

Dear Gastrells Community,

It's hard to believe we have found ourselves at the half way point for this academic year!

Yet another fortnight has passed and the activities and opportunities throughout the school keep on flowing.

We are especially proud of the children who are exhibiting their artwork in such a professional setting — what an incredible opportunity, and a wonderful celebration of their creativity and confidence. If you haven't yet visited the exhibition, we highly recommend to. We have also been hugely impressed with our gymnasts in their recent competition. They showed determination, resilience and excellent sportsmanship, and represented Gastrells so well; a real credit to themselves and the school.

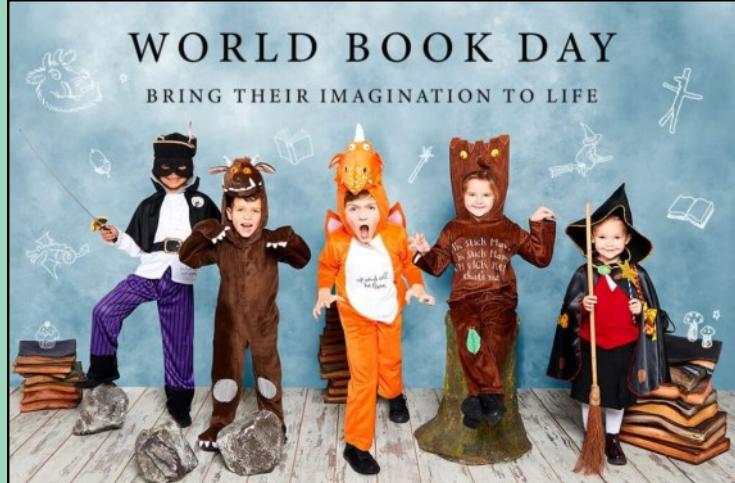
As we reach the end of term, we would like to wish all Gastrells families a lovely half term break. We are also looking forward to welcoming Mrs Seward into school more next term as she begins her handover as Headteacher.

...and finally, good luck to everyone taking part in the **FOG Quiz on Friday night**, we hope you have a brilliant evening!

Wishing you all a lovely and restful half term.

WORLD BOOK DAY

Thursday 5th March



Come prepared for World Book Day on Thursday 5th March where children are invited to come into school dressed as one of their favourite book characters!

MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE

Breakfast Club and After School Club

Just a gentle reminder to please check your account and settle any outstanding fees for your wrap around care.

If you are paying via childcare vouchers, please note that these can sometimes take a little time to reach us. We are only able to update and clear balances once the payment has arrived into our account.

To help us keep bookings organised and ensure sessions run smoothly, we kindly ask that any outstanding balances are cleared before making any bookings for Term 4.

School Dinner Money

Please could we also ask that you log into ParentPay and settle any outstanding school dinner balances before we break up for half term. A small number of accounts are beginning to build up, and we would really appreciate these being cleared in preparation for the new term.

Residential Trips

If you have any outstanding monies for upcoming residential trips, we would be grateful if payment instalments via the school app could be brought up to date before we return after half term.

NEXT LEVEL EXHIBITION

THREE STOREYS GALLERY



We are delighted to share that the Next Level Exhibition is now open for the public to view in Nailsworth, and we couldn't be more thrilled to see so many of our children's artwork on display. The exhibition, which was open to young people aged 4–19, showcases an incredible range of talent from across the local area, and it is a real celebration of creativity and self-expression. We are incredibly proud that Gastrells artists are exhibited alongside so many other talented young people, and it has been wonderful to see the children's work presented in such a professional setting.

We are also excited to announce that three of our Gastrells children had their artwork selected for very special reasons. Danny and Millicent had their artwork selected to be produced into cards that will be sold throughout the event, raising money for 'NailsworthCAN' and Ben O'Brien created an incredible snake collage, which was not only chosen to feature on the main advertising leaflet, but has also won him the accolade of most impressive artwork in his age category! A fantastic achievement and a real honour.



There was a real buzz at the exhibition, and it was lovely to see so many members of the public viewing the artwork, taking their time and admiring the children's creations.

Miss Mahaffy said, *"It was very hard to select the artwork to submit this year, there are so many talented children throughout the school. We feel truly blessed to have such a brilliant opportunity on our doorstep to celebrate young people and their creativity"*

The exhibition is open to view until 22nd February so if you're able to visit, please do go along and support our young artists, it's a wonderful display and something the children can be extremely proud of.



