# Weekly Learning Update

# 3rd October 2025

# Nursery

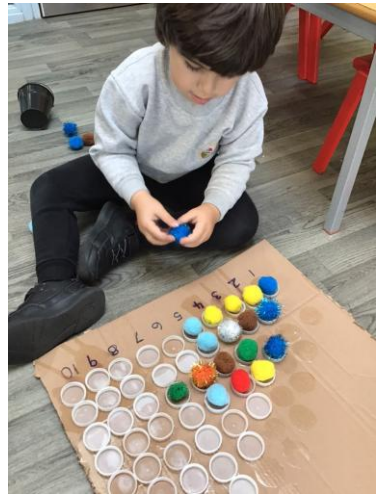
It has been another brilliant week in Nursery!

The children have enjoyed accessing a range of different challenges within the continuous provision and have been working incredibly hard when developing their fine motor skills. Each morning, there are different challenges set which support gross and fine motor development. These range from dancing to using play dough and the children are enjoying all of these!

Our focus within English this week has been to develop our whole class story map to support the retelling of 'From Head to Toe' by Eric Carle.

We have played a range of games and taken part in activities this week to support honing attention and listening to a range of different sounds that the children have enjoyed identifying.

Within continuous provision, there has been an emphasis on activities that support sharing and turn taking. The children have shown such 'Community' and 'Respect' through working together and making sure everyone has a fair turn. Great work, Nursery!



# Reception (King Class and Parks Class)

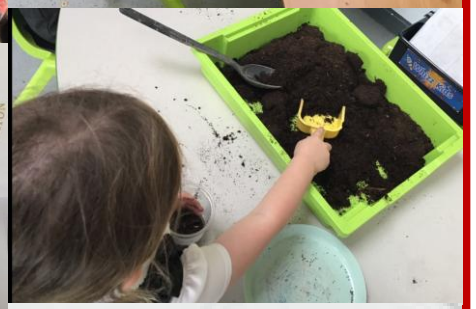
Reception have had another super week!

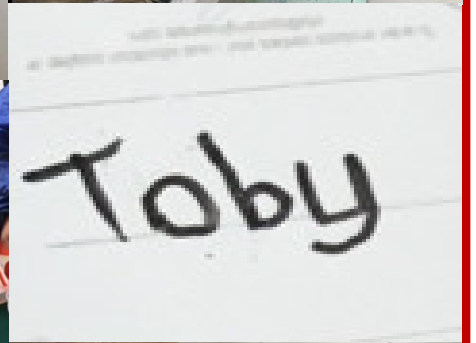
This week, in Phonics, we have learnt the phonemes: r, h, b and f/ff. We have continued learning to orally blend words and write the graphemes using handwriting sayings.

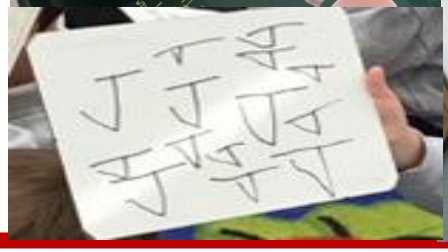
In English, we have been learning to write our names. The children have been practising using a capital letter at the beginning of their names, making sure that their letters sit neatly on the line and are the correct height.
We have also continued to develop our writing skills by creating lists. The children have enjoyed thinking carefully about what to include and used their phonic knowledge to record sounds they can hear in words.

In Maths, Reception have been learning how to count objects from a larger group. The children have really enjoyed exploring this skill using a range of concrete resources, such as bears, animals, cubes and counters. They have then applied their previous knowledge of touch counting to carefully check their answers. It has been wonderful to see their independence and enthusiasm growing as they practise these important early number skills!

During Continuous Provision, the children have had lots of fun exploring the different learning areas. They especially enjoyed making their own sandwiches and creating pumpkin soup for the tiger!





# Year 1 (Bell Class and Windsor Class)

We've had another fun-filled and busy week in Year One, packed with learning and creativity! We're so proud of everything the children have achieved!

This week, the children finished writing their lovely letters to Floella Benjamin. They told her all about life in England, including their favourite foods and weather. Both Year One classes came together to share their letters and celebrate their fantastic writing — it was lovely to see them showing lots of pride in their work!

In Maths, we've been learning how to compare numbers using *greater than*, *less than a*nd *equal to*. The children have been using inequality symbols and working with counters and cubes to show what they've learned.

