

INSIDE ST GABRIEL'S

Your Half Term Update

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A half term break is a suitable time to pause and reflect, no time more than this half-term as schools have ventured back to something that is more normal than what we have had to endure for the last year or so.

It is testament to the staff, but above all the pupil of St Gabriel's that we have all been able to enjoy much that has happened over the course of these first weeks of the school year. Trips out, fixtures, activities galore, new experiences and lots of learning contributes to the balanced and broad education that we hold so dear.

One of the things that has been missing so much from the last 18 months is the sense of a normal routine. Although we all got into our own routines there was always a little sense of uncertainty as to what might lie around the bend.

That is why all that you can see in these pages show that, slowly and surely, we are heading to a much brighter time. This is clear to observe in the joy and laughter that we see around all aspects of school daily, and what is presented to you in this newsletter; I hope that you enjoy!

[Take a look at a 'Day in the Life at St Gabriel's' Video here!](#)

Induction Events

The start of term started off with our postponed induction and taster events. We began with our hugely successful Year 5 taster day for senior school, a day filled with rocket making, growing dragon teeth and making new friends. The success of this event was a wonderful start to the term.

We welcomed Year 8 and Year 9 pupils for their own induction lunch. The incoming Year 12 had an induction at The Farmhouse, you can see the happy faces in the picture below.

The week finished with a BBQ for the incoming Year 7 pupils on the Sunday before term, an event we will seek to make a permanent fixture. After having a catch up after the holidays and meeting their Form Tutors, we hope that it made the transition to senior school a little easier.



SCHOOL TRIPS

School trips were an important part in this term's calendar. The most obvious sign that we are indeed heading into a brighter time. Here is a little overview of what our pupils have been up to.

Year 12 & Year 13 Trip to FSC Start Bay.

Our Sixth Form geographers visited Start Bay, Devon, this half of term. The aim was to develop practical skills for their independent investigations which constitutes 20% of their final grade in this A Level. Albeit an important trip, lots of fun was had and they benefitted from some glorious weather!

The geographers examined coastal systems and sediments, and analysed human impacts on these natural processes such as coastal defences. The water cycle was carefully examined, studying the water and carbon in the soil through practical investigation.

"The coastal walk was beautiful and the trip was very informative for my future classwork" - Molly, Year 13



Year 9 Trip to Farnham Sculpture Park

Year 9 examined how movement is interpreted in sculpture work during their trip to Farnham Sculpture Park. They examined the varied animal sculptures first hand, seeing how artists can use different materials for different effects and how one sculpture can look different from changing angles.



The pupils will go on to make clay based, semi abstract projects individually. They will also work together for a collaborative sculpture project using the medium of card.

Olivia and Annabelle from Year 9 mentioned how their observational skills were challenged on this trip. They are now looking forward to using these skills in the art rooms.

Year 12 & Year 13 Trip to Parliament

The Sixth Formers were able to visit Parliament this term as part of their PSHE Programme. They benefitted from a tour of the Commons and the House of Lords. The trip included a workshop explaining representation and voting systems.

Aspen, Year 13, commented how interesting it was to see how the House of Lords operates and felt that the workshop examining voting systems was a relevant topic to understand given the discussion of Proportional Representation at the Labour Party Conference.



Year 8 Trip to Pitt Rivers & Natural History Museum

The Year 8 art trip to Pitt Rivers and the Natural History Museum in Oxford focused on how artefacts inspire art. The trip served as a research trip to gain inspiration for projects in the classroom. They had an engaging sketchbook workshop and put some of these newly learned skills to the test.

Isla and Lily were intrigued at the range of artefacts including jewellery and weapons. They were both very happy to be going on trips again now that the restrictions have eased.

Year 7 Trip to Calshot

The newest year group in the Senior School were treated to a residential trip to Calshot Activities Centre in Southampton. It served as a wonderful opportunity to strengthen new friendships that have been made this half of term. The whole trip was about team building and developing confidence whilst being away from home. Many pupils mentioned how much fun was had, and the consensus was that the best activity was the 'giant swing'.

A great way for Year 7 to end the term!



