Book Day, which could not happen without the support of parents and carers - thank you.

### **Janitor Vacancy**

We have a vacancy at the School for a Janitor to start Tuesday 02/05/2023.

The working hours are 4.00pm to 6.00pm Monday to Friday (10 hours a week).

The role will include: - Closing the school each evening, filling the Toilet Roll and Paper Towel Dispensers, cleanliness of external bins and outside areas and being a Key Holder for emergency call outs (when Caretaker is not available).

Informed telephone contact to find out more is available with Headteacher John Hayes or Bursar Steve Swatton, on Monday, Wednesday or Friday on 01827 213910.

Full details and application form can be found on Saint Gabriel's Catholic Primary School website under Our School then Vacancies. Direct link [HERE](#)

Application deadline is Friday 17/02/2023 9.00am.

### **Attendance**

Parents of children with attendance below 90% have been written to this week.

The attendance of our children at school has received a massive blow due to the Covid pandemic. It has always been parents/carers legal duty to get children into school regularly, this is even more vital now due to the disruption to the children's learning. For this reason, it is so important that your child is in school for every educational hour possible AND THAT WE RE ESTABLISH OUR BEST POSSIBLE ATTENDANCE.

NO HOLIDAYS CAN BE APPROVED. I would ask that any routine appointments are made out of school hours and that you consider very carefully any absence from school. We don't want the education of our children to suffer any more than it has done already.

Our expectations for attendance are as per our published Attendance Policy which you can find [here](#) , we would encourage you to read and understand this.

Current attendance for the school year so far - Overall 94.33% (5/9/22-2/2/23)

R - 91.77%

Y3 - 95.90%

Y6 - 95.55%

Y1 - 91.90%

Y4 - 94.90%

Y2 - 94.55%

Y5 - 94.80%

Attendance overall is slowly creeping upwards.

We need to improve the attendance of our pupils, particularly our youngest pupils. Thank you.

### **Traffic**

Obviously, we can all see there is greater congestion on local roads at the moment. The closure of the slip road off the A5 nearest to the M42 has added to traffic using Marlborough Way.

Please do factor this in to your journeys..... and try to leave some extra time at the start and end of the day.

### **Home Reading Books**

*We are currently running very low with our levels of home reading books, particularly in the purple and turquoise book bands. Could I please ask everyone to have a good look at home, just in case any books have been overlooked or forgotten about, and return them to school as soon as possible. Many thanks in anticipation of your support.*

## White Rose Maths

I'd like to signpost parents and carers to a series of free maths films on 'White Rose hub' called Maths with Michael. Please have a look at this mini-series with Michael Underwood that explains how maths is taught at school. Thank you, Mrs Taggart.

<https://whiterosemaths.com/maths-with-michael>

## The Game

We have been alerted to "A game" being circulated via Facebook to children which contains several different actions for them to complete, including the encouragement of self-harm and hurting others.

Lisa Farmer, Education Safeguarding Lead for Staffordshire said "Whilst many of our children will, I am sure, be confident in ignoring these messages, I am also conscious that around the country there have been several incidents where dares via social media have led to a child's death."

If you have any queries about how to talk to your child about this and being safe online, there are useful resources on the NSPCC website [HERE](#)

## Winter

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. 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 COUNTY COUNCIL](#)

[ST. GABRIEL'S WEBSITE](#)

## 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. Thank you.

## Resilience/Independence

Do encourage your child to organise themselves properly each morning. Encourage them to carry their own bag and belongings. Talk to them about organising their belongings, so they are not misplaced. Thank you for your cooperation.

## **Family & Community Information Hub**

Please could I draw your attention to the family and community information section on our website? This section contains a wealth of current information on community activities, mother and toddler groups, free courses, job and training opportunities, information for parents of children with additional educational needs along with opportunities available to them for example short breaks and also information on healthcare.

Please take some time to have a look at the information found [here](#) and keep checking in - there will be new information added most weeks.