In Science, we explored our senses with a super exciting investigation! This included the children using their sense of touch to feel mystery objects hidden in a box and even took part in a taste test with lemons — there were some brilliant (and very funny) reactions!

In RE, we've been thinking about how Christians show love for God. We read the story of *Jonah and the Whale* and worked in small groups to draw different parts of the story. The children really enjoyed sharing their ideas and working together.

In D&T, we got creative by making moving pictures. The children followed step-by-step instructions carefully and were so proud of their finished designs — with lots of concentration and creativity on show!

In Music, we've been learning the *Menu Song*. The children had a great time singing in time and adding actions — it's been lovely to see their confidence grow.

In PSHE, we talked about how we show love to people who are special to us. The children shared some really thoughtful and kind examples.

The children also enjoyed some reading for pleasure time this week and got to choose a book from the library to read.

# Year 2 (Braille Class and Kerr Class)

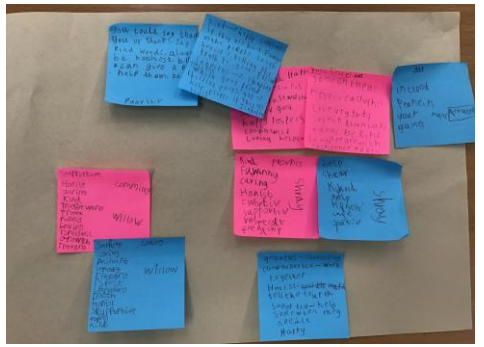
What a brilliant week we've had in Year 2! The children have been curious, creative and full of thoughtful ideas. Here's a little snapshot of our learning!

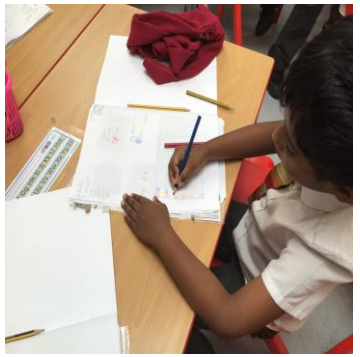
In our Maths lessons, we've continued exploring place value and had great fun comparing numbers and objects using the greater than (>), less than (<) and equal to (=) symbols. The children are becoming confident mathematicians—there's been lots of lively discussion and some very proud faces!

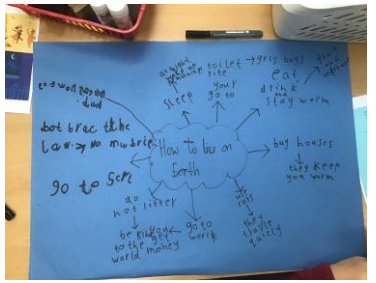
This week, in English, we imagined what an alien might need to know about life on Earth—and wrote letters to tell them all about it! After brainstorming important facts (from food and animals to friendship and fun) each child chose three topics and planned two key facts for each. We rehearsed our ideas, then wrote our letters with care and enthusiasm. The children showed a brilliant understanding of how letters work—and their writing was out of this world!

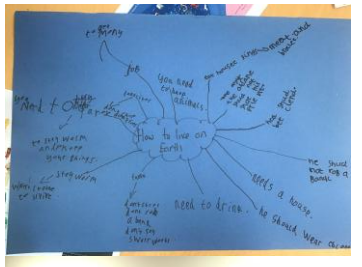
In Science, our plant investigation is officially underway! We started by deciding what equipment we'd need, then talked about how to make it a fair test. The children agreed that the soil, water, seed type and pot size should all stay the same. Over the next week, we'll be observing our plants closely to see what changes take place—lots of excitement ahead!

In PSHE, we explored the qualities of a good friend. The children shared thoughtful ideas, recognising that friendship is about more than just playing games—it's also about listening, cooperating and sometimes compromising to make sure everyone feels happy and included. We're so proud of the kindness and empathy they're showing in class!







# Year 3 (Malala Class and Anning Class)

We had a really exciting start to our week, taking part in a Netball Festival! The children had lots of fun learning about the rules of netball and practising their skills, showing great enthusiasm, brilliant teamwork and lots of determination. It was wonderful to see them all working together, cheering each other on and learning something new.

In English, the children have been writing their own information reports about the Stone Age. We have been so impressed to see them all using the features of non-fiction writing, sharing all the facts they have learnt, as well as including all of the grammatical techniques we have been practising over the last few weeks.

