

Dear Gastrells Community,

What a wonderfully full final two weeks of term we've had! The children have continued to impress us with their focus and enthusiasm for learning, and we've definitely managed to squeeze in plenty of festive cheer along the way too...in fact...this issue of the newsletter could easily be a short novel—it's been such a busy (and brilliant) end to the year, that it's hard to capture everything we've been up to! So, grab yourself a cup of tea (...or perhaps a little mulled wine), sit back, and enjoy a look back at a fabulous end to 2025.

We'd also like to take this opportunity to thank the entire Gastrells team for their energy, commitment, and hard work this term. We have some exiting plans forming for the term ahead and look forward to sharing this with you shortly. Wishing you all a beautiful Christmas, whatever that may look like for you, and we very much look forward to seeing you in 2026! Warmest wishes.....The Gastrells Team.

THANK YOU

A **HUGE** and heartfelt thank you to all of the gifts parents have very kindly given to staff this year. Presents are never expected, but your generosity is greatly appreciated and noted...Thank you all.

MESSAGE FROM GOVERNORS

We are pleased to announce that Patricia (Tricia) Carrington and Wynitia (Neesh) Oakhill were appointed to the Board of Governors as Chair and Vice Chair respectively at the last Full Governing Board Meeting following the resignation of the previous Co-Chairs, Rhian Evans and Clare Lucas. Rhian and Clare worked tirelessly to support the school for some time, but particularly through these last few months and our gratitude and thanks go to them for their dedication to the role.

Tricia & Neesh are both Co-Chairs at another school in the area and bring experience and expertise in Governance to our Board. They are both committed to ensuring Gastrells Primary School is supported through this next phase of its journey.

They are looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible in the new year.

SPECIAL AWARDS

Congratulations to all the children who have received a special award. We are very proud of you.



Merits 12th December



Multi-Skills awards

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Our annual Carol Service at The Tabernacle was a wonderful celebration and as always, the children did us proud. From Rudolph to Elton John, every performance was full of confidence and festive spirit.

A special mention goes to our brand-new school choir, led by Mr Brown, who showcased 2 folk-style songs—an exciting first for Gastrells. And as always, The 12 Days of Christmas in true Gastrells tradition was a brilliant finale and a real highlight, competitiveness and all!

Thank you to all parents and carers for coming, and to The Tabernacle for hosting us so warmly once again.



CHRISTMAS CHEER

CHRISTMAS CHEER IN THE LUNCH HALL!

Christmas Lunch in the hall is always a real festive highlight, with the whole school coming together to enjoy a special meal and plenty of Christmas cheer. All staff took on the role of servers, much to the delight of the children.

The children pulled crackers, shared jokes, and sang along to Christmas music, filling the hall with laughter and festive spirit...just the medicine we need at the end of a long term!

A big thank you to all staff for helping to make the lunchtime so special, and to our brilliant caterers in the kitchen for preparing such a delicious meal for everyone.



CHRISTMAS CHEER

CHRISTMAS CHEER IN THE LUNCH HALL!



THE ANGEL EXPRESS

A DAZZLING PERFORMANCE!

Owls and Peregrines class delighted us with their Christmas play, *The Angel Express*. Across three performances, the children came together to sing, act and shine on stage—and for some, it was their very first performance at Gastrells, so an extra well done to these children for being so brave.

