Weekly Learning Update

8th November 2024

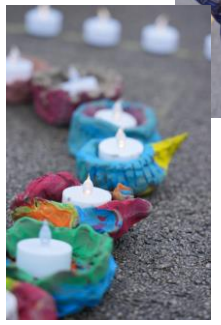
Festival of Light and Peace

Each year we take time to celebrate a Festival of Light and Peace where we explore how people from different worldviews might use and celebrate light. This is an important festival day for St Gabriel's as it has given us an opportunity to celebrate the diversity of our school community and consider how people with different worldviews can still have lots in common and live together in unity.

Throughout the day, each class was very lucky to have a member of the local community visit and share with the children how they celebrate a specific festival within their worldview and explore the significance of light within their religion. It was incredible to listen to the personal experiences of these visitors and explore different symbols and items used during these important times.

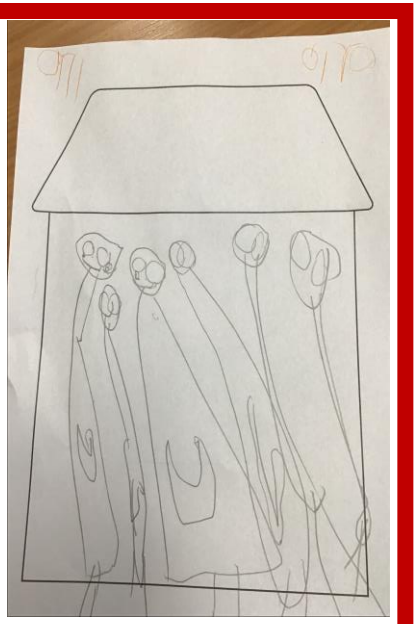
All children, from Nursery to Year 6, were then given the opportunity to explore a celebration linked with light within a specific worldview. After learning about the celebration, its links to theology and practices, the children were then able to create their own light-based item. This included lanterns, diva lamps and Christingles! At the end of the day, each child took some time to add to our whole school light display outside.

It was such a wonderful day. We have loved seeing children come into school in their traditional clothes and sharing with us their own personal worldviews while also exploring and celebrating the worldviews of others. Thank you to our parents for helping support this important festival day and to those who took the time to visit our classes and share an important message with our children.



Nursery

This week, we have started our new key text ‘From Head to Toe’ by Eric Carle. We have been sharing the story together and learning about the different animals throughout the story. The children have been focusing on our families and drawing beautiful pictures showing who lives in their homes and even making their own village small world scenery. On Thursday, we celebrated the Festival of Light and Peace by creating our own star and following the line of light with our tealights.



Reception (King Class and Parks Class)

It has been fantastic to welcome the children back to school this week and to see their enthusiasm for their learning as we start our second Autumn half term.

English:

We have started looking at our focus text 'We're Going On A Bear Hunt' by Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury. As well as the children beginning their whole class story map, they have been honing their sentence skills by ensuring they start sentences with a capital letter, put fingers spaces in between their words and end with a full stop.

Phonics:

We are continuing our Phase 2 phoneme recap with a focus on blending.

Maths:

We have been comparing different objects based on characteristics. This week, we have explored length and height.

Festival of Light and Peace:

We had a wonderful day yesterday celebrating and learning about a range of worldviews. We explored the worldview of Christianity, where we decided to create our own Christingles.

We also explored the worldview of Hinduism, as we welcomed a parent from our wider school community to share their experiences of Diwali.

We really enjoyed taking part in the whole school art installation, placing tea lights to create the word 'peace.'

Year 1 (Bell Class and Windsor Class)

It's been a wonderful first week back after the half term, filled with lots of learning and an exciting celebration. On Thursday, we celebrated the Festival of Light and Peace. We had a focus on the worldview of Hinduism, learning all about Diwali. We found out about the origins of Diwali, how it is celebrated and we made our very own diva lamps to explore the significance of light. We also had a very special visit from a member of our community who spoke to us about the meaning of light within her worldview. She brought in lots of special artefacts for the children to see which really brought our recent learning in RE to life!

