Weekly Learning Update

10th October 2025

Nursery

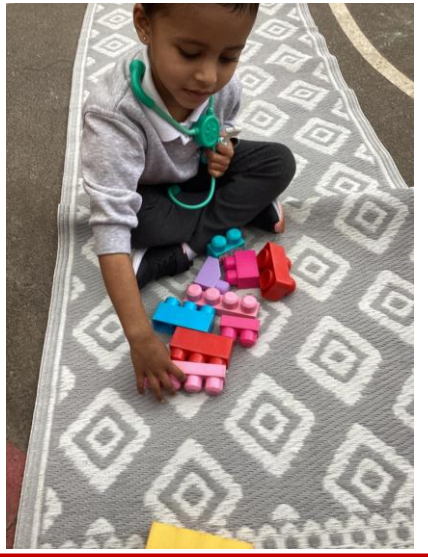
It has been another fabulous week within Nursery!

The children are all settled and well-adjusted to the routine within the school day. The team are all very impressed with how well the children come in and start the carpet sessions straight away and how enthusiastic everyone is to progress within their learning. The children are doing so well, that after a whole class carpet session, we have some additional small group work to continue the challenge and stretch of the skills we are learning!

In Maths, we have been continuing the concept of rote counting within 1-10 this week. Over the week the children have been number detectives, finding hidden numbers within the room and ordering them. There has also been a focus on using concrete resources to count out a group of objects from 1-10.

Our focus in Phonics has been to explore the volume of a range of sounds and the difference in a variety of sounds we have heard. This week, we met Leo Lion (who loves to make loud noises) and Marvin Mouse (who loves to make quiet noises). We were identifying when a loud noise has been heard and when a quiet noise has been heard.

In Continuous Provision, we have had a range of activities available this week, with a theme of sharing and problem solving. Children have enjoyed playing collaboratively and turn taking to complete a range of tasks.



Reception (King Class and Parks Class)

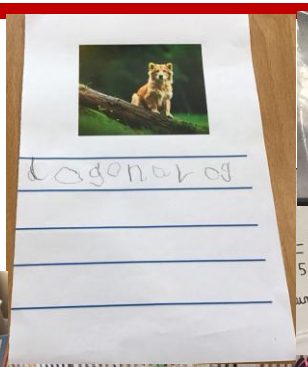
We have had another fantastic week in Reception!

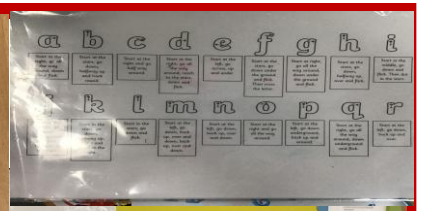
In Phonics this week, we have learnt our final Phase 2 phonemes: l, ll and ss. We learnt to orally blend words and write the graphemes using our handwriting sayings. Now that we have finished Phase 2, the children will be assessed so we can see which phonemes need to be re-taught and we can then focus more on their spelling and reading within Phase 2.

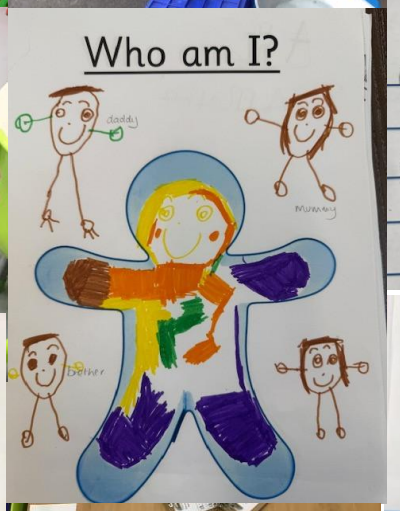
In English this week, the children began writing captions. We have focussed on learning the caption and using our sentence fingers to help us to remember each of the words. We then used our phoneme fingers to help us to identify the phonemes in each word in order to help us to write them.

