

4th October 2024

Dear Parents/ Carers,

As the term advances may I firstly thank you for your continued support of the school. This week it was wonderful to see many of you supporting and attending the Y7 welcome mass at Guardian Angels. To witness our children being active in their worship and commitment to their faith was truly joyful, from the older students who had volunteered as part of the GIFT team music ministry to those year 7s who produced and read some beautiful prayers, I was reminded just how special Catholic education is.

Over 30 children are regularly committed to GIFT team and this really does show a strong reference to the school value of service. I am often humbled by the children's ideas for making the world a better place and their unwavering desire to make it happen. Across school there are many examples of service not least from one of our pupils who actively promotes the chess club in the school and emailed me with ideas to expand it's provision and to ask for more chessboards. When such sensible and thoughtful suggestions come in it would be remiss of me not to oblige.

Today, I met with 15 pupils from all year groups who have been nominated for a Headteachers commendation by their year teams. It was a huge pleasure to be able to discuss with them how they have met our core values of Strength, Service and Success, each story was different reflecting the wonderful uniqueness of each of us. It was also once again was a reminder to me of what a privilege it is to work for your children.

We had an incredible visitor to school this week, Hannah Kelly, who achieved a Bronze medal at the summer Olympics. Hannah is an ex pupil of St Gabriel's and our students were genuinely in awe of her achievement. The message I give to them is that whatever you set as a goal in life if you are determined and focussed it can be achieved and Hannah is a great example of that and therefore an excellent role model to our young people.

Attendance:

As we get tired in the run up to half term routines become even more important. Over the summer my family adopted a puppy called Scout and I have the task of the morning walk. As it is getting a little colder and darker in the early hours I often feel like skipping a day, however, after doing it I feel set for the day ready to face the challenges ahead. This in turn, is like sustaining attendance and in particular punctuality. Routines are important and set us up for our working life.

Our current attendance is 94.2% which is higher than we were this time last year. In order to continue to drive our attendance standards forward please can we ask that any appointments eg: the dentist, opticians etc take place as much as possible outside of school hours. I would also like to remind you that if a student arrives to school after the register has closed (after 09:10am) without a valid reason, a U code will be issued and the late will be classed as an unauthorised absence.

Culture and Standards:

We will be making a change to our Reflections Room provision. After half term, any student who has to spend time in our internal isolation will automatically stay in school until 3:45pm. This is so all the students who are in there to access their curriculum work during the school day and then complete a reflection activity in the time after lessons. We believe that by giving that extra time for students to reflect on their actions it will help reduce the chance of them having to spend time in there again.

Headteacher Mr S Braithwaite BA (Hons), PGCE, NPQH,
Telephone 0161 764 3186
Email stgabriels@bury.gov.uk
Website www.stgabrielshigh.stoccat.org.uk / www.stoccat.org.uk
Twitter @StGabsBury / @STOC_CAT
Postal address Bridge Road, Bury, BL9 0TZ



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SCHOOL
2023 - 2024



Uniform:

Thank you for your support in helping us continue our drive on uniform standards. We are beginning to notice that there are a few young people wearing false eyelashes, excessive make up and nose studs/rings. Please can you refer to the uniform policy that clearly states make up must be natural looking, and false eye lashes and nose jewellery should not be worn. The research shows that the most successful schools have and uphold high uniform standards, and it is based on this that we will be looking to reform our uniform policy for the start of the Spring term where make-up, jewellery and false eye lashes will be readdressed.

Language NUT

Regarding the curriculum, I wanted to draw your attention to the language package we use for MFL called Language NUT. After trialling the app for one year we are delighted with the results it has generated with pupils who are using it regularly. It is suitable for beginners, up to Grade 9 GCSE. The vocabulary is the AQA exam board wordlist. This is the platform used for homework in MFL and the home learning is woven into the classroom teaching. It will cover all four skills, reading, listening, reading and writing and can have a positive impact on learner confidence. It is intuitive and even when homework is complete it can be used for additional practice, this is the sweet spot where incredible progress is made through independent practice. Your child's language teacher will be ensuring they have their log in details and Mrs Heap our Curriculum leader for MFL will be in the resource centre every day to support with homework, log ins and password issues.

Once again, I wish you a restful and relaxing weekend.

Your sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S Braithwaite', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr S Braithwaite
Interim Headteacher