HEADTEACHER'S NEWSLETTER



Number 1: Thursday 5 November 2026

A word from Mrs Toner and Mr Barfield





Welcome back! We hope you all had a restful and enjoyable half-term break. We have an exciting and busy few weeks ahead as we begin preparing for Advent and Christmas, one of the most special and joyful times of the year in our school community.
We know that this season can be a busy one for families too, with lots of events and celebrations taking place both at home and at school.

To help you keep track of everything, we are creating an 'Advent on a Page' flyer, bringing together all the key dates and activities in one place. Pop it on your fridge and you'll have everything you need at a glance as we journey through this wonderful season together.

Staffing news and updates

As you know, Mrs Newson, our office manager, leaves us at the end of this week. I am sure you will join me in expressing our grateful thanks to her for all she has brought to the GSA community over the past three years – in particular the work she has done to strengthen and streamline our communication with you and the wider community. We wish her every success in her future endeavours. Following interviews before half term we have successfully appointed Sapphira Blackwood to the position of Office Manager and we look forward to welcoming her to the team in a few weeks' time.

And last but not least, the final Good Shepherd baby for this year was born before half term - Miss Ryan had her baby boy, Caleb, and they're both doing well after his surprise early arrival.

Advent Mass – Sunday 29 November – please sign up!

To begin the season of Advent, we will celebrate Mass with our parish community on Sunday 29 November. This is always a beautiful celebration, and we love to see so many children taking responsibility for different parts of the liturgy. Over the coming weeks, the whole school, from Reception to Year 6, will be busy learning our Advent hymns to sing as part of the Mass. This will also be the enrolment mass for First Holy Communion Children.

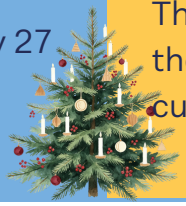
If you would like your child(ren) to take part in the Mass, please let us know via this online form by Tuesday 10 November so that we can ensure roles are allocated to children in good time. Children taking part should attend in full school uniform and arrive at church by 9.30am so that they are seated before Mass begins at 9.45am. The front pews will be reserved for them.

Parish Christmas Fair: Saturday 28 November – 10.30am – 2.30pm

The Parish Christmas Fair is a wonderful social event and a great opportunity for the school and parish to work together to raise vital funds for the upkeep of our church.

On Monday, your child came home with some raffle tickets today for you to sell to friends and family. Please return stubs and money to school.

Also, don't forget it is non-uniform on Friday 27 November in exchange for a bottle for the bottle stall which is run by the school PTA.



Good Shepherd Open Mornings

We are excited to open school to prospective parents on 17 and 19 November. If you know of anyone who is seeking a Reception school place for their child in September 2027 and they are considering The Good Shepherd, please ask them to contact the school office to book an appointment by calling 0115 926 2983.

These are primarily for people who are new to the school and there is no expectation for current parents to book on unless they want to.



Remembrance – 11 November 10.30am

You are all warmly invited to attend a special Remembrance Liturgy, led by our Year 6 pupils, on Wednesday 11 November at 10.30am.

This is an opportunity for us to come together to remember all those who have lost their lives in past conflicts and to pray for those around the world who continue to be affected by war. We will also have a special Remembrance Prayer Station, where you are invited to write the names of any loved ones who have died and whom you would like us to remember in our prayers during the month of November.



Anti-bullying Week and Odd Socks Day

Monday 16 November marks the beginning of Anti-Bullying Week.
The theme for this year is 'Break the Silence' and we encourage all children to come to school wearing odd socks on Monday 16 November in support of this. Throughout the week we will be empowering the children to safely speak up and raise awareness if they see bullying, either face to face or online.

We will also be talking to children about what bullying is and what they should do if they or someone they know is being bullied. A couple of years ago, the school council wrote a child friendly anti-bullying policy which is linked here. Please do talk to your child/ren about this and also reiterate the importance of speaking out if they see bullying of any kind.

Advent Giving – supporting Emmanuel House and Arnold Food Bank

As part of our mission to give to others during Advent, last year we supported young people in care across Nottinghamshire by asking our families to donate selection boxes which were then given as Christmas gifts to those young people.

This year, we have chosen to support Emmanuel House, helping to provide essential provisions for people experiencing homelessness in Nottingham. In addition, we will be supporting our local foodbank by collecting essential items for families who may need extra support over the festive period. Each class will have its own 'Reverse Advent Calendar', linked to the Travelling Nativity, which will be sent to a different home each day during Advent. Please look out for further information over the coming weeks about how you can support our Advent outreach projects.

Contact us at office@goodshepherd.notts.sch.uk