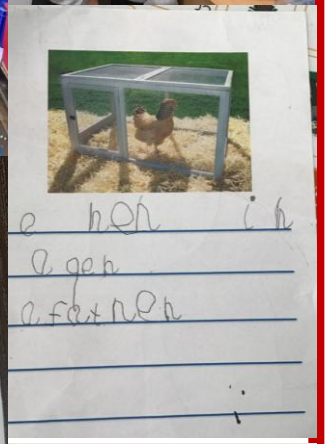
In Maths this week, we have been learning to subitise — to recognise small quantities without counting. The children were introduced to Numicon for the first time and explored how this mathematical resource can help them recognise numbers and develop their number sense.

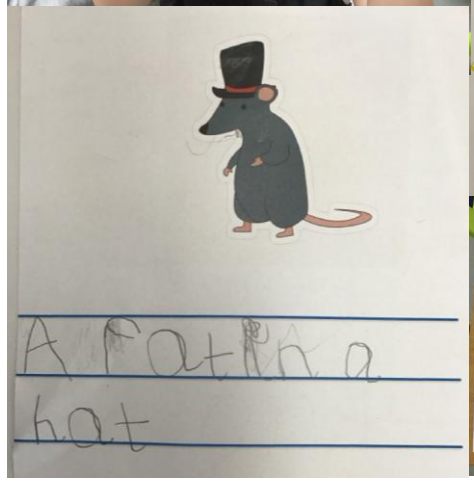
In RE, we learnt about our own personal worldview - the different things that we love and how this makes us who we are and what we believe.

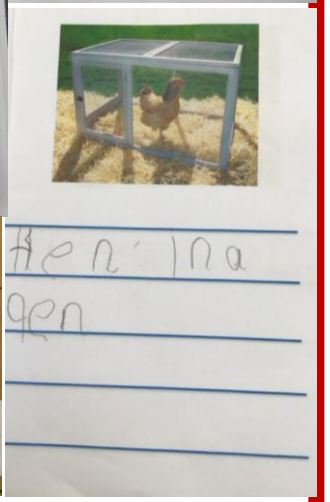












Year 1 (Bell Class and Windsor Class)

We've had a brilliant week in Year One, full of exciting learning and creativity!

In English, we've started our new book *Katie in London* by James Mayhew and the children have loved spotting and recalling lots of famous London landmarks. We've been working hard on using full stops and capital letters in our sentences. We also became *adjective detectives*, hunting for describing words in the story—there were so many to find!

In Maths, we've continued exploring greater than, less than and equal to. The children have done a fantastic job comparing and ordering groups of objects. We also learnt about *ordinal numbers* (like first, second and third) and had lots of fun singing a song to help us remember them!

This week's investigation in Science asked the big question: *Are two eyes better than one?* We tested this by trying different tasks with both eyes open and then with one eye closed. Activities included catching a ball, reading a chart, touching two pencils togethe, and even completing an obstacle course! The children were brilliant scientists and had so much fun exploring.

On Tuesday, we had a wonderful visit from local artist Jessi. The children took part in a special art project to help create elements of *The Big Frieze*. They collaged, painted and stencilled parts of what will become a whole-school piece of artwork. They showed our school value of *community* beautifully and were so proud of their amazing creations!

In RE, we've started learning about Hinduism (Sanatan Dharma). We talked about the idea of *duty* and why it's important. The children thought carefully about their duties at home, at school and in our community—lots of thoughtful ideas were shared!

Thank you for your continued support. We're so proud of how curious, creative and caring the children have been this week!

Have a lovely weekend!

Year 2 (Braille Class and Kerr Class)

What a joyful few weeks of learning we've had! The children have been showing fantastic growth across all subjects and it's been a delight to see their confidence and curiosity blossom.

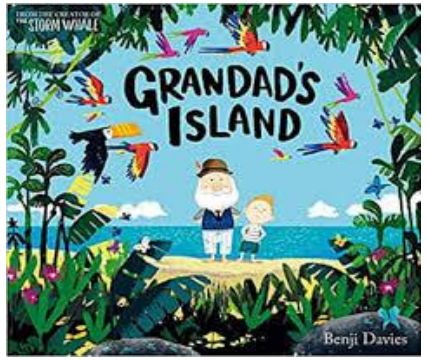
This week, we've kicked off our addition unit by revisiting number bonds to 10. The children have been exploring addition and subtraction fact families, using the part-whole model to understand how numbers relate to each other. It's been wonderful to see them making connections and explaining their reasoning with increasing clarity.

