



Welcome Message



I write this from my office at a time when the only children we have in school are those of our key worker parents. It is eerily quiet, made all the more disconcerting by the beautiful weather we have experienced recently. I am delighted to share this newsletter with you, which gives us the opportunity to remind ourselves of the happiness and educational balance that characterises life at St Gabriel's.

It is when the school is so empty, one realises just how special a place it is with the hubbub of activity and shrieks of excitement from pupils of all ages, as they revel in the joy of being at school. Clearly, for a while, that is not going to be the case, and as we make adjustments to this new, temporary way of living, I hope you can look back on the majority of the Spring Term with fondness at all that was achieved.

It would be wrong of me not to mention here the inspirational way our pupils and staff have reacted to the situation that we find ourselves in. As the cloud of closure came looming towards us all, there was an acceptance and a pragmatism as our community prepared as best it could for the unknown. I have been so impressed by the learning and innovation that has been going on over the last few weeks; well done to all.

Our focus is to provide continuity of learning for your child and we are making the most of the technology we have available to support this and are committed to keeping in regular communication.

Finally, at this difficult time, I wish you all good health and enjoy the unexpected opportunity that we have been given to connect with family and see everything in a different light.

Ricki Smith, Principal

Easter Holiday Activities

Below are some ideas for pupils and parents to get involved in over the Easter holidays. Do share how you get on.



Make a video diary of life during lockdown. You are living in an extraordinary period of time and this is something you might like to share in the future with your children and grandchildren.



Watch an episode of 'Come Dine with Me' to understand the format of the programme and then have a family competition. Either individually or in teams (parents vs children for example) cook a three course meal with entertainment (you could even dress for dinner). Score the meal out of 10 (video or record your marks and feedback) and have a prize for the winner(s).



Get creative with a range of online drawing tools such as Snapseed, VSCO, Pixlr, Over, Sketchclub, Brushes, Redux, Magic Eraser, Pics Art, Repix, Green Screen, PS Express, iMovie, Cute Cut and Procreate.



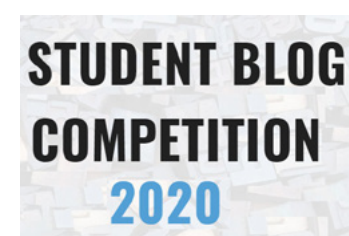
Explore galleries and artefacts online. Visit: [British Museum](https://www.britishmuseum.org/)



Go on a country walk and take some artistic photographs.



Design your own lockdown meme.



Create a political blog for 16+ students. Visit: [psa](https://www.psa.org.uk/)



Enter a historical fiction competition Visit: [history.org.uk](https://www.history.org.uk/)



View performances from the National Theatre on YouTube. New releases every Thursday.



View free online musical performances. Visit: [The Royal Opera House](https://www.roh.org.uk/)



Try an online Escape Room. Visit: [escapefromhome.co.uk](https://www.escapefromhome.co.uk/)



Listen to live music. Many bands and orchestras are making their performances available for free. Visit: [digitalconcerthall.com](https://www.digitalconcerthall.com/) [classicfm.com](https://www.classicfm.com/)



Practise a musical instrument. With lots of free online learning resources available and songs via YouTube, it is a great time to practise together and can be fun and therapeutic.



Create your own music. A free digital audio workstation, which we use in school, is an easy way of creating music without ever practising a single scale. Visit: [lmms](https://www.lmms.org/)



Access a range of shows. Visit: [digital theatre](https://www.digitaltheatre.org.uk/) Username and password have been included in email home this week.



Mute your favourite television programme and add your own storyline, by reading facial expressions and body language. Can you guess the correct emotion in the scene?



Spend time in your garden, get active, play sport and even have a go at growing your own plants, flowers or vegetables.



Live stream West End shows. Andrew Lloyd Webber has released the Show Must Go On through YouTube. Also Visit: [Willows Musical](https://www.willowsmusical.com/)



Turn family charades into a game show by making your own score boards and theme music.



THE ADDAMS FAMILY



A highlight of the Spring Term was the production of The Addams Family on 3 and 4 March at Arlington Arts. A cast of drama, music and dance students came together to perform and entertain with their amazing talents. They took the audience on a Gothic journey and showed dedication and commitment throughout the rehearsal process right up until the final curtain. Revisit the incredible performance and celebrate our girls' amazing talents. [View Gallery / Read More](#)

“The professionalism of the cast, backstage team and band were exceptional from start to finish.”

