

22nd November 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

The weekly Sunday Gospel was taken from Mark.

'Jesus said to his disciples "In those days, after time of distress, the sun will be darkened, the moon will lose its brightness, the stars will come falling from the heaven and the powers in heaven will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory; then too he will send the angels to gather his chosen from the four winds, from the ends of the world to ends of heaven" We can focus too much on the language of apocalyptic literature and as a result we have missed the point here. Mark's Gospel teaches us it is not about waiting for the end. It's about how we live here and now. It's a call to live here and now with purpose to cherish every moment.'

In terms of cherishing moments there have been some wonderful enrichment activities in the past week. Y7 enjoyed the Pantomime and their excellent behaviour was a joy to behold, it was equally wonderful to see them join in at all the right moments and having fun together as a year group. KS4 pupils were taken to see Blood Brothers, a wonderful play that they study for GCSE, but of equal importance it is for students to experience the emotion and craft of live theatre. Some Y11 pupils also went to an enriching talk by Andy Burnham on his leadership journey again a moment of inspiration. I wish on your behalf to thank the staff for organising these experiences for your children.

Year 11 update

Year 11 parents' evening will take place in our school hall on **Thursday 5th December from 3.45-6.45pm** and we look forward to discussing Year 11 progress and attitude to learning this year with their parents and carers. The fortnight commencing **Monday 2nd December** is a very important period for Year 11 as we have a number of GCSE NEA (Non-Examined Assessment) days leading up to the Christmas holidays in Hospitality and Catering, Drama, Art, 3D Design, Photography and Vocational PE. It is vitally important that Year 11 Students are attending school in order to be fully prepared. These days cannot be rearranged and we appreciate your support in this matter.

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

Personal Development

The recently conducted 'St Gabriel's Big Listen' provided us with some really useful feedback about your child's experience of St Gabriel's. The overwhelming majority told us they feel safe and happy in school, have a trusted adult to go to if needed and understand the school's sanctions and rewards systems well. They also feel included in the prayer life of school, understand and support the mission statement and are educated on how to look after their mental health.

In response to some suggestions from the survey we are looking into increasing the number of toilets available, especially for boys. They also identified that rewards could be more motivational so we are getting further pupil voice on what would motivate them. Students can use this link to share their ideas - <https://forms.office.com/e/KkqP0xCihG>. We are also using staff briefings to help make sure sanctions and rewards are applied as consistently as possible by teachers.

Labour Market Information – Would you want to talk to your child about their possible future career? <https://gmacs.co.uk/advice/> gives lots of information for parents and students alike.

Did you know that based on the total number of jobs, the largest industry in Bury is **Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles** (18.8%). Other major industries include Manufacturing, Education, Human Health and Social Work Activities, which represents over 10% of roles. **Financial & Insurance companies** make up 1% of the Bury economy, and 3% of the roles across England. 2% of the total jobs in Bury are in **Information and Communication**.

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Uniform

Further to my letters dated 08th and 15th November, thank you for your support in helping us ensure our uniform standards are high. It is really important that our students understand our need for high standards and we appreciate your collaboration in enforcing these standards and expectations at home. Our focus for next week is below, however we will still continue to challenge the wearing of false eye-lashes, make-up that is not natural and subtle and jewellery that is not compliant with our uniform policy.

- W/C Mon 25th 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 if a loan of a uniform item is needed, it will result in a student being issued an S4 (Uniform).

If you feel there is a medical reason why your 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.

Attendance

We are also introducing an attendance drive over these next two weeks. As I alluded to in last week's letter, 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. Therefore, any student who has 100% attendance for the weeks 25th Nov – 29th Nov and 02nd Dec – 06th Dec will be entered into a draw to win a £20 voucher. If a student is in for 100% on both weeks their name will go into the draw three times, otherwise their name is entered for the week they achieve 100% attendance. One student in each year group will receive this reward and it will be announced in their celebration assemblies the week of 9th Dec.

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

Yours sincerely



Mr S Braithwaite
Interim Headteacher