Weekly Learning Update

12th December 2025

Nursery

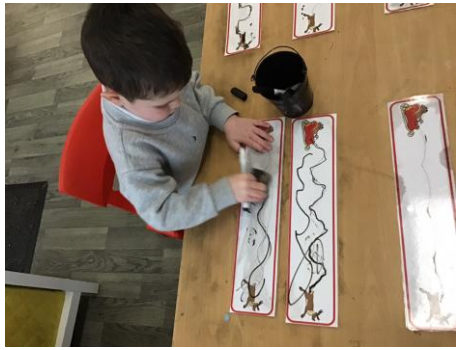
We have had such a busy week in Nursery!

We have been busy practising our Nativity as well as preparing to welcome our families into Nursery's Craft Creation session today.

During Maths, the children have been focusing on the concept of counting out a set number from a large group. The children have played a range of games, including feeding the Number Monster! The children have focused on a range of different skills with this, from recognising numerals and counting within 5, as well as practising their touch counting skills. They have worked very hard!

In Phonics, the children have been practising listening to a range of sounds and differentiating them. They have thought about long and short sounds, loud and quiet sounds and making different sounds using instruments.

We have had a festive theme in our continuous provision this week. The children have been able to make paper chains and challenge one another to make the longest. As well as this, they have taken part in some fine motor festive threading as well as continuing to access the wrapping station - they have really enjoyed these areas! The children have continued to explore counting objects from a larger area as well as helping Santa find his reindeer in the mark making area!



Reception (King Class and Parks Class)

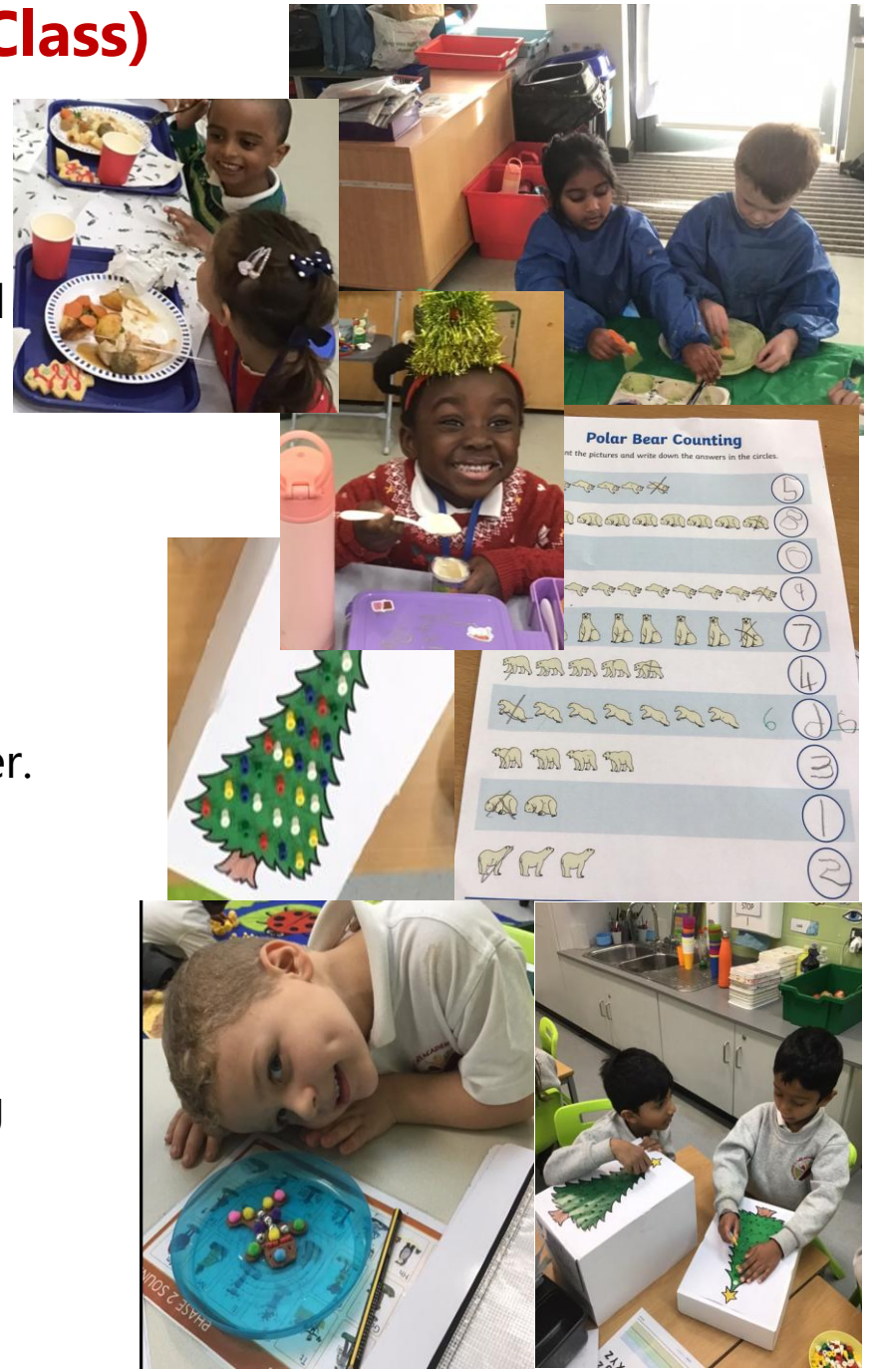
We have had another brilliant week of learning!

