



# St Mark's C of E Junior School

*Growing together, becoming all we are created to be*

Weekly Newsletter - Friday 4th April 2025

[www.stmarksjunior.com](http://www.stmarksjunior.com)

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Our Value in focus this term is: JUSTICE

## Headteacher's Message:

We are at the end of another busy week - lots to celebrate and be thankful for. Once again, our newsletter is packed with the highlights.

On Monday, the children will be walking to the church in their classes to explore aspects of the Easter story through six different interactive, and engaging activities, organised and led by members of St Mark's Church. This is a fantastic way of bringing part of the RE curriculum to life and giving the children time to think deeply, reflect and ask questions as we learn together through this hands-on approach.

Today, we say we sadly goodbye Mrs Kearney, who has been a key part of our team for over 20 years.

Mrs Kearney has made a marked difference to many children's lives at St Mark's at many different stages of their journey. She has a true gift of bringing the best out of others (children and adults alike!); her smile and joy radiates infectiously.

Mrs Kearney's specific involvement with children often in their most vulnerable moments has been incredibly special and truly transformative.

So, Mrs Kearney, as you start a new chapter, giving time to enjoy opportunities that otherwise wouldn't be possible, may you know that your work and influence at St Mark's has made a lasting impact. You are truly treasured and will be sorely missed!

As we move towards the end of the term we are looking forward to all that the last week will bring.

*Have a super weekend,*

*Mrs A Fitch and the Staff Team*



## *Learning Highlight of the Week*

**Class 1:** This week class 1 have been on two Geography walks around our locality. On Tuesday they explored the different types of land use and today they were surveying the attractiveness of the environment, noise levels and how well the community is looked after.

**Class 2:** In DT, the children have been trying lots of different vegetables. They practised peeling and cutting the vegetables in preparation for making their seasonal vegetable tarts next week.

**Class 3:** The children enjoyed PE this week, where they have been learning Basketball skills.

**Class 4:** Class 4 made Roman Chariots in DT. They had great fun racing them in the playground too!

**Class 5:** Class 5 are learning about costal erosion, looking at some villages in the UK where homes are crumbling into the sea.

**Class 6:** In PE, the children enjoyed their first Athletics lesson of the season.

**Class 7 & 8:** Year 6 had a fantastic Residential this week. See page 3 for more!



## Netball Champions

On Friday, a Year 5 team and a Year 6 team went to a netball tournament at Leckhampton High School. Both teams played in their separate pools to begin with and were then placed in to either the Shield, Plate or Cup competitions.

The Year 5 team were put in to the Shield and the Year 6 team in to the Cup. Both teams won all of their matches and went into a final!

**The Year 5 team won The Shield Competition and the Year 6 team were crowned Overall Champions and Gold medal winners of The Cup!**

All of the children were fantastic, showed brilliant sportsmanship and represented our school to the highest standard.

**We are exceedingly proud of all of you. What a fabulous way to finish our season.**

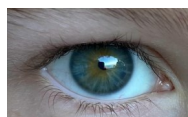


## Gloucestershire Young Photographer of the Year 2025

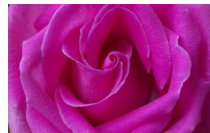
This year Gloucestershire Young Photographer 2025 Primary School competition had a record number of entries. There were so many excellent images submitted and selecting the best of them was not an easy task for the Judges.

We are therefore delighted that **8 entries** from St Mark's have been selected for inclusion in the **Audio-Visual Presentation** that will be produced over the next few weeks. **Congratulations to the following successful entrants: Amelia, Ayla, Bobby, Chris, Maisy, Penny, Rex, Samuel** whose photos will appear in the Audio Visual presentation.

In addition, particular congratulations are due to 2 of those entrants, whose images have also been



given an **Award of Commended or above**. They are: **Penny (My Eye Reflection)** and **Samuel C (Swirling Rose)**.



Penny and Samuel have been invited to attend the Awards Evening at Cheltenham Playhouse when the certificates and prizes will be presented. There is also an overall school winner too which you may remember St Mark's winning last Year!

Well done and thank you to everyone who entered the competition. A reminder that you can view the photos on our [website](#).

## Reading Award

Two children have completed their Year Group reading list! Well done to Stella and Joshie who will be presented with their Reading Award badges. Such a fantastic achievement! We are delighted to see your dedication and a love of reading shine through.

There is still time to complete the challenge, please click [here](#) to view the reading lists.