CHARITABLE GIVING

We are incredibly proud of our charitable events this term, have a look at what we have been up to:



Our Macmillan Cake Sale (24 September) was another great success this term. Families gave an incredible amount of delicious donations and the event raised an amazing £783 for the charity. Well done everyone!

Non-Uniform Day in Aid of Swings and Smiles

We are so pleased to have supported the local charity Swings & Smiles this term raising money on our non-uniform day (14 October). The charity, based in Thatcham, provide 'support, friendship and play for children with special needs and their families'. We raised a massive £898 holding this event which is a huge achievement - thank you to everyone who donated!



If you are interested in any other events in support of Swings & Smiles, they are holding a Gin Tasting Night at The Globe, Newbury (4 November).

<https://www.swingsandsmiles.co.uk/Event/gin-tasting-night>

Harvest Festival

We collected donations as part of our Harvest Festival celebrations, which were donated to the local food bank. We were astounded at the number of donations. A very proud moment for the school!



National Poetry Day

October was a month of many things to celebrate and National Poetry Day was one of them. The pupils were invited to write a poem based on the theme of choice.

You can find the anthology of poems written by pupils and staff [here](#) or on our Instagram and Facebook. The quality of the submissions was very high, we have some incredible literary talent at the school.

You can also watch rendition of 'The Crocodile' [here](#) - a fun poem featured in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland recited wonderfully by our Y6 pupils.

For those who are interested in some poetry recommendations, we have a post on Instagram detailing some anthologies for all ages.

Year 12 Welcome Laura Farris MP to St Gabriel's

It was a privilege for our Year 12 Politics students to welcome Laura Farris MP to St Gabriel's (8 October). Laura was invited to be questioned about the workings of our political system and local issues in Newbury/West Berkshire. All questions were given by pupils across the school and were selected randomly by our Year 12 politics students, Lily and Emily.

Laura explained details of political processes such as how to become an MP and how laws are written and passed in Parliament. Key issues in Newbury and West Berkshire were raised such as recycling, homelessness and disability access. Laura commended our pupils on the quality of questions asked.



First choice

A single doughnut on the plate,
But two mouths are eager to take
A bite, release jam in a rush
And feel lips dry with sugar dust.
And so, to be fair,
They are told to share
Equally, kindly, without strife.
One of them is given the knife
Instructed to divide the divine crust.
But to ensure all is fair and just
There is the usual subtle ruse -
Whoever does not cut is first to choose.

- Mrs. Borzoni, Librarian



This is the graveyard of my
Hopes and dreams,
Please, take my hand
And mourn with me.
'Here lies,'
Reads a faded stone,
'The belief that life
Was your own.'

The centrepiece stands here,
A blazing monument
To freedom, to autonomy.
For I have none
That I can see.
I had no say, no vote
In this tragic destruction,
And yet I pick up the ruins,
And rebuild from the debris.

I have no control,
No choice in life
So as I stand here in this necropolis,

I'm thankful that
I'm still alive.

- Tara, Sixth Form

We would like to thank Laura Farris MP for coming to our school and sharing her political experience with our engaged politics students. The recording of this event will be shared to the rest of the school shortly to allow everyone pupil to benefit from this great opportunity.



Achievements

Year 13 Pupil Receives Commendation from Oxford University.

We are incredibly proud of our Year 13 student Rhiannon who has been awarded a commendation for her essay on Classical Reception as part of the Mary Renault Prize.

The Mary Renault Prize, run by St Hugh's College Oxford is a Classical Reception essay competition for national Sixth Form Pupils. The prizes awarded are in honour of Mary Renault, best known for her novels set in Ancient Greece.

Essays are written on any topic related to the reception of classical antiquity – including Greek and Roman literature, history, political thought, philosophy, and material remains. Rhiannon was awarded a commendation for her submission as the committee was "greatly impressed by the quality of your essay". Congratulations Rhiannon! A fabulous achievement celebrated by the whole school!

St Gabriel's Awarded 'Gold' in Green Tree Schools Award

We are so pleased to announce that St Gabriel's has been awarded Gold in the Green Tree Schools Award. Thank you to Chrissy Adams who works with our Year 1 children who organised and led the activities that has resulted in this very prestigious award.

