Weekly Learning Update

13th March 2026

Nursery

It has been another fantastic week within Nursery. There have been a range of opportunities indoor and outdoor, to extend learning and on Thursday, we took part in several experiments to celebrate Science Week within St Gabriel's. Children enjoyed observing coloured liquid moving from one glass to another without it being held and exploring the reaction of how food colouring within milk can be displaced by liquid soap.

Within our English sessions this week, we explored the sounds that can be heard in a range of words. We have thought about the word structure and hearing sounds within CVC words: the beginning, middle and end.

We have continued to explore rhyme and rhythm this week in Phonics. Children have continued to focus on the pace and rhythm within songs and stories as well as hearing different rhyming words and identifying them.

In Continuous Provision, children have enjoyed supporting their numeral formation with play dough within the Maths area. They have been threading and focusing on fine motor development within the Creative area. They have also enjoyed accessing the outdoor classroom, with new outfits and masks within the Role Play area.

We are really looking forward to welcoming one parent/carer or family member into Nursery on Monday as part of our Mother's Day celebration. We have a range of activities for your child to take part in with you - see you then!

Reception (King Class and Parks Class)

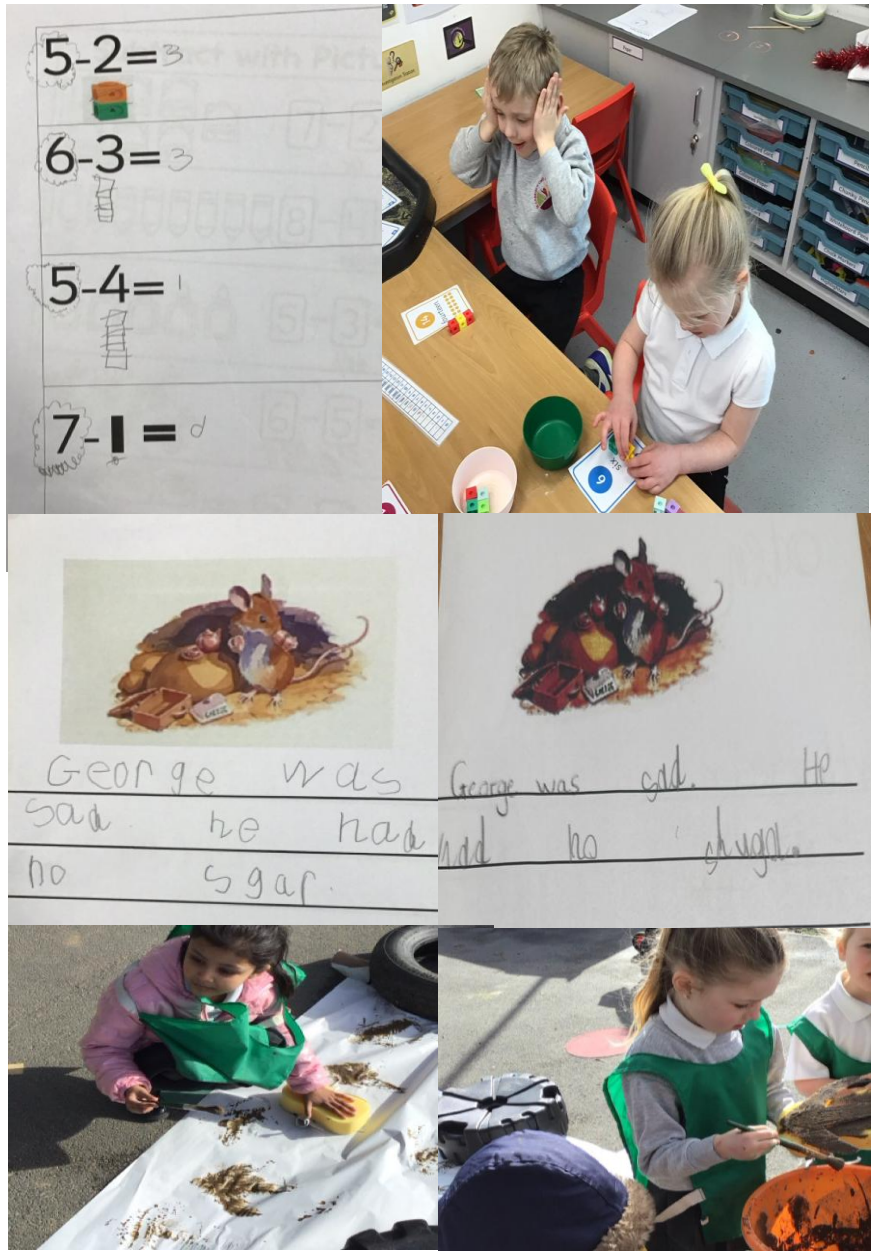
Reception have had another busy week filled with growing rainbows in our investigation area to designing our own dragon eggs! Outside, we have created dragon footprints, played music on the xylophones and tested ways to transport water from the bucket to the tray.