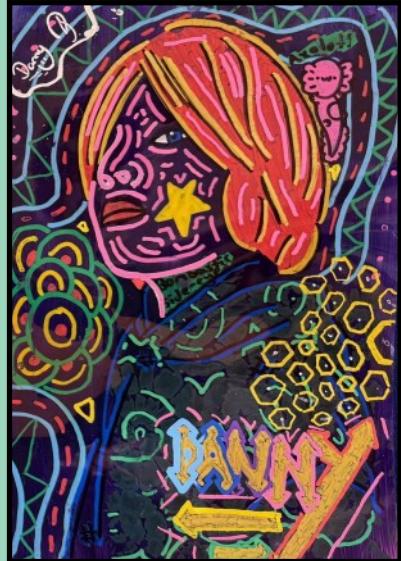
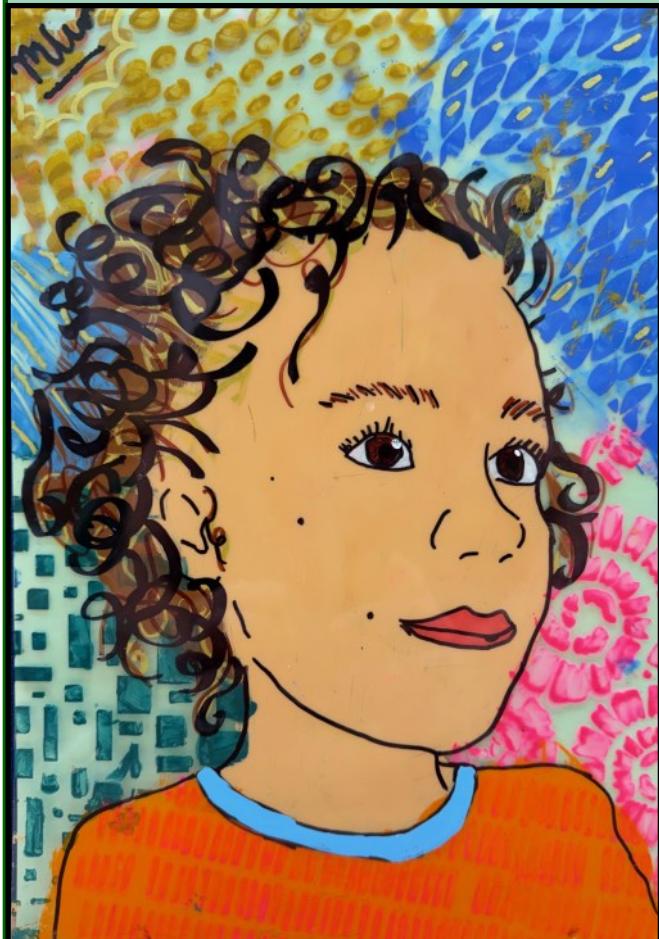


We were incredibly proud of the confidence and joy they brought to every moment, and the costumes looked absolutely fabulous.



The story opened with a bold “Extra! Extra!” style announcement, as the *Angel Express* newspaper shared the news of Jesus’ birth. Excited by the headline, the angels quickly gathered together, forming a choir to sing, celebrate, and welcome the arrival of the newborn King. Congratulations Owls and Peregrines—what a super show to get us in the festive mood!

CREATIVITY AT ART CLUB



What a fabulously creative term we have had at Art Club! ... from cyanotype printing, to embroidery and acetate layering portraits — we are so very proud of you all. Just brilliant.

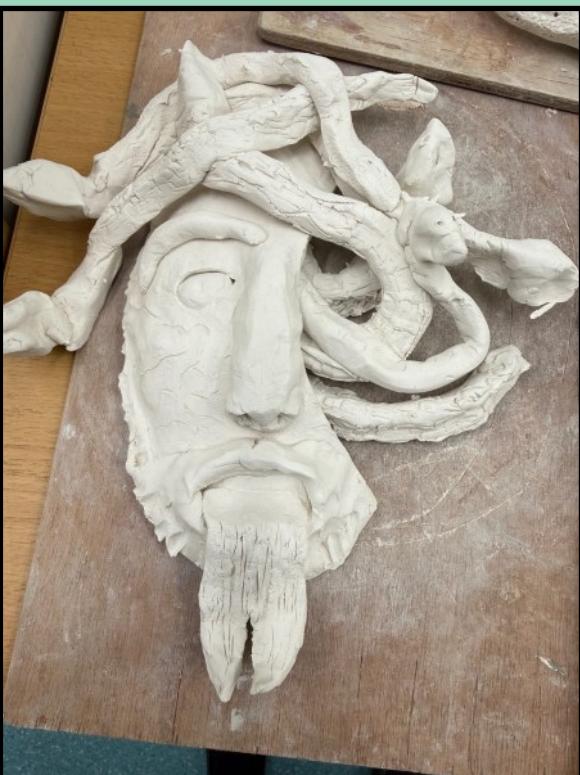


THE CURSE OF MEDUSA



And the creativity continues in Eagles class as their Medusa heads came out of the kiln!

