

Dear Parents & Carers,

I am honoured to join Gastrells as your new Headteacher and very much look forward to working with such a dedicated staff and welcoming community. Over the coming weeks, I am excited to meet all the children and, in time, to have the opportunity to meet all parents and carers.

As a mother of three young children, I understand the importance of balancing family life with learning and personal development. I am committed to ensuring that every child at Gastrells feels supported, valued, and confident, so that they can thrive and reach their full potential.

Throughout my career, I have taught in a range of schools across Bristol and Gloucestershire, including large and small settings, as well as city, village, and independent schools. These experiences have shaped my belief that strong relationships and a shared vision are key to a successful school community.

Together, we will work collaboratively to strengthen learning and raise standards across all areas of the school, building on the excellent work already taking place. I am committed to the continued success of Gastrells and will strive to ensure that all pupils receive the outstanding education and enrichment opportunities that they deserve. I am determined that the school will build on its excellent reputation, continue to flourish, and remain at the heart of the community.

I will aim to be at the school gate before and after school each day, so please do come and say hello. I look forward to meeting many more of you in the coming weeks.

Kind regards,
Helen Seward



Congratulations to everyone who received merit awards over the past couple of weeks...



13th March 2026



17th April 2026



CREATIVITY SHINES

Our Art Ambassadors enjoyed their second 'Fledgling Arts' visit to Rodborough Playgroup, where they led a whole-group creative activity with the children. Using techniques they had previously learned in school, the Ambassadors carefully prepared the base of a tree through cardboard relief sculpting and tissue paper mâché, creating a truly special gift for the playgroup. The playgroup children then worked together to add beautiful blossom and a colourful meadow. The finished piece is a wonderful example of teamwork, creativity and collaboration, and will be proudly displayed on the playgroup hall wall.



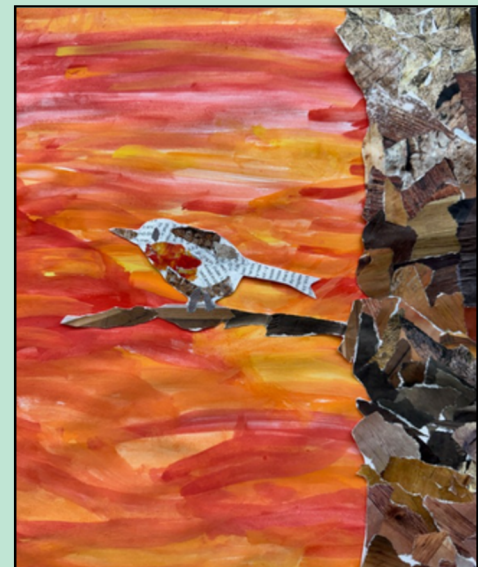
BRITISH BIRD COLLAGES

Eagles Class have created a stunning set of British bird collages, using carefully selected magazine pages to colour-match the distinctive patterns and markings of each bird. Their artworks feature a wonderful range of birds, including woodpeckers, robins, finches and raptors, and the results are really effective.



The children showed great creativity, patience and attention to detail in bringing their designs to life. This was another great example of how we can integrate nature and art, inspiring children to observe the world around them while expressing themselves creatively.

Well done Eagles!



CREATIVITY SHINES

A 'SPLASH' OF FUN

Peregrines Class had great fun creating these lively canine portraits. The children carefully followed instructions to draw their dogs with a real sense of movement, making them look as though they were shaking off after a wet walk. Then, in true Pollock style, they splattered paint across the background to capture the effect of water droplets flying through the air. These portraits are full of energy, personality and fun — a super job by everyone involved!



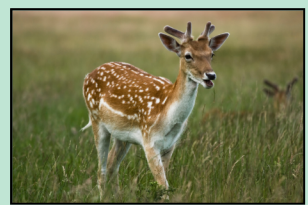
IN OTHER NEWS...

AMAZING ANTLERS!



Sparrowhawks enjoyed a truly fascinating Show and Tell recently, which captured everyone's interest from the very start. Everyone knows that Miss Mahaffy has a special love of nature, often helping children to identify bugs and feathers brought in at break times, but Hope took things to a whole new level with her amazing selection of deer antlers that her family had found in Scotland. This created the perfect opportunity to explore the features of the deer found in the UK, including the magnificent Red Deer, which is the UK's largest land mammal.

It was a fabulous experience for the class and an incredibly interesting way to learn more about the natural world.



ROCKING IT!



BATTLE OF THE BANDS!



Each week, the children have been practising together with Dave, working hard to learn their chosen songs and develop their confidence as performers. They can choose from a range of roles within the band, including drums, keyboards, bass guitar, or even the all-important role of lead singer.