We have received a plaque to display to show the commitment that our school has made to the environment, reducing waste and caring for wildlife!

EPQ Presentations

In September, we were treated to some informative EPQ presentations. Our Sixth Formers are given the opportunity to write an Extended Project Qualification which allows them to explore a topic of interest not directed by the curriculum. They learn to structure a report and enhance their confidence when they present the project.

Some titles of presentations this term: "How has technology affected umpiring in cricket?" and "The effects and impacts of the Glorious Revolution on the Crown and Catholics today". Congratulations to our pupils who presented this term, the passion and hard work was obvious in what was shown.



Music Exam Results:

Here are the most recent pupils with music examination results, Congratulations!

Lilia Hartland 1 violin Pass

Tilly Heywood 5 piano Distinction

Sophia Marsh 1 violin Pass

Penny Page 4 piano Pass

Penny Page 5 violin Pass

World Mental Health Day



Paddington
@paddingtonbear

...

If we can't think of anything nice to say it's kinder to not say anything at all.

3:22 pm · 10 Oct 2021 · Twitter Web App

Be Kind

Being kind has become a big thing
I don't understand why
It's so simple to do
Just do the opposite of making
someone cry

Being kind could just be a smile
At home on a rainy day
Or more important like
When you help someone out at play

Many people may say you are not
kind
Nasty and mean
But kind is not in your actions
It is who is inside of you and me

That person inside is always kind
Just sometimes not shown
But be your self
And let that person glow

What I am trying to say is
Being kind isn't a slogan
Saying or brand
It is who we are inside and long may
it last

by Alissia Mooney , Year 7

A Note From The Nurse, Lucy

Lucy joined us this term after working as a paediatric nurse. She worked at Great Ormond Street Hospital in the bone marrow transplant unit for two years. She then worked in Harley Street children's oncology unit for a year.

"I always wanted to enter in to school nursing once I had finished working in a hospital clinical setting. I love the combination of emotional, pastoral and first aid work that is needed within a school and the sense of community at St Gabriel's is something I was never able to achieve while working on a ward.

I have really enjoyed getting to know the pupils this term and I am really grateful for their sensitivity regarding Covid-19. Make sure you prioritise your mental health this half term. Self-care is really important so spend some outside in the fresh air. Keep testing at home! See you soon!"



Black History Month

Another event celebrated this October was Black History Month. Our Head of Diversity and Inclusion, Aspen (Year 13), gave an assembly on Black History Month (13 October). The assembly discussed how Black History Month in the UK started.

Aspen also drew inspiration from those role models making history now, such as the late Chadwick Boseman who starred as Black Panther. Marcus Rashford was also raised, a footballer turned influential activist due to his work advocating ending child poverty.



Open Morning & Candidates' Day:

Saturday 2 October was our highly anticipated whole school Open Morning. Despite the torrential rain and wind, the event was a huge success.

We had over 80 tours of Sandleford, the Junior and Senior Schools. A hugely important admissions event for our co-educational entry for next September 2022. We thank all the staff who contributed to making this event such a success.



12 October was our Candidates' Day for pupils joining the Senior School next year. It was a fun-filled day welcoming external pupils to join our existing Year 6 to experience a whole range of senior school lessons and team building exercises.

We are now looking forward to welcoming over 70 children to the entrance examinations after half term!

For any admissions queries, please contact our Director of Marketing & Admissions, Jane Benney, at admissions@stgabriels.co.uk



Sports This Term

In PE this term we have focused on developing teamwork and leadership skills. We have covered a range of sports such as netball, football, cross country, badminton, yoga, fitness, dance, gymnastics, and handball.

Year 9 have also completed a sports leadership course and led young people in sport.

It was a warm welcome back with many fixtures this term. Each week we had 75+ students representing the school in a variety of sports including netball, football and hockey.

Attendance at clubs this term is over 90% in Years 7 - 10 with numbers increasing at the incredibly popular early morning running groups.

We are very proud of student achievements in sports and always like to share results and news. Follow us on Twitter @StGabrielsSport for all our news!