IN OTHER NEWS...

REPLIES FROM KENYA



Sparrowhawks Class have been delighted to receive some photographs from our penpal friends at **RAAP School in Kenya**. Seeing the images has really brought the project to life. Now that we've exchanged photographs of our settings, it has opened the children's eyes to just how different our schools and surroundings can be — from classrooms and outdoor spaces to the wider community around them. At the same time, the children have also noticed many similarities too: the pride everyone takes in their learning, the importance of friendship, and the excitement of sharing news and asking questions.

The letters have sparked lots of thoughtful conversations in class, with the children eager to learn more about daily life at RAAP School and to share their own experiences here at school. It has been wonderful to see such curiosity, empathy and enthusiasm growing with each exchange.

Our gifts for the children at RAAP School haven't arrived yet, but we're looking forward to them being received soon. In the meantime, it's been lovely to continue building this relationship and strengthening the connection between our two schools.

We can't wait to share our next letters and keep this special partnership going.

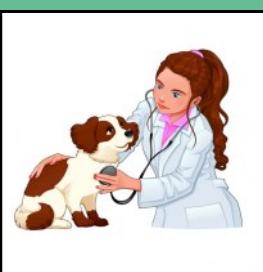


OWLS REQUEST FOR VISITORS...

After half term, Owls Class will be exploring our new topic, "**People Who Help Us**," and we'd love your support.

We're looking for people in a wide range of roles who help others as part of their job to visit the class for a short, informal chat. This helps the children understand the many different ways people contribute to our community.

In previous years, we've been lucky to welcome visitors such as police officers, firefighters and midwives — and we'd love to broaden this even further this year. Do you know a friendly postal worker, refuse collector, crossing patrol, paramedic, care worker, builder, shop worker, or anyone else who helps people in their day-to-day work? If you can help, or can recommend someone who might be happy to visit, please contact Miss Woolls at cwoolls@gastrells.glos.sch.uk.



IN OTHER NEWS...

HOKUSAI MEETS ALMA THOMAS

Sparrowhawks have just completed these beautiful acrylic paintings depicting Hokusai's Great Wave through the painterly lens of artist Alma Thomas.

Two very different artists; Hokusai a Japanese wood block painter from 200 years ago, and Alma Thomas an African-American abstract artist from 50 years ago. The children compared both styles of artwork and then adapted their painting techniques to

reflect the block pattern of warm and cool analogous colours within the sun and the wave. As we are sure you will agree, these are stunning and very atmospheric. Well done all!



BIKEABILITY

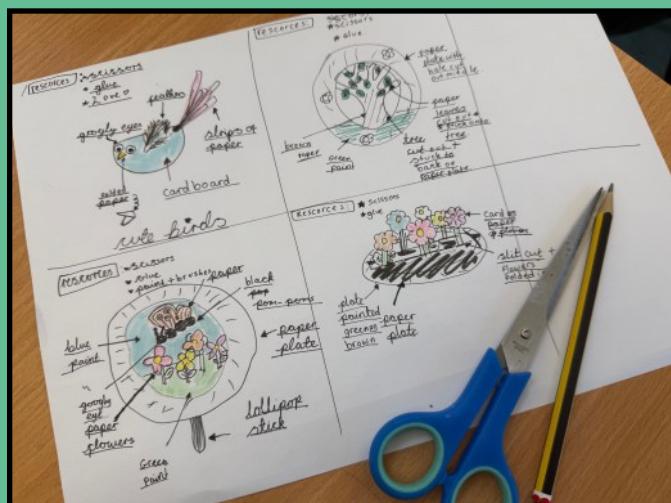
Last week, it was the year 5's chance to take part in this year's Bikeability, which equips children with the skills, confidence, and safety knowledge to ride bikes on roads through three progressive levels, covering off-road control to navigating complex, busy traffic.

As always, the children embraced this opportunity enthusiastically and have come away feeling more empowered on



ART IN THE COMMUNITY

Art Ambassadors are stretching their wings and will be visiting the local Rodborough Playgroup to lead some creative stations in their afternoon provisions. The team are busy researching the developmental stages of younger children and putting together some spring inspired activities to offer.



IN OTHER NEWS...

