



St Mark's C of E Junior School

Growing together, becoming all we are created to be

Weekly Newsletter - Friday 20th March 2026

www.stmarksjunior.com

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

Our Value in focus this term is Courage

Headteacher's Message:

At St Mark's, we have been proudly combining the joy of Comic Relief with one of our FACE values: *Compassion – Be kind, notice the need*. Today has been a wonderful reminder that small acts of kindness can make a big difference.

As part of Red Nose Day, the children have been learning about how the money they raise helps provide essentials for people who need it most—food to eat, a safe place to sleep, and the chance to live free from fear and harm. They have been finding out about the real impact their generosity can have, and it has been inspiring to see their empathy and understanding grow.

Today we have been laughing proudly and joining in the fun, with our own special funky groove for Comic Relief's Red Nose Day! A huge thank you to all the children who dressed up in support of this wonderful cause, as well as those who went the extra mile and sported crazy hair for the day. Your creativity, enthusiasm, and joyful silliness were fantastic to see!

Taking part in just one day of fun helps transform lives—and thanks to your kindness, we have already raised an impressive **£223** on ParentPay. Your generosity truly brings our value of *Compassion* to life.

Thank you for your continued support.

Have a super weekend and enjoy the sunshine,

Mrs A Fitch and the Staff Team



Earth Hour

Today, children from the School Council delivered fantastic and thought provoking presentation in our Celebration Assembly about **Earth Hour**.

Earth Hour is a global environmental movement where individuals, communities and businesses turn off non-essential lights for one hour to show commitment to the planet.

Earth Hour is organized annually by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and encourages people worldwide to switch off non-essential electric lights for one hour, typically from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m. local time on the last Saturday of March as a symbolic gesture of environmental responsibility and climate action.

The main goal of Earth Hour is to raise awareness about climate change, energy consumption and environmental issues such as biodiversity loss and pollution.

While turning off lights is a simple symbolic action, it encourages individuals and communities to reflect on their daily habits, adopt sustainable practices, and take meaningful steps toward protecting the planet.

So how can you make a difference?

On **Saturday the 28th March** we would like everyone to **turn off their lights at home** for one hour between **8.30 and 9.30pm**.

We would also like to invite children to **wear green and or blue** on **Friday 27th March** for a **donation of £1** or whatever you can spare.

Thank you to the School Council for delivering such a wonderful presentation today and for inspiring us all to take part in Earth Hour.



Learning Highlight of the Week

Class 1: In PE, Class 1 have been learning basketball skills, including how to defend space and improve their dribbling.

Class 2: Class 2 enjoyed making bunnies and rabbits in Art this week, in readiness for a surprise next week, that they do not know about yet!



Classes 3 & 4: The children in Year 4 thoroughly enjoyed their trip to the National Roman Legion Museum. See page 3 for the full write-up!

Class 5: Class 5 also went on a trip this week. They visited the Waterways Museum in Gloucester. See below for more details.

Class 6: In Art, Class 6 have been working on a multi-layered piece. Last week, they took photographs around the school grounds. They plan to trace these images and create doodle patterns within them. This week, they have been designing their doodle patterns.

Class 7: In Geography, Class 7 enjoyed learning all about Fair Trade. They had the opportunity to act out the trading of items such as bananas.

Class 8: Class 8 have been creating their very own musical scene based on a specific event they remember from their time at St Mark's. This involved writing a song, producing a script, and developing choreography.

PTA Easter Bake Sale & Cake Competition—Thursday 26th March

We're holding a Easter Bake Event on 26th March, and we'd love the children to get involved!

Children are invited to bake and decorate an Easter-themed cake or treat at home and bring it into school.

These will be judged, and the winners will receive a chocolate Easter egg prize.

After judging, cakes can either:

- Be taken home, or
- Donated to the bake sale after school.

Bake Sale

We would also be very grateful for any extra cakes or baked goods to sell at the bake sale.

We will be selling cakes for £1 a slice and all money raised will go towards supporting the school through the PTA.

Thank you for your support!



Year 5 Waterways Museum Trip

Yesterday, Year 5 pupils enjoyed a trip to Gloucester, where they visited the National Waterways Museum.

This award-winning museum is located in the historic Llanthony Warehouse in the heart of Gloucester Docks. It explores over 200 years of history, focusing on the docks and the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal, bringing the past to life for visitors.

Throughout the day, the children were split into smaller groups and took part in a variety of engaging activities. One challenge involved building a bridge using lollipop sticks and bulldog clips, which they then tested by adding weight. They were subsequently asked to redesign their model using fewer materials, to see if it could still support the same load.

The children also explored the museum exhibits and particularly enjoyed examining the detailed ship models.

Another activity involved labelling different parts of a model river—something the children have been studying in school. It was fantastic to see them confidently applying their knowledge and using the vocabulary they have learnt in class.

It was a wonderful day, and the children represented St Mark's exceptionally well through both their behaviour and their enthusiasm for learning. **Well done, Year 5!**

Year 4 Trip to the National Roman Legion Museum

On Thursday, the children enjoyed a fun and immersive visit to the National Roman Legion Museum in Caerleon, Wales. During the trip, they explored the museum, amphitheatre, baths, and barracks, gaining a deeper understanding of Roman life.

