



St Mark's C of E Junior School

Growing together, becoming all we are created to be

Weekly Newsletter - Friday 3rd July 2026

www.stmarksjunior.com

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

Our Value in focus this term is Respect

Headteacher's Message:

It has been another busy week in the life of St Mark's, albeit a slightly quieter one, with many of our Year 6 children spending time at their new secondary schools as part of their transition. That said, we certainly kept the remaining Year 6s busy! As you'll see from this week's learning highlights, they have enjoyed a wonderfully creative week.

**Get excited for
NEW CLASSES!**

On Wednesday, all of the children spent time with their new class teachers in their new classrooms. This was a fantastic opportunity for them to experience what life will be like in their new year groups. We hope it has helped to settle any nerves, build confidence and leave the children feeling excited about all that lies ahead.

🎪 **Happy's Circus is Coming to St Mark's!** 🎪

Sunday 13th September 2026

We are delighted to announce that **Happy's Circus** will be coming to St Mark's this September with its spectacular new show, **Universe!** To give you a flavour of what's in store:

*Step inside the Big Top and prepare to be transported on a magical galactic adventure. Featuring stargazing acrobats, gravity-defying aerialists and mysterious cosmic creatures from another world, Universe is a breath-taking celebration of colour, wonder and imagination. This unforgettable family event promises to amaze audiences of all ages as performers weave together dazzling feats of daring and beauty in a journey through the limitless possibilities of the cosmos. **A Universe of Stars awaits you!***

Tickets on Sale Now

Tickets are selling fast, so be sure to secure yours as soon as possible. To purchase tickets please use the **QR code** on the **Circus flyer** attached with this week's newsletter.

Every Ticket Helps Our Children



This year's circus is about much more than a fantastic evening of family entertainment. It is also a vital fundraiser for our school.

St Mark's is in urgent need of **new interactive whiteboards** to enhance teaching and learning across the school. These boards will provide our children with more engaging, interactive and accessible daily learning experiences.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our community, we have already raised **£2,500** towards our target of **£5,000**. So, we still have a little way to go.

By supporting Happy's Circus, you will be helping us provide the resources for our children. **Together, we can make a real difference to the quality of education for all of our children.**

Thank you for your continued support—do take a look at the circus information and book on if you can. 🌟🎪🌟

Best wishes for a lovely weekend, Mrs A Fitch

Monday Morning as Normal!



We recognise that there is a certain football match taking place in the early hours of Monday morning! Please be aware that school will start at the normal time for all children. We have spoken about the possibility of children watching highlights from the game at school on Monday. Come on England!!!

Join The Library Challenge 2026: Tales Through Time!

Challenge runs from Saturday 11 July to Saturday 12 September

Travel through time, get reading, and earn rewards!

This summer, Gloucestershire Libraries invite children and families to step into Tales Through Time, a journey across stories, characters, eras, and adventures. From ancient legends to futuristic tales, this year's Challenge celebrates imagination, creativity, and the power of storytelling.

The Library Challenge

Why Take Part?

- Adventures on Every Page: Explore time-travelling tasks inspired by stories, eras, characters and creativity.
- Family Fun: Enjoy activities designed for shared storytelling and reading experiences.
- Exciting Rewards: Earn stamps, complete levels, and unlock badges, stickers, certificates, and a medal for achieving Gold!



How It Works

Sign up for free at any Gloucestershire Library.

Explore the tasks in your Challenge journal, suggestions are inspired by Tales Through Time, but you can choose anything you're interested in!

Complete a task, collect a stamp, and level up! Show what you've done to our friendly library team. Stickers, certificates, and lots more surprises await at each level!

- 3 stamps → Bronze
- 6 stamps → Silver
- 9 stamps → Gold

Climb all the way to GOLD level to earn your Tales Through Time medal - and get entered into the prize-draw giveaway! You could win vouchers or brilliant book bundles!

