



26th March 2021

Dear parents and carers,

The 12-month anniversary of the first national lockdown this week has provided many of us with the opportunity to reflect on a year that has been unlike any other. It has been a time to remember those we have sadly lost to the virus. I know many of you will have been personally touched by such loss, and I want to extend my deepest condolences to those who have lost loved ones over this past year. It is a time to acknowledge that each and every one of us have had a tough year, missing friends and family and coming to terms with wide-reaching changes to normal life.

The anniversary is also an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the role everyone in our school community has played in the national response to the pandemic. I am in awe of the amazing resilience, teamwork and positivity demonstrated since last March. For today, I want to say thank you. Thank you to our staff, governors, pupils and families for everything you have done for our children and our school. It is a deep credit to all, seeing the lengths everyone has gone to since last March to keep our children safe, cared for and educated.

Important notice – School Growth

I am pleased to announce that in line with the growing development of Houlton and the record number of Reception place applications received this year, St Gabriel's will be expanding its intake this September. This will mean we will have two Reception-age classes in the school for the first time. To accommodate this growth, a two-classroom extension will be built at the east end of our current building, adjacent to the current Reception and Year 2 classes. This building work will commence in the Easter Holidays and will complete in the Summer Holidays. Our top priority throughout the Summer term is to maintain the safety and security of our site for our whole community.

After Easter, **the car park will have a greatly reduced capacity** so we urge you not to use it unless you have no other option. Walk, cycle or scoot wherever possible. If you have to drive, park off-site and walk a short distance. The community barn car-park is not far away. Please do not park around the junction in front of the school as this poses a risk to children and families crossing the road. Please also be mindful of resident driveways and not to block people in.

In school, all building work and the site compound will be sectioned off by robust fencing that no child can access. The build site will be self-contained and will not materially impact on day-to-day activities for our children. As always, any visitors and workers on our site will be fully DBS checked. Reception and Year 1 children will access their classrooms in exactly the same way as now, and will continue to have the earlier drop-off time 8:40am and pick-up time 3:10pm. Years 2-6 will have a slightly longer walk around the building to access their classrooms and will be marked by a dedicated path. The current drop-off and pick up times for these year groups will remain.

I hope that you will not be inconvenienced by this build project and will join with us in celebrating the continued growth and development of our school.

Parent Survey

To help us learn more about your experience at St Gabriel's and to aid our future planning, please take the time to complete [this parent survey](#). We greatly appreciate your feedback in helping us make this the best possible school for our children. All complete responses will be entered into a draw to win a **£10 book voucher**.

Houlton community Easter Story trail.

From Palm Sunday (28th March) through to Easter Sunday (4th April) St Gabriel's church will be hosting an interactive Easter Story trail across the Houlton community. We'd love you to take the opportunity to explore the Easter story around our community next week. There will be 8 pieces of art spread around Houlton each telling part of the Easter story using artwork produced by children from schools across the county and with links to online activities related to each part of the story. If you visit all the stations and can answer some simple questions about the story, we will deliver a small chocolate-based prize to you on Easter Monday.

If you'd like to take part next week, more details, including the maps and details of quiz questions, will be available via the event page here: <https://fb.me/e/2huwB7Dlx>

Red Nose Day

Thank you for your generous donations in support of Comic Relief; we have raised a fantastic **£241!** Thank you to all the children for helping show our school values of **Love** and **Community** by getting involved with this great cause. If you wish to do so, the option of making a donation is still available on ParentPay.

Uniform

Children are welcome to wear our **summer uniform** next term. Our Summer Term uniform comprises:

Boys

- ❖ No tie
- ❖ White polo shirt **with logo**
- ❖ School jumper
- ❖ Shorts or trousers
- ❖ School shoes

Girls

Burgundy gingham dress available from most supermarkets ([ASDA](#), [Sainsbury's](#), [Argos](#))

- ❖ No tie
- ❖ White polo shirt **with logo**
- ❖ School jumper/cardigan
- ❖ Grey skirt/dress/shorts
- ❖ School shoes

We can only keep a limited supply of school polo shirts in stock so if you would like to buy more for next term, numbers will be limited to 2 per child. Parents will have the option of purchasing additional ones after Easter.

End of Term

Usually we finish school a bit earlier on the last day of term, however, due to the shortened term we will be finishing at the **usual times next Thursday**. Summer Term starts on **Monday 19th April**.

Have a great weekend.

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen. 2 Peter 3:18

Yours sincerely,



Mr. A. Taylor
Headteacher



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