



St Mark's C of E Junior School

Growing together, becoming all we are created to be

Weekly Newsletter - Friday 5th December 2025

www.stmarksjunior.com

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

Our Value in focus this term is Compassion

Headteacher's Message:



December is in full swing here as the end of term draws closer and the season of Advent (and cheeky little elves!) begins. *Thank you so much to all those who were able to come to our Christmas Fair yesterday and for your generous donations. Huge thanks to the PTA and Year 6s who made this event such a success!*



We have been thinking about the significance of Advent; a time for us to **get ready** for Christmas - both practically but also reflecting on ways we can 'get ready' in our hearts, by showing **love, generosity and compassion** to those around us.

The run-up to Christmas is often exciting and busy time of preparation. **But it's important for us all to remember those who find Christmas a tricky time or just need a helping hand.** With this in mind....

YMCA Under the Tree Project—Reminder

As mentioned in last week's Newsletter, this year YMCA Cheltenham has launched a special 'Under the Tree' campaign, with the aim that every local child and adult staying in its temporary and emergency accommodation wakes up to a present this Christmas.

St Mark's are supporting this important campaign to help those in need in Cheltenham to have a happier Christmas.

The YMCA have created an [Amazon wish list](#) and full details of the campaign and options of how to donate can be found [here](#).

Thank you so much to those who have dropped off presents so far. Gifts can be handed in to the St Mark's school office by **Wednesday 17th December. Thank you!**



St Mark's Presents.... **Groovin' - The Nativity!**

We can't wait for lots of fun at our Groovy Christmas night at St Mark's Church on Tuesday 9th December

5.30 – 6.15pm – Red & Blue House

6.45 – 7.30 pm –Yellow & Green House

If your child is a member of the school Choir, Recorder, or Orchestra Clubs, please can they attend both sessions.

Children are asked to come in anything **brightly coloured** - dig out your funky headwear, sunglasses, sequins or Christmas clothes! The brighter & funkier the better!!



**Bring family and friends—
all welcome to enjoy an evening of Christmas songs, drama music and sparkle!**

I do appreciate that it is a particularly busy time of year but this is a key event in the life of the school and would really love to see as many children and families at the church as possible. It really is a very special evening and promises to lift us all well and truly into the Christmas spirit! ***Parking is quite limited so please do walk if you can. For those who need to drive, a polite reminder to park with sensitivity to surrounding residents.***

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

Teaching & Learning Owls

Reading Award - Riana

Bronze - Alex, Buddy & Edward

Well done to Riana who has completed the whole Year 6 Reading list.
Wow Riana, what an amazing achievement and it's only December!

Congratulations to our badge winners!



W/C 8th December

Tue 9th - Christmas Concert @ **St Mark's Church**:

5.30 – 6.15 – Red & Blue - Plus Choir, Orchestra & Recorders

6.45 – 7.30 – Yellow & Green - Plus Choir, Orchestra & Recorders

Wed 10th - Panto Everyman Theatre Trip 9.15am-12.30pm (Please bring packed lunches)

Thu 11th - Christmas Jumper Day (Save the children)

Thu 11th - Ukulele Concert at 9am for parents of Year 5 & 6 ukulele students



W/C 15th December

Wed 17th - Christmas Lunch

Thu 18th - Rocksteady Concert @9.30am. Rocksteady Parents invited to attend.

Thu 18th - Year 3 DT Day

Thu 18th - PTA Disco Y3 & Y4 – 6-6.45pm / Y5 & Y6 – 7-8pm

Fri 19th - End of Term 2

Panto Reminders

Next week the children will be going to see the Pantomime, 'Robin Hood and his Merry Men' at the Everyman Theatre. The show starts at 10am and we expect to be back at school at approximately 12.45pm.



Children will require a **packed lunch** unless your child is in receipt of Free School Meals and has ordered a packed lunch via the office.

Please can all children wear school uniform. Class 8 children will need to bring their PE kit and trainers in a bag for the afternoon.

Christmas Disco – Thursday 18th December

Timings:

- **Years 3 & 4:** 6:00–6:45pm
- **Years 5 & 6:** 7:00–8:00pm

Please bring:

- A **water bottle**
- Your **entrance slip** with **£2** (Slips to be sent home w/c 15th Dec)
Change for sweets, glow sticks and tattoos.

Please do NOT bring:

- Mobile phones
- Your own food
- Heels or heeled shoes

Collection:

Children will be collected **under the Willow tree**.
No child will be allowed to leave **without an adult**.



Wellbeing Support — A Kind and Caring Guide for our Families

At our school, we know childhood is full of exciting moments—new friendships, new skills, and new adventures. But we also know that sometimes these adventures can feel a little overwhelming but with gentle support and understanding, they can learn to feel calm and confident again.

You might notice your child:

- Feeling nervous
- Worrying about things going wrong
- Finding it hard to sleep
- Complaining of tummy aches or headaches
- Avoiding situations they used to enjoy



These signs don't mean something is "wrong" with your child—they simply mean they need some extra comfort and guidance.



How You Can Help at Home

Small, caring moments can make a big difference.

Here are a few ways families can help ease anxious feelings:

1. Talk and Listen

Make space for your child to share how they feel. Let them know it's okay to be worried sometimes, and that you're always there to listen.

2. Keep Routines Steady

Predictable routines—like bedtime, homework time, and family meals—help children feel safe and secure.

3. Practise Calm Breathing Together

Slow, deep breaths can help the body feel peaceful. Try breathing in for three seconds, then out for three seconds, and repeat a few times.

4. Celebrate Small Bravery

Whether they joined a game, put their hand up in class, or tried something new, praise their effort. Bravery grows with encouragement.



How We Support Children at School

Our staff are always looking out for pupils' wellbeing. We encourage positive friendships, teach emotional awareness, and provide quiet spaces where children can take a moment if they need it. If you're concerned, please speak with your child's teacher—we're here to help, together.

You're Not Alone

If you'd like more advice or a friendly chat, please reach out. We care deeply about your child's wellbeing and are always happy to support you. With patience, understanding, and teamwork between home and school, children can learn to manage their worries and flourish.



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 Y5-6	1.00pm - 1.30pm

Please see club selections [table](#) 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

- Year 3 Ukulele Letter



Outdoor Learning - Autumn Term 2

Class 2: Thursday Morning

Class 1: Thursday Afternoon

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

Diary Dates

December

Tue 9th - **Christmas Concert @ St mark's Church:**
5.30 – 6.15pm – Red & Blue House
6.45 – 7.30pm – Yellow & Green House

Choir, Recorder and Orchestra Club members to attend both!

Wed 10th - Whole School Panto Trip 9.15am – 12.30pm

Thu 11th - Christmas Jumper Day (*Save the Children*)

Thu 11th - Ukulele Concert at 9am for parents of Year 5 & 6 ukulele students

Wed 17th - Christmas Lunch

Thu 18th - Rocksteady Concert for Rocksteady Parents 9.30am

Thu 18th - Year 3 DT Day

Thu 18th - PTA Disco - Y3 & Y4 – 6-6.45pm / Y5 & Y6 – 7-8pm

Fri 19th - End of Term 2

January

Mon 5th - Term 3 starts

Tue 6th - Skillzone Trip Class 6

Wed 7th - Skillzone Trip Class 5

Wed 14th - Year 5/6 Swimming Lessons Start

February

Tue 3rd - Year 6 National Measurement Check

Thu 4th - Rags Collection

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.