In English, we are continuing our story maps and writing sentences about the main events.

In Maths, we are subtracting by counting back, using cubes, number lines and the circle method.

'There's a storm coming' was our theme in PE this week. We developed our ball skills further as we had a snow day - jogging, skipping and galloping through the snow. We had a snowball fight in our dodgeball game and threw snowballs at targets.

Our RE lesson was centred around belonging. The children developed an understanding that many people celebrate different events that are special to them. Following on from last week's lesson on the islamic festival of Ramadan, we looked at the worldview of Hinduism and the festival of Diwali.



We would like to wish those who care for our children a very special Mothering Sunday. We hope you have a relaxing day and enjoy your little surprise!

Year 1 (Bell Class and Windsor Class)

What a wonderful week we have had in Year 1! We are incredibly proud of the children, who have been working so hard on their reading and maths assessments. They showed fantastic concentration and determination and it has been a joy to see the brilliant progress they have made over the term. Their confidence is really shining through!

This week, the children were very excited to bring their own cuddly toys into school to inspire their writing. We imagined our toys had gone missing and created detailed missing posters to help find them. The children worked hard to include lots of adjectives to describe their toys' appearance. Over the next two weeks, we will begin planning and writing our own toy-inspired narratives and the children are already buzzing with ideas!

In Maths, we completed our unit on place value within 50. The children explored the meaning of more and less and practised showing numbers in different ways to prove which numbers were greater or smaller. They used equipment, drawings and number lines with increasing confidence - well done, Year 1!

Our History learning continued with our topic "Toys Through Time." This week, we compared toys made today with toys from the Victorian era, focusing especially on the materials used. The children enjoyed discussing how toys have changed over time. They also played a Victorian-style board game with a partner and answered questions comparing old and new toys. It was fantastic to hear the thoughtful observations they made.

We had an exciting Science Afternoon where the children solved *"The Mystery of the Floating Egg."* First, they placed an egg in plain water and watched it sink. Then, after adding salt, they were amazed to see the egg float! The class had brilliant discussions about why this happened and made fantastic predictions using their growing scientific knowledge. Their curiosity and enthusiasm were wonderful to see.

In RE, we read the parable of The Good Samaritan and linked it to the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." The children were given different scenarios and asked to think about how the Golden Rule could be applied. They responded with kindness and maturity, relating the lesson to their own actions and values.

Year 2 (Braille Class and Kerr Class)

We are so proud of all the children in Year 2 this week after all the effort and resilience they have shown in their English and Maths assessments. It is wonderful to see the brilliant progress they have made since the start of the year.

