

Dear Parents and Carers,

What a busy April we have had at Gastrells! From impressive achievements in netball and dance to the excitement of Year 4 residential, the children have been full of energy and enthusiasm, embracing each opportunity with great positivity.

It has also been lovely to continue to see how many opportunities the children have had to engage with and connect to nature around our school. Whether that be spending time learning outdoors, engaging in specific nature based activities, or bringing in specimens to investigate further, it has been truly lovely to witness their curiosity and appreciation for the world around them continue to grow. These moments not only enrich their learning but also help foster a sense of responsibility and respect for their surroundings and the environment.

It has been wonderful to see how well children are modelling our school values each day, from the moment they arrive to the end of the school day. Their respect and positive attitudes are evident in all that they do as well as noted in kindness and support of one another.

Over the next few weeks, there are some important times ahead for certain classes, particularly Year 6 as they complete their SATs—we wish them all the very best, and begin their transition sessions at Secondary schools, at the other end of the corridor, we will soon be welcoming our new Reception cohort as they join us for some introductory sessions. We also have plenty of exciting events still to come including sports day and our upcoming Summer Art Exhibition, which we are very much looking forward to.

May I take this opportunity to thank FOG for what I hear was a highly enjoyable evening at their latest fundraising event for the school. Your support to make memorable community events and raising much appreciated funds to enrich the children's experiences, is very much appreciated.

I would also like to thank you all again for making me feel so welcome and for helping me to find my feet at Gastrells. Your support has been greatly appreciated. Please do continue to come and introduce yourselves at the start and end of the day—it is always a pleasure to speak with you.

Mrs Seward



## MERIT AWARD

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



24th April 2026



1<sup>st</sup> May 2026



# OUR INCREDIBLE DANCE TROOP!

## A 'SPOOKTACULAR' PERFORMANCE

On Monday 27th April, our brilliant dance troupe took to the stage at The Forum in Bath for the regional heats of The Great Big Dance Off — and what an incredible performance they gave!

Dancing to a wonderfully spooky mixture of music, the children performed with confidence, energy and fantastic stage presence. There was a huge amount of choreography to learn, but their hard work, focus and determination certainly paid off as they achieved an amazing 4th place in the regional heats.



Luke and Sally K for their help with hair, make-up and management on the day — we really couldn't have done it without you!

Finally, a massive thank you must go to Miss Kelly for all of her hard work, commitment and dedication to the event. This fantastic experience simply would not have happened without her.

Well done to every member of the dance troupe — we are so proud of you!



A huge thank you goes to Mrs Salter and Ushma for their support during rehearsals and on the day. We are also incredibly grateful to Mrs Gryngarten, Miss Moss, Rachel T,

# SPORTS FIXTURES

## NETBALL SUCCESS

Gastrells were delighted to enter two teams into the Stroud netball tournament, and what a fantastic afternoon of sport it turned out to be!

Both teams represented the school brilliantly, showing excellent teamwork, determination and passion throughout their matches. The children supported one another, communicated well on court and gave every game their very best effort.

We are especially thrilled to share that one of our teams went on to win the tournament undefeated — an incredible achievement!

A huge congratulations to all of the children who took part. We are very proud of each and every one of you!



# EXPLORING NATURE

## 'WHO LIVES IN A NEST LIKE THIS?'



Children were treated to another fascinating discovery this week, when Lilah very generously brought in an incredibly special nest for us to explore.

The nest had been found abandoned by friends and was believed to belong to a blue tit.

Amazingly, there were still five tiny eggs inside. Great care had been taken before it was collected. The children explained that the nest had been closely observed for a whole month, with no movement or activity at all, to make sure it was no longer active.



Having such an incredible specimen to share with the children gave everyone the chance to look closely at the structure of the nest and compare it with two others that Miss Mahaffy already had. The blue tit nest was beautifully and carefully constructed. The children noticed how soft and warm it looked, made from materials such as moss, feathers, sheep's wool and animal hair. It was clear that a great deal of care had gone into making it safe and cosy for the eggs.

This was very different from another of the nests, which had a much simpler design and was made almost entirely from twigs. The children enjoyed discussing why different birds might use different materials and how the shape and strength of a nest helps protect the eggs inside.

A third nest caused even more curiosity. At first, the children assumed it must also belong to a bird, but something about it seemed different. After some careful observation and discussion, they discovered that it was not a bird's nest at all. In fact, it belonged to a mouse. It was warm, cosy and more hollow inside, making it the perfect place for a tiny mouse to curl up.