- Verity Brazendale, Head of PE



Half Term Recommendations

As we enter the highly anticipated half term, what best to do than to share the amazing events that are happening in the local area this half term:

26 July - 31 December: Botanical Women at Chawton House, Alton

- This exhibition reveals the often hidden role played by women in horticulture and plant science from early as 17th Century. These women were writers, artists, collectors and educators who played an important role in the advancement of botany. Exhibition included in general admission price.
- <https://chawtonhouse.org/whatson/exhibition-botanical-women/>

4 September - 28 November: Both Sides of the Fence, Greenham Tower, Newbury

- An exhibition marking the 40th anniversary of the arrival of peace women at Greenham Common. The exhibition looks at the Women's Peace Camps which emerged in protest to Nuclear weapons being stored at RAF Greenham Common. The exhibition feature stories from military personnel, police, residents of Newbury and the peace women themselves.
- <https://www.greenhamtower.org.uk/exhibitions/>

October: Spooky Halloween River Tour with New Forest Activities, Beaulieu

- A 2 hour canoe tour filled with spooky tales and stories at twilight. Families are invited to dress up and enjoy a warming hot chocolate.
- <https://www.newforestactivities.co.uk/activities/spooky-halloween-river-tour>

2 October - 31 October: Pumpkin Picking, Cobbs Farm Shop, Hungerford

- Open from 10am to 3pm, seven days a week, pick your own pumpkin in the fields at Cobbs farm. No need to book.
- <https://www.cobbsfarmshops.co.uk/pumpkin-picking>

14 October - 31 October: Brick or Treat, LEGOLAND, Windsor

- LEGOLAND will be "transformed into pumpkin filled wonderland for what is sure to be the most frightfully fun event of the year".
- <https://www.legoland.co.uk/explore/special-events/brick-or-treat/>

14 October - 1 November: Happy Halloween at Paultons Park, Ower, Hampshire

- With stage shows (23 - 31 October) and late night openings (26-28 October) it promises to be "the friendliest and most frightful fun fest in the UK".
- <https://paultonspark.co.uk/halloween/>

15 October - 31 October: Fright Nights, Thorpe Park

- Experience thrilling rides at night, live action experiences, and scare zones. Recommended for 13+.
- <https://www.thorpepark.com/explore/theme-park/fright-nights/>

15 October - November 2022: Bond In Motion - No Time To Die Exhibition, Beaulieu

- This brand new exhibition at the National Motor Museum, Beaulieu, features iconic Bond cars, gadgets, merchandise and the world exclusive display of the folding wing glider as featured in the film. Entry to this exhibition includes all Beaulieu attractions.
- <https://www.beaulieu.co.uk/bond-motion-no-time-die-exhibition/>
- Don't forget to see No Time To Die in cinemas this half term!

22 October - 28 November: Hockney and Hollywood, The Base, Greenham

- A major photomontage of an American actress by David Hockney. The photographs featured in the exhibition give a “unique and intimate never before seen ‘behind the scenes’ look” at Hockney’s work.
- <https://thebasegreenham.co.uk/event/hockney-hollywood?e=147349?&c=148695>



23 October - 31 October: Halloween at Blenheim Palace, Woodstock

- A range of half term activities are taking place at Blenheim palace including a mini ghost train and ‘Frightful Fire Performances’.
- <https://www.blenheimpalace.com/whats-on/events/halloween-entertainment.html>

23 October - 31 October: Halloween at Bucklebury Farm, Reading

- Enjoy a range of Halloween activities including their ‘spooky trail’ and pumpkin picking. You can even carve a pumpkin onsite to save the mess! Booking recommended.
- <https://www.buckleburyfarm.co.uk/>



29 October, 6-8pm: Owl-O-Ween, Hawk Conservancy Trust, Andover

- Spooky storytelling and flying displays are in store at the Hawk Conservancy Trust. You’ll be introduced to owls such as the Barn Owl and larger Great Grey Owls. Dressing up is encouraged!
- <https://www.hawk-conservancy.org/events/owl-o-ween/>

31 October: Newbury Artisan Market (10am-4pm), Newbury

- The favoured artisan market returns to Newbury on Sunday 31 October.

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We hope everyone has a wonderful half term break. Make sure you get some much needed rest and enjoy celebrating Halloween. We look forward to welcoming you back on Monday 1 November.