



REMINDER – Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November is a Teacher Training Day and school is closed to students.

*The weather certainly surprised us with far more snow than expected, and we were delighted that we were able to ensure the site was safe for students and staff so that learning could continue. A huge thank you to the students – and to parents and carers for your support with this - who have been so sensible with the relaxation of footwear rules to make walking to and from school a little easier. Some adjustments were made to the Year 11 mock exams, too, to take account of the very cold weather with students able to wear coats and a change of venue on a particularly cold morning.*

*A reminder that students should ensure that their PE kit and school uniform are labelled to support processes in the changing rooms; PE staff will continue to remind students about that.*

*Please remember that sanctions will begin for Year 11 students on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> November if any homework is not completed; students have had this explained to them and we know that they understand the importance of homework to support their learning. Please do keep encouraging your daughter and/or son – in all year groups – to complete their homework. Please check their planners to see that this has been recorded; if there are questions about homework, please use the [Gospel Oak School - Contact Us](#) system to keep us updated and we will respond to you.*

*We hope you have a good weekend; a further reminder that school is closed to all students on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November. We look forward to seeing your daughter and/or son back in school – hopefully without snow! – on Monday morning as normal.*

#### Upcoming Dates

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

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November – Championship League Match, Etihad Stadium

Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November – Flu Vaccination Catch-Up Session

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December – Futbol Lingo

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December – Post 16 Christmas Market Visit

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December – Year 8 and Year 10 Ogden Trust & CRST Partnership Launch Visit

#### Assembly Themes

Assembly focus this week was the Food Bank Appeal

w/c 25/11 – The Law and Knife Crime

w/c 02/12 – Homophobia and Discrimination

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

#### Hot Water Bottles

Please can we request that there are no hot water bottles brought into school as there is a Health & Safety risk with them bursting and containing hot water

### Sixth Form

Students in Year 12 and 13 have been working hard to complete their mock exams over the past few weeks – well done to you all for your hard work.

Students that have 100% attendance each week will be entered into a prize draw to win a £20 voucher – Well done to Brooke and Sristi for winning last week.

We have been busy planning a reward trip to the Trafford Centre for all year 12 and 13 students – in this time students will be able to go shopping or participate in activities at the centre.

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 – Kaniska K

Year 13 student of the week – Beth J

Year 12 attendance - 96.1 %

Year 13 attendance - 97.2 %

Events –

Deadline for post 16 application forms 20th December

Year 12 Work experience deadline 12 the December

4<sup>th</sup> December – Trip to KPMG and the German Market

18<sup>th</sup> December – Reward trip to Trafford centre

2.12.24 – 16.2.14 - Charity weeks

### Food Voucher Scheme – Students in Receipt of Free School Meals

It has been confirmed by Sandwell Council that there will be food vouchers to the value of £60 to be given to parents and carers of students eligible for Free School Meals to cover the October half-term holiday, Christmas holiday and February half-term; the government only announced this information recently and with not enough time for Sandwell Council to make arrangements for this to be provided for October half-term. Sandwell Council have decided that £60 will be provided all at the same time – for the Christmas holiday – so that this financial help is provided at one of the most financially challenging times of the year. We will update you on arrangements for the provision of vouchers to relevant parents and carers nearer the time. **Please note that voucher amounts may vary for other schools depending on the length of their school holidays; this does even itself out over the course of the school year.**



**WATER SAFETY**  
BLACK COUNTRY PROGRAMME

## Come and join our family sessions!





**Sandwell Aquatic Centre**  
**Friday 22nd November at 4-4.30pm & 4.30-5pm**  
**Friday 6th December at 4-4.30pm & 4.30-5pm**

For ALL ages  
Children must be accompanied by an adult in the water

To book these **FREE** water safety sessions please contact Water Safety Coordinator:  
[emma.beddowes@activeblackcountry.co.uk](mailto:emma.beddowes@activeblackcountry.co.uk)



Active Black Country



## YOU ARE INVITED TO **SANDWELL KNIFE ANGEL CLOSING CEREMONY**

Date: Thursday 28 November 2024  
Time: 4pm  
Location: Oldbury Civic Square, Sandwell

#KnifeAngelSandwell

**NOVEMBER  
2024**



**Winter Funland**

Could you please complete your son / daughters Winter Funland consent forms if you wish for them to attend Winter Funland at Birmingham NEC on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

Payment to attend our Year 7 & 8 Trip can be paid either by School Gateway or Cash to our Reception. If you are making payment by cash, then please ensure that this is in a sealed envelope with your son/daughters name and tutor group.