This week in Phonics, we have been learning the phonemes oo (u), ar, or and
We have practised blending words for reading using successive blending as well as segmenting words for spelling.

In English, we have continued writing sentences to inform.
We have started researching facts about different types of bears and using what we have learnt to write simple sentences.

In Maths this week, we have been learning about the conservation of number. The children have explored how a group of objects can be rearranged in different ways but the total number stays the same. We have used practical resources and counting activities to build confidence with recognising numbers, comparing amounts and explaining our thinking.

On Wednesday, we celebrated Incarnation Day. We had a day full of exciting activities all linked to the Christian belief that God became human in the person of Jesus Christ.



Year 1 (Bell Class and Windsor Class)

It has been a very busy and exciting week in Year One! The anticipation is building as we prepare for our Nativity performance next week. The children have been working incredibly hard to learn all of the songs and actions and we are so proud of their effort and enthusiasm during rehearsals.

As part of our RE learning, the children took part in Incarnation Day this week and thoroughly enjoyed reading and sequencing the Christian Nativity story. They were thoughtful in considering why Christmas is such a special time for Christians and shared their ideas during our class discussions. We also crafted beautiful Advent wreaths from paper, including the four Advent candles of Hope, Joy, Love and Peace. Alongside this, we explored the history of Advent and how these traditions remain important today.

We have also been busy and creative in other areas of our learning. In Art, the children completed their butterfly sculptures by securing tape around their tin foil frames and then carefully creating symmetry when colouring the wings. The finished artwork was truly impressive!

In Science, we explored the diets of carnivores, herbivores and omnivores. The children loved investigating and sorting "animal poo" (don't worry - it was brown playdough!) based on whether it contained bones or plants. They were fully engaged and showed great enthusiasm for this hands-on activity.

We are all looking forward to our final week of the Autumn Term and can't wait to see many of you at our Nativity performances on Wednesday 17th December. Thank you for your continued support!

Year 2 (Braille Class and Kerr Class)

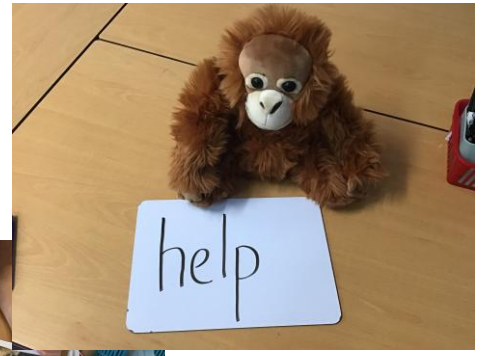
In Year 2, we have had a fun week of learning and rehearsing for our Nativity next week. The children are so excited to share their performance with you all!

