



Students observed Remembrance Day on Monday with the whole school community gathering to remember and reflect on the Astro; it was a poignant ceremony with wreath-laying, beautiful singing from Jess A in Year 11, a minute's silence and a speech from the Lord Lieutenant. The cadets played a central role throughout. Thank you to Miss Burke, Sgt. Gresswell and Mr. Hickinbottom for their work in organising this.



Exams continue in Years 11 and 13; students are approaching these with great maturity and personal commitment to succeeding. The hard work that students are putting in now will pay off in the future as they ensure that learning is being transferred into their long-term memories. It is important that this hard work continues. The importance of hard work is something we are looking to instil more and more into our students; you will see our letter later in the eZine about homework and we thank everyone who has helped us in this process. As always, we continue to welcome feedback and you may get in touch through [Gospel Oak School - Contact Us](#). Teaching staff have also received training this week about 'Behaviour for Learning' and ensuring that there is no passivity in classrooms; information will be shared with parents, carers and students, and sanctions will be introduced where students are not working as hard as is needed to bring success in the future.

Personal organisation is a key part of growing up. One area where students must make sure they are on top of this is with their PE kit. Students are expected to get changed quickly, both into their PE kit and back into school uniform. Please make sure that PE kit and school uniform are labelled, and please remind your daughter or son of the importance of looking after their personal belongings.

As always, please use [Gospel Oak School - Contact Us](#) should you need to contact us. We hope you have a lovely weekend.

Upcoming Dates

Friday 22nd November – Teacher Training Day

Tuesday 26th November – Year 12 and Year 13 HSC
Exam Booster Visit to Star
City

Tuesday 26th November – Championship League
Match, Etihad Stadium

Friday 29th November – Flu Vaccination Catch-Up
Session

Assembly Themes

Assembly focus this week was Remembrance Day

w/c 18/11 – Food Bank Appeal

w/c 24/11 – The Law and Knife Crime

Please take the time to talk to your child about what they have learnt in Assembly.

Careers Event

Year 10 boys will have the opportunity to attend an inspiring and motivational careers talk presented by a diverse range of successful local employers on Tuesday 19th November. This session is designed to give students valuable insights into different career paths, provide them with inspiration for their future, and encourage them to continue thinking about their own professional aspirations. This event is part of the school's broader careers program, aimed at equipping students with knowledge, guidance, and skills for their future endeavours.

Sixth Form

On Friday 8th November year 12 and 13 students took part in a drop down day, students participated in workshops on time management, higher education opportunities and degree apprenticeships. During last session students participated in a whole year group quiz – teams were mixed groups and students love the competition between them. It was a real experience and was a way for us to team build as a sixth form.

Well done to the year 12 and 13s that are currently undertaking their Mock exams.

Reminder – To be completing 4 hours of Uplearn, Everlearner and Seneca.

Your Sincerely

Mr Bala
Director of Post 16

Year 12 student of the week – Hasti H
Year 13 student of the week – Kiera JM

Year 12 attendance – 98%
Year 13 attendance – 94.1%

Events –
Deadline for post 16 application forms 20th December
4th December – Trip to KPMG and the German Market

Parent Line

Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust

Behaviour

Bullying

Diet

Toileting

Healthy Lifestyles

General & Physical Health

ChatHealth

If you are a Parent or Carer of a child in Sandwell aged 5-19 and would like some confidential advice and support, from a School Nurse

Text 07312 263756

Sandwell School Health Nursing

M7637



AUTHENTIC
Italian

28th November

Slow Pulled Chicken, Tomato
& Creamy Cheese Spaghetti &
Spinach

Slow Roast Tomato, Olive &
Basil Pesto Spaghetti &
Spinach

Main Meal Only £2.30
or
**Main Meal & Traybake or
Fruit £2.60**



Aspens

AUTHENTIC
Italian

**Check out our
fabulous, Authentic
Italian slow cooked
spaghetti & sauces**

Bellissimo!

28th November



Aspens

Safeguarding and Safety Updates

Free Online Parenting Courses – Family Lives

Being a parent has never been easy. There are no manuals for it, and previous generations may not be able to provide the insight you're looking for. The family unit is more dispersed than ever, with some families existing hundreds of miles from what may be called a 'core unit'. The rapid pace of societal change in the UK rapidly outstrips the knowledge of the immediate past. The result is that many parents may find themselves lost in a maelstrom of contradictory advice. For adults, time has never been more compacted. Family lives has produced a series of online parenting courses, to make this challenging task a little easier. If interested, please follow the link below:

<https://www.familylives.org.uk/how-we-can-help/online-parenting-courses>



Family Lives offers a confidential and free* helpline service for families in England and Wales (previously known as Parentline). They can be contacted on 0808 800 2222 for emotional support, information, advice, and guidance on any aspect of parenting and family life. Their website is also a rich source of useful support and advice. <https://www.familylives.org.uk>

Building Resilience

With increasing societal pressures, many children struggle with managing emotions, facing challenges and processing failure in a healthy way. This is why building emotional resilience in young people is vital for their mental health and personal successes. Please see below strategies that both parents and schools can implement to help children develop resilience and foster confidence, adaptability and a positive mindset.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators
SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO BUILD EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE

With increasing societal pressures, many children struggle with managing emotions, facing challenges and processing failure in a healthy way. This is why building emotional resilience in young people is vital for their mental health and personal success. This guide provides practical strategies for parents and educators to help children develop resilience and foster confidence, adaptability and a positive mindset.

