

Weekly Learning Update

25th September 2026



Nursery

What a fantastic week Nursery have had! The children have embraced the start of our whole class and small group learning sessions with great enthusiasm. We have begun our English and Phonics sessions and the children have enjoyed learning together in a more structured way. Next week, we are excited to begin our Maths learning sessions too. Our weekly focus will alternate between English and Maths throughout the year.

English: This week, we have been exploring the story *From Head to Toe* by Eric Carle. The children loved joining in with the different movements from the story and thinking about all the things our bodies can do. Our focused small group sessions have included learning about different parts of the body and exploring our emotions.

Maths Area: The children have been creating patterns and sorting objects by colour, developing their early mathematical thinking skills.

Writing and Fine Motor: The writing table has been a popular area this week, with children using whiteboard pens to draw and mark make on sticky-back plastic covered tables. Pre-writing shape cards have supported the children in developing their early pencil control and mark-making skills. We have also been developing our fine motor skills by stretching elastic bands on the geoboards to make different pictures and designs.

Role Play: We have added babies to our home corner, encouraging nurturing play, communication and imagination.

Small World Area: The children have been exploring a small world town featuring people who help us, including firefighters and police officers. This has inspired lots of imaginative storytelling and role play.

Sensory Area: The children have enjoyed exploring and manipulating playdough, developing both their creativity and fine motor skills.

Investigation Area: Magnifying glasses and minibeasts have encouraged the children to look closely, observe carefully and develop their curiosity about the natural world.

Creative Area: The children have been creating self-portraits using mirrors, colouring pencils and felt-tip pens, carefully looking at their own features in mirrors and adding detail to their drawings.

Outdoors: The children have enjoyed taking part in a minibeast bug hunt, searching for hidden photographs around the outdoor area. We have also introduced a new small world area with cars and roads, which has proven very popular. Our large construction resources continue to be a favourite and the children have also enjoyed water play with sea creatures, alongside plenty of opportunities for imaginative and cooperative play.

Snack Time: This week, we introduced our rolling snack routine and it has been a huge success. The children have enjoyed sitting in small groups with a teacher to share a snack, helping to develop their independence, social skills and conversation.



Reception (King Class and Parks Class)

It has been a wonderful week in Reception!

Maths:

We have been developing our representing number skills. Across the week, we have used lots of resources and images to represent different numbers. The children were fantastic at drawing the correct amount of images to represent the given number. They were also able to notice if the image did not correctly represent a number.

English:

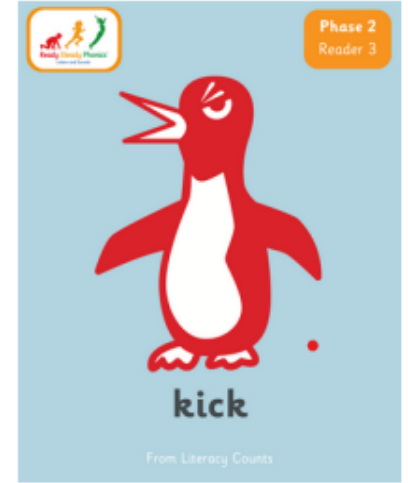
In our English, we have been extending our learning about 'labelling' as we labelled Sophie's leg and head. We were also excited to receive a message from her asking if we could write our names on a label so she could learn them all.

Phonics:

Children have learnt the phonemes 'g', 'o', 'c', 'k' and 'ck' this week and enjoyed consolidating this to read their books. It's been great to see so many children have been practicing at home. Children have gone home with phonics books today, to access the electronic copy, please use the QR code.

Continuous provision:

We have made marble runs, used the tracing paper to write our names, created phonemes using the pegs and been phoneme detectives in the book corner as we searched for our new phonemes hidden in the text.



Year 1 (Bell Class and Windsor Class)

We have had another wonderful week in Year 1!

Phonics:

This week in phonics, we have been revisiting the phonemes igh, oa, oo and oo (u). We practised reading and spelling words such as night, road, zoom and book. The children have been working hard to apply their phonics knowledge when reading and spelling new words.

English:

In English, we have been exploring the story of Old Bear. We have been using a range of adjectives to describe Old Bear and have also used actions to help us learn and remember a sentence from each part of the story. The children have really enjoyed bringing the story to life!