How incredibly lucky we are to have such incredible natural specimens to observe up close, and super for the Nature Team to peak their scientific understanding before the upcoming first round of the Gloucestershire Nature Quiz.

## NATURE'S ARCHITECTS

Not only have we been lucky enough to explore some superb nest specimens, but we also received an exciting donation from Nancy: a wasp papery. Wowee!

The children were fascinated to learn how wasps create these incredible structures. We discussed how they chew bark from trees or wooden surfaces, then mix it with saliva to form the delicate layers of their home.

It was amazing to see nature's very own version of paper and to observe just how carefully and beautifully these tiny architects build their homes.



# WILDFLOWER MEADOW

## WILD MEADOW PROJECT BEGINS WITH STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Wild Meadow Project Begins with Stroud District Council  
We were delighted to welcome two lovely visitors from the Nature Recovery and Biodiversity Department at Stroud District Council, as we look forward to collaborating on a number of exciting nature projects over the next year.



For our first project, Rebecca, the Strategic Lead, worked with Year 4 to begin creating a wild meadow area on part of our school field. The children worked brilliantly, raking and breaking up the soil so the seeds could reach beneath the surface.



They then carefully spread wildflower seeds from two huge bags kindly donated by the council. The area has now been cornered off and will be watered and observed over the coming weeks, with updates shared back to the department.



There is even the exciting possibility of eventually mowing a pathway through the meadow, allowing children to explore it more closely and discover the insects and minibeasts we hope it will attract.

It was such a super afternoon, and we are very grateful to Rebecca and Georgina for their time, support and enthusiasm. Watch this space!



# CREATIVITY SHINES

## PRINTING WITH LIGHT



Art Club have been busy exploring the fascinating process of cyanotype printing.

The cyanotype solution was carefully mixed, painted onto paper in a dark room and left to dry. The children then foraged for leaves, feathers and interesting shapes to use in their prints.

Once their chosen objects were flattened onto the paper, they were exposed to UV light for 20–30 minutes. The children then washed off the solution to reveal a beautiful deep indigo colour, showing the intricate details of each shape. Pure magic!

Next week, the children will develop their compositions further to create a final piece of artwork.



## BRITISH BIRD STUDIES



Peregrines Class have been busy creating endearing clay bird nests, each adorned with tiny eggs and even a little bird to watch over them.

The children focused carefully on adding texture through their mark making in the clay, helping their nests look natural and detailed.



They also learned how to shape a 3D bird by gently squeezing and moulding the clay.

Once these beautiful treasures have been fired in the kiln, the children will paint their birds to resemble British finches or tits.

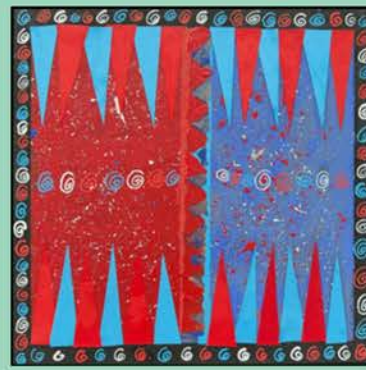
I don't think we could have timed this project better with our nest specimen explorations! Just brilliant - we can't wait to see the final pieces.

# BUSINESS ENTERPRISE

## BACKGAMMON

Sparrowhawks Class have been enthusiastically embracing their Business Enterprise DT project by setting up their very own toy companies. Each child created a company name, logo and strapline before launching their first product: a brand-new backgammon board. The designs are absolutely fabulous, with themes ranging from caves and trolls to planets and botanicals. Every child has added their own creative spin, making each board completely unique. Now that the games are complete, we are looking forward to welcoming parents and carers later in the term for our definitely "not" competitive backgammon championship match!

We are incredibly proud of the children and their fantastic work. These brilliant boards deserve to be seen and will be featured in our Summer Art Exhibition.



## A SNEAKY PEEK...



We couldn't resist sharing a sneaky peek at Year 5's latest clay project, where the children have begun creating their favourite foods served up on a plate! From sushi and fish and chips to a good old fry-up, it has been a fabulous morning of imaginative creations. The children have shown wonderful design and composition skills, carefully considering how each food item should be arranged on the plate for maximum effect. They have also demonstrated impressive technical skill, moulding the correct forms for each piece of food and using the important clay techniques of scoring and slip to ensure everything stays securely in place. Once bisque fired in a couple of weeks, these delicious-looking creations will be glazed and ready for exhibiting.