**Year 7 & 8 Team**

Please complete the below link for your child to receive their vaccine:-

<https://midlands.schoolvaccination.uk/flu/2024/sandwell>



Vaccination UK will be coming into Gospel Oak School on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2024 to administer the flu vaccine for a catchup session. Should you wish for your child to receive his / her vaccine then please complete the above link by midnight on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024. Please ensure that your son / daughter has no allergies to the vaccine and should you have any queries then please contact Vaccination UK on 0121 592 1110.

**Gospel Oak School**

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To: Parents/Carers

21<sup>st</sup> November 2024

**Our Ref:** SBO.KH.3143

Dear Parent/Carer,

**Re: Reasons for Absence**

I am writing to share some positive updates about our school community. Over the past few months, we have seen a noticeable improvement in both attendance and the overall culture here at Gospel Oak School. Our students are not only achieving better academically, but they are also developing a strong sense of belonging and pride in their school. This is a credit to the hard work of both our staff and students, as well as the support we receive from you, our dedicated parents/carers.

The Government have kindly put together a document which outlines guidance around when students should and shouldn't have a day off - please see [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk) Whilst the Government understand that you want the best for your son/daughter, they are encouraging you to consider whether it might be better for your son/daughter to attend school, even when feeling slightly unwell - please see [How to improve your child's school attendance and where to get support – The Education Hub \(blog.gov.uk\)](https://blog.gov.uk)

There are several situations where the Government explain that students should still attend school, even if they are not feeling their best. Some examples include:

- Mild cold symptoms (e.g., a runny nose or slight cough) without a fever or significant discomfort.
- Minor headaches or mild tiredness that does not impact their ability to learn or participate.
- Slight stomach discomfort that does not involve vomiting or diarrhoea.
- Low-grade sore throat that can be managed with fluids and rest.
- Allergy symptoms (e.g., hay fever) that do not affect their ability to concentrate.

In these cases, attending school ensures that students do not miss out on valuable learning time and can continue to engage with their peers and lessons.

We believe that by keeping school attendance high, we can continue to foster a thriving, engaged and supportive school environment for all our students. As always, if you have any concerns or questions about your son's/daughter's health or attendance, please do not hesitate to contact the appropriate year team.

Thank you for your continued support in helping our students succeed and feel at home here at Gospel Oak School.

Kind regards,



**Miss S Bott**  
**Senior Vice Principal**



To: Parents/Carers

**Gospel Oak School**

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21<sup>st</sup> November 2024

**Our Ref:** RQ.KH.3145

**Your Ref:**

Dear Parent/Carer,

**Re: Sparx Reader**

We are excited to announce the re-launch of SPARX reader, which is designed to support your son's/daughter's reading abilities. This programme aims to provide a structured reading routine which builds confident readers through regular reading practice.

SPARX reading homework is set weekly throughout KS3, in which students need to read a text specifically selected for them and answer key questions to assess their understanding. Readers will be rewarded with points by their teachers for completing their SPARX reading homework. Each half term the top reader in each class will be awarded 50 points, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> will be given 25 points.

Research has shown that live feedback helps students to feel more supported and motivated, as they receive guidance exactly when it is needed. This can lead to improved academic performance and increased confidence in their abilities. In addition, regular reading expands your vocabulary, strengthens writing ability and also helps to reduce stress. This can lead to improved academic performance and increased confidence in their abilities.

We encourage you to speak with your son/daughter about SPARX reader, discussing the importance of reading and the benefits it has.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us via [Gospel Oak School - Contact Us](#). We look forward to working with you to make SPARX reader successful for every student at Gospel Oak.

Yours sincerely,

**Mrs R Lane**  
**Senior Lead Practitioner**



To: Parents/Carers

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20<sup>th</sup> November 2024

**Our Ref:** WJO/RQU/003

Dear Parents/Carers,

**Re: Ethics September 2025**

We are excited to share some news regarding a change to our key stage 4 curriculum from September 2025. We are adding 'ethics' as a fortnightly lesson to the curriculum for all students in Years 10 and 11. Religious studies will remain as a standalone subject that students can select as part of the Year 9 options process.

Ethics will provide students with enriching experiences that fosters critical thinking, empathy and a deeper understanding of the world around us. The study of different views, beliefs and perspectives, fosters an open-mindedness and the ability to engage thoughtfully in discussions about complex ethical and moral issues.

We are confident that the introduction of ethics for all students will be a significant and beneficial addition to your son's/daughter's academic journey at Gospel Oak School.

Should you have any questions or wish to discuss this exciting development further contact us via [Gospel Oak School - Contact Us](#).

Warm regards,

**Warren Jones**

**Assistant Director of Learning Standards – Religious Education**