Mrs Chaplin
Head of Drama



“It was an ambitious Addams Family team that pulled off two spectacular evenings of music, movement and melodrama.”

Ricki Smith
Principal



Head of Department Spotlight

Mrs Ruth Chaplin - Drama



Mrs Ruth Chaplin developed a passion for dancing and acting from a very young age, joining a local drama group when she was 10.

After taking A levels in Theatre Studies, Dance and Media and a degree in Media and Performance, she spent three years at the prestigious Bristol Old Vic Theatre School, developing her technical stage management skills. It was while she

was here that she was scouted to work on the production of television shows, including Skins, Mastermind and Cranford.

Mrs Chaplin eventually decided it was time to settle down with her family and turned her hand to teaching, which brought a whole new world of excitement and passion.

Her biggest love is physical theatre, being drawn to the inner emotions of a character and the interesting ways an audience can be presented with them. Her favourite production is Sister Act, because it is an uplifting, hilarious musical, full of fantastic music and great performers!

Her advice to students is “always treat every role you gain as an experience, often those in the smallest of roles can have the biggest impact. A principal is nothing without the performance around them.”

“Drama is not as easy as some people believe. You need to be able to connect with the character you are playing. If you do not believe the person you are creating then the audience certainly will not.”

[Read More](#)



Ms Jessica Hammett - Science



Ms Jessica Hammett's fascination for science came from studying the habitats around her when she was young. She has always been a strong communicator and concrete thinker and loved the challenge of biochemistry at university which she followed with a masters in Science Communication.

Ms Hammett's scientific hero is Fred Sanger, a British biochemist who won the Nobel prize for chemistry twice, an amazing achievement.

As the whole of scientific method revolves around falsification of hypotheses, and this cannot be done without collecting evidence, Mrs Hammett believes school-based experiments are essential. Practical research offers the girls the opportunity to use apparatus, follow instructions and consider errors.

For those pupils interested in following a career in science, Mrs Hammett recommends that careful consideration is given to courses with industrial placements and be prepared for the difference between academic research and working in a company.”

“In the last two years, we have helped girls go to read Medicine, Veterinary Science, Engineering, Biomedical Science, Biology and Biochemistry. We have also had some really super talks from parents who work in science and have come in to share their area of specialism.”

[Read More](#)



Hockey



We are incredibly proud of our Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9 hockey teams, who displayed excellent game play, resilience, motivation and team spirit in one of their many rain-drenched fixtures this term. Thanks to our friends at Kennet School for a great afternoon of sport.

Netball



A cold and very wet day at the Berkshire Schools Netball Tournament on 9 March saw our under 12A team show great resilience in horrible conditions.

All smiles from our Sixth Form Netball Team after winning the Under 18 tournament on 11 March. They beat St Bartholomew's, Willink, Kennet, Theale, Little Heath and Park House! Well done, a victorious win.

Equestrian



Congratulations to Daisy and Minty, who achieved both individual and team wins in the 80cm category at the Inter Schools Show Jumping event at St Hugh's, Oxfordshire.

February & March Match Results

Date	Sport	Age Group	School	Result
26 February	Netball	U18	Theale	Lost 11 - 7
27 February	Netball	U15 & Fast Track	The Downs	Cancelled due to weather
3 March	Hockey	U14	The Downs	Lost 3 - 0
4 March	Netball	U18	St Bartholomew's	Won
5 March	Netball	U15 & Fast Track	Little Heath	Cancelled due to weather
9 March	Netball	U12	Tournament	Fourth
10 March	Hockey	U12	Kennet	Won 3 - 0
10 March	Hockey	U13	Kennet	Lost 5 - 1
10 March	Hockey	U14	Kennet	Won 3 - 2
11 March	Netball	U18	Tournament	Won
12 March	Netball	U15 & Fast Track	Willink	Cancelled
19 March	Netball	U15 & Fast Track	Trinity	Cancelled
24 March	Hockey	U12 & U13	The Downs	Cancelled
25 March	Netball	U15	Tournament	Cancelled
26 March	Netball	Fast Track	Tournament	Cancelled
31 March	Hockey	U14	Trinity	Cancelled

Keeping Active

During the last two weeks of term, the PE Department created a timetable that has been a great source of support for pupils to keep active at home. Look out for more ideas and website links next term.

