



Thought for the Week

This weekend, my daughter and I visited our local library to take part in their Harry Potter Book Night event. It was absolutely amazing! There was lots to do and lots to see – my particular favourite was the map of Lincolnshire that highlighted all the routes on the Lincolnshire libraries Floo network. We were taken to Hogwarts by Professor McGonagall, sorted and given the chance to take part in a Defence Against the Dark Arts lesson.

As I watched all the excited children sitting on a rickety wooden stool, nervously waiting for the Sorting Hat to place them in their Hogwarts House, it made me think about the weight of expectation. In *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, the first ever conversation between Harry and Ron is on this exact topic: Harry is nervous that he will never live up to the expectations of a wizard who has defeated He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named when only a child and Ron worries that he will never be as clever, brave and successful as his older brothers.

We see this time and again in the Bible too; in the book of Genesis, the expectations God has of the first humans is clear and they fail to live up to them (Genesis 3). Jonah is so troubled by the expectations God has of him that he literally turns around and runs in the opposite direction (Jonah 1.3). Mary has some inkling of what God expects of her son, and she dwells deeply on what these expectations might mean for her son's future and for her own (Luke 2.19). To be honest, it would be easy to see God as one who places too heavy a burden of expectation on those he loves.

But what if we were to look at it another way? God looks at Adam and Eve, at Jonah, at Mary and can see all their possible futures. As a loving Father, he wants them to flourish, to be all that they possibly could be. This is not a conditional love: he sees them and loves them exactly as they are, but he also stays alongside them to help them grow into all they could be. In the same way, it is through the wisdom, challenge and, above all, constancy of Harry and Ron's teachers, family and friends that they grow to defeat the greatest evil the wizarding world has ever known.

We know you have high expectations of yourselves and of the pupils in your schools; we are here to be alongside you as you support others to grow into all they could be. But more than anything else, when the weight of expectations might start to feel just a little too heavy, we just wanted to remind you that you are completely amazing just exactly as you are.

Gillian Georgiou – RE & SIAMS Advisor

Important Updates and Messages

SIAMS 2023 National Update Briefing

Please see below for registration for the SIAMS 2023 National Update Briefing on 3rd November 2022 -

Thursday 3 November 6-7.30pm	SIAMS 2023 – National Update	Register here
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Celebrating 10 Years

Culham St Gabriel's is celebrating its 10th anniversary, and to celebrate they are



CULHAM ST GABRIEL'S

launching 10 special grant awards of £1000 each. Applications have now opened; they are looking to support 10 small innovative projects or initiatives that will make a difference! Closing date: 22nd September:

<https://www.cstg.org.uk/grants/celebrating-10-years/>