Weekly Learning Update

19th September 2025

Nursery

We have had another brilliant week in Nursery! We have welcomed more new children to the setting and the team continue to be very proud of how well everyone is settling in and how well the children are showing our St Gabriel's values. We have spent a lot of time throughout the week talking about our school values and showing examples of these. We are very impressed with how the children are responding and how keen they are to demonstrate our values.

English:

We have introduced the children to our key text 'From Head to Toe' by Eric Carle this week. We have spent time familiarising ourselves with the story and thinking about the different animals, including the different ways in which they move.

Phonics:

We have also introduced Phonics this week with the children. We have started our sessions by embedding the importance of our listening ears and taken the children on a number of environmental walks to hear the ongoing noises around us. The children have worked hard to identify these.

Reminders:

With the colder weather we are experiencing, everyday your child is in, may you please ensure they have a coat.
If your child has not got wellingtons in Nursery, please may these be named and brought in soon.
With rainy days set to continue, if your child has an umbrella, please can they be taken back home once you have dropped your child off.

Reception (King Class and Parks Class)

We have had another brilliant week in Reception!

Phonics:

This week, in Phonics, we learnt the phonemes: i, n, m, d and g. We had lots of fun learning the caption actions for each phoneme, blending words orally and learning the handwriting saying so we could write the grapheme (letter).

English:

In English, we have been learning all about labels. We discovered their purpose and explored the different types of labels we come across in everyday life. Around the classroom, we investigated a variety of examples and then had fun designing and creating our own labels during independent challenges.

Maths:

In Maths, we have learnt to touch count, giving items number names. We learnt to touch count a variety of different objects and learnt these important rules:

Line up the items

Start at the beginning

One touch, one count

Count in order

Don't skip or repeat

Final number = total

Count carefully, not quickly

Check your counting

R.E:

In R.E this week, we carried on with our Creation Day activities. The children explored how Christians believe that God's name is very special and should be spoken with love and care. We talked about how reading the Bible and praying are important parts of Christian life and how the Ten Commandments teach Christians to treat God's name as something precious.

Year 1 (Bell Class and Windsor Class)

We're continuing to work on settling into our Year One routines and the children are trying hard to demonstrate our school values every day. Thanks for all your support at home - we were pleased to see so many children completing their home learning and showing pride in their efforts!

Maths: This week, we've been practising counting from different starting numbers up to ten. We've used pictures, counters, cubes and other objects to help us see the numbers clearly. We've also been learning about "one more" and using ten frames and cubes to show how numbers grow. The children are becoming really confident with their counting!

English: We've started our new text for our writing unit, *Coming to England* by Floella Benjamin. The children were interested in Floella's childhood story and have done a great job sequencing the events in order. We were very excited to receive a letter from Floella's Marmie, asking us to write back and help Floella understand what England is like. The children can't wait to write their own letters next week!

RE: We talked about the parable of 'The Lost Son' and thought about how people show love to us and how we can show love back. The children shared some lovely ideas and showed lots of kindness in their discussions.

Science: We've been learning about the parts of the human body and what they do. To help us remember, we played a fun game of Simon Says as well as singing songs to remember the names of different body parts.

Geography: Our geographical skills are really growing! We can now name the four countries of the United Kingdom and use positional language to describe where they are. We also had a great time using atlases to find countries that are special to us—it was lovely to share our experiences of visiting different places.

Year 2 (Braille Class and Kerr Class)

Year 2 had an exciting week that continued to build upon their skills while nurturing their curiosity!

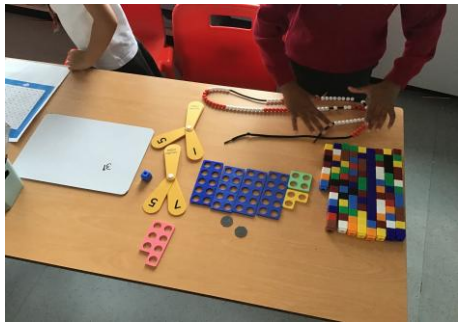
In Maths, we delved into our place value unit, where the children mastered the ability to write numbers up to 100 in words. They employed various patterns to aid their understanding, such as the useful association of “tea for ten” to reinforce the correct spelling of numbers ending in “ty.” We used a rich array of resources including counters, bead strings and Numicon, allowing the children to represent numbers in multiple ways. The children also partitioned numbers to 100 into standard tens and ones, then flexibly, helping to consolidate their grasp of place value.