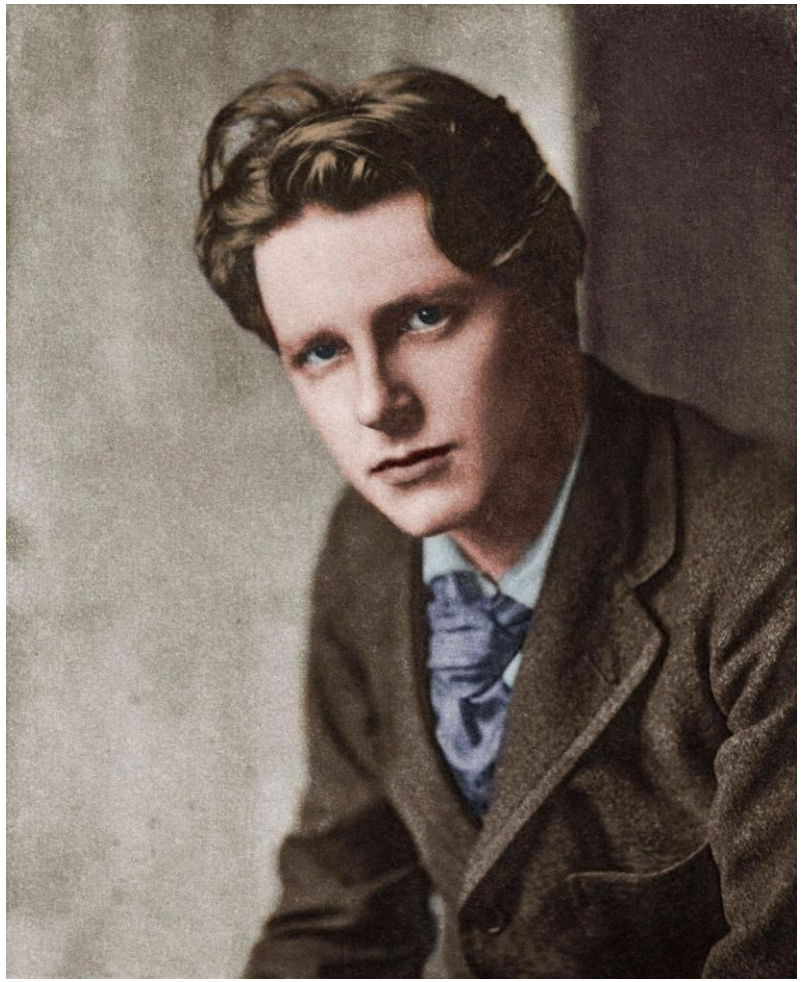
In RE this week, we continued exploring our key question of 'What is important to different people?' This week, our focus was on how sacred texts are important to different worldviews, including those with Christian and Muslim worldviews. We then compared this to non-religious story examples, such as Aesop's fables. The children really enjoyed writing their own story to teach someone about how to live well.

In History, we continued looking at significant individuals from Rugby. This week's significant person was Rupert Brooke – a poet who wrote the famous poem: 'The Soldier'. We sequenced his life events on a timeline and then freeze framed these in small groups.

In PSHE this week, we learnt about how people look after their money. We discussed how important it is to keep money safe and explored different scenarios to identify the best way to look after money.

In DT, we have continued our food and nutrition unit. We were delivered a range of fruit and enjoyed tasting them. We are hoping to use what we have learnt to then design our own fruit kebab by the end of term.

Finally, it was Science Week this week in school and on Thursday, we had a fun time experimenting. We began in the Year 2 classrooms, where we create lava lamps in a bottle. Then, we swapped into the Year 1 classrooms and had a go at exploring a mysterious floating egg.



