



St Mark's C of E Junior School

Growing together, becoming all we are created to be

Weekly Newsletter - Friday 10th October 2025

www.stmarksjunior.com

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

Our Value in focus this term are our FACE Values

Headteacher's Message:

Cycle to School Week 2025 is taking place **next week** from **Monday 13 – Friday 17 October**. During the week it would be fantastic to see lots of the children cycling and scooting on their journey to school. If you live further away why not drive part the way in and then cycle, scoot, or walk the remainder of the journey.

We can enjoy lots of benefits along the way— such as saving money, boosting health, and helping the environment. Last year, lots of our families swapped the school run for pedal power and it will be wonderful if we can do so again.

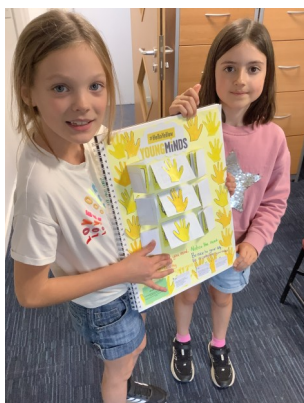


Today we joined communities across the UK by taking part in World Mental Health Day's *Hello Yellow* campaign to raise awareness and funds for YoungMinds, the UK's leading charity for young people's mental health.



Children and staff marked the day by wearing yellow or brightly coloured clothing. We also spent time in class building our understanding of what we mean by 'mental health' and looking at ways to build resilience as well as knowing how to ask for help.

Thank you to everyone who has donated so generously to the YoungMinds charity. **So far we have raised an incredible £175**



In case you missed last week's newsletter here are the resources which YoungMinds offer to support parents and carers if you ever need help and advice to support your children.

This includes:

- Online resources (www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/)
- A phone line, open 9.30am-4pm (0808 802 5544)
- An online chat for parents and carers to speak to trained professionals if you're concerned about your children's mental health [Parents Helpline](#) | [Mental Health Help for Your Child](#) | [YoungMinds](#)

With my best wishes for a lovely weekend,

Mrs A Fitch and the Staff Team

Teaching & Learning Owls

Gold - Abi

Bronze - Isaac, Jacob & Dylan

Congratulations to our badge winners!



Learning Highlight of the Week

Class 1: Class 1 have enjoyed getting into the Christmas spirit, designing their Christmas cards, ready for them to be printed for parents to purchase soon. It's never too early!

Class 2: The children have enjoyed learning about the Hello Yellow campaign today and participating in the class activities.

Class 3: In English, the children have been creating their own mythical creatures. As well as designing their creature, they notated what special features or powers their creature has.

Class 4: Class 4 enjoyed their Science lesson. Similar to class 3 last week, they created electrical circuits to turn on a lightbulb. They carried out experiments with different materials to find out which materials were conductors and which were insulators.

Class 5: Class 5 have been studying Freda Carlo. In preparation for their final piece, which will be a self portrait, they have been learning how to draw different facial features.

Class 6: Class 6 have also enjoyed taking part in the Hello Yellow activities in class today. One of the activities looked at how to help express and understand their emotions.

Class 7 & 8: In PE, Year 6 have been looking at the different jumps and shapes they can make using the apparatus.



Football News

Last Friday the girls football team played in a league match away to Lakeside. The girls demonstrated excellent skills and played some fantastic football, with some cracking goals. Their sportsmanship and teamwork was fantastic throughout. **The final result was 4-0 to St Mark's. An amazing result, well done to the players.**



On Wednesday, football teams from St Mark's played in a home match against Charlton Kings Junior School.

In our league team match we won by an impressive 6-1! After a slow start the team soon rallied, playing some excellent football. The team are worked very well together, showing great comradery and teamwork, as well as scoring 6 great goals.

In our friendly match we were up against a very strong team indeed. St Mark's did their best to match them, but found it very hard to play against Charlton Kings style of football. The whole team battled until the end, so very well done!

A massive thank you has to go to the year 5 Dads for helping out. We have such a great community at St Mark's and your help with the team was very much appreciated!