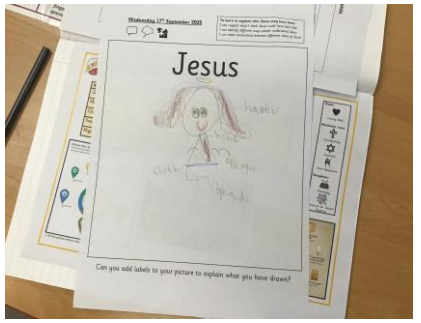
In English, we explored the captivating text "Here We Are" by Oliver Jeffers. The children made thoughtful predictions based on the stunning illustrations and considered the author's purpose. They concluded that Jeffers wrote this narrative to inform and explain the world we inhabit, reinforcing their analytical skills.

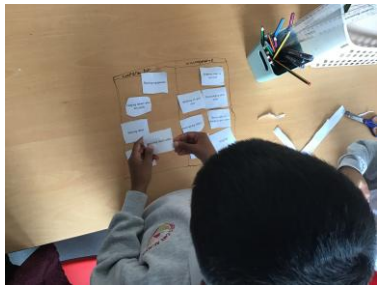
Our Science lessons captured the children's attention as we embarked on an inquiry to observe how bulbs grow over time. This included comparing seeds and bulbs and using secondary sources to document growth. Such hands-on learning helped cement their understanding of biological processes.

During our Religious Education sessions, we contemplated the question "Who is Jesus?" The children explored biblical texts about Jesus' childhood and identified on a map where he originated from. By examining illustrations and using their prior knowledge, they created their interpretations, fostering both creativity and critical thinking.

In PSHE, we introduced the term “cooperative.” The children learned its significance in working together positively. We discussed behaviours associated with cooperation versus uncooperativeness and how fostering collaborative skills encourages better teamwork among peers.



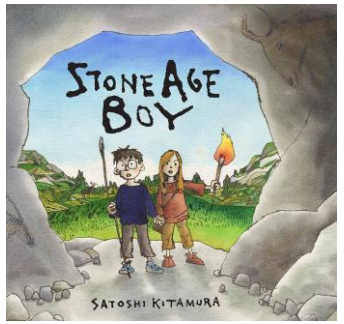


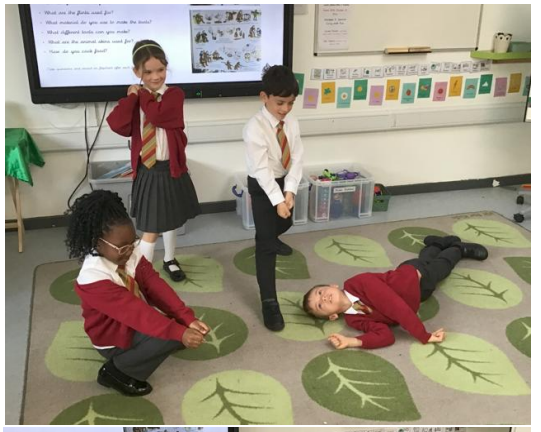


Year 3 (Malala Class and Anning Class)

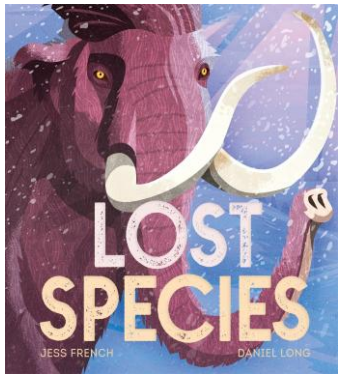
It's been another wonderful week in Year 3!

In English, we started our new book 'Stone Age Boy' by Satoshi Kitamura. The children enjoyed predicting what might happen in the story, after reading just the first page, and they have enjoyed learning more about life in the Stone Age. In groups, they created freeze frames of to show the different tasks that would have been carried out and then they got into the role of the boy from the story, thinking of questions that he might ask about what was happening. We have also been exploring the features of an information report, ready to write our own non-fiction book on the Stone Age in a couple of weeks' time!





In our Reading lessons this week, we have been reading an extract from the book 'Lost Species' by Jess French. The book features lovely illustrations and exciting facts about a wide range of extinct animals which the children have really engaged with. We wanted to share the book with you for those children who want to look into it further.