Looking at Greek mythology in World Awareness and Geography lessons, the children have done a wonderful job observing the form of a face as a 3D structure. Our Medusas will be glazed and then re-fired to get that vibrant green colour that Medusa is famous for....



***Disclaimer:** Gastrells hold no responsibility should you choose to look directly into one of these Medusa's eyes. Viewing is at your own discretion!*

ALL ABOARD!!



Art has continued in style this term, with Eagles completing their perspective unit inspired by *The Polar Express*.

Drawing in perspective is no easy task, but through careful preparation and precise measuring, the children have produced work they can be truly proud of.

With the added touches of the Northern Lights and a warm carriage glow, these wintery train scenes have been a huge success and will be brightening our corridors as we head into the new year.

CREATIVITY ACROSS THE SCHOOL



Ospreys have created these vibrant 3D heads inspired by the cubist artist Pablo Picasso. With a focus on shape, colour and composition, the results are really striking and we look forward to displaying them soon.

Goshawks have also been busy constructing the base for these 'giant' mini-beasts. Forms have been shaped and sculpted using cardboard and tissue paper, ready for children from across the school to add paint and bring them to life next term with some iridescent paints and acrylics.



FESTIVITIES EMBRACED!



Festive fun has been in full swing across the school this week!

In EYFS, children have loved starting each day with the Advent book calendar. Carefully wrapped by our Christmas elves, each morning brings a new story to unwrap and enjoy together—such a magical way to begin the day.

KS1 children also have been busy making Christmas cards and decorations, playing festive games, and singing merrily throughout the week. The classrooms have been full of creativity, laughter all week long.

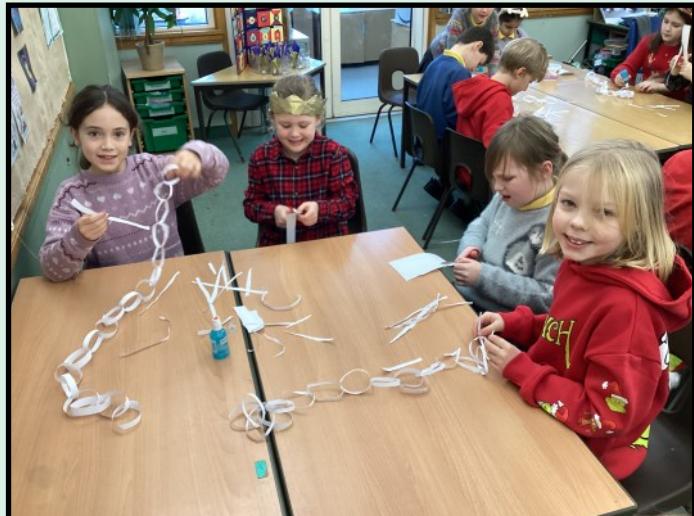


FESTIVITIES EMBRACED!

Festive fun has been just as busy in KS2, with the children filling their week with crafts, games and Christmas challenges.

From seeing who could make the longest paperchain using just one piece of paper, to drawing Christmas scenes from memory, there has been plenty of creativity on show, alongside parachute games and lots of teamwork and laughter.

It's been a brilliant (and well-deserved!) way to round off a term of super learning.



A special mention goes to Sparrowhawks class, who have taken photographs of what Christmas looks like for us, to share with their pen pals in Kenya—ready to be sent off this week with a special arty Christmas gift.



ROCKING AROUND...

iROCK



The children showcased a range of instruments, including bass, keyboards and drums, along with some confident singers leading the way (and some guest singers too!).