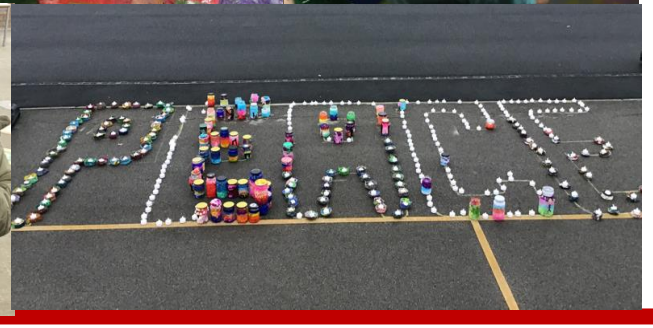
In Phonics, we have moved on to Phase 4, thinking about how the phonemes we have learnt can be blended into clusters. We have focused on words such as 'burnt', 'paint', 'plant' and 'faint' so far, consolidating our Phase 2 and Phase 3 phonemes by reading and writing words and sentences.

In English, we started our new text 'The Tale of Peter Rabbit' by Beatrix Potter. The children were so excited to read the story and get to know the characters in more detail. We used story maps and stick puppets to retell the story and tried to use the conjunction 'and' to join ideas together about the characters.

In Maths, we have been focusing on addition, learning to add more and solve problems involving addition. The children used counters and ten frames to help them to find the answers and we were really impressed to see the children writing down the fact families for their calculations.

In Science, we have been learning about animals in our local area. We went on a minibeast hunt to see how many we could spot!

In History, we have started our new unit of learning on the Victorians. We began by thinking about what history is and created a timeline of key events that have happened in our lives so far.



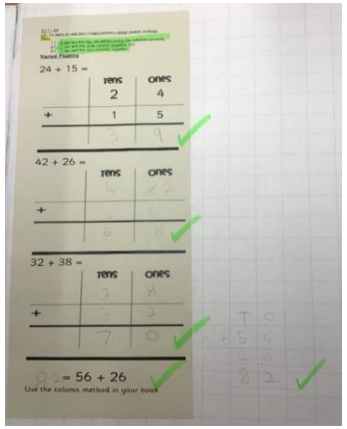
Year 2 (Braille Class and Kerr Class)

It has been a busy first week back!

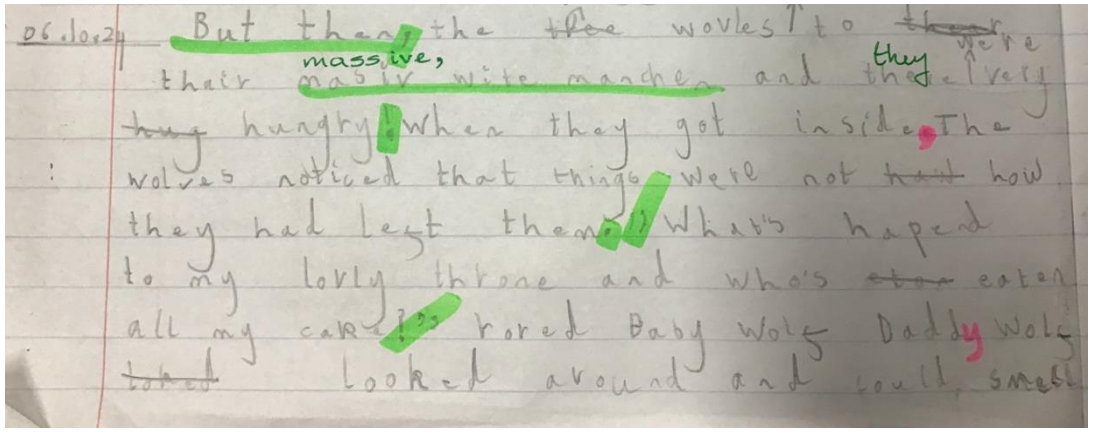
During our English lessons this week, the children have been hard at work creating their own innovative versions of the traditional tale Goldilocks. There have been some very funny and incredibly descriptive adaptations!

Our Maths lessons have challenged our addition skills. We have looked at the column method using base ten and then used our addition skills to solve tricky reasoning and problem-solving questions.

We finished off our scientific investigation on how plants grow this week. Earlier in our learning, we planted seeds and placed them in different positions of the room. We also planted them in different conditions: one with light and water, one with light and no water, one with no light and water with the last one having no light and no water. The experiment showed us how plants will grow given the right conditions and how they find it difficult when certain conditions are not met.



During our Music lesson this week, we have begun the preparations for our Christmas production by learning the words and actions for our fleece force song. The children have picked it up superbly and we cannot wait for you to see it all!