In Maths, we have been focusing on numbers to 1000, thinking about the value of the hundreds, tens and ones in different numbers and finding different ways to partition them.

In Music, we have been singing the song 'I've been to Harlem' and thinking about the shape of the tune with our voices. The children had a go at making up an accompaniment from the pentatonic scale.

In History, we have delved further into our Stone Age topic, learning more about how we can use historical sources to understand the past.

In RE, we have been thinking about why nature and the seasons might be important in religion and worldviews. We read the story 'Greta and the Giants' and thought about how nature had inspired her to take action, before thinking about common ideas for religious and non-religious worldviews when it comes to nature.

Year 4 (Tagore Class and Turing Class)

It's been another busy week in Year 4, filled with some amazing learning experiences!

In our Reading lessons, we dove into 'The Land of Roar' and everyone has been applying their active reading skills to understand the text on a deeper level. The suspense keeps us all on our toes and we're excited to see what unfolds next!

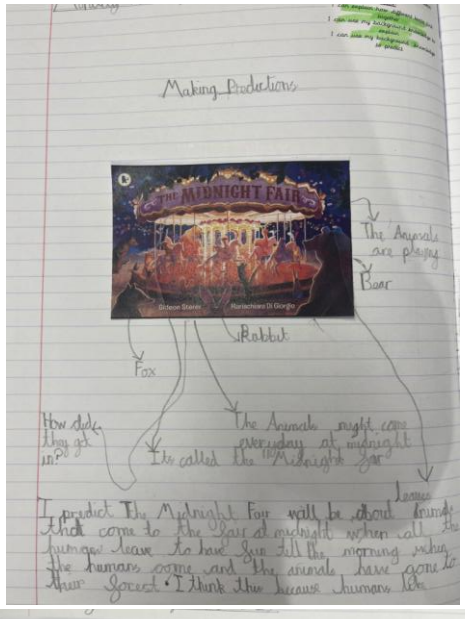
In English, we've immersed ourselves in our new text, 'The Midnight Fair'. To spark our creativity, we listened to music and many of us made the delightful connection to a carousel at the fair. We're preparing to write a setting description, so we've been focusing on expanded noun phrases to enhance our writing – stay tuned for some fantastic pieces!

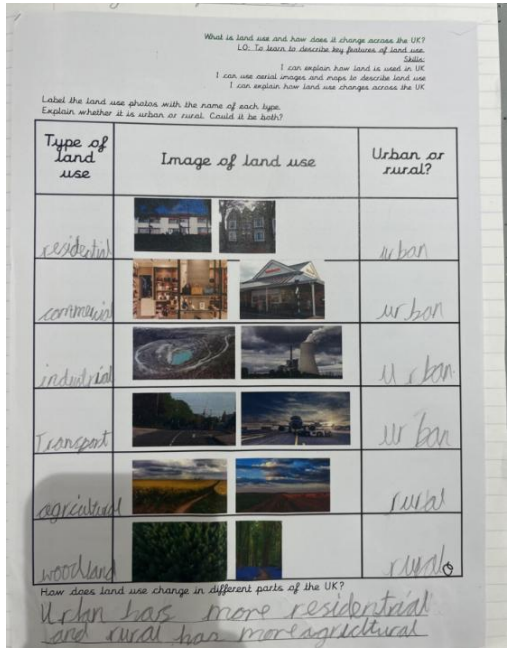
In Science, we delved into the digestive system. We had a bit of fun creating a model using tights, a banana, a masher and a bowl. It was a bit gruesome, but definitely educational!

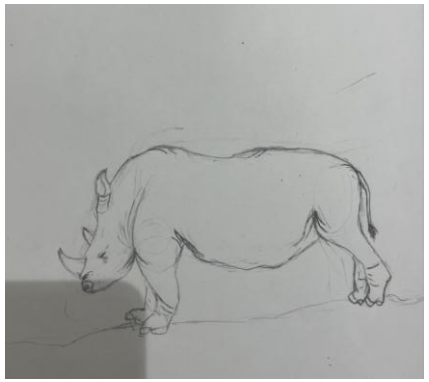
In Geography, we explored the various ways land is used across the UK. It was surprising to discover that more of the UK is rural than urban! Using digital mapping and atlases, we investigated land use in our local area and beyond.

Lastly, in Art and Design, we learnt about the talented artist Albrecht Dürer and created a double-page spread to showcase our understanding of his work.