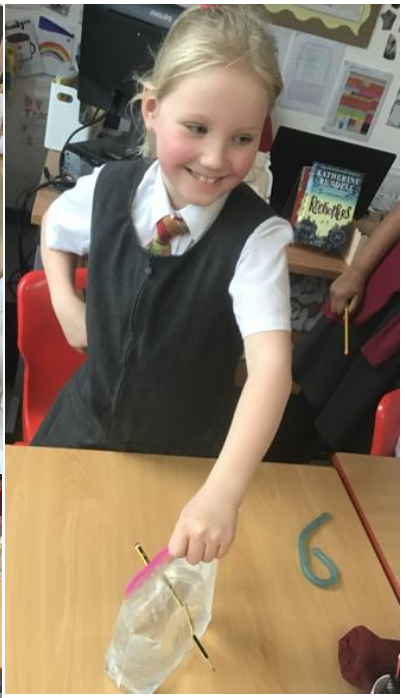
Year 3 (Malala Class and Anning Class)

This week, we are incredibly proud of the growth and resilience the children have shown during their assessments. They approached each challenge with determination and a positive attitude, showing how much their confidence and perseverance have developed. It has been wonderful to see the progress they are making and the maturity they are developing in their learning.

The children enjoyed taking part in a special Science afternoon to celebrate Science Week on Thursday, where they completed two exciting experiments across two classrooms. In “Bridge Over Troubled Water,” they explored how water can travel from one glass to another without being touched, learning about absorption and how materials can move liquids. In the “Indestructible Sandwich” experiment, the children pushed pens through a sealed sandwich bag filled with water and were amazed to see that it did not leak. It was a fantastic afternoon full of curiosity, investigation and scientific thinking.

In History, we have been learning about the six wives of Henry VIII. The children took part in a class debate to discuss which wife they believed was the most influential and why, using the knowledge they gained to support their opinions. They also had great fun learning songs to help them to remember what happened to each of the wives.

Finally, a huge well done to Anning Class for their fantastic class assembly. The children did an amazing job presenting all about Saint Patrick's Day and speaking with confidence. Thank you to all the families who were able to join us!



Year 4 (Tagore Class and Turing Class)

We have been hard at work this week with assessments. The children have shown a tremendous attitude to the challenges presented to them which is evident in the fantastic results that we have seen and the children should be very proud of themselves and all the effort that they have put in.

We have finished writing our speech as Boudica to our rebellion this week too. We have put together all our emotive language, rhetorical questions and powerful adjectives to create a rousing speech that will unite the tribes of Britain to fight against their unelected and unlawful rulers. Next week, we plan to deliver this to our class to see the effects this can have on an audience!

Our Maths work has focussed on the relationship between mixed numbers and improper fractions. We have used our prior knowledge of multiplication and division to help us with this challenge and the children have done a tremendous job of applying this prior learning too.

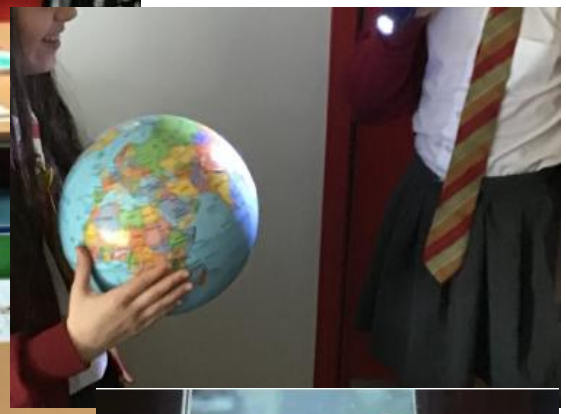
As it is Science week, we were given the opportunity to develop our curiosity with practical experiments. Whilst with our class teachers, we took part in an experiment all about absorption and gravity with the 'bridge over troubled water' task and we were lucky enough to visit the Year 3 team to take part in the 'indestructible sandwich bag' activity. We want to tell you more, so just ask us about it!

Whilst in History, we reflected deeply on the lasting impact the Roman empire had on Britain both in the short and long term. The children discussed changes that happened in aspects such as travel, laws and religion. We debated what we thought were the most significant changes by giving our opinions too.

Well done on another great week, Year 4!