Cleaner Vacancy

We are seeking to appoint a part time School Cleaner to join our friendly and dedicated site team. This role is for 2 hours per day, either 6am-8am, or 4pm-6pm.

Duties to include :

- Working as part of the site team to maintain high and consistent standards of cleanliness
- Complying with policies and procedures relating to Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Security and Confidentiality, reporting all concerns to an appropriate person to ensure pupil and staff wellbeing
- Reporting cleaning supply requirements to the Line Manager

We are also seeking Midday Supervisors.

Please contact Mrs Hicks admin@st-marks.gloucs.sch.uk in the school office for the full job descriptions and person specifications. We would love to hear from you!

Football Success

At the end of last term Tommy & Ethan were both selected to represent St Mark's, playing for the Cheltenham Primary Schools Football Association Under 11s team. This weekend they travelled to Birmingham to play a fixture in the first round of the national cup against South Birmingham Primary Schools F.A. **The team from Cheltenham battled both a strong South Birmingham side and swirling winds to secure their first-ever win in the National Cup with a thrilling 7–4 victory.**

This was only CPSFA's second appearance in the national competition, and after a first-round exit last season, the new crop of 2025–26 players were determined to go one better and they did just that, in style.

Tommy was a steady presence in defence throughout the game, showing great composure under pressure and playing some smart passes out from the back. Cheltenham were flying, and **Ethan** added more magic with a dazzling run down the right, cutting the ball back for his team mate who smashed home to make it 6–2. **What an amazing result! Well done to Tommy, Ethan and the whole team.**



Cross Country News

Yesterday children from St Mark's took part in a cross country event at Newlands Park. It was a fast flat course, approximately two miles in length.

St Mark's children put in outstanding performances. A couple of children came away from the event with personal best placements, a fantastic achievement!

Well done to Chris who finished in the top 10 out of 100 runners!

We also had some children who have not participated in cross country running before. It was so great to have you on the team, you ran courageously.

Huge congratulations to all the children who took part. We were so proud of the way you all represented St Mark's.



Harvest Appeal

There is still time to donate items to our Harvest Appeal. Please see list of essential items on the Foodbank's Shopping List that are most needed by the foodbank—but any non-perishable items are welcome!

Please bring donations to school this Monday.



Thank you so much for helping our school community support this appeal.

Shopping list

Soup	_____
UHT Milk	_____
Hot / Cold Tinned Meat	_____
Microwave Rice	_____
Pasta Sauce	_____
Custard / Rice Pudding	_____
Coffee	_____
Sweet / Savoury Snacks	_____
Toiletries	_____

500 Words Competition

A couple of weeks ago we introduced the children to the **BBC's 500 Words competition**. The competition is a great opportunity for the children to engage more with literacy and writing, building confidence and inspiring the next generation of budding writers!

The 500 Words competition is now **open** for entries and will **close on Friday 7th November at 9pm**.

Please submit your child's entry via the BBC website [500 words](#).

There are lots of prizes to be won as well as the chance to be one of 50 finalists invited to a star-studded grand final in February 2026, which is supported by His Majesty The King

To view the competition rules please visit our website [500 Words Competition](#) page, or visit the BBC's website via this link [500 words: Everything you need to know](#).

St Mark's Writing Competition

In addition to the National competition, we will have an Inter-School competition too, with prizes given! If you would like to enter our school writing competition, please can your child bring a copy of their story into school. Prizes will be given to Lower school and Upper school winners. The deadline for entries will be the same as the BBC 500 Words competition November 7th.



Good luck to all the children who take part and enjoy writing your stories!

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 October Half Term, 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.

Applications for holiday FSM vouchers for the October Half Term 2025 will be **open from midday 7 October until midday on 14 October. Voucher emails will be sent from week commencing 20 October.**

Please check your junk/spam folders during this period as sometimes the vouchers end up there. If you have not received your vouchers by **27 October**, please submit a query via the Microsoft Form [HERE](#).

Families who have signed up to the scheme or who are already registered will receive a total of **£15 per child for one week**.