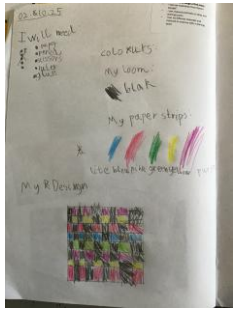
In English, we've continued our journey through Grandad's Island by Benji Davies—a beautiful story about a boy named Syd and his grandad, who takes him on a magical adventure to a tropical island. The book gently explores themes of love, loss and memory. The children have been practising key reading skills to deepen their understanding: asking questions, visualising scenes, listening to extracts and retelling the story. They've also reflected thoughtfully on the characters' emotions at different points in the story, explaining their ideas with growing confidence.

Our plant investigation is in full swing in Science! We've been observing the changes in our three different cress plants and recording the results. The children have loved seeing science in action and discussing why the plants look so different depending on their conditions. We are definitely budding botanists in the making!

In our Geography lessons, we've been exploring London—then and now. By comparing maps from the 1800s with modern digital maps, the children have discovered how transport, homes and clothing have changed over time. It's sparked some fascinating discussions about how cities evolve.

Inspired by the work of Naomi Kendall, we've been designing our final weaving pieces in Art. The children have experimented with different materials and techniques, gaining hands-on experience and expressing their creativity in vibrant ways.





Year 3 (Malala Class and Anning Class)

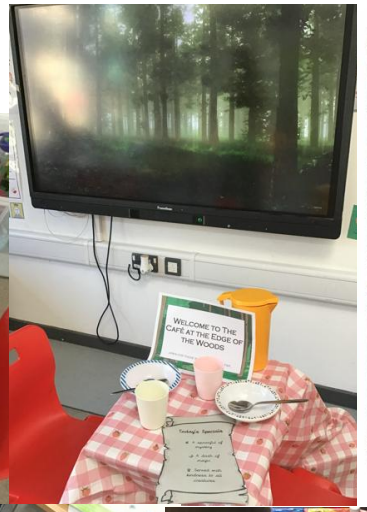
This week, we were very lucky to have local artist, Jessica Hartshorn, come in to work with the children on an art project inspired by The Big Frieze. The children had lots of fun sketching out their designs, then creating their artwork using different techniques. It was amazing!

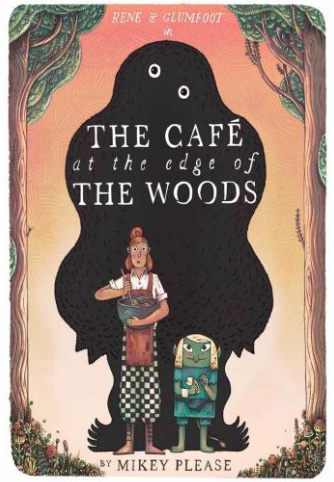
In English, we started our new book 'The Café at the Edge of the Woods' by Mikey Please. Our week started with a mysterious café table set up in our classroom, accompanied by a cryptic sign and an intriguing menu. The children enjoyed predicting what the café might be like, as well as who might eat there, and they were surprised when this was revealed in the book. The story is about a woman called Rene who opens a café beside an enchanted wood but she finds that the locals seem to favour a very peculiar palette, requesting all sorts of disgusting things! The children had lots of fun putting together their own gruesome menus, using powerful adjectives to create vivid descriptions.

In Maths, we have been adding 1s, 10s and 100s to 3-digit numbers, looking out for patterns in our calculations.

In History, we learnt about a significant place in history, Skara Brae. The children got into the role of newspaper reporters, imagining that Skara Brae had just been discovered! They wrote newspaper articles giving all of the details.

In RE, we thought about how nature and the seasons can shape Jewish and Muslim worldviews, focussing on the special celebrations of Eid and Passover.





Year 4 (Tagore Class and Turing Class)

It has been another fantastic week in Year 4! The students have been incredibly engaged in their learning and it's been delightful to witness their enthusiasm.

