

# **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.

## **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 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.

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

## **Key updates to rules in schools**

The Government has introduced precautionary measures to help limit the spread of the new Omicron variant of COVID-19. The key updates for school settings are as follows:

## **Face coverings**

Face coverings should be worn in communal areas in all settings by staff and visitors.



SCHOOL  
MEMBER

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

### Testing

All educational and childcare settings should continue to encourage staff and students to test twice weekly using lateral flow device tests.

### 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 by NHS Test and Trace.

### Travel

Individuals arriving in England from red list countries must follow the red list rules.

**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

### 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 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.

### \*\*\*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.

### Indoor athletics

Congratulations to our indoor athletics team, who found out this week that they are the winners of the Tamworth indoor athletics competition.

A great achievement and well done to all the children who took part!

Thanks again to Mr Fowler, for all the time and effort in organising.

### Reader of the Week

This week's Readers of the Week are:

RHK	Hannah
RJC	Zach E
1KG	Riley
1NH	Maximus
2JH	Olly
2NT	Harrison
3CC	Riley
3LH	Leo
4HA	David
4HB	Nikola
5AC	Caleb
5SG	Anita
6BF	AJ
6ST	Jacob



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 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.

### **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 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021 will be:

Monday:	Pizza, Pasta and Sweetcorn
Tuesday:	Garlic Chicken, Potato and Peas
Wednesday:	Jacket Potato with Cheese and Beans
Thursday:	Roast Dinner
Friday:	Fish Fingers, Chips and Peas



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



## Going crackers

**Q.** Why did the bin collectors refuse their Christmas presents?

**A.** Because it was rubbish!

If you love a cheesy cracker joke at Christmas, make sure to buy eco-friendly, recyclable ones.

A lot of Christmas crackers contain unnecessary plastic that just gets thrown away. Most shops now sell sustainable crackers that can be recycled.



You can find your nearest recycling centre [here](#).

## 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
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**

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

***It has been a demanding and stressful time for all of you.***

***I want to acknowledge that every day can be tough.***

***We too, the staff, face uncertainties, worry and pressures that the ongoing COVID situation has brought, over the past 20 months.***

***I want to make it clear to you, that the staff have gone out of their way in many different ways, to be flexible and do their very best, for the children in their care.***

God Bless

Yours sincerely



John P Hayes  
Headteacher