## Pioneer

We are delighted to share with you the wonderful experience our children had during the recent Pioneer Residential visit. The children participated in a wide range of exciting activities and truly pushed themselves to explore new challenges. It was a pleasure to watch them embrace each opportunity with enthusiasm and confidence.

Throughout the trip, the children showed excellent behaviour and a positive attitude. Staff members were particularly impressed by how supportive they were of one another, creating a team spirit that was inspiring to see. It was clear that they were not only enjoying the experience but were also continuing to build strong relationships with their peer groups.

We were fortunate to have fantastic weather, which allowed the children to fully immerse themselves in all the outdoor activities planned. They were exposed to a variety of new experiences, each one offering a chance for growth and learning. We were especially impressed with how independent they were and how they embraced each activity with such determination and eagerness.

The positive feedback from the staff on their behaviour and attitude was glowing. We are incredibly proud of how the children represented themselves and our school, and we hope that this experience will be something they carry with them for a long time.



## Indoor Athletics

On Monday, a team of children from Year 4 and 5 took part in the Cheltenham Indoor Athletics event at the Ladies' College. The morning consisted of a number of track and field events which the children competed in, against a number of Cheltenham schools, in order to earn points towards a final total.

Track events included lap relays and obstacle courses. Field events included the javelin, vertical jumps and long jumps. All children participated with great enthusiasm and were vocal when cheering on team mates.

**Against tough opposition our final place was 5th. Well done to all who took part.**



## PTA News

On **Wednesday 9th April** the PTA will be holding an **Easter themed cake competition**. There will be individual prizes for **1st, 2nd and 3rd place**, as well as the **best overall house** who will each win a prize.

*Please label your cake container with your child's name, class and house.*

Cakes will be on sale at break time for 50p each and if we have some left we will sell them after school.

You can bring in shop bought cakes for the sale, which will not be judged as part of the competition.

**We can't wait to see you creations! Happy Baking!!!**



Our next **Disco** is on **Thursday 10th of April**.

**Years 3 & 4 - 6.00pm - 6.45pm**

**Years 5 & 6 - 7.00pm - 8.00pm**

**Please bring your disco slip and £2 entry on the door.**

(Disco slips will be sent home in due course)

Drop-off - Reception Front Door

Pick-up - By an adult under the willow tree

**There will be sweets, glow sticks, tattoos on sale so bring change.**

## Rotary Quiz

On Thursday, four children from each Year 6 class participated in the local school Rotary Quiz. There were eight rounds questioning various topics including sport, geography, history and general knowledge. Despite still recovering from their late nights earlier this week, both teams worked well together although there were some interesting disagreements about the final answers.

The two teams were placed 13th and an impressive 3rd. **Well done to those Year 6 who participated.**



## Teaching & Learning Owls

**Star - Scarlett**

**Gold - Rosie**

**Bronze - Nancy and Leo**

**Congratulations to our owl badge winners!**



## Football Festival

Last Friday one of our Football B team took part in a football Festival at St Mark's. We played 3 matches all together.

**Won 4-0 against Greatfield**

**Won 3-0 against Warden Hill**

**Lost 1-0 against Lakeside**

St Mark's won their first 2 matches comfortably, as always they worked very well as a team, played some brilliant football and scored some amazing goals. They continued to play brilliant football in our 3rd match against Lakeside. St Mark's battled hard and dealt very well playing against a tough physical team, but unfortunately Lakeside broke through and scored the only goal of the match. Well done to the whole team, you should be really proud of your performance!

We would like to say a very big thank you to Mark Johns (parent of Freddie) who has helped with our B team this year. He has given up his own time to support our team and help with the refereeing.

**Your help is very much appreciated Thank you Mark.**



## Girls Football Match

Yesterday the Girls Football team played in a close match against Rowanfield.

For a few members of the team this was only their first or second time playing in a match and so a big well done to them.

**St Mark's won 1-0. Well done team!**

The girls played with great enthusiasm and hard work on what was a very warm day.



## Outdoor Learning Next Week

Due to the Year 4's trip Outdoor Learning will be on Monday next week.

If your child does Outdoor Learning please can they wear their suitable Outdoor Learning clothes to school and brings in their wellies.

Outdoor Learning Club has finished for the term and so is unaffected by this.



## Read with me Events

**Read with me** are a charity who have a team of volunteers who come into school offering one-to-one reading support. Their mission is to help every child learn to read well before they go to secondary school. We currently have 4 **Read with me** volunteers who come to St Mark's.