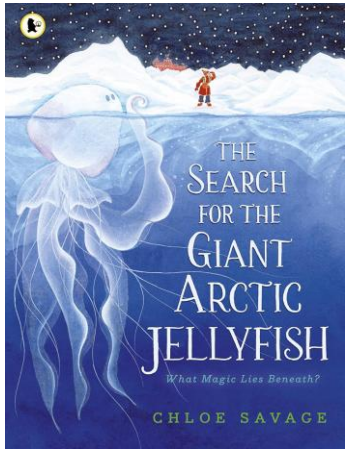
In our Reading lessons this week, we have been enjoying 'The Search for the Giant Arctic Jellyfish' by Chloe Savage.

In Maths, we have started our new unit of learning on Addition and Subtraction, thinking about how we can use our number bonds to support us in other calculations.

In Science, we have been investigating the permeability of rocks to help Houlton builders know which rock to use for the roof of a house!

In RE, we read a story called 'God's Holy Darkness' and discussed how darkness is an important part of nature which carries spiritual significance for many with Christian worldviews. The children then created artwork to show how dark can promote light.

We are really excited about our upcoming trips to the Macready Theatre for our author workshop with Susannah Lloyd and Compton Verney for our Stone Age workshop. Please see the letters sent out for more details and complete the Google Forms attached to them.



# Year 4 (Tagore Class and Turing Class)

It has been a fantastic week in Year 4!

This week, we participated in a netball tournament, where we honed different skills and applied them during the games. All of Year 4 truly demonstrated our value of 'Community' and everyone had a brilliant time!

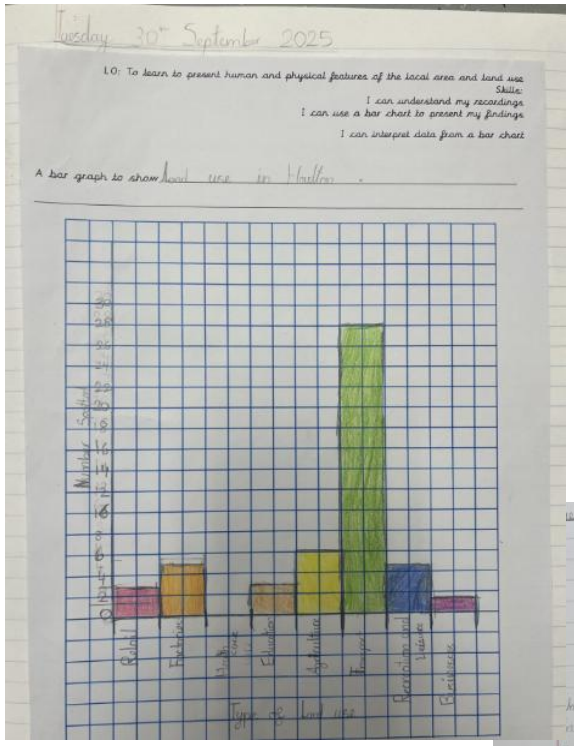
In English, we have been focusing on writing our setting descriptions. The quality of the language used has blown us away, as the children really managed to entertain their readers with their imaginative and vivid descriptions!

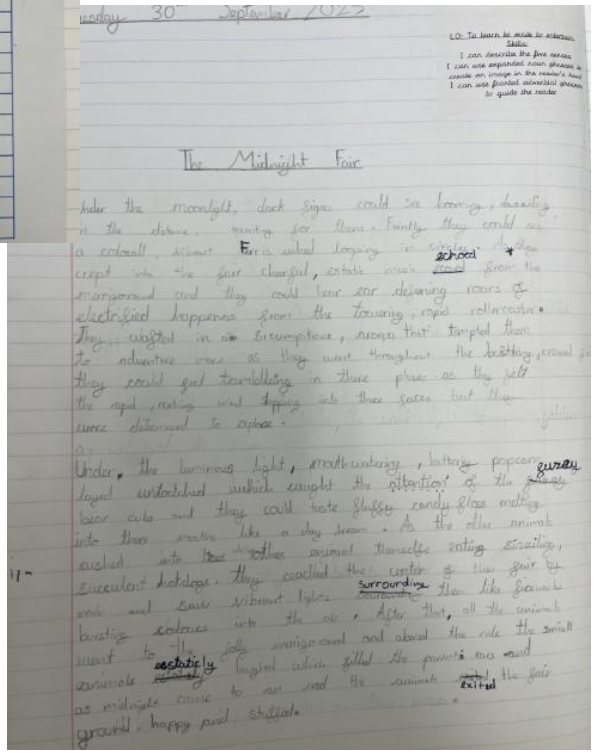
In Maths, we've been tackling rounding to the nearest 10, 100 and 1000. While it has proven to be tricky at times, the students have shown remarkable resilience and determination.