Gloucestershire Young Photographer of the Year

It's that time of year again folks, when our thoughts turn to capturing special moments through a lens. We're delighted to be taking part once more in this wonderful county-wide photography competition, and we'd love as many children as possible to enter.

Each year, more than 65 schools from across the county take part, and it's always inspiring to see the imagination, creativity and careful compositions that children produce. Photographs can be colour or black and white, and the subject matter is completely open—anything from a pet, a family member, a favourite view on a walk, a beautiful snapshot of nature or the business of a market town.

To help spark ideas, here are a few different ways children could experiment with their photography:



Try different perspectives: photograph from up high, down low, or even from the side to make everyday objects look new and interesting.



Get close with macro-style shots: zoom in or move in close to capture details like leaf veins, bark texture, raindrops, feathers, or petals.



Go wide angle: step back and capture the bigger scene—landscapes, skies, or groups of objects.



Play with light and shadow: silhouettes, reflections in puddles, or sunlight through trees can be striking.



Choose colour or black and white: colour can make a photo feel bright and lively, while black and white can highlight shape, contrast and mood.



Look for patterns: repeating shapes (fences, bricks, footprints, waves) can make a simple photo eye-catching.

All submissions must be emailed directly to Miss Mahaffy at rmahaffy@gastrells.gloucs.sch.uk by **Wednesday 18th March**. She will then submit entries on behalf of the school.

Please do encourage your children to get involved, have a go, and enjoy being creative—we can't wait to see what they capture!

22nd Gloucestershire Young Photographer of the Year 2026

We invite all Gloucestershire pupils to enter **ONE** Image - **any subject**

PRIMARY & SECONDARY AWARDS

FIRST PRIZE £75
& RUNNER UP CASH PRIZES

Best Secondary & Primary School Entry
GYP TROPHY



SELECTED IMAGES will be CINEMA PROJECTED

at the Awards evening, **THE BACON THEATRE, CHELTENHAM**

Wednesday APRIL 29th

ENTRIES CLOSE
**FRIDAY
MARCH
20th**

Please submit your entry to your school representative before the closing date

For further information ask your teacher or visit:
www.cheltenhamcameraclub.co.uk
email: GYP@cheltenhamcameraclub.co.uk

Organised by Cheltenham Camera Club
Supported by Cheltenham Arts Council
& Cheltenham Round Table

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS!



PUT 'EM UP!

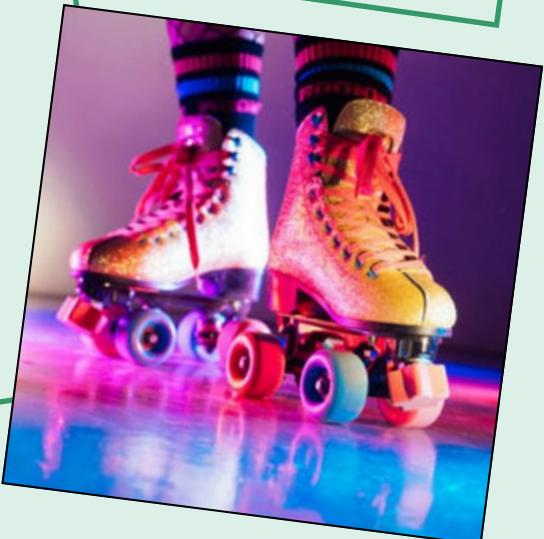
Stroud Boxing Club offer boxing and fitness sessions for adults as well as children aged 10+. I really enjoy their sessions and would highly recommend them.
www.stroudboxing.com

Miss Wools, EYFS

ROLLER DISCO!

Stratford Park Leisure Centre offer fabulous roller skating sessions for the whole family to enjoy on **Saturday afternoons**—you can bring your own skates or use those on offer. It's been great fun taking our children there and re-living my youth again!

Mrs Salter, TA Eagles



ULTIMATE FRISBEE!

'Five Valleys Ultimate' meet on Sundays from 2-4pm at Rodborough Playing field for a brilliant afternoon of ultimate frisbee. So...if you like throwing things on a whole new level, come and join us for some frisbee fun! (Children and adults both welcome)

Mr Cantoni, TA, Goshawks

WAKE THE TIGER

Looking for something incredibly special this half term? I highly recommend Wake the Tiger in Bristol; an extensive and thought provoking immersive art space where you are transported into a whole new magical world. Set within 2 floor of a huge warehouse, this truly is an impressive day out for all the family.