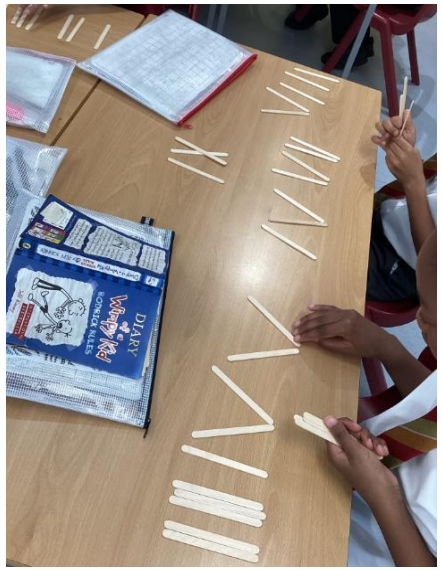
In English, we've been exploring different writing techniques aimed at persuading our audience, getting ready to write our persuasive posters linked to the fair from our class story. The children have already started brainstorming ideas, and next week, we'll dive into the planning phase of the posters, ensuring they can fully express their creativity.

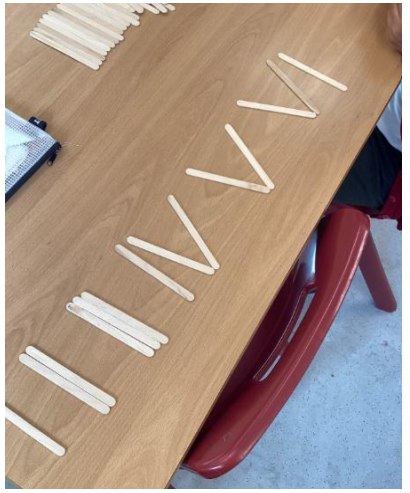
In Maths, we've kickstarted our unit on addition and subtraction. We've focussed on revising the column method to ensure we're aligning numbers correctly and beginning our calculations in the ones column. A highlight was learning about Roman numerals up to 100, where the students used lollypop sticks to create their own representations. It was a fun, hands-on way to grasp an important historical concept!

In Science, we've been immersed in a fascinating investigation, where we observed eggs (representing teeth) submerged in different liquids to examine the effects on their structure. The curiosity displayed by the students has been truly remarkable, leading us to reflect on the importance of dental care.

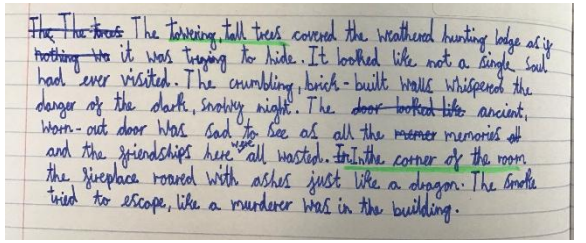
Lastly, in Geography, we explored how land use patterns change over time, using digital mapping tools. The discovery that Houlton didn't exist in 1850 was particularly eye-opening for the class!

Turing Class has also been busy preparing for their Celebration Collective Worship this week and we're truly grateful for all who could attend and support our efforts!



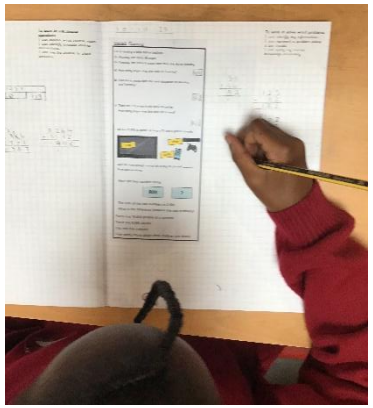


Year 5 (Attenborough Class and Rauf Class)


The towering tall trees covered the weathered hunting lodge as it was trying to hide. It looked like not a single soul had ever visited. The crumbling, brick-built walls whispered the danger of the dark, snowy night. The worn-out door was sad to see as all the memories and the friendships here were all wasted. In the corner of the room, the fireplace roared with ashes just like a dragon. The smoke tried to escape, like a murderer was in the building.

Another great week has flown by in Year 5!

In English, we have been taking time to explore different methods to improve our sentences and effectively create a suspenseful and mysterious mood. We looked at the features and function of both prepositional and adverbial phrases and had a go at incorporating these within different descriptions.