Maths:

In Maths, we have been learning how to find one less than a number. We have also been comparing numbers up to 10 using the inequality signs $<$ and $>$. The children have enjoyed developing their understanding of numbers and explaining their mathematical thinking.

Science:

In Science, the children had lots of fun learning about our five senses and played a game to apply our learning. See if you can play it at home!

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/go/resource/sense-catcher-the-five-senses-game-t-sc-2550316>



Year 2 (Braille Class and Kerr Class)

It has been a super week in Year 2, with lots of exciting learning taking place across the curriculum! In English, we have been enjoying our class text, *A River*. We explored the different settings within the story and used our imaginations to picture ourselves in each location. This helped us to write some wonderful setting descriptions, using ambitious vocabulary to bring our ideas to life. We have also begun planning our own circular narratives, inspired by the structure of the book.

In Maths, we have continued developing our understanding of place value. We have been using number lines to 100, practising estimation skills and thinking carefully about where numbers belong. We have also learnt how to compare numbers, using mathematical vocabulary to explain which numbers are greater than, less than, or equal to others.

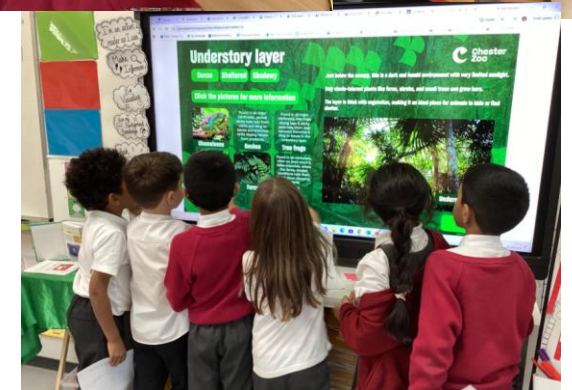
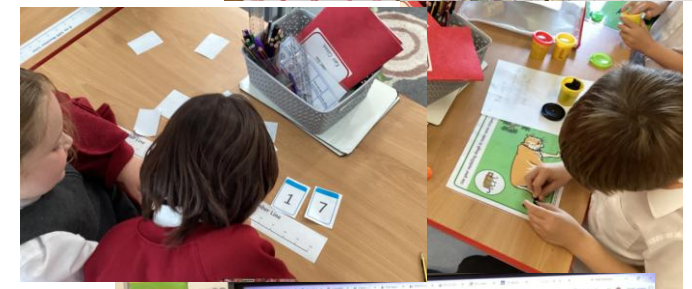
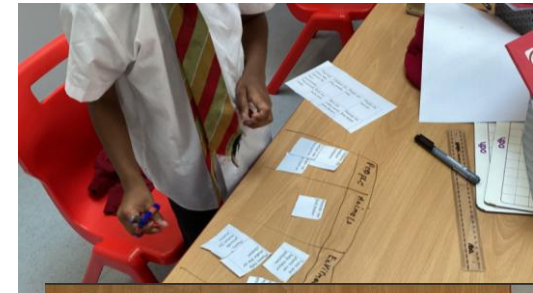
Our RE lesson turned us into detectives! We examined different pieces of evidence and asked the question: *Was Jesus a Christian?* After discussing and analysing the clues, we concluded that Jesus was a Jewish man and learnt more about the beliefs and traditions of Judaism.

In Art, we explored the theme of texture. We investigated a mystery bag filled with a variety of objects and used only our sense of touch to describe them. We then thought about how different textures could be represented through sketching techniques and enjoyed experimenting in our sketchbooks using drawing pencils.

In Science, we became rainforest researchers! We visited different learning stations to discover fascinating facts about rainforest habitats, plants and animals. We then created colourful posters to showcase everything we had learnt.

Finally, in Geography, we learnt about green spaces in London and discussed why they are so important for people, wildlife and the environment. To finish our learning, we designed persuasive posters to convince the Mayor not to build on a local park.

We hope you have a wonderful weekend and look forward to another fantastic week of learning ahead!