We recently enjoyed a fantastic Christmas iRock concert, where we were treated to performances from four brilliant bands in front of the whole school and many parents and carers.



Each band performed with real energy and teamwork, and it was wonderful to see how much they enjoyed being on stage.

A huge well done to everyone involved—what a brilliant way to build confidence, celebrate progress, and inspire a love of music!



DIARY DATES

SPRING 1 TERM

JANUARY	
05	Spring 1 Term Starts
07	Pantomime—Whole School
19	Inset day
23-25	The Big Bird Watch
27	Cheltenham Dance Festival
28	KS1 Sports Hall Athletics
FEBRUARY	
02-22	Next Level Art Exhibition, Nailsworth
04	Girls Football
13	End of Term 3.15pm

SPRING 2 TERM

FEBRUARY	
24	Spring 2 Term Starts
MARCH	
05	World Book Day
TBC	Gloucestershire Wildlife Quiz Round 1
27	End of Term 12.15pm

We will continue to add events to this page throughout the term.

ATTENDANCE ACROSS THE SCHOOL

Owls	93%
Peregrines	94%
Ospreys	93%
Sparrowhawks	97%
Goshawks	89%
Eagles	86%

TERM DATES 25-26

Term 1	Wed 3rd Sept	-	Fri 24th Oct 2025
Term 2	Tue 4th Nov	-	Fri 19th Dec 2025
Term 3	Mon 5th Jan	-	Fri 13th Feb 2026
Term 4	Tue 24th Feb	-	Fri 27th Mar 2026
Term 5	Mon 13th Apr	-	Fri 22nd May 2026
Term 6	Mon 1st Jun	-	Fri 17th Jul 2026

INSET DAYS

Mon	1st Sept 2025	Mon	19th Jan 2026
Tue	2nd Sept 2025	Mon	20th July 2026
Mon	3rd Nov 2025		

DATES CONT...

SCHOOL TERMS AND HOLIDAYS

2025/26



SEPTEMBER							OCTOBER							NOVEMBER						
Mon	1	8	15	22	29		Mon	6	13	20	27		Mon	3	10	17	24			
Tues	2	9	16	23	30		Tues	7	14	21	28		Tues	4	11	18	25			
Wed	3	10	17	24			Wed	1	8	15	22	29	Wed	5	12	19	26			
Thur	4	11	18	25			Thur	2	9	16	23	30	Thur	6	13	20	27			
Fri	5	12	19	26			Fri	3	10	17	24	31	Fri	7	14	21	28			
Sat	6	13	20	27			Sat	4	11	18	25		Sat	1	8	15	22	29		
Sun	7	14	21	28			Sun	5	12	19	26		Sun	2	9	16	23	30		
DECEMBER							JANUARY							FEBRUARY						
Mon	1	8	15	22	29		Mon	5	12	19	26		Mon	2	9	16	23			
Tues	2	9	16	23	30		Tues	6	13	20	27		Tues	3	10	17	24			
Wed	3	10	17	24	31		Wed	7	14	21	28		Wed	4	11	18	25			
Thur	4	11	18	25			Thur	1	8	15	22	29	Thur	5	12	19	26			
Fri	5	12	19	26			Fri	2	9	16	23	30	Fri	6	13	20	27			
Sat	6	13	20	27			Sat	3	10	17	24	31	Sat	7	14	21	28			
Sun	7	14	21	28			Sun	4	11	18	25		Sun	1	8	15	22			
MARCH							APRIL							MAY						
Mon	2	9	16	23	30		Mon	6	13	20	27		Mon	4	11	18	25			
Tues	3	10	17	24	31		Tues	7	14	21	28		Tues	5	12	19	26			
Wed	4	11	18	25			Wed	1	8	15	22	29	Wed	6	13	20	27			
Thur	5	12	19	26			Thur	2	9	16	23	30	Thur	7	14	21	28			
Fri	6	13	20	27			Fri	3	10	17	24		Fri	1	8	15	22	29		
Sat	7	14	21	28			Sat	4	11	18	25		Sat	2	9	16	23	30		
Sun	1	8	15	22	29		Sun	5	12	19	26		Sun	3	10	17	24	31		
JUNE							JULY							AUGUST						
Mon	1	8	15	22	29		Mon	6	13	20	27		Mon	3	10	17	24	31		
Tues	2	9	16	23	30		Tues	7	14	21	28		Tues	4	11	18	25			
Wed	3	10	17	24			Wed	1	8	15	22	29	Wed	5	12	19	26			
Thur	4	11	18	25			Thur	2	9	16	23	30	Thur	6	13	20	27			
Fri	5	12	19	26			Fri	3	10	17	24	31	Fri	7	14	21	28			
Sat	6	13	20	27			Sat	4	11	18	25		Sat	1	8	15	22	29		
Sun	7	14	21	28			Sun	5	12	19	26		Sun	2	9	16	23	30		