This week also saw us celebrate the Festival of Light as a whole school. We learned about Diwali from a visitor, made colourful and bright lanterns and helped in a whole school piece by adding candles to the word ‘peace’ outside on our playground.

Year 3 (Malala Class and Anning Class)

Year 3 have had a super start back to the Autumn Term!

In English, we have started our text 'The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe' by C.S Lewis. This week, we have been focusing on the use of speech within a text and being able to punctuate speech accurately. We have also started to plan an opening to our own story using a similar plot to our key text.

In Maths, we have been consolidating and deepening our understanding and use of column method to solve addition and subtraction calculations. We have been solving calculations where we do not need to exchange as we are looking at that in closer detail next week.

On Tuesday, we enjoyed celebrating our 'Stone Age Day' to end our topic of Stone Age to Iron Age. During the day, we turned our classroom tables into caves where we completed some cave drawings; we discovered more about Stonehenge and created our very own Stonehenge out of biscuits; we made our own stone age jewellery and finally, in the afternoon, we became hunter gathers to complete our own orienteering puzzle! The children had a brilliant day and it was lovely to see them all in their costumes!

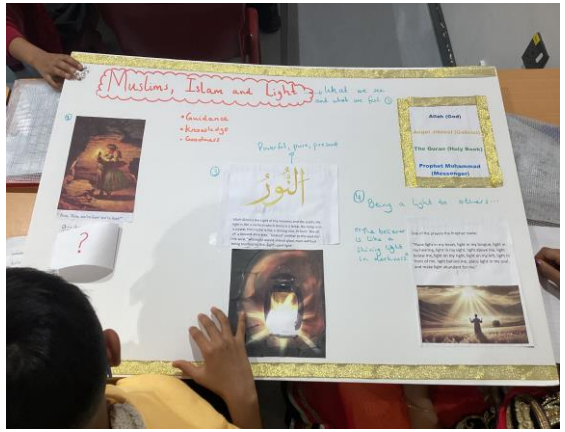
On Thursday, Year 3 enjoyed celebrating our 'Festival of Light and Peace'. We discovered more about worldviews through the lens of Islam and Judaism and looked at the festival of Hanukkah in depth. We then created our own hand menorahs.

Year 4 (Turing Class and Tagore Class)

Year 4 have had a cracking return to school this week; we started our week off with a Firework themed morning. We explored the history of Bonfire night and then created our very own Firework art. This activity was a hint at our new English text. This term, we will be delving into the Firework Maker's Daughter by Phillip Pullman, and we have made predictions of what we think the story will be about, based on the clues on the front cover and the blurb. We look forward to finding out whether our predictions are accurate next week.

In Maths, we have been consolidating and deepening our understating of our Addition and Subtraction learning. We learned the skills of checking the accuracy of our work using the inverse and choosing the most efficient methods for solving subtraction problems.

On Wednesday, we started our new 'Food and Nutrition' Design and Technology unit. We explored the different food groups and discussed healthy diets as recommended by the Eatwell guide. We sorted food into groups and discussed our own diets, sharing what we did well and how we hoped to make our diets even healthier.



In Geography, we have started our new unit: 'Rivers and the Water Cycle'. We used atlases to identify what rivers looked like on a map. We then identified and labelled some of the biggest rivers in the UK on a map

This week the school has been celebrating the Festival of Light and Peace. In Year 4, we were fortunate to have a member of our community visit us and give us an insight into Islam and the significance of light within Islam. We spent the afternoon learning about the festival of Eid and creating our own stunning Eid sun catchers.

Year 5 (Attenborough Class and Gandhi Class)

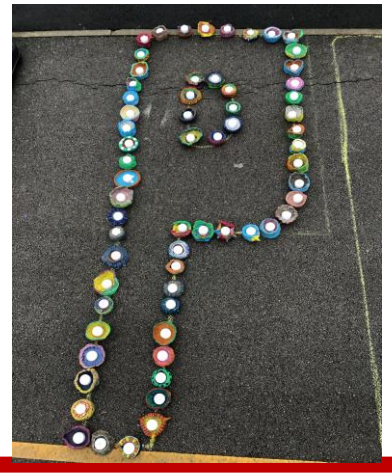
We have had a very successful start to the new half term!

In English, we have started our new book – Who Let the Gods Out? By Maz Evans. We have enjoyed getting stuck into the world of Elliot and his immortal friend, Virgo. Our focus for the first part of this half term will be character descriptions so this week we have explored how authors use description to build up a picture of a character. We tried to use specific vocabulary to describe different well-known villains and played our own game of Guess Who!