What a week it has been!



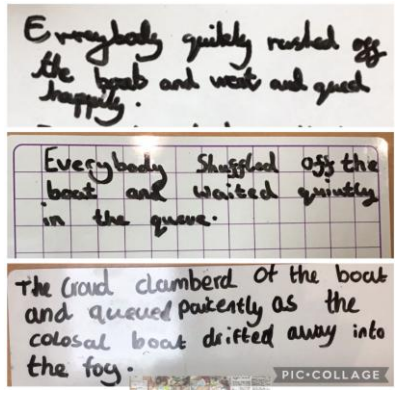




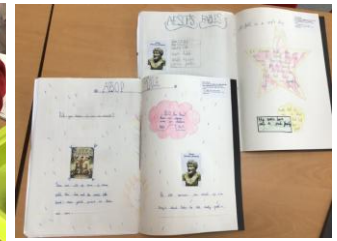
Year 5 (Attenborough Class and Raúf Class)

This week has flown by in Year 5!

In English, we have been reading Shaun Tan's book 'The Arrival'. As it is a book without any words, the children have had to use lots of their visual literacy skills to make observations of the images. The children have then explored their use of verbs, adjectives and adverbials to create a range of engaging sentences that can later be used in our informative writing.



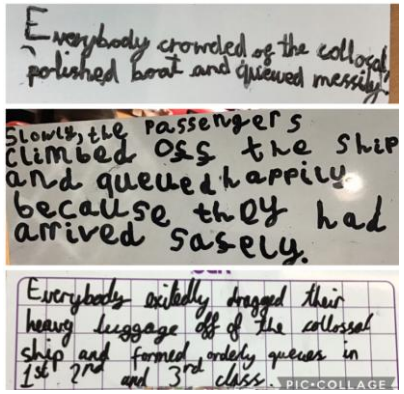
In Maths, we have continued our learning with Place Value as we have explored numbers up to 1,000,000 and how to count both forwards and backwards in powers of 10. The children have done an amazing job at using different tools, such as Place Value and Gattegno Charts, to help them represent and alter differing numbers.



In Science, the children were tasked with using their scientific terminology to accurately describe the properties of different objects. The children used their investigation skills to determine the transparency, softness, strength, absorbency and elasticity of each item.

In Art, we found out more about a famous Greek storyteller, Aesop. The children were tasked with using a range of secondary sources of information to create their own double page spread about who he was and what he did.

In History, we took time to find out more about how historians learn and make judgements about the past. We used our evaluation skills to determine which sources might be more or less reliable.



Finally, in RE, we began our new topic, which focuses on our exploration of the big question: What might it mean to live well? This week, we took some time to define the word 'embodiment' and how a worldview might be embodied. We then looked at the Christian, Jewish and Hindu worldviews and the different rituals a person within these worldviews might take part in, what inspires them to do so and why it is so important to them.

Year 6 (Pogson Class and Walker Class)

Well done for another fantastic week, Year 6!

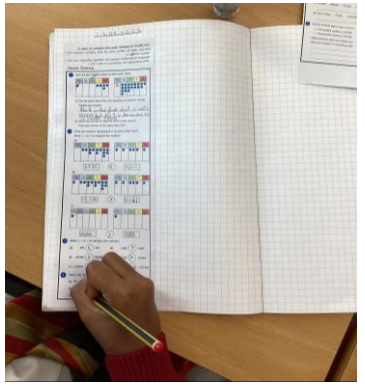
In English, we have started our new book called 'The Final Year' by Matt Goodfellow. It is a verse novel, which is a set of poems put together to tell a story. We have used the skills of prediction and inference to talk about the novel, what it is about and the character's feelings. We have explored how Matt Goodfellow has used cohesive devices within his writing to engage the reader and ensure it makes sense.

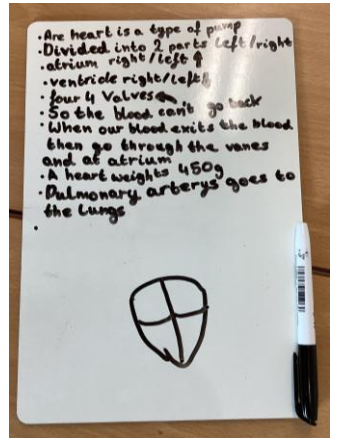
In Maths, we have continued exploring numbers up to 10 million, placing them on a number line, comparing them and rounding them. We have represented negative numbers too, comparing the value of them.

