

15<sup>th</sup> November 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

This week I have been inspired by the service of our Gift team. In Scripture we are taught or told

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord."

A number of our gift team took part in the Interfaith event at Guardian Angels earlier this week. In the morning they supported primary school children as they spoke to various faith leaders from different faiths. In the afternoon it was their turn to meet with a wide variety of faith leaders along with other schools from far and wide. My thanks go to Father Paul for hosting such a rich event where understanding and knowledge brought people together. This truly helps to build a stronger community. Our students notably were exceptional ambassadors for our school and faith and demonstrated excellent service in the morning as helpers and in the afternoon as inquisitive learners asking probing questions.

### Attendance matters:

Attendance has been lower over the last week than it has been all year. It is critical to continue to drive attendance as it has such an impact on resilience, outcomes and mental health. Attendance by year group is as follows:

Year    Attendance year to date

7	96.9%
8	94.0%
9	93.1%
10	92.4%
11	93.9%

### Curriculum matters:

Thank you to Y10 parents and students for an excellent attendance at yesterday's GCSE preparation evening. The PowerPoint from the evening will be placed on the school website for you to access. Topics such as how to revise, what digital learning platforms are available and how we support with careers and wellbeing were covered. From my perspective it was wonderful to see such an engaged year group taking on board advice and tips to secure future success.

### Personal Development:

To mark Anti-Bullying Week 2024 all year groups have had assemblies on this year's theme of 'Choose Respect'. They've been reminded on how Jesus showed dignity and respect to all, include those who society at the time did not show respect to. Our weekly Votes for Schools topic has also linked to this, with forms discussing how we can disagree with others in a respectful way.

If your child needs to report bullying in school we encourage them to speak to staff immediately, however there is our report and support function on the school website

<https://www.stgabrielshigh.stoccat.org.uk/about-us/safeguarding/report-and-support/>

We have also welcomed Councillor Nikki Frith into school to work alongside the Comino Project with our form representatives and possible future leaders on the Nolan Principles of Public Life. Some of these students have also recently represented the school at the town hall at Circles of Influence 2024 to work with council leaders on matters important to young people in Bury.

**REMINDER** - Year 11 College applications need to be completed for Bury College by 25<sup>th</sup> November and Holy Cross by 2<sup>nd</sup> December.

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### **Scholars Programme:**

Last year, 14 of our pupils participated in the Scholars Programme involving a number of early morning tuition sessions lead by a PHD student from Manchester University. They then had to write a 2,000 word assignment on the Algorithms of Decision Making, which was marked using degree standard criteria. All of our pupils graduated the course, with two pupils achieving a First. We are so proud to announce that one of our pupils, Oliver Morgan, has had his work chosen to be published in the Scholar Journal as an example to others. The Scholar is an academic journal of outstanding pupil work from The Scholars Programme. The PhD tutors are given the opportunity to nominate final assignments that are reviewed by an expert panel of PhD researchers, with only the highest scoring published. We look forward to offering this opportunity to more pupils in the Spring term.

### **Christmas Donations:**

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you, we are so grateful to our families who have supported with donations over the years. We have a staff tradition at St Gabriel's which involves donating Christmas presents to help others at this financially difficult time of year. If you are fortunate enough to have any disposable income at this time of year and would like to donate a unwrapped Christmas present, please either drop off at reception or send in with your child to pass to their form tutor. Together we can create even more smiles this Christmas.

### **Uniform:**

Further to my letter last week , thank you for your support in helping us ensure our uniform standards are high and our students understand our policy around make up and flash eyelashes. We will obviously be continuing our drive on this, but I also wanted to remind you of the following:

- W/C Mon 18<sup>th</sup> Nov – Multiple earrings, hooped earrings, nose studs, tongue piercings – we will allow students to wear clear spacers in their nose and in ears. This date allows any students who are unable to remove them to make an appointment at the jewellers they had the piercing done or their GP to have it removed. It also allows time for students/parents to purchase clear spacers. There should be **NO** tongue studs. From the 18<sup>th</sup> staff will be asking students to remove their piercing (we will provide little envelopes and students will have them returned to them at the end of the day) failure to do so will result in an S4 (Uniform)
- W/C Mon 25<sup>th</sup> Nov – Ties and trainers – We are hoping this allows yourselves as parents/carers enough time to purchase ties/shoes. If you are struggling financially we have vouchers for shoe zone and our uniform supplier, and are more than happy to assist if this is needed. Please just contact the school office. Staff will be asking students to wear their tie, change into school shoes and/or ensure that a student has the correct uniform, if necessary we will loan them a tie or provide them a pair of plimsols to wear for the day. Failure to comply with these requests to uphold our uniform standards and policy, or a loan of an uniform item needed, it will result in a student being issued an S4 (Uniform).

If you feel there is a medical reason why you child cannot comply to these areas of the school uniform policy please can you provide medical evidence and a medical exemption pass will be issued to your student. Please note we are unable to make exceptions for uniform without the relevant, up to date medical evidence.

As always, many thanks for your support in ensuring our students reach their highest potential.

Yours sincerely



Mr S Braithwaite  
Interim Headteacher