In Maths, we have begun our unit on fractions with a week of lessons focused on finding equivalent fractions. We first of all compared fractions to unit fractions and then moved on to using our times table knowledge to find equivalent fractions to non-unit fractions.

In Geography this week, we learnt how the human features of Greece are an attraction to so many tourists each year. We explored different areas of Greece to investigate what features of human geography make the country as glorious as it is.

This week the school has been celebrating the Festival of Light and Peace. On Thursday, we were lucky enough to receive a visit from a local member of the community to talk about the meaning of light within their worldview. Then we spent the afternoon decorating Diya lamps after learning about how Sikh people celebrate Diwali and the meaning behind this festival.



Year 6 (Pogson Class and Ahmad Class)

It has been a fantastic first week back after half term in Year 6, with lots of learning opportunities taking place!

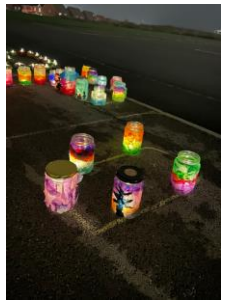
In Maths, we have started our Fractions topic, where Year 6 have been simplifying fractions to find equivalent fractions. As well as this, Year 6 have compared fractions with different denominators, where they have had to find a common denominator to covert the fractions to.

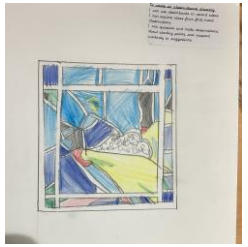
In English, Year 6 have read Wilfred Owen's famous war time poem, 'Dulce et Decorum Est'. They used their background knowledge about World War 1 to discuss the significance of the poem and how it gave the reader an understanding of life on the front line. After this, Year 6 discussed poetic devices used in the poem, such as metaphors and similes, and used these as inspiration for their own war poem that they will write next week.

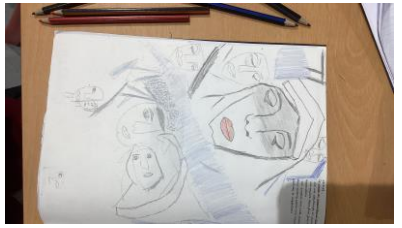
In History, we have jumped straight into our new topic, World War 1. This week, we focused on finding out more about the chronology of this key event. The children were given the task of researching to find out about some of the significant events that occurred during World War 1. They then ordered these events on a timeline. Next week, we look forward to finding out more about how the war began.

In Art, we completed observational drawings based on the work of Roman Halter. The children were presented with a range of examples of his work and then had to draw what they could see in their sketchbooks, adding colour if they wished. Next week, we look forward to finding out more about Roman Halter and his work.

Finally, in RE, we took some time away from our usual learning and celebrated the Festival of Light and Peace. We had a local member of the community visit our class to share how they celebrate the festival of Diwali and shared the importance of the symbol of light in this celebration. Year 6 were given the opportunity to explore the festivals and celebrations linked with the Winter Solstice. We looked at this celebration through a Pagan as well as other religious, non-religious and cultural worldviews. The children then made their own Solstice Lanterns, based on the themes of the Sun, Winter and New Life. These lanterns were then added to our whole school display outside.





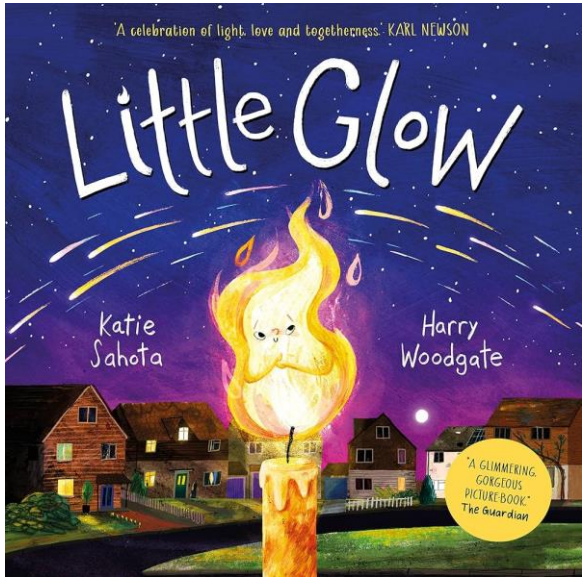


Recommended Read

Inspired by this week's Festival of Light and Peace, our recommended read is Little Glow by Katie Sahota. This picture book is a rhyming celebration of hope, told through the eyes of an introverted lead character, observing the inspiring ways an inclusive community celebrates light through the year.