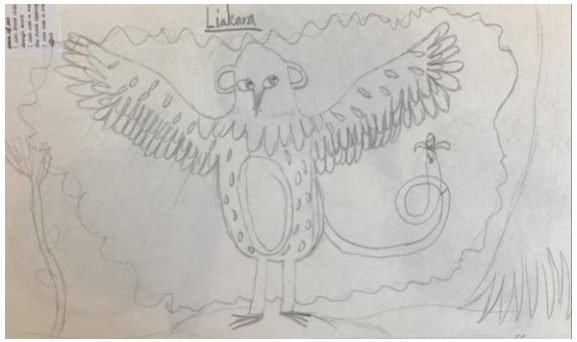


In Maths, we explored different methods to accurately add and subtract a range of numbers with more than 4 digits. We also looked at different strategies to estimate and check our answers to ensure they are as accurate as possible.

In Science, we have been applying our learning from this term by planning our very own investigations to determine what material would make the best wrapping paper for a gift for our lovely Mrs Davis. The children worked in groups to determine their own enquiry questions, variables and methods to be carried out next week.

In Geography, we have been looking at different types of maps and what they tell us about different places. After comparing the features of relief and political maps, we moved on to locate and plot some of the key city states of Ancient Greece.

In RE, we have spent this week exploring what it might mean to live well to those with a Sikh worldview. First, we learnt about the concept of 'guidance' and the roles of gurus in supporting and guiding Sikhs in how to live a good life. The children then researched Guru Nanak's three core teachings and different forms of service, or Sewa, he established.



In Art, we have started our final pieces of work based on Aesop's stories and Greek mythology. The children have done an amazing job taking time to think carefully about their use of space, position, shading and perspective. We can't wait to see their final pieces!

Year 6 (Pogson Class and Walker Class)

We have had a really exciting week in Year 6 this week!

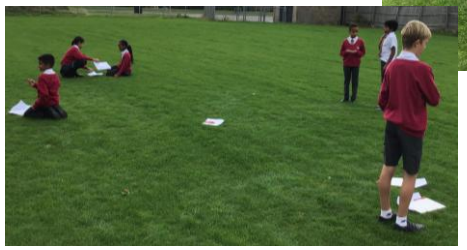
In English, we have started reading our new text *Macbeth* by Andrew Matthews, which is a shortened version of the play *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare. We started our week using drama and role play skills to imagine ourselves on the battlefield, where our story begins. We have also used relative clauses this week within our writing to add extra information.

In Maths, we have focussed on division. We started with short division and problem solving, before starting to practise using long division! We have used our knowledge of multiples to support us in calculating the divisions.

In Science, we conducted an investigation to find out how exercise impacts our bodies. We worked scientifically in groups to measure our heart rate before and after different exercises. We used our plans from last week to support us in making sure it was a fair test too.

In Art, we have had an artist come to visit us! We spent half a day this week working on a collective, whole-school project about The Big Frieze! It was such a fantastic opportunity to work with an artist!

On Thursday, we visited Tudor World, which was our first trip of Year 6. We really enjoyed learning about the Tudor era and deepening our knowledge of this period of History. We got to experience the museum and go on a walking tour around Stratford, seeing William Shakespeare's birthplace and other significant locations.



Collective Worship

During our Worship Through Song, the children started learning the song 'Together'. The song discusses the importance of one of our school values - 'Community'.

This week's Celebration Collective Worship was held by Turing Class, who excellently explained Diwali and the importance and history of this celebration. Well done, Turing Class!

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

Road Safety

It's Cycle To School Week between 13th and 17th October 2025!
We're teaming up with Bikeability UK to support safer, healthier school commutes.

Support our Christmas Fair!

This year's Christmas Fair will be held on Thursday 4th December, between 3.30 and 6pm.

We are accepting donations of pre-loved items, in good condition, to be sold on the day, including:

- Books (for all ages)
- Toys
- School uniform

Are you able to donate a prize for our raffle or know someone who could? Perhaps a product, voucher or service? Please get in touch to let us know.

We also have stalls available for local businesses to sell their products. Let us know if you would like more information.