Every child performed brilliantly and should be very proud of their efforts. It was wonderful to share their achievements with an audience of other classes and parents, who thoroughly enjoyed the show and helped make it such a special occasion.



We would also like to thank Dave for all of his hard work and commitment to each of the bands.

If your child is interested in joining an iRock band, you can email them for more details:

info@irockschool.com



EGG-CELLENT CREATIONS!

We were incredibly impressed by the entries for this year's Decorate an Egg competition — wowie, what a display of creativity! The children certainly made it very difficult for the judges to choose, with so many imaginative designs and brilliant ideas on show. Alongside the teachers, Mrs Seward also joined in with the judging in her first official role as Head, making the event feel even more special. We were bowled over by the effort and originality of the entries, and there were plenty of giggles along the way thanks to the fantastic egg puns that accompanied them. Well done to everyone who took part and made the competition such an egg-celent success!



EYFS

Aoife

Saoirse



YEAR 1

Ted

Isaac



YEAR 2

Harley

Thea



EGG-CELLENT CREATIONS!



Lyra



YEAR 3

Peggy



Yuuki

YEAR 4

Jake



Felix

YEAR 5

Erin



YEAR 6

Lily

Wini



EGG-CELLENT CREATIONS!



We simply couldn't stop there when it came to sharing the designs, as there were just so many fabulous ideas to celebrate! The creativity, humour and effort shown in this year's competition were outstanding, and it felt only right to shine a light on even more of the wonderful entries.

We would therefore love to share some of our runners-up too, whose imaginative designs and clever egg puns were just too good to miss!



WELL DONE everyone!

STAFF RECOMENDATIONS



A NATIONAL HERO TURNS 100

Sir David Attenborough turns an incredible 100 on 8th May — what an amazing milestone for one of the world's greatest natural documentarists. We would highly recommend encouraging your children to watch some of the incredible Planet Earth programmes and discover the wonders of our world, from deep oceans to icy mountains and fascinating wildlife.

Miss Mahaffy, Sparrowhawks

PITVILLE PARK

Now that the sun is coming out, Pitville Park in Cheltenham is a wonderful place for children to enjoy the fresh air and explore the outdoors. They can run and play in the open green spaces, feed the ducks by the lake, enjoy the playground, or take a gentle walk with family while spotting birds and other wildlife — a perfect way to have fun, stay active, and make the most of the warmer weather.

Mrs Richardson, Peregrines



Merlin®



BIRD IDENTIFICATION

If you haven't come across the Merlin bird identification app before, wowie.... do I recommend it! It's free to download and it will identify any bird calls heard, where you can then see if you can spot the birds from the direction and timing of their call. I headed down to Ruskin Mill this weekend and captured 21 species including black cap, wren and green woodpecker! Just brilliant!

Miss Mahaffy, Sparrowhawks

FOG EVENTS

Please remember to book your tickets and join us for our Easter Bingo Night this Friday! 5pm
This is always a lovely event for the children and a fantastic way to raise money for our school.

If you have not been before, it is a fun-filled evening hosted by 'Auzzie Sheila with plenty of laughter, a great community atmosphere, and lots of prizes to be won. It is a wonderful chance to bring our whole school together and enjoy a special evening as families and friends.

Tickets are £3 per adult and £1 per child, to be booked in advance. Food and drink is available as well as a bar!

We look forward to seeing you there.

EASTER / EARTH DAY BINGO!

FRIDAY – 24TH APRIL

5:00 - 7:30pm
Gastrells School Hall

Prizes Galore!

- Seed bom prizes
- Tickets to Birdland
- Tickets to Cotswold wildlife park
- 270° voucher
- French Central - 2 classes
- Signed Gloucs rugby shirt
- Karakorum Ethnical Decor goodie bag
- Lots of chocolate treats!

Refreshments!

- Hot dogs - veggie options available
- Chips
- Cakes & sweet treats
- Smoothies
- Beer & Wine

Tickets: £3 adult / £1 a child
A ticket gets you entry & your first round of bingo. Extra cards - £1 each. Use the QR code or just giving link to get your tickets! Limited tickets on the door so buy before to avoid dissapointment!