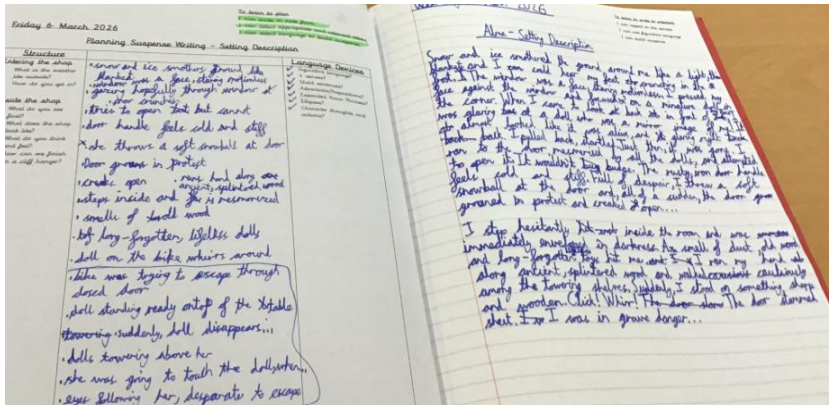
Year 5 (Attenborough Class and Rauf Class)

In English, we have enjoyed writing our own setting descriptions using the skills we've been developing over the past few weeks. The children worked hard to appeal to the senses and used figurative language such as onomatopoeia and similes to bring their characters to life. They also practised building suspense through the use of short sentences and ellipses. Next week, we will be applying these same techniques to write detailed character descriptions.



In Maths, we began the week by completing assessments and it was wonderful to see the strong progress many children have made since the autumn term. Later in the week, we focused on rounding decimals to the nearest whole number and to the nearest tenth. We are now looking forward to moving on to percentages next week.

To celebrate Science Week, the children took part in an exciting experiment involving a flame, a bottle and some water. Ask your child what happened to the water when the bottle was placed over the flame - they should be able to explain the surprising outcome! The attached photos may help prompt their thinking.



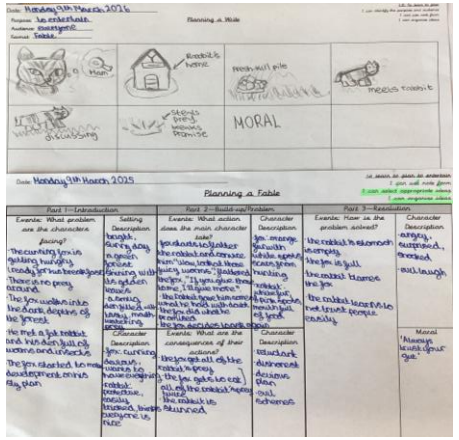
In Geography, we built on our understanding of four-figure grid references and extended this to using six-figure grid references. This helped the children become more accurate when locating places on an Ordnance Survey map.

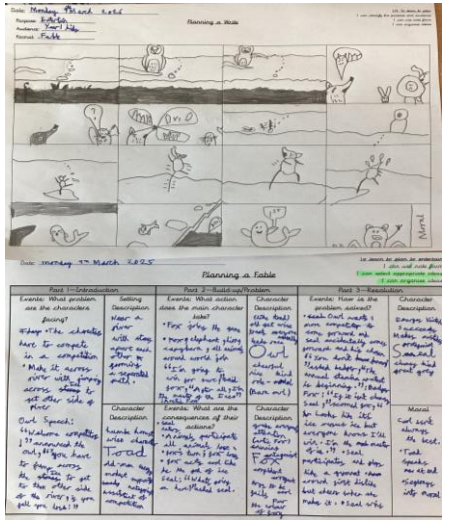
In RE, we used our human and social science skills to analyse Christian perspectives about Jesus and who he was. We also looked at how Christians maintain their connection with Jesus.

