

St Gabriel's

Roman Catholic High School



Learn
Love
Believe

March 2016

Dear Parents and Carers

You will have seen a copy of our latest newsletter Pronuntio. We call it Pronuntio because this means 'to proclaim' or 'to announce'. The last term has been full of news items which we try to share with as many of you as possible, including through social media via Twitter @stgabsbury. Please take a look and see the richness of school life as we move into Holy Week towards Easter.

We are always striving to improve all aspects of school. This year, our priorities are to:

- Improve more rapidly the progress of pupils in key stage 3 from their starting points
- Continue to narrow the gap between our disadvantaged pupils' achievement and other pupils nationally
- Improve the attainment of boys
- Improve the progress and attainment of all pupils in English Language and Maths

Staff and pupils continue to work hard focusing on these areas and making good progress towards them.

To this end, Year 11 are working hard as they approach their last few weeks in school before their final examinations start. Year 11 lessons will continue until Whit half term and staff will be available in June during the normal timetable slots for help and advice. Please refer to the exam and assessment calendar. I would ask all the school community, as well as parents of Year 11 pupils, to support them fully at this time. Attendance and punctuality are absolutely vital now in every lesson. Pupils should be here on time every morning and be punctual to every lesson. This applies to every pupil, not just Year 11!

Parents' evenings for this year have all taken place now. Thank you for attending. I continue to be impressed with the very high attendance of parents. This is vital in supporting your child as it is the only evening you can meet up with your child's teachers to discuss the progress of our children.

Each term brings a new uniform challenge! The uniform policy remains unchanged and can be found on our website. I would encourage you to read it paying special attention to the section about footwear. Other reminders:

- Scarves must not be worn in school but be placed in a bag during the school day
- Mobile phones/devices are not to be used in school and kept out of sight between 8.45 and 3.20pm
- Hair must not be coloured and must adhere to guidelines on uniform and appearance. This includes regulation trousers for boys and girls

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JUBILEE
OF MERCY



Some time ago, I wrote about fizzy drinks and pointed out how much sugar is contained within them. This was also highlighted recently when the Chancellor announced additional taxation on sugary drinks – a 'sugar tax'. Fizzy drinks are not allowed to be brought into school and consumed. Some of you may not agree. Some of you will. But when I consider all the different viewpoints, on balance, I consider this decision to be the right one. Please support us and encourage your child to purchase plain, healthy drinks. Water is the best to aid hydration and oxygenate the brain – and it is the cheapest!

Also announced last week by the Chancellor was the intention that every school in England (including Catholic schools) would become an academy school by 2022. Work to this end has already started in our diocese and I will keep you updated as we move towards this change in the future.

Miss Boucher leaves this week to take up a new position in another school. I am grateful for her work not just as a geography teacher, but for arranging outdoor activity visits to France.

This week is Holy Week. It is an important week in the religious life of our school. Mass is celebrated with Years 7 and 8 and all other pupils will have taken part in a liturgical service. My thanks to Father Paul and Father Chris for their time and support as we all prepare for Easter. We do not simply read or hear about the story of Holy Week. We are participants in it. The joy of the crowds of Palm Sunday quickly turns to aggression on Holy Thursday as we walk with Him to the cross on Good Friday. But love and hope prevail with the discovery of the empty Tomb on Easter Sunday.

'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full' (John 10:10)

How will you and your family walk with Him to the cross this week?

Thank you for your continued help and support this term. It is valued.

Everyone in our school wish each of you a happy and holy Easter. School reopens on Thursday 7 April at 8.45am.

Yours sincerely



S A Smith
Headteacher