Term Time	Holidays	Christmas Bank Holidays	25 th December 2025
Bank Holiday		New Year Bank Holiday	26 th December 2025
Term 1: Mon 1 st Sept – Fri 24 th Oct 2025	40 days	Good Friday	1 st January 2026
Term 2: Mon 3 rd Nov – Fri 19 th Dec 2025	35 days	Easter Monday	3 rd April 2026
Term 3: Mon 5 th Jan - Fri 13 th Feb 2026	30 days	Early May Bank Holiday	6 th April 2026
Term 4: Mon 23 rd Feb – Fri 27 th Mar 2026	25 days	Spring Bank Holiday	25 th May 2026
Term 5: Mon 13 th April – Fri 22 nd May 2026	29 days	Summer Bank Holiday	31 st August 2026
Term 6: Mon 1 st June – Mon 20 th July 2026	36 days		
	Total	195 days*	

SAFEGUARDING

Mental Health Support at Christmas



Do you feel your mental health could be at risk over the Christmas holiday?

It is recognised that, for some, Christmas can be a particularly difficult time of year.

There are organisations to help support your mental health and emotional wellbeing, especially over the Christmas break.

Elefriends is a supportive online community with someone available to speak to you every night until midnight.

Mind offers urgent support, ideas and tips.

Samaritans are available 24/7 for you to speak to about anything you need to talk about, or when you feel you need some support.



Make yourself and your mental health a priority this Christmas and always.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

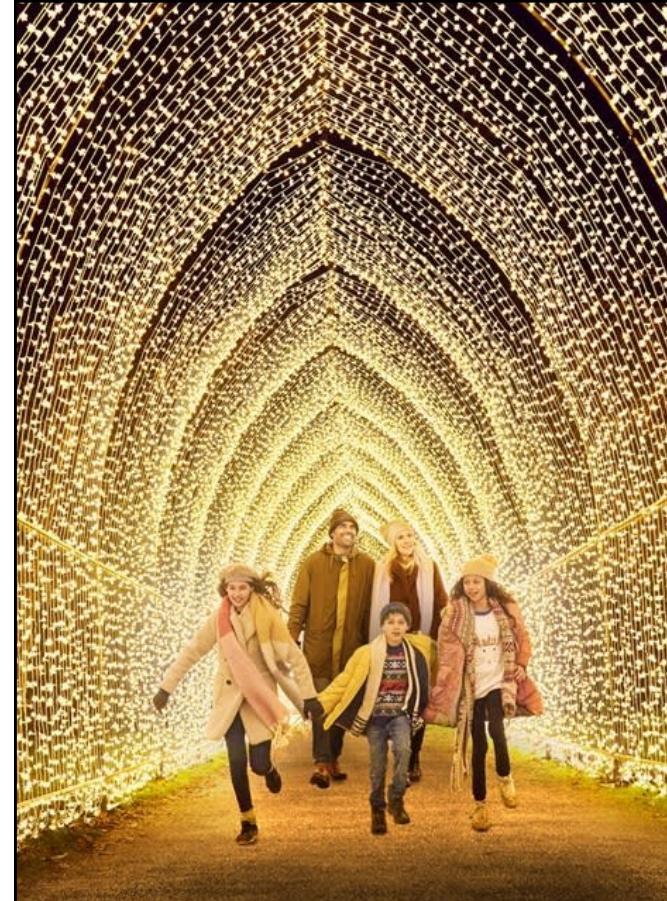


**CHRISTMAS AT
WESTONBIRT**

A magical after-dark trail for everyone

28 November – 31 December

BOOK NOW



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Painswick
Rococo
Garden

Enchanted Garden
by Night



Whimsy, Twinkly, Enchanting!