In Science, we prepared for our upcoming investigation related to teeth. The children are enthusiastic about using eggshells to discover which liquid has the most significant effect. We will set it up next week and we can't wait to see the results!

In RE, we delved deeper into the concept of the Holy Trinity, discussing how Christians explain it. Using various analogies, the class worked hard to simplify this complex idea.

Lastly, in Geography, we had the opportunity to present the data gathered from our fieldwork trip, revealing that there is a significant amount of transport land use in our local area. Overall, it has been an engaging week of learning!



# Year 5 (Attenborough Class and Raúf Class)

We have had a very busy week this week in Year 5.

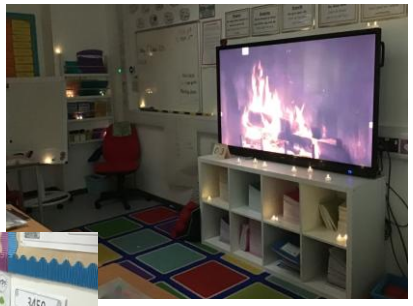
On Monday, the children were lucky to be invited to take part in our very own Netball Festival. The children worked together in groups to learn and strengthen netball skills such as passing, catching, shooting and pivoting. It was great to see the children show off their teamwork skills as they encouraged each other.

In English, we have finally completed our diary entries, written from the perspective of one of the characters from The Arrival. The children worked really hard to use emotive language, expanded noun phrases and fronted adverbials to engage their reader. At the end of the week, we then moved onto our next unit as the children travelled back in time to olden-day Germany where they listened to and read lots of different spooky stories to explore the typical themes of suspense writing.

In Maths, we finished off our Place Value unit with a very fun rounding game and then moved on to our next unit, Addition and Subtraction. This week, we looked at how we can use different mental strategies to help us solve some calculations more easily before we moved onto the formal method of addition with 5- or 6-digit numbers.

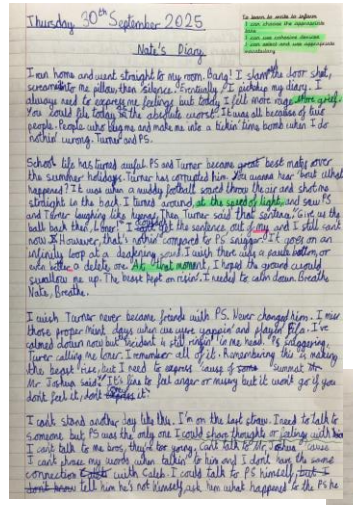
In Science, we carried out investigations as we explored the conductivity of different materials. The children were separated into groups and tasked with finding out which material would allow for a cup of water to cool down the fastest. Each group was given a different material to observe over time as they measured the temperature of the water with a thermometer and calculated the difference in temperatures in order to determine which items were the best insulators and conductors.

In History, we built upon our learning from last week as we focused closer on the specific timeline of Ancient Greece. The children had to use a variety of secondary sources to make notes about each of the five periods of the Ancient Greek civilisation. We then moved on to compare and contrast the different periods and consider which ones had a larger impact on history.



# Year 6 (Pogson Class and Walker Class)

In English, we have been planning and writing a diary in the style of *Nate* from *The Final Year*. We have written informally to represent Nate's character and used Manchester dialect, as written in the book. Our diary entries have shown the events of Nate feeling isolated and left out, after his closest friend, PS, was put in a different class to him for Year 6.


Thursday 30th September 2025

Nate's Diary

I was home and went straight to my room. Bang! I slammed the door shut, screwed me pillow then fabrics. Eventually I'll be picking my diary. I always need to express me feelings but today I still where I was before. Yes I could fib today to the schedule weren't I'll say all because of true people. People who bug me and make me vibe a ticking time bomb when I do nothin' wrong. Turner and PS.

School life has turned awful. PS and Turner become great best mates over the summer holidays. Turner has corrupted him. You wanna hear 'bout what happened? It was when a muddy football soared threw the air and shot me straight in the back. I turned around at the speed of light and saw PS and Turner laughing like hyenas. Then Turner said that [illegible] to us the ball back that. I [illegible] the evidence out of my yard. I still want now. However, that's nothin' compared to PS swagger. It goes on an infinitely loop at a deafening sound. I wish there was a panic button or owt [illegible] delete me. At that moment, I regret the second myself [illegible] me up. The beast kept on risin'. I needed to calm down. Breathe Nate. Breathe.