Throughout the day, the children had the opportunity to examine a range of artefacts, which provided valuable insight into what life was like during Roman times. One of the highlights was trying on replica roman clothes, armour and helmets, as well as re-enacting a roman banquet. Some very interesting food choices were available!



The children's enthusiasm was a joy to see, and they truly relished the opportunity to experience history first hand. They behaved exceptionally well throughout the day and were fantastic ambassadors for our school.



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

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 News

In preparation for the league football finals next week our football team played a friendly this week against Lakeside School.

The match was played in a positive and respectful spirit, with both teams demonstrating enthusiasm, teamwork, and sportsmanship throughout. The match was an enjoyable and a valuable experience for all involved. **A comfortable 9-0 win for St Mark's.**

Good luck to the team in the league finals being held at St Mark's next Wednesday. **Supporters welcome!**



Young Writers Poetry Competition

This week, we received some very exciting news regarding the Young Writers poetry competition. Every child from St Mark's who entered the competition has been selected to have their work published in *I Have a Dream 2026 – The Dream Makers*.

Young Writers commented that "having your pupils' work chosen is something to be proud of – it doesn't happen every day!"

The school will receive a copy of the book, which we will proudly display in the library for everyone to enjoy.

In today's Celebration Assembly, the children were presented with their certificates from Young Writers. We hope that having their work published will inspire them and give them confidence in their writing as they continue to grow.

Young Writers will be announcing the winners of the competition next month, and we'd like to wish all of our talented pupils the very best of luck.

Congratulations to you all!



School Meal—Price Increase 1st April 2026



From **1 April 2026**, the school meal price will increase to **£2.95** per meal. Gloucestershire remains one of the lower-priced contracts nationally, even as many counties now charge well over £3.00 per meal.

Gloucestershire County Council has worked extensively with Caterlink to keep this increase as low as possible despite rising food and staffing costs.



PTA Disco - Thursday 26th March

We're excited to invite everyone to our upcoming PTA school disco! Come along for an evening of music, fun, and fundraising!

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 23rd March)
- Small change for sweets, glow sticks and tattoos.

Please do NOT bring:

- Mobile phones, your own food, heels or heelys

Collection:

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

We look forward to seeing lots of you there for a fun-filled evening while raising money for the PTA!



Teaching & Learning Owls

Star - Stella

Bronze - Enriko, Ralph and Chloe



Congratulations to our badge winners!



Extra Curricular Clubs Spring 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	
Hockey Y5-6	3.10pm - 4.00pm	(Ends 23/02/26)
Netball Y5-6	3.10pm - 4.00pm	(Ends 23/02/26)
Recorders Y3-6	Lunchtime	

Tuesday

Orchestra Y3-6	12.30pm - 1.00pm
Book Club Y5-6	1.00pm - 1.30pm
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

Brass Club Y4	3.10pm - 4.00pm
Coding Y6	3.10pm - 4.00pm
Kids with Bricks Y3-6	3.10pm - 4.00pm

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!

Benhall Residents Association—Litter Picking

Can you help me to Litter pick around our pavements?

- Meet by the Planter, Bibury Road.
- Saturday **28th March 11.00am until 12.30pm**
- You choose which road you tidy.
- All equipment provided, or bring your own litter picks.
- Bags and rings available
- Feel free to bring your children and dogs!



In February, 21 people turned up to help, so it would be brilliant to match that, or even better it!

School Term Dates - 2025-26



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

Term 4: Mon 23th 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 June 2026, 20th July 2026

Letters Sent Home



- Clubs Summer Term
- Keeping Safe Joint Schools letter

2025-26



March

- Tue 24th - Class 1 Locality Walk 1pm
- Wed 25th - In the Net Production Year 4 at Lakeside
- Thu 26th - PTA Easter Themed Cake Sale & Competition
- Thu 26th - PTA School Discos
 - Years 3 & 4: 6:00–6:45pm
 - Years 5 & 6: 7:00–8:00pm
- Fri 27th - Earth Day - wear green or blue £1 donation
- Fri 27th - End of Term 4

April

Mon 13th - Start of Term 5

May

- Mon 4th May - Bank Holiday
- Wed 6th - Cadbury World Year 5
- 11th May - Y6 SATs Week
- Tue 19th - Book Look
- Wed 20th - GWR Trip Year 6
- Fri 22nd - End of Term 5

Advance Notice of Some Key Dates

- 16th May - Summer Fair
- 10th June - Sports Day
- 8th - 10th July - Y6 Residential
- 16th July - Y6 St Mark's School Leavers Service - 1.45pm

Outdoor Learning - Summer Term 1



Class 1: Thursday Morning

Class 2: 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.

PE - Spring Term 2

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

All swimmers to wear PE Kit on a Wednesday

Class 1: Tuesday & Thursday

Class 2: Tuesday & Friday

Class 3: Monday & Friday

Class 4: Thursday & Friday

Class 5: Tuesday & Wednesday

Class 6: Wednesday & Thursday

Class 7: Wednesday & Friday

Class 8: Wednesday & Friday

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