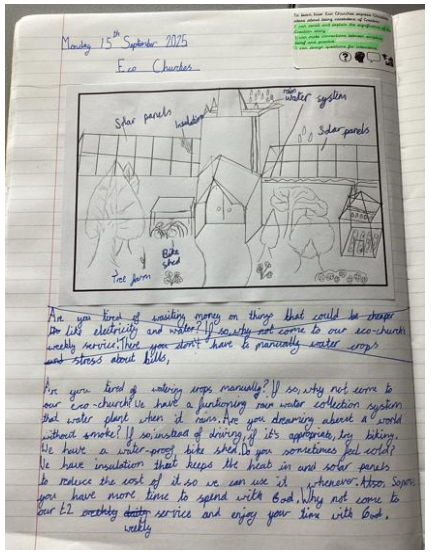
In RE, we have designed our own Eco Church, which highlights the importance of taking care of the environment and nature. Christians believe that they are stewards because they are responsible for protecting God's creation, Earth, a gift to humans. We have also written an advert to promote our designs.

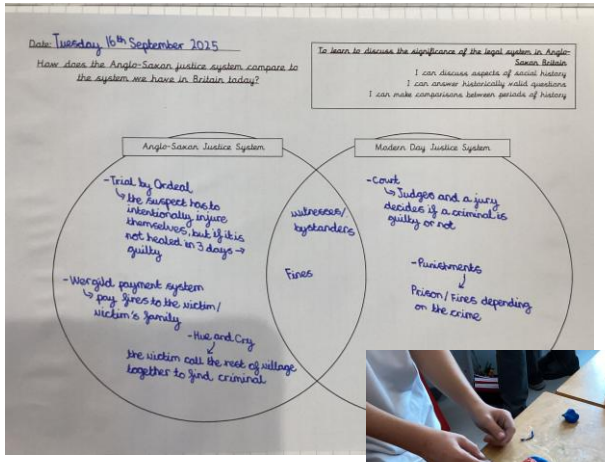
In History, we have explored the crime and punishments of the Anglo-Saxon Era and how their justice system compares with ours today. We have represented our understanding of these similarities and differences using a Venn diagram.

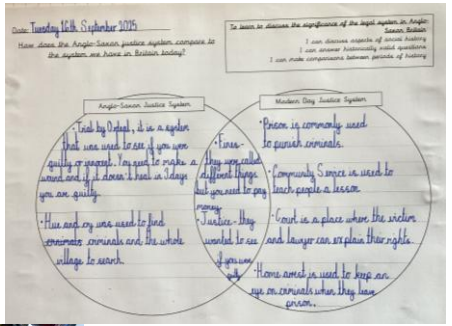
In Science, we have made a model of the heart, representing the oxygenated side in red and the deoxygenated side in blue. We labelled each part and their functions.

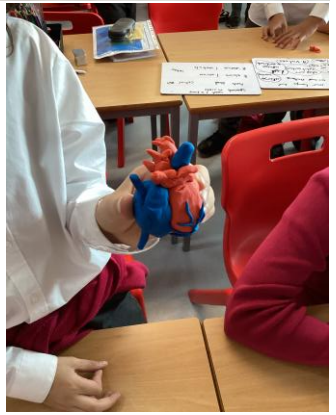












Family Support

Here is some information for parents/carers about reporting safeguarding concerns:

Family Lives offer a free, online facilitated workshop about Anxiety around ADHD, which can help you navigate strategies to help find support and more.

Read more on this week's Family Information Service newsletter, including:

•Increased eligibility for entitlement to Child Benefit

•Sensory Stories with Warwickshire Libraries

•Safe and Well visits

Collective Worship

During collective worship this week, we have continued to discuss the importance of British Values, focusing on Democracy, as children in KS2 will soon be electing this year's school council. We discussed the importance of playing an active part in the school community.

The children have enjoyed singing together during our worship through song assembly on Tuesday, where they sang 'Harvest Samba'. You can listen to this at home here.

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

Local Events

Stratford Literary Festival is one of the most significant literary festivals in the UK, attracting thousands of people to the world famous Stratford-Upon-Avon, and all of whom share one passion; a love of books, writing and reading.

This year, it is taking place from Thursday 30th October to Sunday 2nd November.