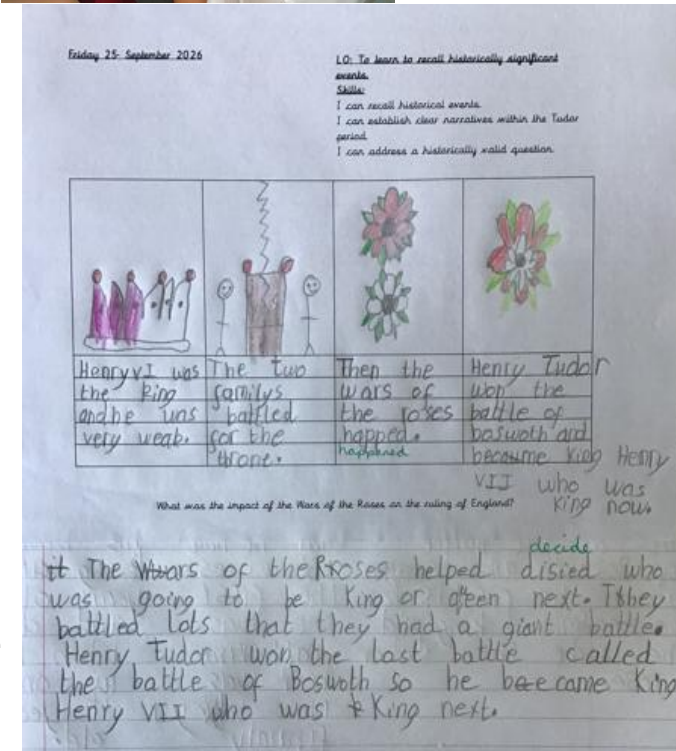
Year 3 (Malala Class and Anning Class)

We've had a brilliant week in Year 3! In English, we have continued exploring The Iron Man, focusing on the features of a threat narrative and how authors create suspense and tension for the reader. We have also been developing our grammar skills by learning when to use a and an correctly, as well as using apostrophes for omission and possession. We have been really impressed with the children's sentence accuracy and their ability to apply these grammatical features successfully in their own writing.

In Maths, we have been using place value grids, place value counters and Base 10 to represent and make 3-digit numbers. The children have also been adding and subtracting 1, 10 and 100 from different numbers, carefully investigating which digit changes and why. They have shown a growing confidence in their understanding of place value and have enjoyed using practical resources to support their learning.

In Science, we have been given the important job of investigating which type of rock would be best to use on the roof of a house. This week, we planned our investigation by thinking carefully about our key question, prediction, variables and method. We can't wait to carry out our investigation next week to discover which rock is the most permeable.

In History, we learnt about the War of the Roses, sequencing key events and considering how this conflict affected the ruling of England. The children enjoyed learning about the rivalry between the two houses and the events that eventually led to the Tudor dynasty. We are also looking forward to our Tudor Day in school on **Wednesday 21st October**. We apologise for the confusion regarding the date on the original letter. Please refer to the letter for full details. The day will be led by an external company called **Portals from the Past** and we are excited to bring our Tudor learning to life through this special experience. Have a lovely weekend!



Year 4 (Tagore Class and Turing Class)

This week, we have enjoyed a range of exciting learning opportunities across the curriculum.

In English, we continued exploring *The Whale* by Ethan and Vita Murrow. We analysed a powerful setting description from the text and identified the language features that helped bring the scene to life. We then focused on building tension in our own writing, using descriptive vocabulary, varied sentence structures and carefully chosen details to create suspense and engage our readers.

In Maths, we developed our understanding of numbers up to 10,000. We used number lines to represent numbers accurately and practised estimating where different values would be placed. This helped us strengthen our sense of number magnitude and improve our reasoning skills.

In Science, we revisited our learning about the digestive system. We discussed the different parts involved in digestion and their functions before creating a model to demonstrate the journey food takes through the body. This practical activity helped us understand the process in a memorable and engaging way.

For Geography, we went on a local walk around Houlton and up Normandy Hill. As we explored the area, we observed and discussed different types of land use, considering how spaces are used by the community and how the local environment has developed.

In Art, we explored sketching as a medium and practised a variety of techniques, including blending and scumbling. We experimented with how these methods can create different textures, tones and effects within our artwork.

In RE, we learnt about the Holy Trinity and discussed its significance within Christianity. We also made connections to St. Patrick and how he used the three leaves of a clover to help explain this important Christian belief.



Year 5 (Attenborough Class and Raúf Class)

We cannot believe that Week 4 has already come to an end and that we are now halfway through the term!