I wish Turner never became friends with PS. Never changed him. I miss those proper mint days when we were yappin' and playin' fifa. I've calmed down now but accident is still replay in me head. PS disagreeing Turner calling me liar. I remember all of it. Remembering this is making the beast rise but I need to appeal 'cause of some [illegible] Mr Joshua said "IT'S fine to feel anger or missy but it won't go if you don't feel it, don't express it."

I can't stand another day like this. I'm on the last straw. I need to talk to someone but PS was the only one I could share thoughts or feelings with but I can't talk to me mum, they're too young. Can't talk to Mr Joshua 'cause I can't phrase my words when talkin' to him and I don't keep the same connection [illegible] with Caleb. I could talk to PS himself, but I don't know [illegible] him he's not himself just him what happened to the PS he


Tuesday 30th September 2025

Nate's Diary

Today was awful. I thought we had a bit of a connection when I had done nothing wrong. Today wasn't the day. I'm so burned out I can't even [illegible]. I got no sleep. The sleep I got was a couple of hours. I'm so tired. My mum [illegible] me to school. I was late. I'm also [illegible] I'm so late. I'm so tired. I'm so [illegible] I'm so [illegible] I'm so [illegible]

# Collective Worship

This week, we had our Harvest Festival Worship, where we gave thanks for the harvest and those who support it, such as farmers. Children demonstrated our school value of 'Community' by bringing in donations for Rugby Foodbank. Thank you for supporting this very worthy cause.

This week marked the beginning of Black History Month, and during this month, we will be reading inspirational stories from black history during our Worship through Story and continuing important discussions during Classroom Worship Time. This week, we discussed why we celebrate Black History Month and some significant figures in Black History.

Collective worship at St Gabriel's always aims to be **inspirational** for all, **invitational** to all and **inclusive** of all.

# St Gabriel's Community Events

We are a group of friendly, enthusiastic staff, parents/carers and friends of the school, who work together to organise events, raise funds and support school projects.

## How can you get involved?

**Come to a Meeting**

They're informal, friendly and involve biscuits!

**Volunteer at Events**

Any time you can spare makes a huge difference!

**Answer the Call**

Send in donations, bake or spread the word.

**Sign up to Easy Fundraising**

Support us while you shop.

**Have Fun!**

It is a great way to meet other parents and carers and feel a part of our community.

**Please join some of our teachers on Wednesday 8th October, 5.30-6.30pm, to find out more about what we do, this year's events and have a catch-up!**

**Refreshments will be provided.**

Proceeds from our Wreath Making Workshop will go towards enrichment opportunities for the children.

# Local Events

The Rugby Literary Festival returns this weekend, from Friday 3rd to Sunday 5th October.

Brought to you by Rugby First, in collaboration with Rugby Borough Council and local author Lindsay Woodward, the festival promises a packed three-day programme that will celebrate storytelling in all its forms.

Whether you're an established writer, you love getting lost in a good book, or you're a budding talent early on in your literary journey, there will be something for everyone across this weekend of workshops, storytelling events, interactive activities, book fairs and crafts.

**All events are FREE unless otherwise stated.**

Follow this link for more information.

# Upcoming Dates

**Monday 6th October: Reception and Year 1 Phonics Information Session**
Join Miss Merrick at 2:15-3pm in the hall to find out more about how we teach phonics and early reading at St. Gabriel's.

**Tuesday 7th October: Reception Open Day**
Join us at 4-5pm to find out more ahead of Reception school applications for September 2026.

**Wednesday 8th October: Community Events Coffee and Catch Up**
Come and find out about this year's community events.

**Tuesday 14th – Thursday 16th October: Parent/Carer Consultations**
Please use Arbor to book your parent/carer consultation.

**Wednesday 22nd October (3.30-4pm): Uniform Shop**
Please donate any clean, pre-loved uniform to help us to raise money for Year 6's celebrations this year.

**Friday 24th October: Non-Uniform Day (Bring a Bottle)**
All are welcome to come to school in non-uniform and bring a bottle to collect donations for our St Gabriel's Christmas Fair tombola and raffle.