Thank you in advance for supporting our fundraising efforts, which will contribute towards enrichment opportunities for the children. For more information, or to offer your support, please contact **office@stgabrielscofeacademy.org**.

Community Events

Thank you for all your support so far! There are still places available and proceeds raised will contribute towards enrichment opportunities for the children.

Upcoming Dates

Tuesday 14th – Thursday 16th October: Parent/Carer Consultations

Wednesday 22nd October (3.25-3.50pm): 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)

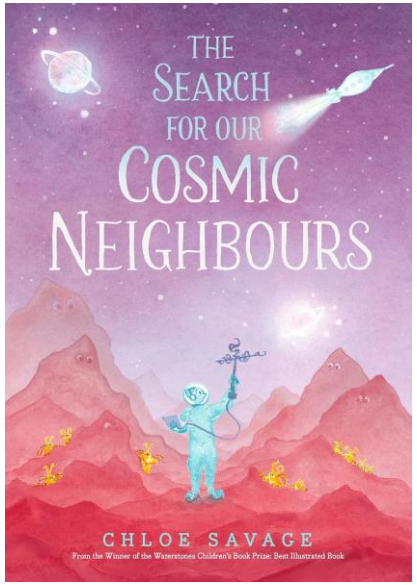
All are welcome to come to school in non-uniform and bring a bottle to collect donations for our St Gabriel's Christmas Fair tombola and raffle.

Recommended Read

In celebration of World Space Week, this week's recommended read is award-winning picture book, 'The Search for Our Cosmic Neighbours' by Chloe Savage – author of The Search for the Giant Arctic Jellyfish. Mixing a magical and human feel with the theme of science and discovery, this is a beautiful and heartwarming book.

Commander Julia and her team of scientists have been exploring space for ten years in their ship, Misson Star Drifter, looking for other life forms. However, after all this time, they have found nothing, and Commander Julia – and her crew – are very tired and dispirited. When the crew of the Mission Star Drifter find a last planet to explore, it initially seems the same as the rest: harsh, cold and lonely. Commander Julia has decided that if they don't find any life on this one, they will go home. Yet, when the ship's dog Khan goes missing, a tremendous discovery is made…

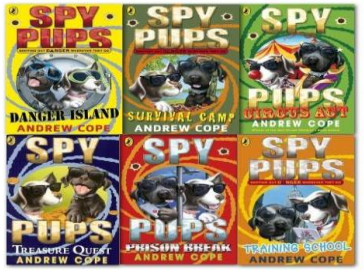
Chloe Savage's stunning picture book about the possibility of life on other planets is both a homage to the brilliant works of astrophysicists, astrobotanists, astrogeologists and the other scientists that are studying space, and also a story about hope and teamwork.



Online Safety

Statistics show that 47% of children between the ages of 3 and 10 own a mobile device. Internetmatters.org has a useful guide for age-appropriate social media apps that can provide safe environments for your children to communicate and share experiences with each other.

Please be aware that children's publisher, Puffin, has issued an alert about books by Andy Cope including those in the Spy Dogs, Spy Cats and Spy Pups series. The books include a link to additional content, but the link is no longer owned by Mr Cope and it has been taken over by a third party which has posted inappropriate material. We advise that these books are removed from children's home book collections.



Whole School Attendance	
Attendance since September	96.4%
This week's attendance	96.5%
Latest Local Authority ranking	91st out of 195 schools
Latest National ranking	Top 30-40% 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?

Family Support

This week's Family Information Service newsletter includes information about:

- Halloween safety
- Child Benefit
- Free cookery classes

and much more!

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.

Other News

Recently, we have seen an increase in the number and variety of fidget tools being brought from home. Unfortunately, this can lead to distractions in the classroom and difficulties in managing their use fairly and consistently.

We kindly ask that children do not bring their own fidget tools into school. The school will provide a selection of suitable resources for children who need them. These will be agreed upon by staff and distributed as required, based on individual needs.

Fidget tools are not to be taken outside on the playground. We offer a wide range of outdoor equipment and activities designed to support regulation and wellbeing during break times.

Our aim is always for a calm and focused learning environment for all pupils and we appreciate your support in helping us achieve this.

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

✉office@stgabrielscofeacademy.org ☎01788 222405