Year 6 (Pogson Class and Walker Class)

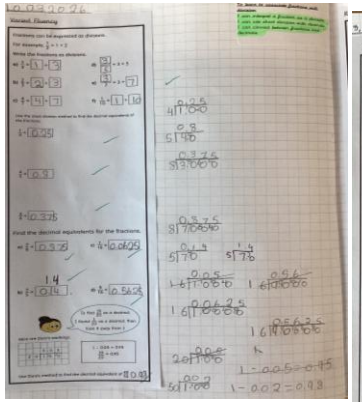
This week, the children have worked really hard during their assessments. We are incredibly proud of them and the progress they are continuing to make. Well done!

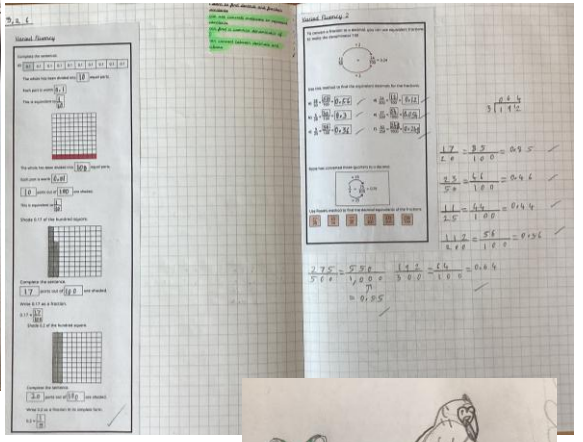
In English, we have planned and written our fables. During the planning process, we drew illustrations to help us visualise the order of the events. We also considered the vocabulary we would like to use to describe the events, characters and setting.



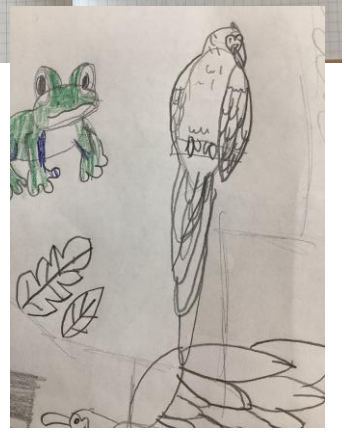


In Maths, we have started a new unit on Fractions, Decimals and Percentages. We began by consolidating our knowledge of equivalent fractions and decimals from year 5, using pictorial representations to support our understanding. We then learnt about percentages and how per cent means that it is out of 100. Once we knew this, we were able to start converting between fractions and percentages!





In Art, we have created a double page spread about the artist, Henri Rousseau, who was a post-impressionist. This means that his artwork was inspired by nature! We have also been able to explore a range of different paints, similarly to what Henri Rousseau would have used.



Yesterday, we had Science Afternoon! We were able to take part in different experiments with different teachers across school. In the Year 6 classrooms, we took part in 'The Exploding Sandwich Bag' experiment, and in the Year 5 classrooms we took part in the 'Scientific Suction' experiment!

'Book in a Box' Competition

A huge well done to all of the children who took part in our **Book in a Box** competition last week for World Book Day. We were absolutely amazed by the creativity, effort and imagination that went into every single entry. From detailed scenes and clever moving parts to beautifully crafted characters, it was clear how much thought and hard work had gone into bringing favourite stories to life.

It was wonderful to see so many families enjoying the display in the hall after school and taking time to look closely at all of the fantastic creations. The judging panel had a very difficult job choosing the winners because the standard was so high, but after much discussion we are delighted to announce that the winners were...

Nursery: Avyaan

Reception: Aleyna

Year 1: Austin

Year 2: Oscar

Year 3: Remi

Year 4: Anaya

Year 5: Eliza

Year 6: Riyaan

We hope you enjoy your new books!

'Book in a Box' Competition

Take a look at all of the amazing entries!

Fundraising Efforts

Thank you to everyone who came along to our second-hand book sale on Friday. We raised a total of £50 for the school.

We plan to run these regularly from now on so if you ever have any unwanted books in good condition, please drop them off at the school office.