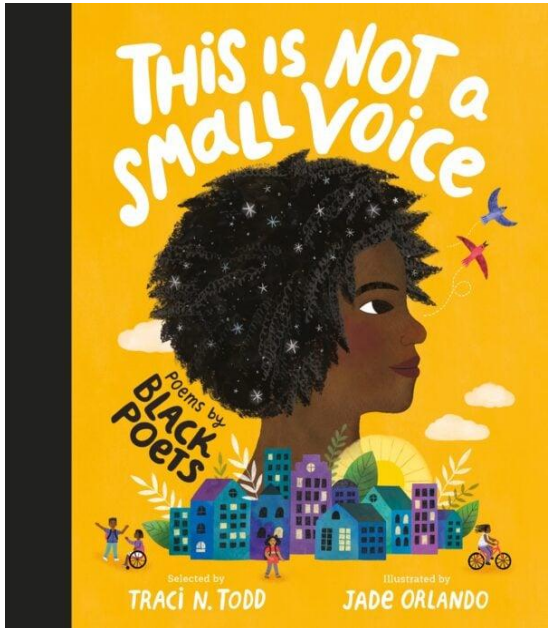
# Recommended Read

To celebrate Black History Month, as well as National Poetry Day, this week's recommended read is a beautiful, bold and moving collection of 100 poems by Black poets for the whole family to treasure.

This gorgeously-illustrated children's anthology, **This is Not a Small Voice,** makes the perfect introduction to poets such as Lucille Clifton, Langston Hughes, Benajmin Zephaniah, Maya Angelou, Caleb Femi and Joseph Coehlo.

The collection touches on a wide range of themes – hope and struggle, joy and pride, home and food, as well as music and family. Each poem is perfectly paired with vibrant, heartfelt illustrations from Jade Orlando.

It's a book to cherish and a brilliant tribute to the rich literary history and bright future of Black writing.




# Online Safety

A recent survey commissioned by BBC Teach for **Safer Internet Day 2025** revealed that **online safety concerns are increasingly affecting younger children**, not just teenagers. Key findings include:

- **80% of primary school teachers** reported at least one safeguarding incident linked to online safety in the past year.
- **36%** said such incidents are increasing.
- **33%** of teachers said children in their class had been victims of online scams.
- Teachers expressed concern about the role of **AI in making scams more convincing** and harder to detect.

To support schools, **BBC Teach hosted a Live Lesson** called *Scam Smashers*, helping children aged 7–11 learn to spot scams and solve online safety challenges in a fun, interactive way.

Follow this link to access this fun and engaging lesson at home. It is also available to view through BBC iPlayer.

https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/live-lessons/articles/zm9vwsg#zm9q3qt

| Whole School Attendance | |
|---|---|
| **Attendance since September** | 96.1% |
| **This week's attendance** | 96.3% |
| **Latest Local Authority ranking** | 130th out of 194 schools |
| **Latest National ranking** | Top 40-50% of schools |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Outstanding** | **100%** | 190 days of full learning<br>All lessons complete |
| **Very Good** | **98%** | 186 days of learning<br>4 days and 20 lessons missed |
| **Good** | **96%** | 182 days of learning<br>8 days and 40 lessons missed |
| **More needed** | **94%** | 178 days of learning<br>12 days and 60 lessons missed |
| **Concerning** | **92%** | 174 days of learning<br>16 days and 80 lessons missed |
| **Very concerning** | **90%** | 171 days of learning<br>19 days and 95 lessons missed |

## Whole school target is 96%

National research shows, on average, children who meet expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics have higher attendance than those who did not.

Please contact the school for support and advice if you are concerned about your child's attendance.

NHS England has provided helpful guidance for parents and carers when making the difficult decision regarding not sending a child to school.

NHS guidance- Is my child too ill for school?

# Family Support

Access parenting advice from child mental health experts, including practical tips and advice videos to support children's wellbeing and behaviour.

**Free 'Understanding Your Child' course for all parents, grandparents, and carers of children aged between six months to 19 years**

The resources are tailored so that whatever their age, you can use the ideas and techniques to help better understand your child, their emotions and how to nurture them.

Find out more here.

# Worried About a Child?

If you have concerns that a child is suffering any form of abuse, neglect or cruelty, contact the Warwickshire Children and Families Family Connect immediately by calling 01926 414144. Lines are open Monday to Thursday 8.30am - 5.30pm, Friday 8.30am-5.00pm.

If you need to get in touch out of usual office hours, please contact the Emergency Duty Team immediately by calling 01926 886922.

If you think that a child is at immediate risk, contact the police immediately by calling 999.

St Gabriel's CofE Academy, Houlton Way, Houlton, Rugby, CV23 1AN

✉office@stgabrielscofeacademy.org ☎01788 222405