In English, we have continued our work on 'There's a Rang-Tang in my Bedroom'. We spent some time recapping the purpose of conjunctions and how we need to choose the right ones to express ideas. We have then gone onto plan and write a 'Breaking News' article for Mr McCormick to tell him about the orangutan who visited our classroom!

In Maths, we have been working on our problem solving skills specifically through comparing number sentences and then using the inverse to find missing numbers.

On Monday, we spent the day exploring 'Incarnation Day' as part of our RE learning. We looked at what the incarnation means and how Christians celebrate the incarnation in crib scenes. We were able to explore a range of crib scenes from different countries and held a class debate on which characters were the most important. We spent the afternoon thinking about the giving of gifts at Christmas time and how gifts don't always have to be presents you pay for. We came up with our own gifts we could share with others at Christmas that did not involve money, for example, sharing with others or helping those in need.

In History, we drew together all of our learning from across the last few weeks and learnt all about the Great Fire of London in 1666. We discovered how the fire started in Pudding Lane and how it spread. We enjoyed ordering the events on a timeline.



Year 3 (Malala Class and Anning Class)

It has been a lovely week in Year 3, full of amazing learning and the start of all the Christmassy fun and excitement! We enjoyed the pantomime and had a wonderful visit to St John the Baptist church to learn more about the Christmas story. We also loved celebrating Christmas Jumper Day and everyone looked fantastic in their festive jumpers!

On Tuesday, we celebrated Incarnation Day. We explored the Christian concept of the Trinity by studying the story of Jesus' baptism through videos, readings and artwork, discussing how the event revealed God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit. We compared Jesus' baptism with modern infant and adult baptisms, identifying similarities and differences and wrote our own baptism prayers. We then enjoyed creating our own symbolic artwork to represent the Trinity.

In English, the children have been writing their own persuasive texts from the viewpoint of Lucy in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, encouraging her siblings to join her in Narnia. They used conjunctions, prepositions and adjectives effectively and their arguments were extremely convincing!

In Maths, we have started our statistics unit by looking at pictograms and discussing how they help us show data in a simple, visual way. We practised reading different pictograms by comparing amounts and answering questions about the information shown and we also created our own pictograms, making sure the symbols and keys were clear and easy to understand.

In Science, we have been learning about how our muscles help us to move. We observed and described how muscles work and then predicted and identified which muscles help in some movements.

In Geography, we presented our findings from last week's fieldwork, drawing conclusions and identifying patterns about how people's use of the local area changes over time and at different points in the day.

In DT, Malala Class have enjoyed making their own packaging for biscuits. They thought carefully about how to join and combine their materials and components, cutting, shaping and scoring with accuracy. They also spent time thoughtfully decorating and refining their designs to make their finished packaging both functional and appealing. Anning class are looking forward to making theirs after Christmas, now that swimming has finished.

A huge well done to Anning this term for the amazing growth they have shown in their swimming lessons. Miss Fricker is very proud of you! Information about Malala's swimming lessons, starting January 16th, will be sent out soon.

Year 4 (Tagore Class and Turing Class)

We reached the part of our English learning journey where we started to plan and write our own prequel story. Evil plans have been hatched and dastardly plans enacted with incredible description as well as including the skills of direct speech and subordinate conjunctions that we have been working on. Next week, we will move onto publishing our work and we are very excited to share this with you at home!

In Maths, we have been learning all about multiplying and dividing by 12, 1 and 0 this week. We have developed our understanding of grouping and sharing using these numbers across multiple forms.