In English, we have been spending much of our time exploring the features and structure of narrative texts in preparation for planning and writing our own versions next week. We began by examining the structure of a narrative focused on a journey to the Moon. The children then broke the text down to identify key language features, including fronted adverbials, metaphors and prepositional phrases. We discussed the impact these features have on the reader and considered how they help to make writing more engaging. Towards the end of the week, the children planned their own narratives based on a journey to Mars. We are very much looking forward to seeing their creative ideas come to life in their writing next week!

In Maths, we have been focusing on ordering and comparing numbers up to one million. The children have been using their understanding of the value of individual digits to tackle increasingly challenging reasoning and problem-solving questions. We then moved on to rounding numbers to the nearest 10, 100 and 1000. To support this learning, we used some familiar poems and rhymes to help the children remember the key rules and apply them successfully.

In History, we have been exploring the concept of chronology by looking at the timeline of British history. The children learnt a catchy story to help them remember some of the key events and periods in British history, from the Stone Age through to the First and Second World Wars. This was a great way to support their understanding of the order in which historical events took place. You might like to ask your child if they can remember the story and recall the correct chronological order of the events we explored!

In RE, we have continued our exploration of embodied worldviews by learning more about rituals and how people within different organised worldviews might demonstrate their beliefs and values through ritual practices. We began by exploring the Christian worldview and considering how Christians might embody their beliefs through particular actions and practices. We then looked at Jewish and Hindu worldviews before reflecting on our own personal worldviews. Throughout our learning, the children considered what inspires people to take part in these rituals and why these activities are important to them.

In Art, we have been developing our sketching skills by exploring a range of different techniques. The children have been learning how to use a sketching pencil effectively to create depth, shading and shadow in simple drawings. They have worked hard to practise these techniques and will begin applying their new skills as they plan and create their final pieces of artwork over the coming weeks.

Finally, in Science, we were very excited to carry out our investigations into parachutes and air resistance. The children explored the factors that can affect air resistance and considered how these might increase or decrease the speed at which a parachute falls. Working collaboratively in groups, they tested different independent variables and observed the impact these had on how their parachutes moved through the air. It was fantastic to see the children developing their scientific investigation skills as they collected results and worked together to carry out fair tests.



Year 6 (Pogson Class and Walker Class)

We've had another fantastic week in Year 6, with lots of engaging learning across the curriculum!

In English, we continued exploring our class text, *One Day*. The children have been thinking carefully about the character of Eugene and have written in role to explore his thoughts and feelings throughout the story. We discussed the conflicting emotions he experiences, particularly his desire to escape while also feeling uncertain about what lies ahead. The children worked hard to apply new vocabulary from the text and incorporated a range of grammar skills into their writing, including the use of formal and informal language, speech structures and semicolons.

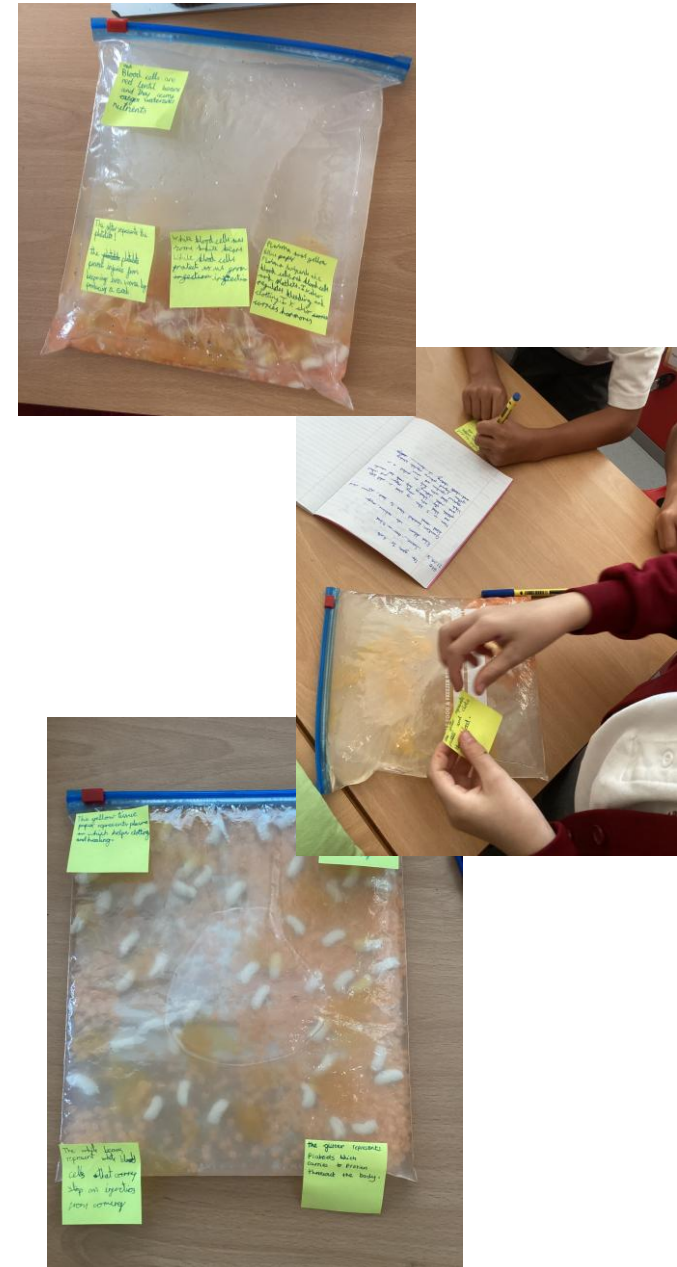
In Maths, we have been developing our understanding of common multiples and common factors. The children have explored how these concepts can be used to solve a variety of reasoning and problem-solving questions, demonstrating resilience and perseverance when tackling more challenging tasks.