[View Timetable](#)



World Book Day



Our picture gallery tells the story of World Book Day in the Senior School and Sixth Form on 5 March. Pupils dressed up as a diverse range of literary characters and enjoyed a book exchange, where they traded some old favourites for an exciting new read. [View Gallery](#)

British Science Week

During British Science Week, Year 10 participated in a host of fun demonstrations to learn about various scientific elements in a practical experimental format. Year 9 also built a fun periodic table. [Read More](#)



Year 13 Biologists recently carried out Gram staining on bacteria, to understand which sample was Gram positive and which was Gram negative.



Rotary Young Chef



Once again Selina wowed the judges at the regional final of the Rotary Young Chef Competition on 7 March at Newbury College, taking second place.

“ I am really pleased to have impressed the judges at the Rotary Young Chef Competition Regional Heat. ”

Selina, Year 9

Story Wall

Connect with us on social; it is a window to our world and a great way to interact together.

For highlights across our social platforms view our [story wall](#)

Featured Twitter Account



@StGabsScience

Follow us for the latest activities and science stories.





Bookmark Competition

Design a Bookmark



COMPETITION

Thank you to everyone who created book-marks for our World Book Day competition. Due to the high volume of entries we are busy judging and will reveal shortly the winning entries.

Debating Broadband



The Debating Club gave excellent speeches during their first virtual meeting. The topic debated was **'This House believes broadband is a right not a privilege'**. The motion was defeated. The Debating Club will continue to meet virtually to debate topics of interest every Thursday.

Catering News



Congratulations to our Catering Team who received a five star rating in their Environmental Health Inspection from the Food Standards Agency. They recently organised Rainbow and St Patrick's Day themed lunches to add variety to the dining room menu and encourage pupils to try new dishes.

Year 7 Art



Year 7 enjoyed creating spiral pattern tie-dye t-shirts in their last Textile lesson of the rotation.

More recently, Year 7 artists have found innovative ways of understanding colour theory by creating 3D colour wheels as part of their 'landscape' project. Their outcomes are creative and inventive; brilliant remote learning!



Year 8 Art

Year 8 created inspirational models in their Art lesson, in response to their Pitt Rivers Museum trip.



Year 9 Art

Year 9 girls created a wonderful collaborative eye study using charcoal and chalk recently, to kickstart their 'Portraits' project. Well done girls!



Art in Isolation

Our pupils are creating all kinds of wonderful art whilst working at home due to the Covid-19 closure of the school buildings. We have created a gallery that will be updated regularly to share some of their work. **Visit Gallery**



SoyKind



On Saturday 22 February, our Year 12 Student Business Challenge Company, SoyKind, set up a stall to sell their reusable food wraps at a pop-up shop event in the Kennet Centre, Newbury. Trading alongside teams from other schools, it was pleasing to see the large number of stalls with an ethical or environmentally friendly focus.

To maintain their plastic free approach, our team had investigated purchasing an alternative to the traditional plastic pull up banner by adopting one made from recyclable card with a base lined with wild flower seeds that could be planted out afterwards. However, at over double the price of a standard reusable banner it was beyond their budget and could not be justified from a business perspective.

Undaunted they utilised the skills of team member, Issy, who set up an easel and canvas and painted their logo at the event; a great move that created interest. Although the Kennet Centre was particularly quiet at the end of half term week, the team sold some wraps and developed their skills in talking about their business with members of the public. The team have sold their food wraps, which are vegan friendly as they do not use beeswax, at a few school events. With face to face sales curtailed they are now developing their social media presence and reviewing ways to sell online.

Geography



We often talk about the importance of balance and having a balanced approach to the curriculum, but what do we mean by that? A good example was shown in Geography when Year 7 pupils found time after a topic test, and in between final rehearsals for the Addams Family, to use their creativity and work collaboratively to create models of the rainforest. Recycling and reusing other resources was also part of this time-limited challenge.

Robotics Challenge



Congratulations to the St Gabriel's team who took part in the Lego Robotics Competition. They showed amazing talent winning for thier excellent programming and robotic design.

Teaching Remotely



As new teaching methods have been initiated across all subjects, pupils and teachers alike are embracing new technologies. It is challenging but exciting at the same time.

The girls have done a superb job so far, we are impressed by their ability to adapt. New ways of teaching and learning in Mandarin, for example, have included writing and online marking with Year 11, video lessons with Year 10 and dictation with Year 7. More examples are being shared regularly on social media.