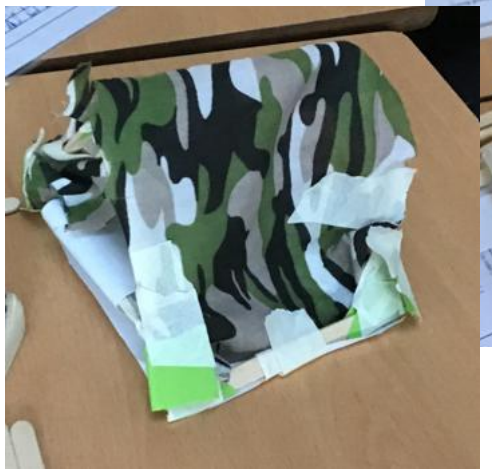
For our RE learning, we developed our knowledge about how Hindus worship God. We noticed similarities with other religions as well as distinct differences. We then used this to make connections about how one's individual worldview may differ from that of their community.

During our DT lesson this week, we were able to taste the delicious bread we had been building towards! The children baked them very carefully following food hygiene and safety rules.

Our Geography learning was all about the impact humans can have on physical geography. We learned about pollution as well as the role humans have in impacting rivers positively!

Year 5 (Attenborough Class and Rauf Class)

In Maths, we are nearing the end of our unit on fractions. This week, we have focused on subtracting fractions from mixed numbers and subtracting one mixed number from another. Although these processes involve several steps, the children have shown great perseverance and have successfully applied their knowledge to solve a range of problems.



In English, we have begun exploring the topic of artificial intelligence by gathering ideas about its benefits and challenges. The children have identified the structural and language features of a balanced argument and, in preparation for writing their own, have practised using conjunctions and adverbials to connect and contrast ideas effectively.

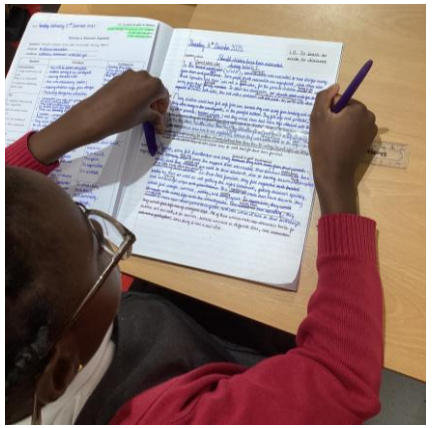
In Science, our investigation focused on chemical changes. The children tested reactions by mixing bicarbonate of soda with different liquids to produce a gas. They observed what happened during the experiments - please take a look at the photos to see the results!

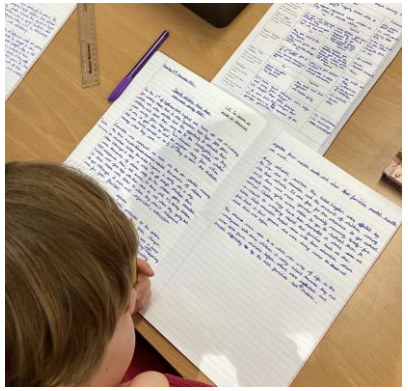
In RE, we celebrated Incarnation Day and continued learning about Jesus as the Messiah. We began by discussing what a Messiah is and reading scripture from different prophets. The children then explored how Christians express the true meaning of Christmas and debated whether the world still needs a Messiah today.

In DT, we have completed our bird hides! The children followed their plans carefully, using a variety of joining techniques. They also considered how to finish their designs. Our next step will be to evaluate the finished products.

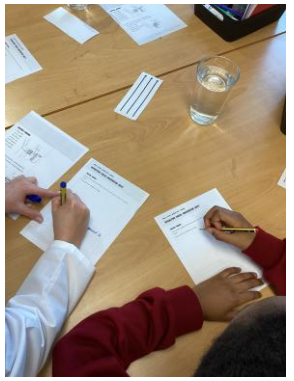
Year 6 (Pogson Class and Walker Class)

In English, we have finished writing and editing our balanced argument about evacuation and whether it was a safe, necessary operation or not. We have maintained a neutral tone throughout our writing to allow the reader to make their own decision.