In Science, we learned about the different components of blood and their important roles within the circulatory system. The children investigated the functions of red blood cells, white blood cells, plasma and platelets before creating their own blood bags to represent each component. This practical activity helped them understand how these parts work together to keep our bodies healthy and functioning effectively.

In RE, we explored how Eco Churches put Christian beliefs into action by caring for God's creation. The children considered how Christians can act as caretakers of the world and examined practical ways churches support environmental sustainability within their communities.

In History, we focused on rationing during World War II and the impact food shortages had on daily life. The children investigated why rationing was introduced and discussed the challenges families faced when certain foods and goods were limited. We also considered how communities adapted and worked together during this difficult period.

Well done, Year 6, for another week of thoughtful discussions, hard work and enthusiasm for learning.



Signals Class

This week we introduced our new Makaton sign of the week: "Gone." We have been building this sign into our everyday routines and activities to help the children become familiar with the sign and understand its meaning in different contexts.

The children were particularly engaged with our sand monsters activity. They had great fun creating and exploring their monsters until Mrs Evans gave them a 'splat' and they were gone! This provided a wonderful opportunity to reinforce our sign of the week through meaningful and engaging play experiences.

As we begin to explore the changing season, we have introduced some autumn themes into our enhanced provision. The children enjoyed investigating a pumpkin that had been cut open and were able to observe the seeds, pulp, and ribs inside. This sparked lots of curiosity and opportunities for discussion. During our sensory play activities, the children explored a range of autumn colours, which they thoroughly enjoyed. They also had great fun engaging with other sensory experiences, including the sand tray, where they investigated different textures and materials.

To further develop the children's communication and language skills, we took part in a "What's in the Bag?" activity. The children explored a variety of hidden objects and were encouraged to use descriptive language to talk about what they could feel and notice. Through listening carefully to clues and descriptions, they then had the opportunity to guess what was inside the bag. This activity supported vocabulary development, listening skills, turn-taking, and communication.

We also had the opportunity to visit the library this week. The children have really enjoyed choosing their own books and exploring different stories. We are delighted to see their enthusiasm for books and reading growing.

Please remember to return library books every Tuesday.



Our Library

We are delighted to share that our newly renovated school library officially launched this week! Thanks to the generous funding provided by the PTFA, alongside money raised through our fundraising efforts, the library has been transformed into a welcoming and inspiring space for all of our children to enjoy.

The library is filled with a wide variety of high-quality books, including exciting fiction, fascinating non-fiction texts and beautiful picture books. There are also several different seating areas where children can get cosy, relax and immerse themselves in a good book. Each class will have weekly or fortnightly opportunities to visit the library, giving children regular time to browse, read and enjoy the fantastic collection of books available. We hope this wonderful space will continue to promote a lifelong love of reading and encourage children to explore new authors, genres and interests.

