



St Mark's C of E Junior School

Growing together, becoming all we are created to be

Weekly Newsletter - Thursday 23rd 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:

What a fantastic first term we have had! The children have settled in so well to their not-so-new classes and have shown outstanding attitudes to learning. You can see from the learning highlights what an action packed week of learning it has been!



School Council

Yesterday, we were delighted to announce the School Council representatives for each class! An enormous total of 70 children across the school applied for this important role in the school—what a fantastic reflection of the positive, proactive attitude children have to wanting to make a difference and being agents of change!

All those who applied 'pitched' to the rest of their class, using their application form as a prompt. Voting took place in a democratic way using a secret ballot box and voting papers, where each child voted for one councillor and one vice councillor. The photo opposite shows our School Councillors and Vice Councillors for this year.

As a school we value the thoughts, ideas and opinions of all our children and the School Council is a great way of ensuring the voice of the children is heard. Part of their role is to come up with ideas to help improve our school. As well as listening to the voices of the children in their classes, they will be assisting House Captains to help to organise events across the school through the year.

Huge congratulations to our newly elected Councillors and Vice Councillors. We hope that you enjoy your roles and we look forward to hearing your ideas.

Prefects

This year, we have introduced an additional level of responsibility in Year 6: **School Prefect**. It is considered to be a prestigious position with expectation that children would lead by example, be relied upon to have an excellent attitude to their learning and demonstrate our school values at all times.

A School Prefect will have a variety of responsibilities through the year, working on a rotation basis each term. The Prefect roles will include, **lunchtime mentoring, organising and leading lunchtime games, working with staff to ensure play equipment is well stocked, organising litter picking and showing visitors around the school** to name a few.

Well done to all the children who have been selected to be a prefect, we hope you relish your new roles.

With my best wishes for a fantastic half term break, Mrs A Fitch and the Staff Team



Poppy Appeal

This Remembrance, we will be supporting our Armed Forces community. The Poppy Appeal continues to be a symbol of remembrance for those who have served for our country, as well helping to raise funds to support veterans, serving personnel, and their families.



This Year we will be creating a poppy display in school. The children have been invited to make poppies over half term. The poppies can be made from anything and designed in any form that they choose. See photo of a previous display for examples. **All poppies need to be in by Friday 7th November.**

From **Monday 3rd November** The Year 6 House Captains will be taking the Poppies out at break and lunchtime, to sell to the children for a small cash donation. Poppies will also be available in the school office.

As a school community we are proud to support the appeal again this year, to honour the courage and sacrifice of our Armed Forces community, past and present.

Outdoor Learning Year 3

Next term, Year 3 children will have Outdoor Learning lessons. The lessons take place every Thursday, with **class 2 in the morning** and **class 1 the afternoon**. The sessions will commence on **Thursday 6th November** and the last session will be on **Thursday 11th December**.

Children need to wear their **own clothes** for Outdoor Learning that will keep them warm and they do not mind getting muddy. They will need a **waterproof coat, long trousers** and may also need hats, gloves and scarfs. Please can the children bring **wellies** in a separate bag and don't forget to wear shoes for inside which they can change back into.



In addition to this, on Friday 7th November is Year 3s one off Outdoor Learning immersion into the stone age day with Mr Oakey and so the children will need to wear the above Outdoor Learning clothes on Friday too!

Bikeability

This week saw the return of Bikeability, which is a scheme that equips Year 6 children with the skills and confidence they need to cycle on the roads.

Last Friday, a large team of specialists carried out maintenance checks on all of the children's bikes in readiness for this week. The course started on Monday in school, with circuits and challenges around the playground. Tuesday saw the biggest step for the children – cycling on the actual road! With the experienced instructors on hand, the children were made to feel more confident in no time.



The children learnt to:

- Start and stop with more confidence
- Pass stationary vehicles parked on a road
- Understand the road: signals, signs and road markings
- Negotiate the road: including quiet junctions, crossroads and roundabouts
- Share the road with other vehicles

The Bikeability team were extremely impressed with the St Mark's children and how well they applied themselves, listened to the instructors and behaved. They have certainly grown in confidence and cycling proficiency.