Miss Mahaffy, Art Lead



DIARY DATES

SPRING 2 TERM

FEBRUARY

22 Next Level Exhibition Ends

23 Spring 2 Term Starts

MARCH

05 World Book Day

06 In the Net, Y4

08 Drumming concert, 1.30pm

16 Class Photos & Y6 Leavers Photos

TBC Gloucestershire Wildlife Quiz Round 1

23 FOG Easter Egg Competition

26 iRock concert, 1.30pm

27 End of Term 12.15pm

SUMMER 1 TERM

APRIL

13 Summer 1 Term Starts

16-23 Scholastic Book Fayre

24 FOG Easter Bingo!

TBC Gloucestershire Young Photographer Comp

29-01 Year 4 Residential

MAY

TBC FOG Pre-loved Clothing Sale

22 End of Term 3.15pm

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

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	Mon 23th 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		

ATTENDANCE ACROSS THE SCHOOL (30th January – 12th February 2026)

Owls	100%
Peregrines	90%
Ospreys	96%
Sparrowhawks	95%
Goshawks	89%
Eagles	87%

DATES CONT...

SCHOOL TERMS AND HOLIDAYS

2025/26

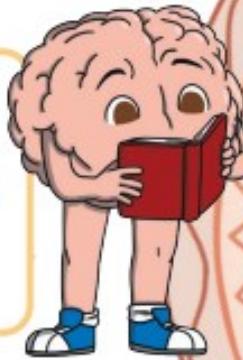


SEPTEMBER							OCTOBER							NOVEMBER						
Mon	1	8	15	22	29		Mon	6	13	20	27		Mon	3	10	17	24			
Tues	2	9	16	23	30		Tues	7	14	21	28		Tues	4	11	18	25			
Wed	3	10	17	24			Wed	1	8	15	22	29	Wed	5	12	19	26			
Thur	4	11	18	25			Thur	2	9	16	23	30	Thur	6	13	20	27			
Fri	5	12	19	26			Fri	3	10	17	24	31	Fri	7	14	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			
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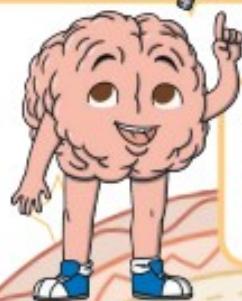
Term Time	Holidays	Christmas Bank Holidays	25 th December 2025
Bank Holiday		New Year Bank Holiday	26 th December 2025
Term 1: Mon 1 st Sept – Fri 24 th Oct 2025	40 days	Good Friday	1 st January 2026
Term 2: Mon 3 rd Nov – Fri 19 th Dec 2025	35 days	Easter Monday	3 rd April 2026
Term 3: Mon 5 th Jan - 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 is about our feelings, thoughts, and how we get along with friends. It helps us stay calm, be happy, and make good choices.



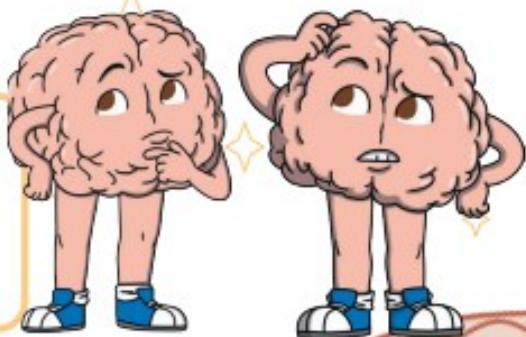
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Good mental health means being able to deal with everyday problems.

What is Mental Health?

Mental health can be affected by many things, like how we are born, what happens to us, and our family.



Just like you need to eat healthy food and exercise to stay strong, you need to do things that make you happy and calm to keep your mind healthy.

COMPETITION

22nd GLOUCESTERSHIRE Young Photographer of the Year 2026

We invite all Gloucestershire pupils to enter **ONE** Image - any subject

PRIMARY & SECONDARY AWARDS

FIRST PRIZE £75
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Best Secondary & Primary School Entry
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Organised by Cheltenham Camera Club
Supported by Cheltenham Arts Council
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Please email your entries to

Miss Mahaffy by Wednesday 18th March.

