

23rd May 2025

Dear Parents/Carers,

'LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU' John 13.31

An American journalist, after watching Mother Teresa caring for a man with gangrene, remarked to her. 'I wouldn't do that for a million dollars.' Mother Teresa replied: 'Neither would I... But I do it for the love of God.' Selfishness keeps us shut in, builds barriers, even walls, between us and others. What frees us is caring, caring for others, being friends, being sisters and brothers to them, being good neighbours. A doctor, who shared some of the deepest moments in the lives of many patients, says that people facing death don't think about the degrees they've earned, the position they've held, or how much wealth they've amassed. What really matters at the end is who you have loved and who has loved you.

Love asks the best from us and brings out the best in us. Being loved gives us a surprise energy and courage. Love makes us faithful, productive, strong and constant in doing good. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, famous for her work on the stages of dying, has written: 'Love is the flame that warms our soul, energises our spirit and supplies passion to our lives. It's our connection to God and to one another.'

Practicing love has power to heal ourselves and others. To love is to heal, both those who receive and those who give it. To decide to love is to be fully open to life. It is choice and not just feeling. When we choose to be loving, caring healing, helping, and forgiving persons, we grow towards what our life is meant to be. There's really no other way. So Jesus insists, very strongly: 'Love one another, as I have loved you.'

GCSE exams:

I am delighted to report that the conduct and attitude of our Year 11 students has been exceptional as they approach their examinations. They have embraced the challenge with purpose and energy, and I am incredibly proud of their efforts.

As we approach the half-term break, it is important that our Year 11 students balance rest with revision to ensure they are "match-fit" for the remainder of the exams. I would like to remind you of the programme we shared last week for the half-term revision sessions. I am truly grateful to our staff for giving up their holiday to support our Year 11 students in securing their personal success - it is a true example of service.

Work Experience:

Work experience placements our Year 10 students have been undertaking this week. I am pleased to report that they have gained a truly valuable insight into the world of work through this opportunity. I would like to take this moment to express my sincere gratitude to Mr Killion for his relentless efforts in securing these placements. His dedication to planning a great experience for those students who have participated in the work placement programme here at St Gabriels RC High School is truly commendable. The work experience placements have undoubtedly provided our students with a unique chance to explore potential career paths and develop essential skills for their future. I am confident that this experience will prove invaluable as they continue their educational journey.

Catholic School Inspection:

This week, we have also had our Catholic Schools Inspection, and I am pleased to share that our students have been incredible ambassadors for our school. While I cannot yet share the findings of the Inspection, I can say that there have been many moments where our charism as a school of Service and Family have been demonstrated, and we look forward to a report that captures this.

Attendance:

Attendance remains a priority, and I am pleased to report that our year-to-date attendance is above 92%, which is a significant improvement from the same time last year when it was dropping below 90%. This sustained success is a testament to the partnership between school and parents.

Have a wonderful half term and many thanks, as always, for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

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

Mr S Braithwaite
Headteacher