Book Now

28 Nov – 29 Dec



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Stroud Christmas Markets

Thursday 18–Tuesday 23 December, 2025
Cornhill Market Place, GL5 2HE

Thursday 18th
Crafts • Gifts • Food
9am–4pm

Friday 19th
Crafts • Gifts • Food
9am–4pm

Monday 22nd
Crafts • Gifts • Food
9am–4pm

Saturday 20th
Stroud Farmers' Market
9am–2pm

Tuesday 23rd
Stroud Farmers' Market Extra
9am–2pm



Finish your Christmas shopping in Stroud

For further info: markets@fresh-n-local.co.uk • 07813 943237

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Please be aware that Gastrells will be submitting a number of entries for children from the school itself, so if you would like to enter your child into this exhibition, please contact Miss Mahaffy first to check that we are not also entering them via the school, as only 1 entry is allowed per child. Many thanks.

rmaffay@gastrells.glos.sch.uk

► YOUNG LOCAL ARTISTS ► AGED 4 TO 19 ► OPEN CALL, APPLY NOW



NEXT LEVEL
'Our Natural World'
Young People's Art Exhibition

3rd - 22nd February 2026

We are looking for **young artists, aged 4 to 19**, who would like to have their work in an exhibition in our gallery and café at Three Storeys in Nailsworth. Together we want to celebrate young peoples' creativity and art.

Visit threestoreys.co.uk
Applications close on 12th January 2026

► YOUNG LOCAL ARTISTS ► AGED 4 TO 19 ► OPEN CALL, APPLY NOW

COMMUNITY EVENTS



NEXT LEVEL YOUNG PEOPLE'S ART EXHIBITION

3rd - 22nd February 2026



We are inviting young people, aged 4-19 and living or going to school within 10 miles of Nailsworth, to apply to be part of the Next Level art exhibition at Three Storeys. We want to see the talent and imagination of children, displayed for everyone to enjoy, on real gallery walls.

This time we have a theme to our exhibition; '**Our Natural World**'. This can be interpreted in many ways. You might want to celebrate what you love about the natural world, locally or globally, or perhaps you want to focus on sustainability and climate change.

What is your personal connection to nature and your natural environment?

We will be awarding prizes for each age category, as decided by a panel of local artists. The winners will be announced at a private view event for friends and families, on Tuesday 10th February.

How to apply (free of charge):

Entries can come from the parent/carer of the young person, or directly from the artist. Complete the application form, which can be found on our website, and submit it along with a high quality photograph of one piece of artwork via email, to info@threestoreys.co.uk by 12th January 2026.

2D or 3D work can be entered. We will only be considering one piece per artist, and it must fit with the theme. It is essential the photo is high quality; please take a photograph straight on, in daylight.

Please make sure you read the full information on our website, which includes how to deliver your work if requested.

Visit threestoreys.co.uk
Applications close on 12th January 2026

Please scan
QR code
with phone
camera



COMMUNITY EVENTS

TABLE TENNIS



MINCHINHAMPTON
COMMUNITY HUB

£5

PEOPLE OF ALL AGES AND ABILITIES ARE WELCOME

6PM TO 7PM – JUNIORS

7PM TO 8.30 PM – ADULTS AND ADVANCED JUNIORS

TO BOOK A PLACE OR FOR MORE INFORMATION, EMAIL:

STROUDTTCLUB@GMAIL.COM

OR CALL 07768 527743

