

7<sup>th</sup> March 2025

Dear Parents/Carers,

During our recent Ash Wednesday service, it was wonderful to see over 100 of our students join in the celebration. It is heartening to witness our young people feeling safe and comfortable to openly practice their faith. Their participation is a testament to the inclusive and supportive environment we strive to cultivate at St Gabriels RC High School.

In the spirit of our school's values, I was struck by the words of Pope Francis, who reminded us that "if my fast does not help others, it is fake, inconsistent, and takes me down the path of a double life, pretending to be a just Christian." This message of authenticity and consistency is one that I believe resonates strongly with our community. Let us all pray for the grace to live out our faith with unwavering commitment, doing only what we can with the consistency of true Christians.

On a lighter note, I am pleased to share a list of recommended reads for your child, following our successful World Book Day celebrations. Encouraging reading not only supports academic progress but also fosters a love for literature and enhances critical thinking skills. I hope you find these suggestions inspiring and that your child enjoys exploring these wonderful works.

For our Key Stage 3 students, we recommend *The Icarus Show* by Sally Christie, *The Seeing Stone* by Kevin Crossley-Holland, *Some Places More Than Others* by Renee Watson, and the timeless classic, *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank. For our Key Stage 4 students, we suggest *Kidnapped* by Robert Louis Stevenson, *Two Can Keep a Secret* by Karen M McManus, the science fiction masterpieces of H.G. Wells, and the epic fantasy series *A Game of Thrones* by George R.R. Martin. I hope you and your child find these recommendations helpful. Please remember that public libraries and online platforms also offer a wide selection of free e-books for further reading options.

### **Attendance**

Thank you as always for supporting the school in our drive to improve attendance. Again, we are over 2% higher in our attendance than we were last year to date. Last week we celebrated our 396 students who had achieved 100% attendance during half term 3 (07<sup>th</sup> Jan 2025 – 14<sup>th</sup> Feb 2025). We are hoping that we can improve on this number for this half term, as any student who achieves 100% attendance between 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2025 and 04<sup>th</sup> April 2025 will receive a Golden ticket for an early lunch the first week back after Easter. Please continue to have those conversations with your children about the importance of good attendance.

Yours sincerely



Mr S Braithwaite  
Headteacher