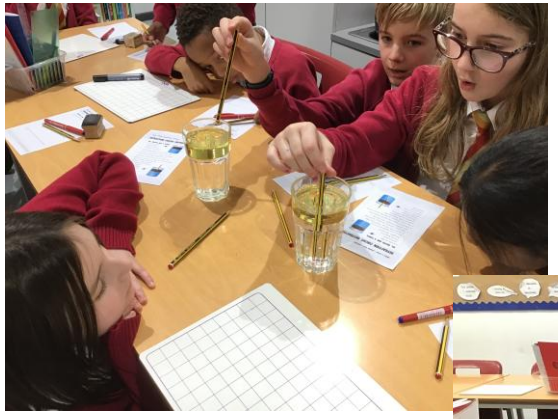




In Maths, we have started a new topic on units of measurement. We have recalled a range of metric measures of length, capacity and mass, such as mm, ml and g. We have used our knowledge to identify which units are best to measure different things and we have also started to convert between metric measures.



In Science, we have investigated refraction. We have completed a circuit of investigations within the classroom to explore how light appears to bend when moving between different mediums, such as air and water. We found that this is because of the different densities, so light travels at different speeds. This is what causes refraction and gives the illusion of light bending.



In History, we have explored a variety of different sources which are examples of propaganda. We have discussed how different sources show different realities of what life was like on the Home Front during WWII, and how this impacted people's perception of what was actually happening.

On Thursday, it was Incarnation Day. We spent the day explaining the connection between biblical texts and Jesus as the Messiah. We also explored how Christians express their beliefs about Jesus, based on the transfiguration. We finished the day by evaluating the impact of the Messiah.

Community Events

Monday 26th January 2026
7pm until 8.30pm
18+

Sound Bath Meditation

Class Rate
£17

With Evelyn Frain

Join us for an hour of deep relaxation, where you will receive the benefits of sound bath.

Refreshments available afterwards.

Taking place at St Gabriel's C of E Academy. Houlton, Rugby

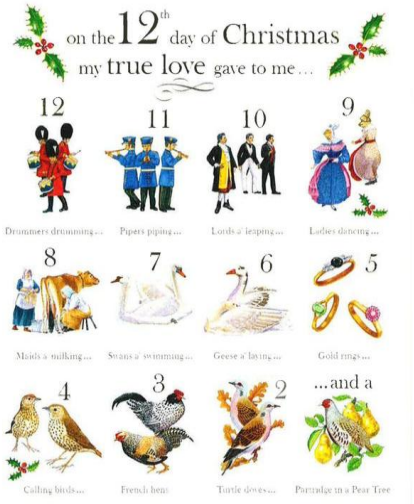
To reserve a place, please contact office@stgabrielscofeacademy.org

All proceeds from ticket sales will contribute towards further enrichment opportunities for the children and school projects.

Collective Worship

In Worship Through Story this week, we shared *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*. We discussed how Christmas Eve is a special night for those with a Christian worldview as it is a time of waiting and preparation for the celebration of Jesus' birth.

During Worship Through Song, the children enjoyed singing *The Twelve Days of Christmas* together.



This week's Celebration Collective Worship was led by Attenborough Class, who shared their fascinating learning about Ancient Greece. Well done!

