



ST MARK'S C OF E JUNIOR SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Value in focus: FACE Values

Growing together,
becoming all we are created to be

25th September 2026

HEADTEACHER'S MESSAGE

What a fantastic week it has been at St Mark's. We have made the most of the September sunshine and it has been wonderful to see children learning both in and outside the classroom.

A particular highlight this week has been reading the applications for our Year 6 leadership roles. The quality of the letters was outstanding, demonstrating thoughtfulness, maturity and a genuine desire put our Vision and Values into action, to serve our school community.

Today, we were delighted to announce our new House Captains, Vice House Captains and Prefects. House Captains help lead and inspire their Houses and will organise inter-house events, while Prefects support the wider school community, acting as positive role models and helping younger pupils particularly at lunchtimes.

Congratulations to:

Blue

House Captains - Charlie B, Lyra

Vice House Captains - Phoebe, Margot

Red

House Captains - Amelie, Freddie C

Vice House Captains - Beca, Henry

Green

House Captains - Oliver C, Eva

Vice House Captains - Honey, Sid

Yellow

House Captains - Heather, Teddy

Vice House Captains - Kiara, Olly T

School Prefects

Remi, Max, Evie, Florrie, Sienna, Nancy, Charlie P, Jacob, Rex, Tegan & Chris

Well done to every child who applied.



At St Mark's, Pupil Voice is incredibly important. We know that leadership opportunities help children develop confidence, contribute to school life and shape our community. Next week, we will begin the application process for our **School Council** and **FACE Champions**. **School Councillors** represent the views of their classmates and work with staff to help improve our school (even further!), while **FACE Champions** will have a Wellbeing Leadership focus, finding new ways of putting our values of Forgiveness, Aspire, Compassion and Engage into action - not just in our school but in our local community to help make a positive difference.

Please encourage your child to consider applying. Whether or not they are successful, having the courage to put themselves forward, share their ideas and embrace a new challenge is something to be celebrated.

**Have a wonderful weekend,
Mrs A Fitch and the Staff Team**



Learning Highlight of the Week

Class 1: Class 1 have enjoyed getting creative, making their very own woolly mammoths as part of their Stone Age topic! Using milk bottles, different shades of brown paper, wool and pipe cleaners, the children brought their creatures to life.

Class 2: In PE, the children played games to practise their throwing and catching skills.

Class 3 & 4: Both classes have enjoyed their Maths learning this week, ordering numbers, exploring Roman numerals and they are also beginning to learn about rounding. The children also had a fantastic time at their first swimming lesson at the Leisure Centre. It was lovely to see them getting involved and building their confidence in the water!

Class 5: In Art, the children have been learning about the famous artist Frida Kahlo. They explored one of her well-known paintings, which shows two different influences of Mexico and the USA, which she created to reflect the different sides of her identity. Inspired by Frida's work, the children then created their own drawings to represent themselves, exploring their different sides, influences and personalities.

Class 6: Class 6 have enjoyed writing their own stories about two giants this week – one good and one bad! Along the way, the giants encountered various challenges and they finished their tales with a meaningful moral.

Class 7: Class 7 enjoyed their library session this week, where they had the opportunity to read for pleasure. They also loved sharing book recommendations with their peers and discovering new stories to enjoy. A special mention goes to **Oliver, Kiara, Charlie and Sienna**, who had the wonderful opportunity to speak with the Archdeacon yesterday. They proudly shared their RE books and talked about what they have been learning in class, including the Creation story in Genesis. Well done to all four children for confidently sharing their learning!

Class 8: In Computing, the children have been using Scratch to design and create their very own Pong games! By setting up ball and paddle sprites, they applied their coding skills to programme the ball to bounce and bring their games to life.

Cross Country

Last Friday, it was the boys' turn to take part in the Cross Country meeting at Burrows Field in Cheltenham. The Cheltenham Schools Cross Country meetings are always great fun and fiercely contested, and our boys from St Mark's ran with tremendous grit, determination and sportsmanship. A huge well done to all our runners — you represented St Mark's wonderfully and should be incredibly proud of your efforts!



The Year 6 boys



The Year 6 girls team from last week

Harvest Foodbank Appeal

This year St Mark's will be collecting donations of food in support of the Cheltenham Foodbank Harvest Appeal.

Our FACE value of Compassion is 'Be kind—Notice the Need'. This is a powerful way of putting our Value of 'Compassion' into action, as we **Notice the Need** of the many people in our community who could do with help at this time.



Harvest appeal

Shopping list

Tinned meat/fish

Tinned veg/fruit

Cooking sauces

Coffee

Milk (UHT)

Cereals

Fruit juice (long-life)

Jam

Instant mash / noodles

Toiletries

If you feel able to donate, please see the list of essential items on Foodbank Shopping list that are most needed by the foodbank—but any non-perishable items are welcome!

Donations can be brought to the school any time from now until **Thursday 8th October at 9am** in readiness for our Harvest Festival for the children is on Tuesday 8th October.

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



Name it to Claim it! – Please Label Your Child's Clothes

Please can you check your child's school clothes are clearly labelled (handwritten is absolutely fine).

We have a team of Year 6 office helpers who look through the lost property most days. Clearly labelled items make it much easier for them to reunite clothing with its owner and help prevent the lost property pile from growing!

Many thanks for your support.



Christmas Card Competition

Receiving a letter from the House of Commons is always very exciting, and this week St Mark's has just received such a letter!



We have been invited to encourage the children to take part in Max Wilkinson's Christmas Card Competition.