We will let you know when the next sale will be!

As well as this, our Year 4, 5 and 6 disco raised £725 for the school! Thank you for supporting our fundraising efforts.

Collective Worship

During collective worship this week, we have been reflecting on Palm Sunday and children were learning about the significance of this day as part of the build up to Easter.

The children also learnt about rail safety and we have achieved a bronze award, which recognises commitment to raising vital rail safety awareness.

This week, Anning Class led Celebration Collective Worship, sharing the significance of St Patrick's Day! Well done, Anning Class.

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

Recommended Read

The Magic Feather is a brand-new, beautifully illustrated rhyming picture book by Julia Donaldson, author of The Gruffalo, with artwork by award-winning illustrator Catherine Rayner. The story follows a young girl who receives a magical feather that allows her to understand the trills and twitters of birds. When she learns that the birds are in danger and their nests are threatened by the queen's woodcutters, she sets off on an extraordinary journey across the sea to help save their homes.

Told in Donaldson's signature rhyming style, this heartwarming fairy-tale adventure celebrates the magic of nature and the importance of caring for the world around us.

With stunning illustrations and a gentle environmental message, the story encourages young readers to listen to nature, protect wildlife, and believe in the power of kindness and courage.

Online Safety

The Lego website is a great resource to explore with your children to help them be 'digitally smart':
https://www.lego.com/en-gb/sustainability/children/digital-child-safety?gad_campaignid=21966363556&gad_source=1&gbraid=0AAAAA-kcL7WFQXkapiC_LNDSAZnxqEd44&gclid=EAIaIQobChMIpYHFyNmakwMVGjkGAB1GKSBlEAMYASAAEgJwBvD_BwE

Raising digitally smart families

As a brand that's all about play, we're committed to ensuring play is safe for everyone. That's why we've created tools and resources to empower children and families to learn good digital habits and thrive online. Below, you'll find helpful content and playful learning experiences to help your family become digitally smart.

Maths Problem of the Week

KS1

You have a set of the digits from 0-9.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Can you arrange these digits in the five boxes below to make two-digit numbers as close to the targets as possible? You may use each digit once only.

largest even number ☐☐

largest odd number ☐☐

smallest odd number ☐☐

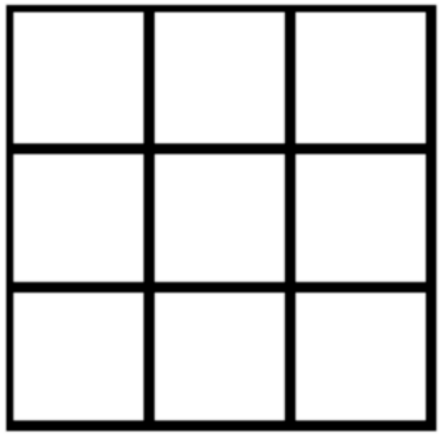
largest multiple of 5 ☐☐

number closest to 50 ☐☐

How will you know that your solution is as close to the targets as possible?

Try out some ideas. Can you find other ways of doing it?

KS2



This is a plan view of a 9-hole milk crate.

Place all 6 milk bottles into the crate so that there are 2 milk bottles in every column and every row.

(Use counters for the milk bottles).

Challenge

Special Numbers

I'm thinking of a two digit number.

My number is special because adding the **sum** of its digits to the **product** of its digits gives me my original number.

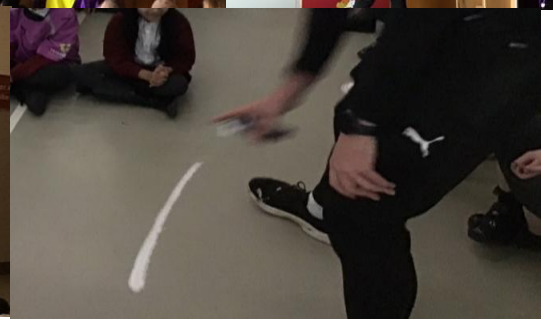
Can you discover my special number?