Events this Summer

There are more than **150 free or low-cost events** taking place in Gloucestershire libraries throughout the summer. The programme includes:

- Storytelling sessions
- Museum pop-up events
- Science workshops
- Hands-on craft activities

Visit gloslibraries.uk/events to find out what's happening at your local library.

Learning Highlight of the Week

Class 1: In Science, the children have been exploring light and darkness through practical investigations.

Class 2: In History, the children have been learning about the process of mummification in Ancient Egypt. They then applied their knowledge by writing their own instructions explaining how to mummify a pharaoh.

Class 3: In RE, Class 3 explored Kenning poems, a type of poetry in which each line uses a two-word metaphorical phrase to describe something without naming it directly. The children used the Bible to identify stories that matched each poem. The class showed great enthusiasm and initiative throughout the lesson, confidently navigating their way around the Bible to find the relevant stories.

Class 4: Class 4 thoroughly enjoyed their music lesson this week. They learnt about two key features of music: pitch and dynamics. Using the song *Boom Chicka Boom*, the children explored contrasting dynamics by singing both loudly and softly, while also thinking about pitch.

Class 5: In PE, the children played a whole class Rounders match. They focused on the different ways to get a player out, including stumping.

Class 6: In Music, Class 6 have been learning about the composer Heitor Villa-Lobos. Using glockenspiels, percussion instruments and their voices, the children recreated the sounds of a train, experimenting with different dynamics and tempos.

Class 7 & 8: The children have had an exciting week with lots of practical lessons. They enjoyed testing the aerodynamics of different materials, as well as taking part in a bridge building competition. They also tried their hand at Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet!

Teaching & Learning Owls

Star - Mya, Eshaal, Emily & Abi

Bronze - Theo, Shenuk, Harvey, Elizabeth, & Sasha

Congratulations to our badge winners!



Reading Award

Massive congratulations to James and Jacob who have both completed the Year 3 Reading List. A fantastic achievement—well done James and Jacob, we are all incredibly proud of you both.



Clothing & Lost Property

Please can you check that your child's school clothes are clearly labelled in readiness for September? Handwritten labels are absolutely fine.

We will be putting out the lost property after school on Monday, so please do take a look if your child has misplaced any items.



Extreme Weather and Heatwave Plan

With warmer weather forecast for next week, we would like to make you aware of our **Extreme Weather and Heatwave Plan**, which is available to view in the **Policies** section of our [website](#).

During this period of hot weather, please ensure your child brings the following:

- A sun hat
- A named water bottle
- Children can wear school uniform or PE kit, trainers or closed toed sandals including Crocs-style sandals.

Please also apply sun cream to your child before they come to school.



To help keep children safe and comfortable during this period of hot weather, we will:

- Encourage children to stay in shaded areas whenever possible
- Limit running around at break and lunchtime
- Provide regular opportunities for rest and cooling down
- Ensure children have frequent access to drinking water
- Remind children to wear hats/caps when outdoors



Thank you for your support in helping us keep all children safe during periods of hot weather.

Cheltenham HAF Events

The Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme is funded by the Department of Education for those in reception to year 11 who receive income-related free school meals. HAF is returning this summer during the school holidays!

The Cheltenham HAF soft launch is currently open and all summer activities can be viewed at [Cheltenham HAF Events](https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/holiday-activities-and-food-programme/). During this soft launch period families have a chance to browse activities and choose the activities they plan to book when bookings open on Monday 6 July.

For more details about the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme please visit -

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/holiday-activities-and-food-programme/>.

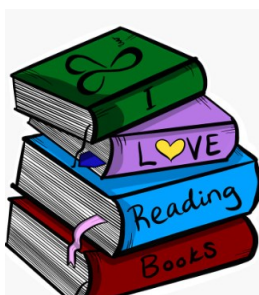


Reading Books

We will be starting to collect in all school reading books next week.

Please can your child return any reading books to school.

Thank You!



Summer Holiday Birthdays

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



Fundraising Success

Congratulations to Alfie on completing his first sponsored 5K run over the weekend!