[rmaffy@gastrells.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:rmahaffy@gastrells.gloucs.sch.uk)

Gloucestershire Young Photographer of the Year 2026

Rules

1. This Competition is open to pupils attending Gloucestershire Schools only.
2. Each pupil may submit one digital image via a single School Representative, either in colour or monochrome with resolution of 1920px wide x 1080px high.
3. The whole picture must have been photographed by the entrant and therefore be their copyright. AI images are **NOT** allowed. Creative images are allowed but must be the work of the entrant.
4. All entries **must include the name of pupil and the title of the image** and will need to be submitted by **Friday 29th March 2026 - 23.59hrs**. **UNTITLED work will not be selected**
5. The photographs will be judged by a panel of three judges chosen by Cheltenham Camera Club.
6. Winners will be notified by early April, and the results will be published on the Club's website www.cheltenhamcameraclub.uk.
7. The Judges' decision is final.
8. Awards will be made for individual photographs, as well as for best overall School entries in Primary and Secondary school categories (see 10. below for details).
9. All selected entries will be projected at the Awards Evening at the Bacon Theatre, Cheltenham on Wednesday 29th April. Booking details will be sent to schools with the results.
10. The prizes will be presented at this Awards Evening. Prizes will be awarded for the 1st, 2nd & 3rd placed photographs in both the Primary and Secondary categories; other photographs may receive Highly Commended and Commended Certificates. Trophies will be awarded to the Primary and Secondary Schools with the best overall entries.
11. Any photograph entered may be shown on the Club's website, displayed in other exhibitions, and used for publicity purposes by Cheltenham CameraClub, complying with GDPR where appropriate.
12. A presentation of the selected images with titles and authors names (First and Surname) will be made available to all participating schools for showing to their pupils. School names will not be displayed alongside photographs but listed in the Presentation.
13. Whilst every care will be taken, the Club cannot accept responsibility for the infringement of copyright.

Affiliated to PAGB through membership of MCPF
and supported by Cheltenham Arts Council and Cheltenham Round Table
www.cheltenhamcameraclub.co.uk

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COMMUNITY EVENTS

February Half Term at the Museum!

It's a busy Half Term packed with hands-on activities, creative workshops and plenty for families to explore. Creative makes, family fun and brilliant ways to dive into history all week long.

Art Explorers: Arts & Crafts Trail

Sat 14 - Sun 22 Feb | £2 per trail

Follow the trail through puppets, pottery and nature-loving makers, try creative challenges and design your own patterns. Finish it and you'll earn a nature-inspired stamper to take home.

Making Folk: Crafting Charms and Folk Motifs

Sat 14 Feb, 1-4 pm | £5

Get creative with natural materials, beads and fabric as you make your own charms or stitch folk-inspired motifs. For all ages, proudly part of Gloucester Folk Trail.

Hands On History: Object Handling with the Birdlip Mirror

Sun 15 & Wed 18 Feb | £1 donation

Take a closer look at our Birdlip Mirror replicas and discover their stories with our Visitor Experience Assistant. This relaxed drop-in is free, with a suggested £1 donation. Great for families aged 3+.

Brick Builders Club: The Great Outdoors

Tue 17 Feb, 10am - 1pm | £3 per child

Get creative with nature-themed LEGO challenges inspired by our Arts & Crafts displays. Build landscapes, dream up wild creatures or invent something totally new. Pick up fun prompts and let your imagination take over. Suitable for ages 5+.

Glorious Glevum Tour

Wed 18 Feb, 2-3pm | From £5

Explore Roman Glevum with Lucius Sita, our resident auxiliary soldier. Discover why the Romans chose Gloucester, what daily life looked like and the hidden treasures inside the museum.

Medieval Mercenary Tour of the Eastgate Chamber

Sat 21 Feb, 2-3pm | From £5

Join Sir Miles, our medieval mercenary, for a fascinating trip into the Eastgate Chamber. Explore its history, uncover old myths and hear the superstitions that have surrounded this hidden space for centuries.



COMMUNITY EVENTS



COMMUNITY EVENTS

underbelly PRESENTS

MASSIVE

FROM THE STREETS OF
GIFFORDS CIRCUS

TWEEDY'S

CIRCUS

* full disclosure:
it's tiny.



"THE BEST
CLOWN I HAVE
EVER SEEN"

THE INDEPENDENT

"A CIRCUS CLOWN AND
TRUE GENIUS"

THE SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

"TWEEDY IS A
MARVELLOUS
COMIC" ← TIME OUT