Guidance for entries:

- Size: A4 landscape
- Theme: A fun and creative Christmas design, with local Cheltenham themes encouraged
- Please do not use: glitter, glue, cotton wool or stick-on items, as these do not reproduce well
- Original artwork only: please send the original design, no photocopies
- The winner's name will appear on the Christmas card, so the winner must be able to give consent for their name to be used.
- **Closing date: Friday 2nd October 2026**

The winner and selected runners-up will receive a certificate and a prize in the run-up to Christmas.

Where to send entries:

Max Wilkinson

16 Hewlett Road
Cheltenham
GL52 6AA



Good luck to all the children who enter! We would love to hear about your designs, so if you take part, please let us know and send us a picture of your artwork so that we can celebrate your entry in school.

Allergy Advice for Parents and Carers

As children return to school, we would like to remind all parents and carers of the importance of sharing information about allergies and helping us keep all children safe.

Please tell the school about your child's allergies:

- Inform the school of any known allergies your child has, including **food, medication or environmental allergies**.
- Please keep your child's medical information up to date and let us know if their allergy or treatment changes.
- Provide any prescribed medication, such as an adrenaline auto-injector, in line with the school's policy.
- Please ensure medication is in date, clearly labelled with your child's name and provided to the school as required.

As a school we:

- Maintain a register of pupils with known allergies.
- Encourage children to use hand sanitiser before and after eating.
- Provide age-appropriate allergy awareness lessons in class and collective worship.
- Remind children that **sharing food is not allowed**.
- As a school we carry spare adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs)



Nut and Shellfish-Free School

St Mark's is a nut and shellfish free school.

Please do not include nuts or shellfish in your child's packed lunch. We have children and staff in school who have nut and shellfish allergies, and your cooperation helps us reduce the risk of an allergic reaction.

Thank you for helping us maintain a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for all our pupils.

School Term Dates - 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, 2nd Sept, 22nd Oct,

23rd Oct, 7th June



Dates for your Diary

September

Wed 30th - Year 6 London Trip to Parliament

October

Mon 5th - Flu Immunisations

Mon 5th – Fri 9th - Cycle to School week

Wed 7th - Y3&4 Parents - Coffee with Mrs Fitch 2.30-3pm

Wed 7th - Year 6 (2025-26) Leavers Reunion 4.30pm-5pm

Thu 8th - Harvest Festival in School (Children Only)

Fri 9th - World Mental Health Day (Hello Yellow)

Mon 12th - Experience Harvest Y3-5 visit St Mark's Church

Tue 13th - Rags Collection

Tue 13th - Book Look

Wed 14th - Y5&6 Parents - Coffee with Mrs Fitch 2.30-3pm

Thu 22nd - INSET Day

Fri 23rd - INSET Day and End of Term One

Sat 31st - Year 6 Secondary Application Closing Date

November

Mon 2nd - Start of Term 2

Tue 10th – Parents' Evening 3.30-6.00

Thu 12th – Parents' Evening 3.30-6.00

Fri 13th - Children in Need

Wed 18th - St Marks Open morning 10.30am

Mon 23rd - Anti Bullying Week Starts and Odd Socks Day

Tue 24th - St Marks Open morning 10.30am

December

Thu 3rd - Y3 Ukulele Concert for parents time tbc

Mon 7th - Carol Service **5.30-6.15** Yellow & Green House / **6.45-7.30** Red & Blue House

Wed 9th - Panto 10am

Thu 10th - Christmas Jumper Day (Save the Children)

Wed 16th - Christmas lunch

Thu 17th - Concert for Rocksteady parents 2.15pm

Extra-Curricular Clubs Autumn Term 1 2026

Monday

Chinese Y3-6 3.15pm - 4.00pm

Gardening Y3-5 3.15pm - 4.00pm

Gymnastics Y3-6 3.15pm - 4.00pm

Homework Y3-6 3.15pm - 4.00pm

Recorders Y3-6 Lunchtime

Running Y3-6 3.15pm - 4.00pm

Tuesday

Orchestra Y3-6 Lunchtime

Boys Football Y5-6 Lunchtimes

Girls Football Y5-6 Lunchtimes

Choir Y3-6 3.15pm - 4.00pm

Tennis Y4-6 3.15pm - 4.10pm

Wednesday

Baking Buddies Y3-6 3.15pm - 4.30pm

Multisoccer 3.15pm - 4.15pm

Thursday

Kids with Bricks Y3-6 3.15pm - 4.00pm

Outdoor Learning 3.15pm - 4.15pm



Outdoor Learning



Class 1: Thursday Afternoon

Class 2: Thursday Morning

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 - Autumn Term 1

Please wear your PE Kit to School on PE days.



Class 1: Monday

Class 2: Wednesday

Class 3: Monday & Thursday (non swimmers)

Class 4: Monday & Thursday (non swimmers)

Class 5: Tuesday & Friday (non swimmers)

Class 6: Tuesday Friday (non swimmers)

Class 7: Wednesday & Friday (non swimmers)

Class 8: Tuesday & Friday (non swimmers)

Senior Leadership Team

Mrs Fitch: head@st-marks.gloucs.sch.uk
Mr Edwards: deputy@st-marks.gloucs.sch.uk
Mrs Whale: senco@st-marks.gloucs.sch.uk
Mrs Hicks: admin@st-marks.gloucs.sch.uk

All enquiries:

admin@st-marks.gloucs.sch.uk
01242 702280

www.stmarksjunior.com

Term Dates