Please find attached the events for children and families. This link will take you directly to the children's event page.

https://www.stratfordliteraryfestival.co.uk/events/children

Stratford Sharing Stories

Events for Families

Box Office: 0333 666 3366
or online at stratlitfest.co.uk
All ticket prices include a booking fee

Please note:
Adults are also expected to buy a ticket to events unless otherwise stated.

Thursday 30th Oct

Maz Evans
The Last Bard
£8.55 | 10.30am | Age 8+

Will is the last descendant of William Shakespeare, and he's accidentally summoned his characters to help with some neighbourly troubles. Comedy, tragedy, history: Will's world has it all... the superstar author Maz Evans is back with a new standalone story.Join her and find out more!

The Last Bard
Get Writing Workshop!
£10.69 | 2pm | Age 8+

Join Maz – the bestselling author of *Who Let the Gods Out* and new book *The Last Bard* – in an inspiring workshop for young writers. Dive into Shakespeare's wacky world and find out how to tell your story in five easy acts. Plus hear Maz read a snippet from her brand new story.

Thursday 30th Oct

Cat Weatherill
A Visit from Mother Goose
FREE | 2pm | Age 3+

Fire imaginations and get creative with a joyous introduction to the traditional fairy tale character of Mother Goose. Presented by storyteller Cat Weatherill, this hugely entertaining session will feature stories, nursery rhymes and puppets.

Please note that this event is at Stratford Library!

Friday 31st Oct

Ursula Jeakins
Craft Workshop:
Stationery and Bookmaking
£16.04 | 2-4pm | Age 11+*

Make your own stunning notebooks and stationery using bookbinding techniques under the expert guidance of Ursula Jeakins. There'll be take-home kits available for purchase. Please note: sharp craft knives are used at this workshop. Instruction will be given but participants use them at their own risk.

Ticket prices includes all materials

*Young people under 14 years can attend alone but a contact number for a responsible adult must be left. The Festival cannot be responsible for their care.

Saturday 1st November

Sammie Horton and Playbox
Spooky Halloween Theatre Workshop

£8.55 | 10.30am-12pm | Age 7+

Join the brilliant Playbox Theatre for an imaginative and action-packed workshop! Dive into spooky stories and ghostly tales through a blend of mime, movement, role play, and improvisation. This 90-minute session is perfect for boosting imagination, confidence, and creative energy.

Saturday 1st November

Spooky Drop In and Do
Spooooky Halloween

FREE | 11am-12.30pm | Age 4-11

Join Becci Smith and get crafty with us this Halloween! With malevolent masks, petrifying puppets and creepy colouring to choose from. Drop in... if you dare!

Saturday 1st November

Thiago de Moraes
Comic Workshop

£10.69 | 12.30pm **OR** 2.30pm | Age 7+

In partnership with *The Phoenix* comic, join the brilliant comic illustrator as he shows you how to create your own characters so you can start to make your own characters and stories for your own comic.

In partnership with *The Phoenix* comic

Saturday 1st November

Sara Johnson
Children's Facepainting

FREE | 11am-12.30pm | Age 3+

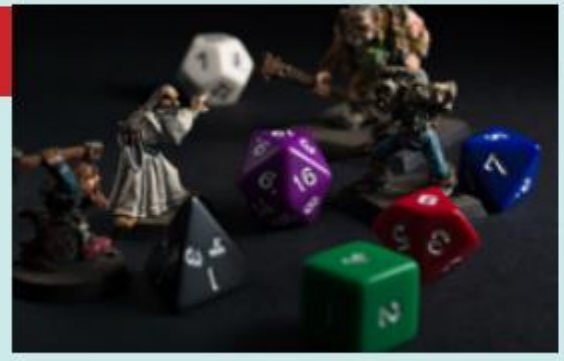
Sara Johnson will transform you into something ghoulish and ghastly to terrify friends and family!

Saturday 1st November

Gaming Event

£10.69 | 5pm-6.30pm | Age 11-16*

Are you a budding young adventurer ready to slay? Come and play Dungeons & Dragons with our talented team of Dungeon Masters. Borrow some dice and a ready-made character from us and get stuck in! No experience necessary - we'll help you all the way.

