



St Mark's C of E Junior School

Growing together, becoming all we are created to be

Weekly Newsletter - Friday 4th July 2025

www.stmarksjunior.com

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

Our Value in focus this term is: **TRUTHFULNESS**

Headteacher's Message:

Another busy week of school life; a slightly quieter one with many of the Year 6s out, spending time in their new Secondary Schools. We've really missed them and can't wait to make the most of our last 2 weeks with everyone back together. That said, we put the remaining Year 6s to good work this week which included them leading a sports afternoon for the Year 2s, who were also spending time in their new school, here at St Mark's. Glowing reports from Benhall staff and the Year 2s had a fantastic time!

With initial concerns about our Willow Tree over the last couple of weeks, a member of the school community (who has asked to remain anonymous) wrote this beautiful poem as a way of expressing the tree's significance.

Illustration by Mrs Edmondson. I wanted to share it with you all — what a gift. **Have a super weekend, Mrs A Fitch**



The Willow Tree

The willow stands where youthful hearts have played,
As ages passed, new generations came,
Its branches bow to those who seek its shade,
Its wisdom deepens, sacred in its name.
The school that grows beneath the willow's boughs
Is built on truths from those who taught before.
Their roots grow strong as time itself allows;
Both school and child grow stronger evermore.
Around the ancient trunk they knelt in tears,
And tied bright ribbons, tokens of their care,
To mark the ones we've lost throughout the years,
Whose souls live on within the bark they share.
The school's true strength lies in its constancy,
The symbol at its heart: the Willow Tree.

School bags from September

You may be aware that children in three out of our four year groups use lockers rather than pegs for coats / bags. These lockers are now looking extremely tired and take up a huge amount of space which is in high demand for small group work. Therefore, the lockers will be replaced with pegs over the summer holidays.

From September, we are asking that children use **draw-string bags only**. We do not want to add to extra cost but if new bags are being purchased, please opt for **draw-string bags rather than backpacks** to ensure the space can be used for children's learning rather than unnecessary clutter! Children only need to bring a water bottle, a healthy snack and a packed lunch if not having hot dinners. We provide everything else in school. Pencil cases are optional, not necessary. Thank you for your understanding and support.

School Uniform

In readiness for September we would like to share our School Uniform list with you. We have also attached the School Uniform Policy with this newsletter.

School Uniform List

- Grey trousers, of appropriate style (no combat style or 'skin-tight' trousers / jeggings trousers)
- Tailored grey shorts / skorts, skirt or pinafore dress, straight or pleated, of appropriate length
- White polo t-shirt (with school logo if possible)
- A logo embroidered navy-blue round-neck jumper or cardigan
- White, black or grey socks
- Traditional black shoes or smart, completely black trainer style shoes
- Navy blue striped or gingham dress – optional (Summer term only or in particularly hot weather during Spring term)
- We require all children to wear sensible, smart, black shoes. Smart trainers are permitted if they are completely black.



Please note: although we cannot insist that all children wear a logoed jumper / cardigan all of the time, the hope will be that children will wear logoed school uniform for most of the time.

All logoed uniform can be purchased from www.monkhouse.com and by searching for the school's name.



P.E Kits

- Plain coloured round-necked t- shirt (logo if possible) to match your child's house team colour.
- Plain navy or black shorts
- Plain navy tracksuit (for colder weather) or school uniform jumpers / cardigans
- Trainers

Please do not provide branded sports hoodies

Plain navy tops or the school jumpers / cardigans should be worn, only.

Please ensure that all clothing has your child's name written on it. Thank you!

Parent Online Safety booklet

As part of our online safety focus, please see link below to the updated Parent Online Safety booklet, produced by Knowsley CLCs, which includes an overview of key parental controls. We hope you find this booklet valuable as we all play a crucial role in guiding children by setting boundaries, using parental controls, and having conversations about online safety.



This guide will help you set up parental controls and adjust privacy settings to provide your child with a safer online environment. It covers different Social Media platforms, Search Engines, Game Consoles, Streaming and Operating Systems. <https://www.knowsleyclcs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Parental-Controls-booklet-2025.pdf>

Learning Highlight of the Week

Class 1 & 2: Year 3 enjoyed an afternoon of sport with Year 2 Children from Benhall who will be joining St Mark's in September.

Class 3: In English, the children have been learning to write play scripts in preparation for writing their own TV Advert next week.

Class 4: Class 4 have been making their Pavilions this week, highlighting the importance of protecting our Oceans.

Class 5: In Geography, the children have been carrying out research on the Amazon Rainforest. They created a PowerPoint with their findings.

Class 6: Class 6 have two highlights this week. In PE, the enjoyed playing 'Five Bats', which is a Rounders/Cricket crossover game. In Outdoor Learning they made headdresses and pancakes! They also enjoyed flower pressing.

Class 7 & 8: It has been very quiet in Year 6 this week, with lots of children attending their Secondary School Transitions. The rest of the children have been busy making Anderson shelters out of corrugated card.