## **Dogs on the school grounds**

A reminder please that dogs must not be brought beyond the school gates and onto school premises. Dogs are banned from all school grounds because of the danger of toxicariasis in dog waste. This is in line with County Council guidelines. Please respect this request at all times. Thank you.

## **Message from the Friends of St. Gabriel's**

The friends of St. Gabriel's are looking for any unwanted Christmas gifts that could be used for Mother's Day. The blue bin will be out by the office and labelled for items to be dropped off if you have anything to donate.

Please join their Facebook page and keep up to date with events being run by the Friends of St. Gabriel's.

[www.facebook.com/friendsofstgabriels](http://www.facebook.com/friendsofstgabriels)



## **Bereavement Help Points**

Fridays 10am-12noon @ Sacred Heart.

Thursdays 5.30pm-7.00pm @ The Cafe at Sacred Heart

If you are struggling with bereavement and loss and wish to talk to someone just come along.

## **Safe Haven**

**Safe Haven is a Crisis Café** situated at Sacred Heart Church, for people aged 18 plus with mental health problems. This service will run between 5pm to 11pm Wednesdays to Fridays and 9am to 5pm on Saturdays and Sundays, and Bank holiday 1.30pm to 9pm.

Safe Haven will provide a safe, supportive, and therapeutic environment helping individuals in their recovery through promotion of self-empowerment and independence. It will be relaxed, informal and supportive, considerate of risk and safety, but focused on de-escalation and recovery. They are currently looking for volunteers, for more information email

[Claire.Griffiths@burtonmind.co.uk](mailto:Claire.Griffiths@burtonmind.co.uk)

## **Heart of Tamworth Community Shop**

The community pantry at Sacred Heart has regular deliveries of good quality, fresh food. All of the food is in date but sometimes has a shorter date than others and so needs to be distributed quickly. You are more than welcome to pop down to have a look. There is a Facebook page HOT Community Shop where you can keep up to date with availability.

### Dates for your Diary

Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Y2 Mass 9.15am
Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Parents Evening 3.30 - 6.00pm
Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Parents Evening 3.30 - 6.00pm
Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Break up for Half Term
Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> Feb	Ash Wednesday (during Half Term) START OF LENT
Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Return to school
Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March	Y3 Mass 9.15am
Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> March	Early years and Y1 Mass 9.15am MOTHER'S DAY SALE - TOILETRIES/PERFUME etc 2pm-3pm - <u>Children</u> visit the hall with an opportunity to buy. 3.30pm-4pm - Open to ALL families after school
Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> March	Year 3 - Sacrament of Reconciliation, Sacred Heart Church 6pm
Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup> March	Tempest Photography Reception & Y6 Vistas and Year Groups
Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> March	Mass - Whole school led by y4 9.15am Break up for school holidays
Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup> April	Easter Sunday

### **Preparing for Lent**

Ash Wednesday - which signals the start of Lent is Wednesday February 22<sup>nd</sup> - during half term. Before it arrives, make a point of stopping and thinking about how you could spend Lent?

There are 3 holy practices which we are called to take on in Lent.

PRAYER - spending some time - just a little each day to talk to God.

FASTING - giving up or staying off something we enjoy or like.

ALMSGIVING - giving what we can, if we can, to those less well off.

Make a Lenten plan and try to keep to it for a grace filled journey to Easter.

### **A prayer for Turkey and Syria**

We pray for the people of Turkey and Syria.

We pray for everyone who is affected by the earthquake,  
those who have lost loved ones,  
and all who have lost their homes.  
May they be comforted by so many people  
reaching out to offer support.

Lord, bless the efforts of rescuers and medical staff,  
CAFOD and all the other agencies trying to help.

Move our hearts with compassion.  
May our sisters and brothers know that they are loved  
and find their hope restored.  
Amen.

**CAFOD**  
Catholic Agency for  
Overseas Development

God Bless

Yours sincerely

*John P Hayes*

John P Hayes

Headteacher