TERM DATES

SUMMER 1 TERM

APRIL

13	Summer 1 Term Starts
16-23	Scholastic Book Fayre
22	Y5 & Y6 Netball
24	Easter Bingo - FOG
27	The Great Big Dance Off, Regional Heats
29-01	Year 4 Residential

MAY

TBC	Gloucestershire Wildlife Quiz - Round 1
15	KS2 Handball
20	KS2 Sports Hall Athletics
21	Piano Concert 2.30pm (parents welcome)
22	FOG Pre-loved Clothing Sale
22	KS2 Duathlon
22	End of Term 3.15pm
31-03	Year 6 Residential

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

SUMMER 2 TERM

JUNE

01	Summer 2 Term Starts
03	KS2 Rounders
04	Cricket Competition
10	Y2 Dodgeball
12	£10 Challenge
15	KS2 Swimming Gala
16 - 17	Summer Art Exhibition
19	KS2 Mountain Biking
24	KS1 District Sports
30	Sports Day, Mini Olympics am, Races pm

JULY

02	Owls - Bristol Zoo Trip
06 & 08	Year 6 Production, Matilda, 6pm
07	KS2 District Sports
09	Y4 Multiskills
13	KS1 Sportshall Athletics
14	KS2 Sports Awards 2pm (Parents welcome)
15	KS1 & KS2 Dance Festival
17	Leavers Assembly 11am
17	End of Term 12.15pm

TERM DATES 25-26

Term 1	Wed 3 rd Sept - Fri 24 th Oct 2025
Term 2	Tue 4 th Nov - Fri 19 th Dec 2025
Term 3	Mon 5 th Jan - Fri 13 th Feb 2026
Term 4	Mon 23 rd Feb - Fri 27 th Mar 2026
Term 5	Mon 13 th Apr - Fri 22 nd May 2026
Term 6	Mon 1 st June - Fri 17 th July 2026

INSET DAYS

Mon	1 st September 2025
Tue	2 nd September 2025
Mon	3 rd November 2025
Mon	19 th January 2026
Mon	20 th July 2026

ATTENDANCE ACROSS THE SCHOOL

(23rd March - 17th April 2026)

Owls	92%
Peregrines	92%
Ospreys	95%
Sparrowhawks	94%
Goshawks	92%
Eagles	84%

TERM DATES

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	5	13	20	27	Mon	4	11	18	25	
Tues	3	10	17	24	31	Tues	6	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
Bank Holiday	

Term 1: Mon 1 st Sept – Fri 24 th Oct 2025	40 days
Term 2: Mon 3 rd Nov – Fri 19 th Dec 2025	35 days
Term 3: Mon 5 th Jan - Fri 13 th Feb 2026	30 days
Term 4: Mon 23 th Feb – Fri 27 th Mar 2026	25 days
Term 5: Mon 13 th April – Fri 22 nd May 2026	29 days
Term 6: Mon 1 st June – Mon 20 th July 2026	36 days
Total	195 days*

Christmas Bank Holidays	25 th December 2025
	26 th December 2025
New Year Bank Holiday	1 st January 2026
Good Friday	3 rd April 2026
Easter Monday	6 th April 2026
Early May Bank Holiday	4 th May 2026
Spring Bank Holiday	25 th May 2026
Summer Bank Holiday	31 st August 2026

Trusted Adults

What is a trusted adult?

Trusted adults are adults you know well, who care for you and help you to feel safe.

You can go to them with your worries. They will listen to you and give you the help you need.

Who could be a trusted adult?

- An adult who looks after you
- Other adults in your family
- Your teacher
- Other adults in school

Who are your trusted adults?



COMMUNITY NEWS

Moon
tell me
truth

Art & Poems from the Children of Gaza

Artwork by Samia Baroud (age 14), Palestine

Monday 27th April - Saturday 2nd
May - 10am - 4pm
Sunday 3rd May - 12pm - 4pm
Little Chapel Rodborough Tabernacle
Tabernacle Walk, GL5 3UJ

A selection of poems written and
illustrated by children from
Palestine, age 9-15.
They were submitted as entries for
the 2023 Hands Up Project
International poetry competition.



For further information contact Palestine Solidarity Campaign
Stroud District - pscstroud@protonmail.com
Donation towards the exhibition much appreciated.



COMMUNITY NEWS



WALK THE WALL 18th - 19th APRIL 2026 STROUD

Saturday 18th: Meet 10am at Wallbridge Lock, Stroud, GL5 3JS. Walk over Rodborough Common ending at Brimscombe.

Illustrating the effects of Israeli occupation on the lives of Palestinians using features in Rodborough and surrounding landscape.

Moderately challenging, 5.2km. Walkers need to be moderately fit to climb onto the common and dress appropriately for the weather.

<https://tinyurl.com/33ccmndy>



Sunday 19th: Meet 2pm at Winstones Icecream, Rodborough Common, GL5 5BX. A 1.5 hour reasonably level gentle walk over Rodborough Common looking at the landscape and relating how the land is occupied in Palestine. Walk ends back at Winstones.


<https://buytickets.at/pscstrouddistrict/2132129>



Cost: £5 - £10 donation, children free. Please book tickets for all attending

For further information contact Palestine Solidarity Campaign
Stroud District - pscstroud@protonmail.com

If you cannot buy a ticket, but want to come on the walk, please email us and we'll do everything we can to ensure you can come.

 @StroudPSC