If you have signed up previously you do not need to re-register for the October Half Term holiday vouchers - as you will already have been included.

Families that have previously signed up will need to contact GCC with any changes to your circumstances (e.g. if the number of children eligible increases or decreases). To update details of an existing application, please submit an **update existing details request via the Microsoft Form [HERE](#)** so that the team can update your account, as details are not automatically updated.

To ensure Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) reach all those who are eligible, they encouraging parents that have not previously signed up, to sign up as soon as they can.

Please note that GCC 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](#) page.

Using vouchers – vouchers need to be used and will only be awarded once you have registered for the scheme and cannot be backdated. Vouchers 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. Vouchers not received should be queried via the Microsoft Form [HERE](#) by the end of the holiday period.

To apply and for those wishing to find out more about eligibility please visit: [Holiday free school meal vouchers | Gloucestershire County Council](#)

Extra Curricular Clubs - Autumn Term 1



Monday

Baking Buddies Y3-6	3.10pm - 4.30pm
Chinese Language Y3-6	3.15pm - 4.15pm
Gymnastics Y3-6	3.10pm - 4.00pm
Netball Y5-6	3.10pm - 4.00pm
Recorders Y3-6	Lunchtime
Running Y3-6	3.10pm - 4.00pm

Tuesday

Choir Y3-6	3.10pm - 4.00pm
Orchestra Y3-6	12.30pm - 1.00pm
Tennis Y4-6	3.15pm - 4.15pm

Wednesday

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

Thursday

Outdoor Learning Y3-6	3.15pm - 4.15pm
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Friday

Girls Football Y4-6	12.30pm - 1.00pm
Boys Football Y4-6	1.00pm - 1.30pm

Rags Collection—Thank You

Thanks for your generous donations to our Rags 2 Riches 4 Schools collection today. We collected 44 bags of clothing in total. A fantastic amount and funds raised go directly to our school. Thank you for your generosity.



School Term Dates

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 2026, 20th July 2026



2025-26



October

Mon 13th - Fri 17th - Cycle to School Week
Tue 14th - Harvest Festival (Children Only)
Tue 14th - Book look 3.10pm Class 4 & 7 Only
Fri 17th - Y6 Bikeability—Bike Maintenance Check
Mon 20th - Thu 23rd - Bikeability Year 6
Tue 21st - Book Look 3.10pm Except Class 4 & 7
Thu 23rd - St Mark's Open Morning 11-12pm
Thu 23rd - PTA Family Bingo Night
Fri 24th INSET DAY - No children in School
Fri 24th End of Term 1

November

Mon 3rd - Start of Term 2
Fri 7th - Stone Age Day Year 3
Fri 7th - Non-Uniform day in exchange for a bottle/teddy for the Christmas Fair Tombola
Mon 10th - Fri 14th - Anti Bullying Week
Mon 10th - St Mark' Open Morning 11-12pm
Tue 11th - We the Curious Year 4 Trip
Wed 12th - Parents Evening (timings tbc)
Thu 13th - Parents Evening (timings tbc)
Thu 13th - Greystones Farm Class 1 Trip
Fri 14th - Children in Need
Thu 20th - Greystones Farm Class 2 Trip
Fri 21st - St Mark' Open Morning 11-12pm
Tue 25th - Hindu Centre Year 4 Trip
Thu 27th - PTA Movie/Popcorn Night

Letters Sent Home

- Skillzone Year 5 Trip
- School Council Letter
- Pioneer Year 6 Residential
- Hindu Centre Year 4 Trip
- Instrument Hire Year 4 Letter



Outdoor Learning - Autumn Term 1

Class 3: Thursday Morning

Class 4: Thursday Afternoon

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



PE - Autumn Term 1

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

Class 1: Tuesday & Thursday
Class 2: Tuesday & Thursday
Class 3: Monday
Class 4: Friday
Class 5: Tuesday & Friday
Class 6: Thursday & Friday
Class 7: Monday & Friday
Class 8: Wednesday & Friday