- 1 ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION**
 Regularly engaging children in open dialogue fosters trust and emotional expression. Encourage them to share their thoughts and feelings freely without judgment. Set aside time daily, perhaps during dinner, to ask open-ended questions such as, "What's made you happy today?". This encourages children to express themselves openly.
- 2 MODEL POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR**
 Children often learn how to manage emotions by observing adults. By modelling calm and positive responses to challenges, you can teach them valuable emotional management skills. If you've had a difficult day, verbalise how you're feeling and explain how you plan to handle it, such as "I'm a bit worked-up, so I'm going for a walk to clear my mind."
- 3 TEACH PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS**
 Helping children break down challenges into manageable steps encourages a proactive mindset. Explain that every problem has a solution, even if it's not immediately obvious. For example, if a child is stuck on homework, support them in breaking the task into smaller steps, saying things like "Let's focus on just this first question for now."
- 4 FOSTER A GROWTH MINDSET**
 Encourage young people to view mistakes as learning opportunities. A growth mindset helps them see setbacks as part of the process, rather than something to be upset about. After a child loses a game or performs poorly on a test, for example, ask them what they've learned from the experience. This reinforces the idea that effort – and even failure – leads to improvement.
- 5 PROMOTE SELF-CARE PRACTICES**
 Teaching children about self-care helps them understand the importance of balancing work with relaxation to maintain emotional wellbeing. Parents and carers could start a screen-free hour before bedtime where the family engages in relaxing activities like reading, setting an example to the child for how to unwind.
- 6 BUILD HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS**
 Strong relationships with peers and adults provide a support system that enhances resilience. Encourage positive, respectful interactions to develop social skills. Playdates or group activities can be instrumental in teaching children how to resolve conflicts with friends by modelling and practicing calm communication.
- 7 SUPPORT EMOTIONAL AWARENESS**
 Helping children to identify and name their emotions allows them to manage these feelings more effectively. When a child is upset, encourage them to talk to you about what they're feeling in an empathetic and supportive manner, and ask them why they might be experiencing these emotions.
- 8 ENCOURAGE INDEPENDENCE**
 Giving children opportunities to make their own decisions builds confidence and encourages problem-solving skills. A good example of this would be letting children choose and pack their own lunches for school, guiding them with options but allowing them to assume responsibility for the task to help them take ownership.
- 9 DEVELOP COPING STRATEGIES**
 Teaching children techniques like mindfulness, deep breathing or journaling can help them to manage stress. Show them how to perform breathing exercises when they're feeling anxious, and practise this regularly. Reinforcing this behavior in young people will make it easier for them to use these techniques of their own accord during stressful moments.
- 10 CELEBRATE SMALL WINS**
 Recognising effort, no matter how small, reinforces perseverance and encourages children to keep trying. After a child completes a difficult task, makes progress on a project or reaches another type of personal goal, praise their efforts. Emphasise the hard work they've put in and be sure to let them know how proud you are!



Lewis George

Muay Thai WBC Champion



We are thrilled to share some *incredible* news with you! Gospel Oak School has the unique privilege of welcoming a true champion into our community. A WBC Muay Thai Champion is now part of our school and will be working closely with our students to inspire them in ways we never thought possible.

Our champion guest will be introducing our students to the world of Muay Thai, not just as a sport but as a powerful way to build character and life skills. Through these sessions, students will gain invaluable lessons in **respect, pride, and aspiration**—qualities that are at the heart of both Muay Thai and our school values. This program is a rare opportunity for our students to learn directly from a world-class athlete, and we believe it will have a lasting, positive impact on them.

What Can Students Expect?

Students will participate in sessions designed to encourage discipline, self-respect, and determination. These are essential qualities not just in sports but in all areas of life. Our champion will also be sharing personal stories, challenges, and triumphs, showing students that they too can overcome obstacles and aim for greatness in their own lives. We are truly excited about this initiative and look forward to seeing the positive impact it will have on our school community. Thank you for your continued support, and please join us in welcoming our Muay Thai champion to Gospel Oak!



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Our Ref: SBr.KH.3134

Your Ref:

To: Parents / Carers

15th November 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Emergency Closure

As we are now into the autumn months, I thought that it would be helpful to write regarding our emergency closure procedures in the event that they are required. We are determined to do whatever we can to stay open to staff and students despite any adverse weather conditions or issues with water or power.