Australian Exchange



“ The Gold Coast is a beautiful area surrounded by beaches and the scenery was like nothing I had ever seen before. ”

Pippa, Year 10

Pippa, Year 10, recently returned from three wonderful weeks on the Gold Coast as part of the Australian Exchange Programme.

It was amazing to see my exchange partner, Isabella, again after her trip to the UK last year as we have become very close friends. However, I was not immediately welcomed by the lovely warm sun I was expecting when I arrived but instead, a cyclone! It was very interesting to experience such weather and luckily it all cleared up in time for our weekend trip to Noosa, a beach town slightly further north of the Gold Coast.

I had loads of Australian experiences, including meeting a koala, visiting Bondi Beach and seeing the Sydney Opera House in all of its glory. I learnt lots about the history of the country that I did not know before.

St Hilda's School was very welcoming to me and it was a pleasure to meet and get to know all of Bella's close friends and to take part in classes that I do not usually do back at home.

Unfortunately the exchange was cut from the original six weeks to three due to Covid-19 and it was slightly scary to be abroad whilst everything was happening.

Nonetheless, I had an amazing experience that I will never forget. Isabella and I are already working with our families to see each other again once it is safe enough to travel.



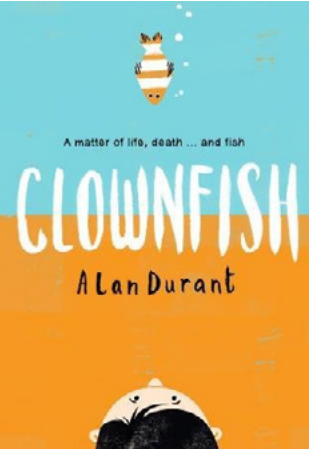
Year 11 2020



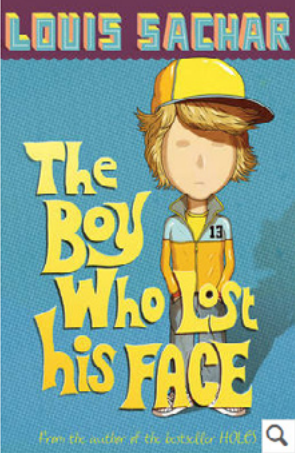
Reading Lists

Click on the links below to see Mrs Borzoni's suggested reading lists for Year 7 - 9.

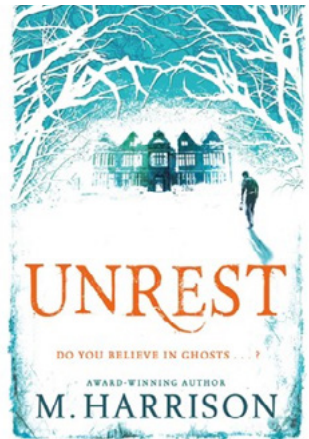
Year 7 Reading List



Year 8 Reading List



Year 9 Reading List



Concilium



We have introduced a new blog on our website that will share articles of interest. Currently it will focus on sharing helpful resources to support children's learning.

Concilium is taken from Latin, meaning plan, purpose, counsel, advice, judgement and wisdom. [View Posts](#)

Coronavirus Government Updates

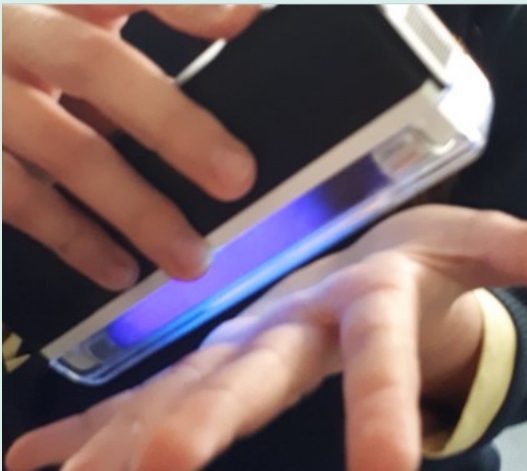


Open Morning

Saturday 3 October

Email: admissions@stgabriels.co.uk

Handwashing



Year 7 used glowing hand cream and UV lights in Science to find out how good they actually are at washing their hands!



Wash hands for about 20 seconds with soap and hot water or use a sanitiser gel