The **Race for Life** Cheltenham Pretty Muddy 5K is a fun and unique event, combining obstacles with grass, woodchip, and of course, plenty of mud. It's an enjoyable yet challenging course that raises vital funds for Cancer Research UK.

Not only did Alfie complete the course, but he also raised an incredible **£150** for this fantastic cause.

Well done, Alfie—we are all extremely proud of you!



Rags 2 Riches 4 Schools Collection

Thank you to everyone who took the time to donate clothing to our *Rags 2 Riches 4 Schools* collection.

We collected an amazing total of **36 bags/107.4Kkg** of clothing! Your generosity has helped raise valuable funds for our school, and we are incredibly grateful for your support.

Thank you for helping make this collection such a success!



School Lunch Payments

We kindly ask all parents to ensure their Parent Pay account for school lunches remains in credit. This is particularly important as we come to the end of the academic year.

If you have any outstanding balance, please arrange to clear it over the weekend and ensure you have enough credit for the rest of the term.

Did you know? On ParentPay, you can set up your account to receive an automatic email alert if your balance falls below a set amount (suggested amount £5) — helping you stay on top of payments with ease.



Extra Curricular Clubs Summer Term 2

Monday

Baking Buddies Y3-6	3.15pm - 4.30pm
Chinese Language Y3-6	3.15pm - 4.15pm
Gardening Club Y3-5	3.15pm - 4.00pm
Gymnastics Y3-6	3.15pm - 4.00pm
Netball Y5-6	3.15pm - 4.00pm



Tuesday

Tennis Y4-6	3.15pm - 4.10pm
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Wednesday

Baking Buddies Y3-6	3.15pm - 4.30pm
Cricket Y3-6	3.15pm - 4.15pm Finished

Thursday

Coding Y6	3.15pm - 4.00pm	Finished
Kids with Bricks Y3-6	3.15pm - 4.00pm	Finished
Outdoor Learning	3.15pm - 4.15pm	

Friday

Athletics (With the Ball)	3.15pm - 4.15pm
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Please see club selections [table](#) for club dates!

School Term Dates - 2025-26

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

Inset Days: 20th July 2026

2026-27

Term 1: Tue 1st Sept – Fri 23rd Oct 2026

Term 2: Mon 2nd Nov – Fri 18th Dec 2026

Term 3: Mon 4th Jan - Fri 12th Feb 2027

Term 4: Mon 22nd Feb – Thu 25th Mar 2027

Term 5: Mon 12th April – Fri 28th May 2027

Term 6: Mon 7th June – Wed 21st July 2027

Inset Days:

1st Sept 2026, 2nd Sept 2026, 22nd Oct 2026, 23rd Oct 2026, 7th June 2027



Letter Sent Home

- RSE Letter
- Class Photo Proofs
- Bikeability Y5 Form
- Young Voices Letter
- KS2 SATS results Letter



Outdoor Learning - Summer Term 2

Class 4: Thursday Morning

Class 3: 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



July

Mon 6th - Year 3 Visiting Benhall to Watch Year 2 Play (morning)

Wed 8th - Fri 10th July - Y6 Residential

Thu 9th - Cheltenham Music Festival Year 5 Trip

Fri 10th - Annual Reports Distributed to Parents

Mon 13th - Sports Day 9-11am

Mon 13th - Talent show 1.30pm

Tue 14th - Year 3 Egyptian Day

Thu 16th - Y6 St Mark's School Leavers Service - 1.45pm

Thu 16th - PTA Disco

Fri 17th - Last day of term—2pm finish

Advance Notice of Some Key Dates

Sunday 13th Sept - Happy's Circus @ St Mark's School 12.30pm

PE - Summer Term 2

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



Class 1: Wednesday & Friday

Class 2: Tuesday & Friday

Class 3: Monday

Class 4: Friday

Class 5: Tuesday & Thursday

Class 6: Tuesday & Thursday

Class 7: Monday & Wednesday

Class 8: Wednesday & Friday

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