We are incredibly proud of our Reading Ambassadors, who have already been doing a wonderful job of helping to keep the library tidy, organised and well looked after. They have taken their responsibilities very seriously and are helping to ensure that the library remains an inviting space that everyone can enjoy. Their enthusiasm for reading and commitment to caring for the library has been fantastic to see.

We are so grateful to the PTFA and everyone who has supported our fundraising efforts at community events in helping to make this exciting project possible and we look forward to seeing the positive impact it has on fostering a love of reading across our school community.



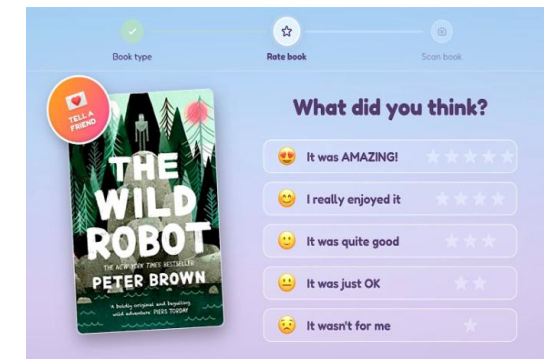
Little Library

Following on from our library transformation, we have also introduced a new way of supporting and celebrating reading in school. This week, we launched **Little Library**, an exciting online platform that allows us to celebrate and monitor children's reading journeys in a much more engaging way, keeping the focus firmly on the joy of reading rather than simply recording that reading has taken place.

Through Little Library, children can scan the books they have read, rate and review them and recommend their favourite titles to their friends. The system also helps us keep track of books that are being borrowed from the library and sent home, making it easier for us to manage our book collections and ensure books are shared and enjoyed by as many children as possible.

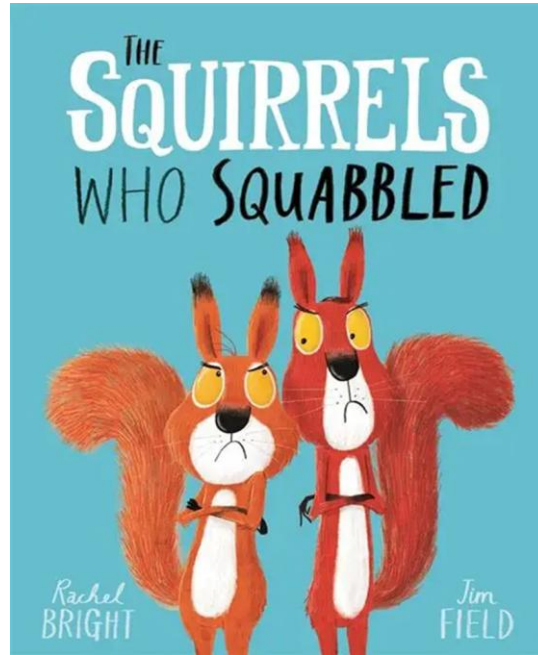
One of the things we are most excited about is the insight Little Library gives us into our children's reading preferences. In school, we will be able to see which books, authors and genres are proving most popular, identify patterns in what children enjoy reading and use this information to make informed decisions about future book purchases and recommendations. It will also provide valuable opportunities for meaningful conversations about reading, helping us to celebrate children's achievements and encourage them to explore new books that match their interests.

We are looking forward to seeing how Little Library, alongside our wonderful new library, helps to strengthen our reading culture and further promote reading for pleasure. By giving children a platform to share, review and recommend books, we hope to inspire even more discussion about reading and help every child develop as a confident, enthusiastic reader.



Collective Worship

During Worship Through Story, we read the Squirrels Who Squabbled. We discussed how the story links to "Love one another as I have loved you." (John 13:34) as when the squirrels finally stopped thinking only about themselves and helped each other, they realised their friendship was far more valuable than a possession.



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



£45 per ticket, including all supplies, a welcome drink and festive treat!

