



St Mark's C of E Junior School

Growing together, becoming all we are created to be

Weekly Newsletter - Friday 21st March 2025

www.stmarksjunior.com

All enquires: admin@st-marks.gloucs.sch.uk

Our Value in focus this term is: JUSTICE

Headteacher's Message:

What a fantastic end to the week, raising money for Comic Relief! You will see from the photos that lots of children wore their own home clothes for the day and there were some brilliant hair styles too! Thank you for all of your generous donations. So far we have raised an **incredible £275**. There is still time to donate on Parent Pay if you haven't had a chance to already.

In class, the children have also explored the difference that funds raised today makes to the lives of children and families. Comic Relief supports incredible projects and organisations who are making a difference for people across the UK and around the world. The money raised will help support people struggling with the cost-of-living crisis and tackle issues such as homelessness, mental health problems, and food poverty here in the UK and around the world.

Today, we have seen our value of Justice in action, as we reach out to those who need help.

Have a super weekend, Mrs A Fitch and the Staff Team



Learning Highlight of the Week

Class 1: Class 1 have been working on ball control skills, with particular focus on dribbling the ball with their feet.

Class 2: In English, class 2 are studying *A Seed is Sleepy*. Inspired by this book the children have been planting seeds and will be having a Sunflower growing competition in order to learn how plants grow.

Class 3: English was also a highlight for Class 3. They enjoyed finishing off their Newspaper article on Boudicca.

Class 4: To link with their topic Italy, in Outdoor Learning, the children built models of earthquake resistant buildings as well as making pizza.

Class 5: Class 5 have enjoyed starting their English unit on the poem *The Highwayman*.

Class 6: In Science, the children were learning about the orbit of Planets around the Sun.

Class 7: Class 7 tested air resistance by seeing if the wing span length of a paper aeroplane made a difference to how far it flew. They presented their data in a graph.

Class 8: Class 8 have been creating Banksy inspired artwork using portrait stencils.



PTA—We Need You!

Our school community needs your help. As you know many of the current PTA team are coming to the end of their tenure and we really need new members to ensure that this valuable support for the school continues. We are looking for a new **Chair** and a new **Treasurer** for our PTA. The PTA are a crucial part of our school community who host fabulous events for the children (and adults!) to enjoy, whilst raising vital funds for the school.

Here is what our Year 6 children have to say about how vital the work of the PTA is, and what would be missed if we cannot recruit a new team.

'The PTA organise lots of school events to raise money for us! If it wasn't for the PTA we wouldn't have a Summer Fair, leavers hoodies, movie night, bake sales, ice lollies on hot days, school discos, iPads, First Aid training, leavers books and books for our library.'

'Without you, our school years wouldn't be as memorable. We need someone not just for me or you, but for all of St Mark's children.'

'Pretty much everything they do is for us and that's why the PTA is so important.'

'School discos are absolutely necessary to have 3 times a year and the sweets, glow sticks and tattoos are epic'.

'The Year 6 raise money with the help of the PTA at the Christmas Fair, so that we can afford the leavers hoodies. The PTA contribute to the leavers books. I am so glad the PTA are here to fund all of the fun things we do at school.'

'I am extremely grateful for all the gifts you give us.'

If you are interested in finding out more, please do not hesitate to contact us at school or get in touch with Liv and Sarah through the St Mark's PTA Facebook page. Thank you!



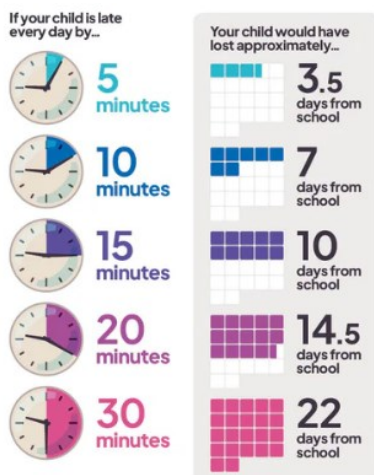
I would once again like to take this opportunity to thank the team for all of the work they do and for providing the school with additional resources, facilities and opportunities for the children - it really does make a difference.

School Punctuality

Please be reminded that children should arrive in the school classroom between 8:35am and 8:50am. Lessons start promptly at 8:50am and so any child arriving after this time will miss valuable learning time.

Should your child arrive late please can they enter the building via Reception and report to the school office as a late arrival. **They will need to give their name, class and a good reason for their lateness.**

Did you know that in one school year...



**MOMENTS
MATTER,
ATTENDANCE
COUNTS.**

Save Our Environment

Thea, Nicole and Abi in Year 6 have been busy thinking about ways we can improve our school environment. Please share the below message with your children.

Save Our Environment

Litter is being found all around the school.