Teaching & Learning Owls

Star - Samuel & Sam

Gold - Iestyn, Edward

Silver - Freddie, Elena, Mya

Bronze - Tanaka

Congratulations to our badge winners!



Talent Show

As the talent show draws near St Mark's has been buzzing with excitement. The children have been practising in their free time at school and I'm sure lots of hard work has been going on at home too!



Auditions will take place next week. Unfortunately parents are not invited to the auditions as we recognise that, for many children, standing in front of peers will take a lot of courage. It might be too much for some to have parents present as well.

Parents of children who get through to the final of the Talent Show will be invited on for 15th July at 1.30pm.

Should your child need to send in any music to school, this can be emailed to clerical@st-marks.gloucs.sch.uk.

We can't wait to see the children perform and celebrate the talents of the St Mark's Children.

Reading Award

Oliver in Year 5 has successfully completed the Year 5 Reading list. Congratulations to Oliver! You have always shown great enthusiasm for reading, having completed the reading list **every year** since starting at St Mark's.

What an amazing achievement!



Parent Pay

As we approach the end of the academic year, please can we ask that you check your child's Parent Pay account to ensure that they remain in credit. Any outstanding arrears should be cleared as soon as possible. Thank you!



Summer Holiday Birthdays

If your child has a birthday in the school holidays they are welcome to wear their own clothes for one day in the last week of term.



PTA Reminder

The PTA AGM is taking place in School next **Friday 11th July at 15:10**



Reading Books

We will be starting to collect in all school reading books next week. **Please can your child return any reading books to school.** This includes library, class library and school schemed reading books.



The Library Challenge

A reminder that we will be supporting the Gloucestershire Library Challenge running **12th July to 13th September**. The theme this year is **The Natural World**. There are lots of different interactive and fun challenges that you can complete! Please head to the below website for everything you need to know to get started. www.gloslibraries.uk/welcome-library-challenge

We would love to celebrate with all those who enter the challenge, so please do bring any certificates / medals to school on the first week back in September. Happy reading!

Parent Questionnaire

Huge thanks to all those who were able to complete the Parent Questionnaire. We had a great uptake and some extremely positive and helpful feedback. We are currently pulling the results together to be able to share with you all but, in the meantime, have used suggestions within our School Development Plan to inform future practice.

Extra Curricular Clubs - SUMMER TERM 2

Monday

Baking Buddies Y3-6	3.10pm - 4.30pm
Gym Club Y3-6	3.10pm - 4.00pm
Chinese Language Y3-6	3.15pm - 4.15pm
Recorders Y3-6	FINISHED



Tuesday

Board Games Y5-6	FINISHED
Orchestra Y3-6	FINISHED
Tennis Y4-6	3.15pm - 4.15pm

Wednesday

Baking Buddies Y3-6	3.10pm - 4.30pm
Cyclestars Y3-6	3.15pm - 4.15pm
European Languages Y3-6	3.10pm - 4.15pm
Magical Maths Y3-6	3.15pm - 4.15pm

Thursday

Coding Club Y5-6	3.10pm - 4.00pm
Choir Y3-6	FINISHED
Outdoor Learning Y5-6	3.15pm - 4.15pm
Reading & Times Tables Y3-6	FINISHED

School Term Dates

2024-25

Term 6: Tue 3rd June – Fri 18th July 2025

Inset Days: 21st July



2025-26

Term 1: Mon 1st Sept – Fri 24th Oct 2025

Term 2: Mon 3rd Nov – Fri 19th Dec 2025

Term 3: Mon 5th Jan - Fri 13th Feb 2026

Term 4: Mon 23rd Feb – Fri 27th Mar 2026

Term 5: Mon 13th April – Fri 22nd May 2026

Term 6: Mon 1st June – Mon 20th July 2026

Inset Days: 1st Sept, 2nd Sept, 24th Oct, 1st June, 20th July

Outdoor Learning - Summer Term 2

Class 5: Thursday Morning

Class 6: Thursday Afternoon



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

Diary Dates

2024 - 25

July

Tue 8th - Rocksteady Concert 9:30 Rocksteady parents invited
Tue 8th - Class 7 Book Look after School
Wed 9th - Burnham on Sea Trip Year 3
Thu 10th - Book Look after School (Excluding Class 7)
Fri 11th - PTA AGM 3.15pm
Tue 15th - Talent Show Finals 1.30pm
Thu 17th - St Mark's Year 6 Leavers Service - 1.45pm
Thu 17th School Disco - Y3 & Y4 6-6:45, Y5 7-8:00, Y6 7-8:30
Fri 18th - Last Day of Term - **School Finish Time 2.15pm**

PE - Summer 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: Tuesday and Wednesday

Class 4: Tuesday and Friday

Class 5: Tuesday

Class 6: Tuesday

Class 7: Tuesday and Friday

Class 8: Tuesday and Friday