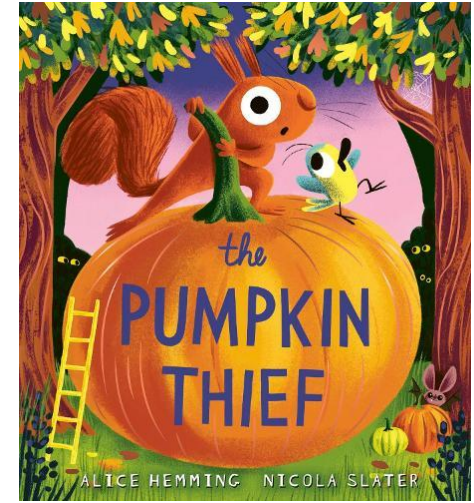
To secure your place, please contact
office@stgabrielscofeacademy.org

Recommended Read

The Pumpkin Thief by Alice Hemming and Nicola Slater

To celebrate the start of autumn, we are sharing this hilarious Squirrel and Bird adventure! With a little help from Bird, Squirrel has grown some beautiful pumpkins and couldn't be prouder. But when the pumpkins start disappearing one by one, Squirrel is determined to solve the mystery and catch the sneaky thief before Bird returns.

Written by Alice Hemming and brought to life with Nicola Slater's wonderful illustrations, this laugh-out-loud story is perfect for this time of year. There's even a fascinating non-fiction section at the back of the book packed full of pumpkin facts for curious readers to enjoy. If this story leaves you wanting more, be sure to look out for Squirrel and Bird's other adventures: The Leaf Thief, The Flower Thief, The Snow Thief and The Sun Thief, all packed with humour, friendship and plenty of Squirrel's wonderfully dramatic antics!

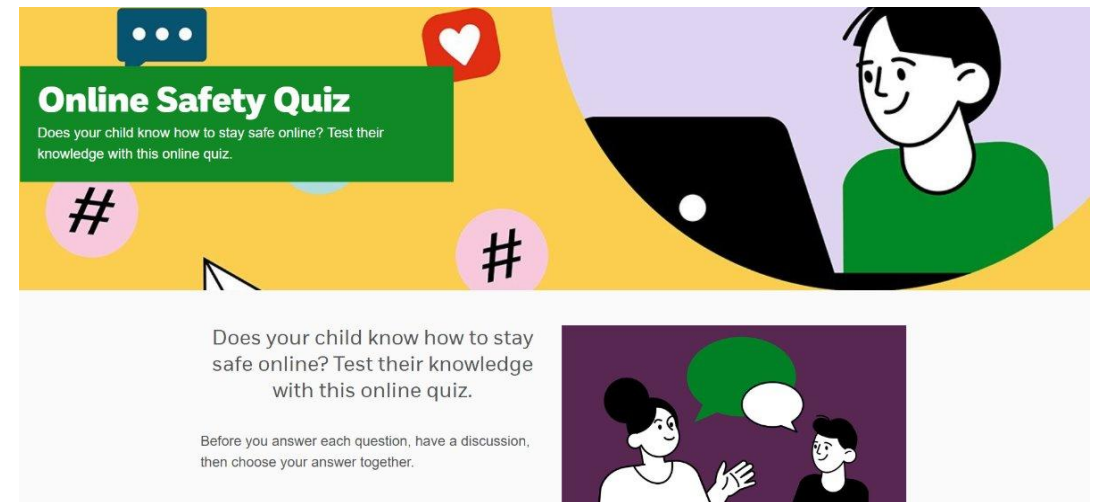


Online Safety

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	97.1%
This week's attendance	97.8%
Latest Local Authority ranking	126 out of 192 schools
Latest National ranking	Top 40-50% 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

Friday Big Play

Each Friday the whole school attendance is 96% or above, children will earn an extra 5 minutes of playtime which will culminate in a Big Play on the final Friday of term.

This Friday's attendance was 96.4%!

This is the fourth Friday in a row where attendance has passed 96% which is great news!



[NHS guidance- Is my child too ill for school?](#)

Family Support

This week's Family Information Service [newsletter](#) includes information about:

- Autumn safety guide
- Youth Mental Health Day
- Youth Conference 2026

and much more!



Worried About a Child?

If you have concerns that a child is suffering any form of abuse, neglect or cruelty, contact the Warwickshire Children and Families Family Connect immediately by calling 01926 414144. Lines are open Monday to Thursday 8.30am - 5.30pm, Friday 8.30am-5.00pm.

If you need to get in touch out of usual office hours, please contact the Emergency Duty Team immediately by calling 01926 886922.

If you think that a child is at immediate risk, contact the police immediately by calling 999.



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