A lot of this will never break down and biodegrade.

It also endangers our wildlife!



Help by litter picking around the school at break and lunch.

Every Wednesday lunch time meet us under the willow tree then we will litter pick around the school.

If you have any questions, ask Mrs Hicks.

Hockey

We have had not one but two Hockey events this week! On Wednesday the children went to Cheltenham College to take part in the Mixed Hockey Schools Festival. The children did fantastically considering this was only the second (1st game for Isaac!) time playing matches!

We won 2 games, lost 2 and drew 1.

1st match - Leckhampton Lions - won 2-0

2nd match - Leckhampton Eagles - lost 0-2

3rd match - Swindon Village - lost 0-1

4th match - Leckhampton Hawks - won 1-0

5th match (5/6 place decider) Leckhampton Jaguars - 0-0

We finished 3rd in our group stage and 5th overall due to our goal difference. All seven players played brilliantly, working together as a team, encouraging and supporting each other. They showed amazing team spirit and it was an absolute delight to take them - they did St Mark's proud!



On Thursday the children then competed in the Quicksticks Hockey Tournament at Pates Grammar School in which they played just as brilliantly. Well done to all our players this week.

Thanks again to our St Mark's parents for their continued support and helping to transport the children to all these sporting events!

Football

On Wednesday the boys' Football team played in a home match against Swindon Village. **They secured a comfortable 12—3 win.** 😄

As always we were blown away by their ability and sportsmanship.

Well done to the whole team, we are really proud of you.



Teaching & Learning Owls

Stars - Maddie & William

Gold - James

Congratulations to our owl badge winners!



Class 1 Helpers

Class 1 are looking for extra volunteers to help with the below events.

- 1st April 9am - Walk around the locality - focus on land use (*1 extra helper needed*)
- 4th April 9am - Walk around the locality - focus on surveys
- 10th April - cookery session

Walks will be roughly 1.5 hours. Cookery will be from 9am - 12. Any help, any time, would be appreciated.

Please contact clerical@st-marks.gloucs.sch.uk and let Mrs Anderson know so she can keep track for us.

London Moon Walk

Miss Thom and Mrs Hopkinson are taking part in the **London Moon Walk on Saturday 17th May.**

It is a huge charity event raising funds for Breast Cancer.

If you would like to make a donation you can access their fundraising page by clicking [here](#). Any donations would be most welcome.

From all of us at St Mark's we'd like to wish Miss Thom and Mrs Hopkinson the very best of luck with the event!



Charity Event and London Marathon

Mrs Mobley, who has worked at St Mark's for many years, is running the **London Marathon on the 27th April.** She is also organising a clothes sale on **Sat 5th April 1-3.30pm** at **United Reformed Church, Salisbury Avenue, Warden Hill** to help raise money for **Alzheimer's Research UK.** To find out more and support Mrs Mobley with her fundraising please click [here](#). Good luck for the London Marathon, we are all very impressed!



Schools Circuit Racing

Children from St Mark's represented our school in cycle racing at Evesham Velopark back in February. In association with the British Schools Cycling Association, Cycle Stars are hosting another event on the **13th April.**

All children who compete will receive a certificate and the podium children win a medal, but most importantly the children are racing for the honour of their school and the winning school will be awarded with a trophy.

More information can be found on the event page:

<https://www.cyclestars.co.uk/bsca-school-racing>

Alternatively contact Steve at Cycle Stars:

cyclestars001@gmail.com

07825 250632

www.cyclestars.co.uk



Photography Competition Gallery

We have added this years photography competition entries onto the website so that you can have a look at all of the children's fantastic entries. They are under the News and Events as well as on the Art Gallery page. Alternatively please click on one of the links below.

www.stmarksjunior.com/photography-competition-2025

<https://padlet.com/sedmondson9/st-mark-s-c-of-e-junior-school-art-gallery->



Extra Curricular Clubs - SPRING TERM 2

Monday

Boys Football Y5-6	Lunchtime
Baking Buddies Y3-6	3.10pm - 4.30pm
Gardening Y3-6	3.10pm - 4.00pm
Gym Club Y3-6	3.10pm - 4.00pm
Chinese Language Y3-6	3.15pm - 4.15pm
Hockey Y5-6	3.10pm - 4.00pm
Netball Y5- 6	3.10pm - 4.15pm
Rugby Y5-6	3.10pm - 4.00pm
Recorders Y3-6	Lunchtime

Tuesday

Orchestra Y3-6	3.10pm - 4.00pm
Tennis Y4-6	3.15pm - 4.15pm

Wednesday

Baking Buddies Y3-6	3.10pm - 4.30pm
Cyclestars Y3-6	3.15pm - 4.15pm
French Club Y3-6	3.10pm - 4.15pm