We must say a huge thank you to the Bikeability team. It has been a fantastic week of learning essential road safety skills, which the children can take away with them as they journey on from St Mark's.

Cross Country

On Friday it was the boys turn to travel to Ashley Manor to compete in Cross Country racing, representing our school.

It was another brilliant race for St Mark's. The children ran with great strength and competitiveness.

Congratulations to Charlie, Henry, Chris, Beau, Oliver, Freddie and Josh for showing such grit and determination. You did us proud!



Learning Highlight of the Week

Class 1: Class 1 have enjoyed painting their clay pots that they made with Mrs Fitch a few weeks ago.

Class 2: In Art, the children focused on colour mixing using oil pastels to create autumn leaf shapes.

Class 3: In Maths, the children have been learning about measuring. In the school hall they were tasked with estimating and then measuring different lengths of ribbon using a metre ruler, which they then had to convert into centimetres.

Class 4: The children have enjoyed creating their Mythical Creature fact files, looking at the creatures diet, habitat and fun facts. They also used their computing lesson to enter their creatures ratings onto a database.

Class 5: In Geography, Class 5 were looking at 4 and 6 figure grid references to identify mountains on an Ordnance Survey map.

Class 6: In History, Class 6 have been learning about the Anglo Saxons' law enforcement and punishment system of *Trial by Ordeal*. If a local jury could not decide the outcome of a crime they used *Trial by Ordeal* to decide if a person was innocent or guilty. The children discussed whether this was a fair way of deciding someone's fate.

Class 7: Class 7 also enjoyed Art this week. They used gutta to create Viking knots on silk, ready to be painted after half term.

Class 8: In English, Class 8 created a brochure for unusual (and actually genuine) hotels, such as the Oreo hotel, Ribbon hotel and Treehouse hotel.

A Big

THANK YOU



**St. Mark's C of E Junior and Benhall
Infant Schools**

for supporting Cheltenham foodbank.

**Your donation of 295.5kg of food makes a BIG
difference to local people of crisis.**



Cheltenham foodbank is part of the Trussell Trust's UK wide foodbank network.

Registered Charity Number: 251549 | Registered in England and Wales

Football Matches

On Wednesday the boys teams played in away matches against Charlton Kings Junior School. The matches were extremely competitive and our players showed resilience and great teamwork. Some of our players had a go at playing in positions they do not normally play, in which they showed great confidence and adaptability.

In the **league match St Mark's won 5-2** and in our **friendly match the team won 5-1**. An impressive result for both St Mark's teams. Well done to all the players, Mrs Campbell and everyone involved behind the scenes, including you the parents for ensuring your child can get to these away matches. We know it is not easy, so thank you for your support!



Extra Curricular Clubs - Autumn Term 2



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

Tuesday

Orchestra Y3-6	12.30pm - 1.00pm
Choir Y3-6	3.10pm - 4.00pm
Tennis Y4-6	3.15pm - 4.10pm

Wednesday

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

Thursday

Coding Y6	3.10pm - 4.00pm
Kids with Bricks (Lego) Y3-6	3.10pm - 4.00pm
Outdoor Learning Y3-6	3.15pm - 4.15pm

Friday

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

Please see club [schedule](#) for club dates!

School Term Dates

2025-26

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



Letters Sent Home

- Swimming Year 5 & 6



Outdoor Learning - Autumn Term 2

Class 2: Thursday Morning + Fri 7th Nov

Class 1: Thursday Afternoon + Fri 7th Nov

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.



2025-26



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 3.30-6pm
Thu 13th - Parents Evening 3.30-6pm
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

December

Thu 3rd - Christmas Fair
Tue 9th - **Carol Services:**
5.30 – 6.15pm – Red & Blue
6.45 – 7.30pm – Yellow & Green
Wed 10th - Whole School Panto Trip 9.15am – 12.30pm
Thu 11th - Christmas Jumper Day (Save the Children)

PE - Autumn Term 2

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

Class 1: Tuesday

Class 2: Monday

Class 3: Monday & Friday

Class 4: Monday & Friday

Class 5: Tuesday & Friday

Class 6: Tuesday & Thursday

Class 7: Monday & Friday

Class 8: Wednesday & Friday



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