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

Recommended Read

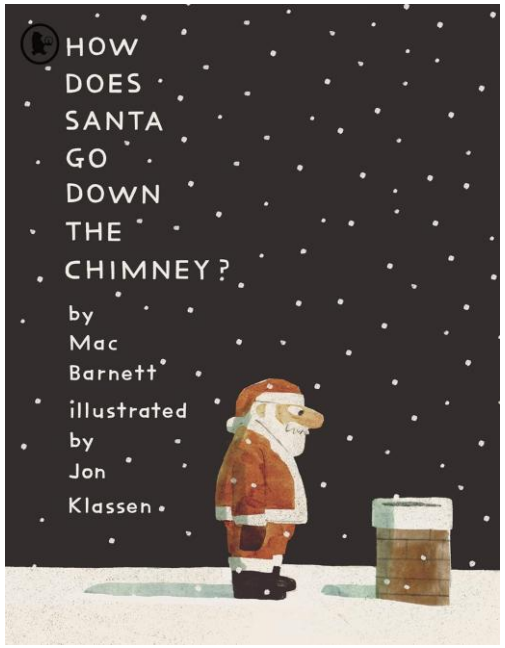
How Does Santa Go Down the Chimney? Written by Mac Barnett, illustrated by Jon Klassen.

Ever wondered *how* Santa actually gets down the chimney?

In this fun and imaginative picture book, Mac Barnett and Jon Klassen team up to explore every silly possibility. Does Santa go in headfirst? Feet-first? What if he gets stuck? And what about houses with no chimney at all? Does he slide under the door like a piece of paper or pour himself in through the tap?

With Barnett's playful, straight-faced humor and Klassen's charming, witty illustrations, this book dives into all the wild theories children come up with.

It's a lighthearted, creative read that would be perfect for sharing a laugh together on Christmas Eve.



Online Safety

Here are some tips on how to create a great environment for children to talk about online safety:

1 TALK EARLY AND OFTEN

- Talk with children from an early age to make it easier to maintain good communication
- Have bitesize conversations that are relevant to them

2 CHOOSE THE RIGHT TIME

- Choose to talk when you are due to spend some time together, like over a meal or during their bedtime routine
- Bring digital experience into normal, everyday conversations

3 OPEN UP AND SHARE TOO

- Model the behaviour you want them to show by sharing about your day
- Be open and encouraging to make them feel supported

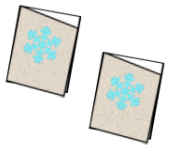
4 CREATE A SAFE SPACE FOR YOUR CHILD

- Ask open-ended questions
- Ensure that your child feels listened to rather than cornered
- When they start talking, hold off with questions and really listen
- Be prepared, calm and patient with them

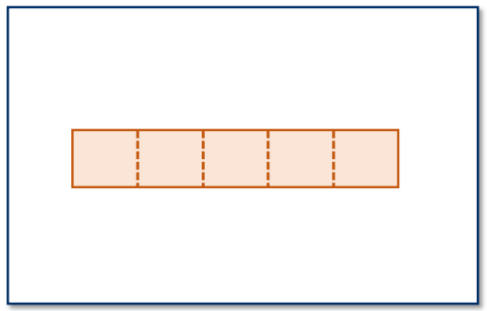
Maths Problem of the Week

KS1

1 Mo writes 5 cards.
He gives some out.
He has 2 cards left.

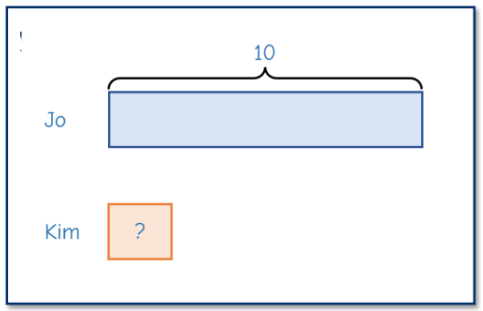


How many did he give out?



2 Jo has 10 chocolate coins.
She gives 4 to Kim.
They now have the same number of chocolate coins.

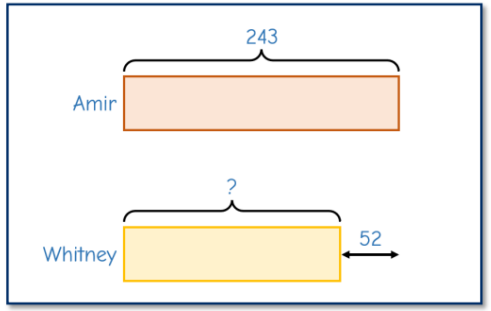
How many chocolate coins did Kim have at the start?