Thursday

Girls Football Y4-6	Lunchtime
Coding Club Y5-6	3.10pm - 4.00pm
Choir Y3-6	3.10pm - 4.00pm
Outdoor Learning Y5-6	3.15pm - 4.15pm



Letters Sent Home

- Cheltenham Jazz Festival Year 5 Trip
- Spring/Summer Menu



School Term Dates

2024-25

- Term 3: Mon 6th Jan - Fri 14th Feb 2025
- Term 4: Mon 24th Feb – Fri 11th Apr 2025
- Term 5: Mon 28th April – Fri 23rd May 2025
- Term 6: Tue 3rd June – Fri 18th July 2025

Inset Days: 2nd June, 21st July



Outdoor Learning - Spring Term 2

- Class 3: Thursday Afternoon**
- Class 4: Thursday Morning**

Please ensure your child wears suitable outdoor learning clothes to school and brings wellies and a warm waterproof coat every Thursday

Please note: all children must wear long trousers for safety reasons.



2024 - 25



March

- Tue 25th - 2nd Charity Fair after school
- Thu 27th - Class 8 Thursday Parents' Evening
- Mon 31st - Pioneer Year 6 Residential

April

- Tue 1st - Pioneer Year 6 Residential
- Wed 2nd - Pioneer Year 6 Residential
- Mon 7th - Book Look Class 7
- Tue 8th - Easter Service 9.45am
- Tue 8th - Book Look Year 4
- Wed 9th - PTA Bake Sale
- Thu 10th - Book Look Year 3, 5 & Class 8
- Thu 10th - PTA Discos
- Thu 10th - Year 4 Roman Experience Trip
- Fri 11th - End of Term 4
- Mon 28th - Start of Summer Term

May

- Mon 12th - Rags Collection
- Mon 12th - 14th - SATs Week
- Tue 20th - School Beat Session
- Tue 20th - Swimming Gala
- Wed 21st - GWR Trip Year 6
- Wed 21st - Spring Fayre
- Thu 22nd - Book Look
- Fri 23rd - End of Term 5

Advance Notice of a Few Dates

- Tue 10th June - Sports Day

PE - Spring Term 2

Children should come to school in their PE kit on PE days.



- Class 1: Monday and Thursday**
- Class 2: Wednesday and Friday**
- Class 3: Wednesday**
- Class 4: Friday**
- Class 5: Tuesday and Thursday for non-swimmers**
- Class 6: Tuesday and Thursday for non-swimmers**
- Class 7: Tuesday and Friday for non-swimmers**
- Class 8: Tuesday and Friday for non-swimmers**

Remember: tracksuit tops should be plain navy only. A school sweatshirt is absolutely fine.

Holiday Free School Meal (FSM) Voucher Scheme

We would like to make you aware of the holiday Free School Meal (FSM) voucher scheme that Gloucestershire County Council is currently offering to families in Gloucestershire.

This Spring (Easter), Gloucestershire County Council will provide families in receipt of Free School Meals, who sign up to this offer, with vouchers to assist with food costs during the school holidays. The vouchers are funded through grant funding they have received, and they are separate to that of term time free school meals.

The scheme is for children in reception to year 11 who receive Pupil Premium (benefits-related) **free school meals** and attend a school in Gloucestershire.

Families who have signed up to the scheme or who are already registered will receive a total of **£15 per child**. **Families who have signed up previously do not need to re-register for Spring (Easter) 2025 holiday vouchers - they will already have been included.** Families that have previously signed up will need to contact GCC with any changes to their circumstances (e.g. if the number of children eligible increases or decreases). To ensure they reach all those who are eligible, they are encouraging parents that have not previously signed up, to sign up as soon as they can.

To find out more about the scheme and to apply, please visit [FAQs | Gloucestershire County Council](#)

Please note Gloucestershire County Council do check eligibility for the scheme by cross-referencing with the term-time free school meal register, so please make sure you are registered beforehand. You can register by visiting the [apply for free school meals](#).

Applications for holiday FSM vouchers for the Spring (Easter) Holidays 2025 will be open from midday 18th March until midday on 1st April. Voucher emails will be sent from week commencing 7th April. Please check your junk/spam folders during this period as sometimes the vouchers end up there. If you have not received your vouchers by 14th April, please submit a query via the Microsoft Form [HERE](#).

Using vouchers

Vouchers need to be used and will only be awarded once the parent has registered for the scheme and cannot be backdated. Vouchers are valid for 6 months, although should be used in the holiday period in which they are awarded. If vouchers are not claimed and have expired, they cannot be re-issued.

For anyone wishing to update details of an existing application, please submit an update existing details request via the Microsoft Form [HERE](#) so your account can be updated, as details are not automatically updated.