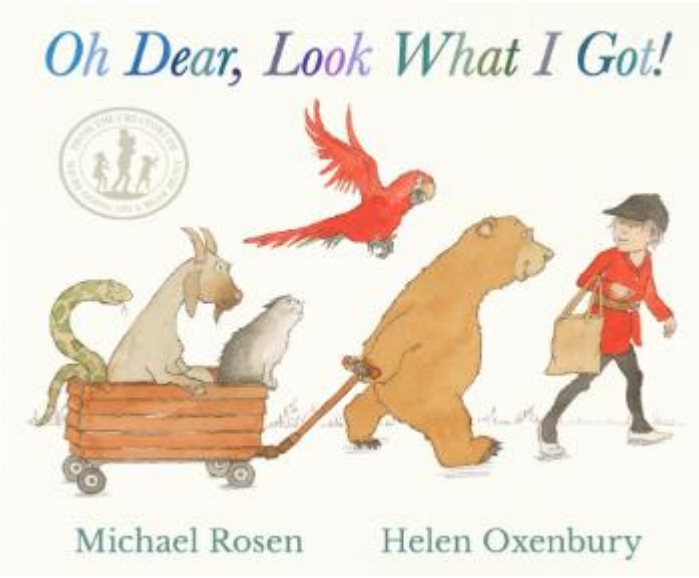


Recommended Read

This week's 'Recommended Read' is a classic, new picture book by the creators of the bestselling, "We're Going on a Bear Hunt."

From beloved author and illustrator pairing Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury comes a brilliant new picture book that will delight a new generation of children.

Each visit to the shop brings an animal surprise in this playful read-aloud, with a final twist and a joyful ending.

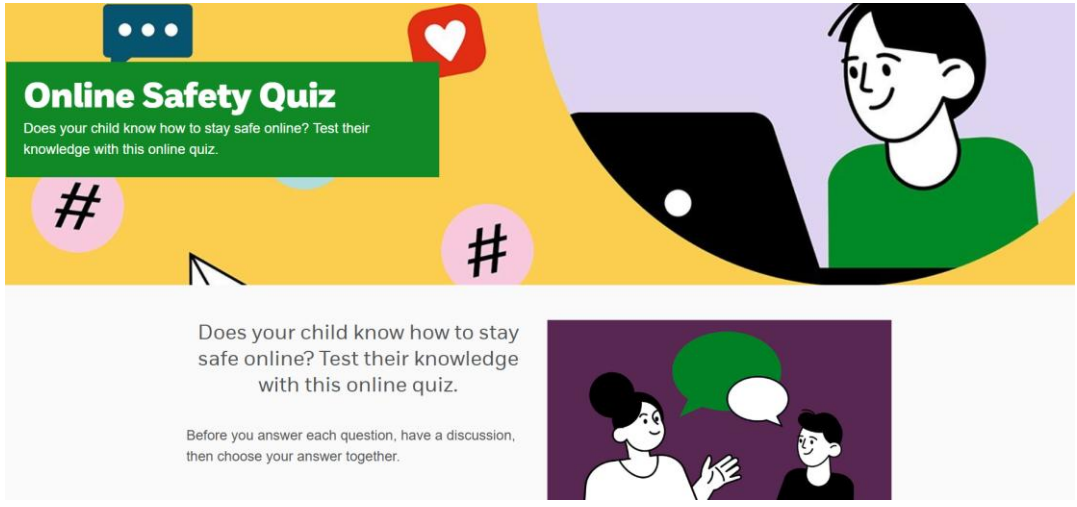


Online Safety

Opening up conversation about online safety with your child or children is essential in arming them with the best knowledge and tools for navigating the online world.

Test your child's online safety knowledge by taking this quiz together provided via the NSPCC website:

nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/quiz/



Whole School Attendance	
Attendance since September	95.39%
This week's attendance	95.07%
Latest Local Authority ranking	13th out of 195 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?

Other News

Reception 2026 Open Day

Join us on Tuesday 7th October, 4-5pm, at our Reception Open Day to find out more about our learning environment and meet our staff.

Uniform Donations

We are accepting second-hand uniform donations! On Wednesday 22nd October, Year 6 will be running a Uniform Shop to raise money for their activities and celebrations over the year. Please bring in any clean, pre-loved uniform to the office for our Uniform Shop.

School Photographs

On Tuesday 23rd September, children will have their individual and sibling portraits at school. It is PE day for Year 2 and Year 5, so there are some changes to be aware of:

Year 2: Please wear school uniform on this day. PE kits are not required on Tuesday.

Year 5: Please come to school wearing uniform and then bring PE kit to change into for the afternoon.

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

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