From the window of a cosy house in a seaside town, a lonely little candle looks out onto the world. Throughout the year, the small flame watches on as families use different kinds of light to celebrate Lunar New Year, Diwali, Hanukkah, Ramadan, Halloween and Christmas.

Little Glow is amazed by the bolder bright lights and yearns to light up the skyline in the same way. But as a family gather one evening, the flickering flame realises that even a small, quiet glow has huge importance.



Online Safety

The NSPCC have an online safety hub that offers advice for parents from photos to online games to parental controls. Their guides help you to make informed decisions and help to keep your child safe. The team have an amazing wealth of experience, with a team of ex-frontline practitioners from ex-police, former teachers and ex-children services workers. They know the challenges that children can face online and their aim is to ensure that every child is safe online. This video explains more.

This week, we would like to share their 'Online Games' guide. This guide helps you to understand the risks and get advice to help children play online games safely.

Whole School Attendance	
Attendance since September	97.0%
This week's attendance	97.1%
Latest Local Authority ranking	41 out of 188 schools
Latest National ranking	Top 10-20% of schools

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

PTFA

PTFA NEWSLETTER

Friends of St Gabriel's C of E Academy

w/e 8th November 2024 | PTA@stgabrielscofeacademy.org

We hope you had a great half term break!

There has been lots going on with the PTFA over the last couple of weeks.

First we had the donut and second hand uniform sale where we raised **over £300** on the day.

We ran the movie night tuck shop at Houlton School where we raised **£70.**

Then last night we had our neon disco for yrs 4-6 which was **AMAZING**! Initial numbers look like we have raised **around £475!!**

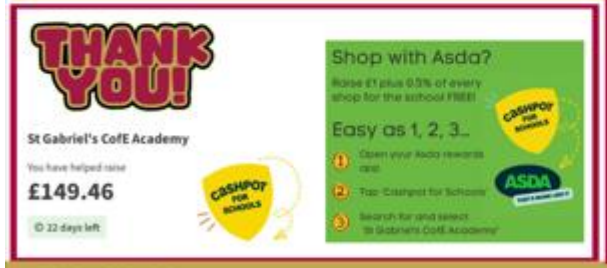
We would like to say a big **THANK YOU** to everyone that has supported us and got involved but a **special thank you goes to Matt James who gave up his time to DJ last night**

FUNDING NEWS

Reception are using their £200 against their living eggs experience and year 1 are using their £200 against their trip to St Johns museum.

There are **just 6 spaces left** on our wreath making workshop so book your space to avoid disappointment.

£30 per person



EVENTS

Full details and how to book to follow

- **Friday 15th November:** Family Bingo Night
- **Thursday 28th November:** Wreath Making Night
- **Friday 29th November:** Hot Chocolate sale
- **Friday 13th - Sunday 15th December:** Santas Grotto at the Barn

PTFA NEWSLETTER

Friends of St Gabriel's C of E Academy

w/e 8th November 2024 | PTA@stgabrielscofeacademy.org

Next Friday is our family bingo night so bring along your family and friends for a night of family fun!

Our prizes on the night are truly AMAZING!

Tickets are £5 per person

Prizes on the night include:

4 x tickets to Jack and the Beanstalk Panto at the Benn Hall

2 x tickets to a Coventry City FC 2024/25 season game

2 x tickets to Three Little Pigs at Macready Theatre

Ice skating tickets at Whilton Locks Garden Village

FREE entry tickets for 2 adults & 2 children to Tigers Indoor Play

£25 Nandos voucher

£25 Pizza Express voucher

Cash prizes

BOOK YOUR TICKET BY SCANNING QR CODE

Friends of St Gabriel's C of E Academy (Registered Charity No: 1204367)

Family Support

Online Parenting Courses - Family Lives

Family Lives has produced a series of online parenting courses. If interested, please follow the link below:

https://www.familylives.org.uk/how-we-can-help/online-parenting-courses

Family Lives offers a confidential and free* helpline service for families in England and Wales (previously known as Parentline). They can be contacted on **0808 800 2222** for emotional support, information, advice and guidance on any aspect of parenting and family life. Their website is also a rich source of useful support and advice.

(Free from landlines and most mobiles)*

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

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