A Special Visitor

On Tuesday, during collective worship, we were lucky enough to welcome John Brookes - a premiership referee. The children were very excited and inspired by his time spent sharing details of his role and responsibilities.

Some children had the opportunity to try on his match shirts. Others received an offical coin used in the coin toss at the beginning of premiership matches. The children enjoyed watching a clip of John in action on the pitch and his demonstration of the vanishing foam used to mark areas for free kicks.

John explained the role of a referee and the values he upholds which align closely with our own St. Gabriels values. Our sports team also enjoyed quizzing some questionable calls from previous matches!



MHST

Mental Health in Schools Team

Tips For Wellness

Dimensions tool

Free online personalised self-care information & support for adults and children in Coventry & Warwickshire

Self-Care

Self-care is all about the little things we do to help ourselves feel better or to keep ourselves feeling good. This is a great way to look after our mental health and wellbeing. Self-care involves 'checking in' with yourself and thinking "how do I feel today?" and understanding "what do I need today?" Self-care looks different for everybody. What works for one person may not work for someone else!

Our tips for self-care:

- **Taking** time-out when we are feeling overwhelmed.
- **Making** time for an activity which makes us feel good e.g., taking a bath, listening to music, going for a walk, or playing a game you enjoy.
- **Doing** the basic things to look after ourselves e.g., eating and sleeping well.
- Practise self-care by asking yourself the questions in the box below:

How do I feel today? What do I need today? Do I need physical or mental self-care? When can I add self-care into my day? Make time to do it! Repeating these Self-Care check-ins at least once each day can help improve our mental health.

Make time for a relaxation activity. Scan the QR codes below for more information around self-care. Why not try the mindfulness activities in the QR codes below too!

Primary resources:

Self-Care

Mindfulness

Secondary resources:

Self-Care

Mindfulness

Watch the Mindfulness animation! The Mindfulness in Schools Project has lots of other great resources too.

In Coventry and Warwickshire, for any urgent mental health concerns, contact the RISE Crisis Helpline available 24/7, by calling NHS 111. Alternatively, call 999 or visit A&E in an emergency, for example if medical attention is required.

MHST are available to support you and your school throughout the school year including term time and school holidays.

Please contact your school's Mental Health Lead for information and advice.

Key Dates: Spring 2

Monday 16th March: Nursery Mother's Day Event
We are hosting a Mother's Day event in Nursery, where an adult can come and take part in activities with their child. See below for guidance on booking.

Thursday 19th March: Year 3 and 4 Easter Concert
All children in Years 3&4 will be performing Easter concerts together for families. The performances will be choreographed by iSingPOP who will spend 3 days in school supporting the children. The children will be learning and performing a number of special songs with actions, linked to the school vision and values as well as the Easter story. Tickets are limited to 2 seats per family across performances due to capacity.

Monday 23rd – Thursday 26th March: Parent/Carer Consultations
Please book via Arbor and see times and dates available for each teacher. Booking will open at 12pm on Monday 9th March.

Tuesday 24th March and Wednesday 25th March: Nursery Spring Craft Sessions
To celebrate the end of the Spring Term, we would like to welcome families to Nursery to take part in a range of activities with their child. For both of our Nursery events, families can book onto one allocated slot. Due to space limitations, only one adult is able to attend (and babies in arms).

Friday 20th March: Bell Class Celebration Worship

Friday 27th March: Pogson Class Celebration Worship

Whole School Attendance	
Attendance since September	96.2%
This week's attendance	97.2%
Latest Local Authority ranking	42 out of 196 schools
Latest National ranking	Top 20-30% 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

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

Citizens Advice is a UK-based charity that provides free, confidential advice and support to individuals facing various issues, including legal, financial and consumer problems.

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