**Read with Me** will be bringing their **Not So Secret Book Club** to several Pop Up Play Days this Easter!

You will be able to find them on the following dates, from 10am until 2pm:

Tuesday, 15th April at Coney Hill Park.

Thursday, 17th April at Podsmead, Scott Avenue.

Friday, 18th April at Kingsholm, Sebert Street.

Tuesday, 22nd April at Ayland Gardens, Barton.

Thursday, 24th April at Parry Hall Park.

Friday, 25th April at The Lanett Park.

They will have plenty of free books available to take home and enjoy, plus lots of Easter-themed activities, and of course, storytime! To book your place at one of the events, visit: [www.gloucestershirehaf.com/gloucester-city-haf/](http://www.gloucestershirehaf.com/gloucester-city-haf/)

You will also find them on Robinswood Hill on Tuesday, the 15th of April from 11am until 2pm. There is no need to book this event; just turn up!



## iSingPOP Fundraiser

You may remember Jessica coming into school to work with children to record an iSingPOP CD. You can catch Jessica again at an iSingpop Fundraiser this Saturday. Tickets can be purchased via the following link:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1272498329759?aff=oddttdtcreator>



## Extra Curricular Clubs - SPRING TERM 2

### Monday

Boys Football Y5-6	FINISHED
Baking Buddies Y3-6	FINISHED
Gardening Y3-6	3.10pm - 4.00pm
Gym Club Y3-6	3.10pm - 4.00pm
Chinese Language Y3-6	3.15pm - 4.15pm
Hockey Y5-6	FINISHED
Netball Y5- 6	FINISHED
Recorders Y3-6	Lunchtime

### Tuesday

Orchestra Y3-6	FINISHED
Tennis Y4-6	FINISHED

### Wednesday

Baking Buddies Y3-6	FINISHED
Cyclestars Y3-6	3.15pm - 4.15pm
French Club Y3-6	FINISHED

### Thursday

Girls Football Y4-6	FINISHED
Coding Club Y5-6	3.10pm - 4.00pm
Choir Y3-6	3.10pm - 4.00pm
Outdoor Learning Y5-6	3.15pm - 4.15pm



## Messy Church

Come along to St Mark's Church this **Sunday 6th April** at **3.30pm** for **Messy Church**.

A fun filled, family friendly service packed full of activities, songs, lessons and food!

Flyer attached.



## School Term Dates

2024-25



Term 3: Mon 6th Jan - Fri 14th Feb 2025

Term 4: Mon 24th Feb – Fri 11th Apr 2025

Term 5: Mon 28th April – Fri 23rd May 2025

Term 6: Tue 3rd June – Fri 18th July 2025

**Inset Days: 2nd June, 21st July**

## Letters Sent Home

- Parent Letter Staff Changes Spring 25
- Clubs Summer Term 1 2025



## Outdoor Learning - Spring Term 2

**Class 3: Thursday Afternoon (Excluding 10th Apr)**

**Class 4: Thursday Morning (Excluding 10th Apr)**

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.**

## 2024 - 25



### April

- Mon 7th - Book Look Class 7
- Mon 7th - Experience Easter with Open the Book at St Mark's Church Y3-5 **Children Only**
- Tue 8th - Easter Service **Children Only in School**
- Tue 8th - Book Look Year 4
- Wed 9th - PTA Bake Sale
- Thu 10th - Book Look Year 3, 5 & Class 8
- Thu 10th - PTA Discos
- Thu 10th - Year 4 Roman Experience Trip
- Thu 10th - Class 1 Cookery DT Session 9-12
- Fri 11th - Class 2 Cookery DT Session 9-12
- Fri 11th - End of Term 4
- Mon 28th - Start of Summer Term

### May

- Mon 12th - Rags Collection
- Mon 12th - 14th - SATs Week
- Tue 20th - School Beat Session
- Tue 20th - Swimming Gala
- Wed 21st - GWR Trip Year 6
- Wed 21st - Spring Fayre
- Thu 22nd - Book Look
- Fri 23rd - End of Term 5
- Advance Notice of a Few Dates**
- Tue 10th June - Sports Day

## PE - Spring Term 2

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



**Class 1: Monday and Thursday**

**Class 2: Wednesday and Friday**

**Class 3: Wednesday**

**Class 4: Friday**

**Class 5: Tuesday and Thursday for non-swimmers**

**Class 6: Tuesday and Thursday for non-swimmers**

**Class 7: Tuesday and Friday for non-swimmers**

**Class 8: Tuesday and Friday for non-swimmers**

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