Students and parents/carers should be extra careful travelling to and from school and take extra time to travel as pavements and side roads could be potentially hazardous. We have purchased a plentiful supply of salt and grit so we are as well prepared as we can be. However, our site has two separate buildings so students have to walk outside. If it is very snowy, students will need to wear sensible and appropriate footwear with grip and ensure they are warm. They will remain indoors as far as possible for their safety and will be required to walk very carefully along the cleared paths only. As we spread significant grit and salt, snowballing under any circumstances is absolutely not allowed as it is dangerous. I would be grateful if you could communicate this to your son/daughter.

We will endeavour to have done the following by 6.30am on any day we have to close the school:

- Notified the local radio stations: BBC WM 95.6 FM, Free Radio 96.4 FM and Heart FM West Midlands 100.7 FM.
- Placed a message on our social media feeds.
- Sent a text message to all the mobile phone numbers of parents/carers with parental responsibility we currently have in Arbor.
- Sent an email to all the email addresses of parents/carers with parental responsibility we currently have in Arbor.
- Placed the appropriate message on the website-eg
 - Open for all students
 - Open but late start (and instructions will follow)
 - Closed to all students except for those sitting external examinations.
- Notified the local authority: Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council.

The decision to close the school, unless directed by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, is always made in the morning. However, if there is any additional information that I feel would be helpful to share with parents/carers I will update the website at the earliest opportunity.

We will do all we can to stay open. However, there may well be health and safety reasons which would mean we would have to close during the day and send the students home before 3.00pm. I would suggest all parents/carers nominate a place of safety, which may be your home, to which your son/daughter can go if we have to close. We have been reviewing our procedures and are planning to complete the following if we must close during the school day:

- Notify the local radio stations (especially Heart FM West Midlands, BBC West Midlands and Free Radio West Midlands).
- Send a text message to all the mobile phone numbers of parents/carers with parental responsibility we currently have in Arbor.
- Send an email to all the email addresses of parents/carers with parental responsibility we currently have in Arbor.
- Place a message on our website and social media feeds.
- Thirty minutes later we will send the students home. Any students who are unable to make their own way home may remain in school until 3.00pm where they will be supervised.

I hope you appreciate that any decision to close the school is never made lightly. The safety of students, parents/carers and staff will always remain the priority when making decisions.

Yours sincerely,



Mr S Brownlow
Executive Principal



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Our Ref: CM.KH.3141

Your Ref:

To: Parents / Carers

15th November 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Homework 2024-25

Further to our letter sent to all parents and carers on 27th September, I am writing to update you about further developments with our approach to homework. You will be aware that all parents and carers were invited to share their thoughts on our proposals via our consultation form, and homework was also discussed at our Parent and Carer Forum on 6th November; thank you to everyone who has contributed to this process.

Our in-school data is showing us that many more students are completing homework than previously; throughout the whole summer term in the last academic year, 432 achievement points were awarded for homework completion. In the month of October, 1710 achievement points were awarded, representing a percentage increase of nearly 400 per cent. Parents and carers at our Parent and Carer Forum also commented very positively on the increase in the amount of homework being set, and there was a lot of very useful feedback about the online platforms that we are using.

Following the consultation, I have taken the following decisions:

- Sanctions will be introduced for Year 11 students who do not complete homework from 25th November; a Year 11 student who does not complete their homework will receive a B2, which represents a 30-minute same day detention. The introduction of sanctions from this date was supported by 79% of respondents to our consultation.
- Sanctions will be introduced for Year 7-10 students who do not complete homework from 13th January; a Year 7-10 student who does not complete their homework will receive a B2, which represents a 30-minute same day detention. The introduction of sanctions from this date was supported by 80% of respondents to our consultation.

The initial proposal was for students to be given 'one warning' – in other words, they could miss one homework per subject – before the introduction of sanctions; however, as there has been a significant build-up to this point there will be an immediate issuing of a B2 on non-completion. Homework has a positive impact on student progress; in order for our students to make the most of their abilities, they need to be working hard both in school and at home.

Please note the following:

- All students are welcome to stay at school each day until 4pm in order to complete their homework in the LRC should they wish to do so; this will support where students may wish to stay in a quiet environment with computer access.
- A dedicated space is available in the LRC at lunchtimes for Year 11 students who wish to complete their homework during the school day; this will also support those parents and carers who explained that they felt that students spent enough time working at school during the day and should have the facility to do homework in school time.
- Year 11 students are able to use the Sixth Form Silent Study area after school until 4pm each day should they wish to use this space for homework.
- Whilst different subjects will require students to use specific online platforms for homework, students continue to have access to these platforms for all available subjects; if one student prefers a particular platform, they may also access this to support with their revision and independent learning.
- Some written homework will be set as relevant to support teaching and learning; parents and carers may wish to support their daughter or son in combining both written and online learning to continue to facilitate future preparation for assessments.
- If you require an electronic device at home to support your daughter or son with their homework, please get in touch via [Gospel Oak School - Contact Us](#) and we will provide support.

If you have any further queries or observations, please do not hesitate to contact us via [Gospel Oak School - Contact Us](#). As always, thank you for your ongoing support as we work to ensure that your daughter or son is able to achieve the very best academic results.

Yours faithfully,



Miss C Middlehurst
Senior Vice Principal