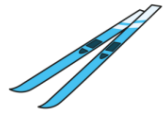
KS2

3 Amir puts 243 decorations on his Christmas tree.
Whitney puts 52 fewer decorations on her tree than Amir did.

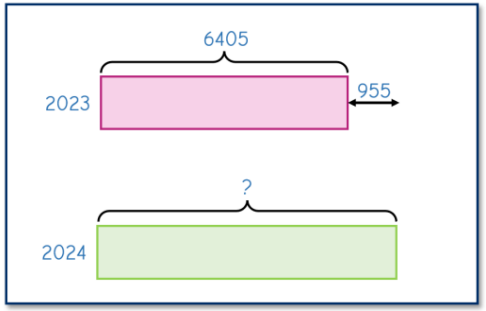
How many decorations did they use in total?



4 6,405 people visited a ski resort in 2023
955 more people visited the same ski resort in 2024
10% of the visitors in 2024 hired skis.



How many people hired skis in 2024?



Challenge

5 A tree has 480 red and green baubles on it.

$\frac{2}{5}$ of the baubles are red.

More red baubles are added to the tree.

$\frac{7}{13}$ of the baubles are now red.

How many red baubles were added to the tree?

Answers

1. Mo gave out 3 cards.
2. Kim had 2 chocolate coins at the start.
3. Amir and Whitney used a total of 434 decorations.
4. In 2024, 736 people hired skis.
5. 144

Whole School Attendance	
Attendance since September	95.9%
This week's attendance	95.4%
Latest Local Authority ranking	62nd of 196 schools
Latest National ranking	Top 20-30% of schools

Advent Attendance Award

Weekly Draws: Each week during December, one child from each class who has attended school every day that week will be entered into a draw to win a book of their choice.

Grand Draw: Children who achieve full attendance for the whole of December will be entered into a special draw for another chance to win a free book.

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.

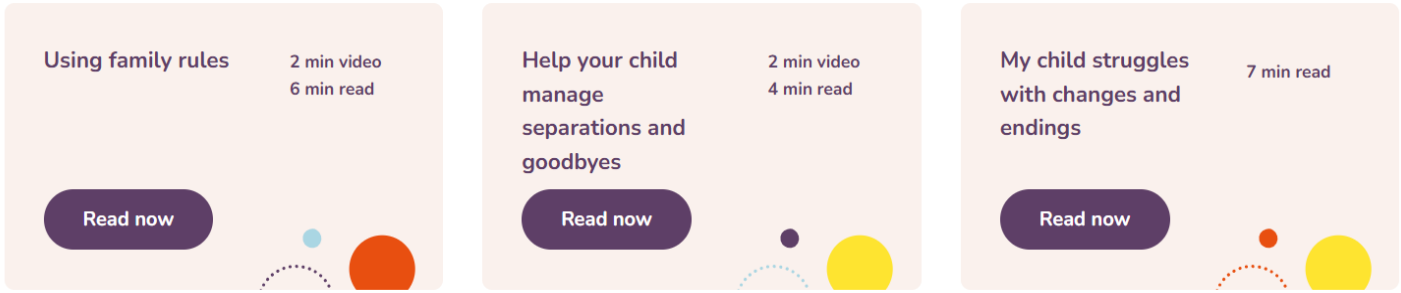
Please contact the school for support and advice if you are concerned about your child's attendance.

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

Place2Be: Parenting Smart offers practical tips to support children's wellbeing and behaviour.



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.

Fundraising Efforts

We are delighted to share that we raised £1,145 during the Christmas Fair and from our Christmas raffle. We have contacted raffle winners, so please come and collect your prizes from the school office. Thank you for your support.

Thank you for supporting our book fair. It was so pleasing to see how happy children were when buying their latest book! Scholastic have rewarded the school with over £450 worth of vouchers which will be used to purchase books for the library and as rewards for children.

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