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# YEAR 4 RESIDENTIAL



Our Year 4 children have been having the most wonderful time on their residential trip to the Forest of Dean!

From evening walks under the trees to gathering around the campfire, the children have embraced every moment of adventure.

The activities have kept on rolling, with orienteering, crate stacking, caving, low ropes and even foraging all packed into their busy days. What an exciting way to explore, challenge themselves and enjoy the great outdoors together.



There have been late nights, early starts and plenty of tired legs, but also huge smiles, teamwork, bravery and laughter along the way. We are so proud of how the children have thrown themselves into each new experience and made the very most of this special time away.



A huge thank you must also go to Mr Lowe and Mrs Cook, who accompanied the children on their adventures, helping the children to create what we are sure will be some very special memories.

# SMALLEST UK BIRD SPOTTED AT GASTRELLS!



Whilst our Year 4 children have been off gallivanting in the Forest of Dean, Year 5 decided that they were not going to be left out of the adventure!



Armed with the Merlin Bird ID app, we headed out into our very own school grounds to see what feathered friends we could discover. Moving as quietly as possible around the playing field, the children listened carefully as the app helped us identify the calls of a wren, robin, goldfinch, song thrush and chiffchaff.

Most impressively, we also picked up the call of a goldcrest — the UK's smallest bird! Not content with simply hearing it, we followed the surprisingly loud call until we narrowed it down to one particular tree.

Then came the patient waiting, watching and searching for that tiny flash of gold.

Sure enough, there it was!

The goldcrest hopped happily from branch to branch, proudly showing off its golden crest for all the children to see.



## FOG UPDATE

### AUSSIE SHEILA'S ROUND UP...



Wow what a turn out for our Easter Earth Day Bingo event! We had a such a laugh and LOVE bringing our Gastrell's community together. This event was about having a good time and subtly raising awareness about Earth Day & the environment. The event also raised £548 for school resources. We were kindly donated prizes by Cotswolds Wildlife Park, 270 Climbing centre, Birdland, LillyPad florist, Stratford Park Leisure Centre, Moonflower and Karakorum, plus parents donated not just their time and skills at the event but wonderful prizes such as Yoga classes & French lessons so a huge thank you the them and to all our wonderful volunteers.

If you would like to join our PTA, FoG (Friends of Gastrells) or can offer prizes or help in any way, perhaps an idea for an event, then please do get in touch.

We are all part of this wonderful school community, the more people involved means bigger better events. Our next meeting is our annual AGM (date to be released shortly), which is open to all parents and teachers.

# STAFF RECOMENDATIONS

## GEOCACHING



### GEOCACHING

If you are looking for a brilliant way to get the children outdoors, may I recommend giving Geocaching a go! My boys have been enjoying lots of Geocaching recently and, on Saturday, they walked an incredible 21,000 steps without a single moan! It is such a fun way to explore our beautiful local areas and commons, while giving every walk a real sense of purpose. Best described as a real-life treasure hunt, it is a wonderful way to keep little legs moving, eyes searching and everyone enjoying the fresh air together - what an adventure!

Mrs Obrien, TA

### THE BEAUTIFUL CAM PEAK

If you are looking for a moment of beautiful serenity, may I recommend Cam Peak where the bluebells are out in mass!

I headed there with my family at sunset and captured these beautiful photographs. We are so lucky with where we live and if you can't quite make it to Cam, you can also head to many of the local woods to see the blanket of bluebells and wild garlic blossoming - just lovely!



Mrs Gibson, Piano Teacher

### SLIMBRIDGE

If you are looking for a lovely family day out, may I recommend Slimbridge Wetland Centre where spring has most certainly sprung! I headed there with my family and we were greeted by ducklings and goslings everywhere! The canoeing was also a real highlight and lots of fun as we paddled our way through the peaceful waterways. There is so much to see and do, from spotting the birds to simply enjoying the beautiful surroundings. A perfect place for a little adventure and some time together in nature - highly recommended!

Mrs Seward, Head Teacher



# FOG EVENTS



**SATURDAY  
6TH JUNE**

THIS EVENT IS OPEN TO THE COMMUNITY



**PRE-LOVED  
CLOTHES  
SALE**

**11AM-1PM**

Donations of clean, good quality **adult & children's** clothes (in bags separated & labelled by age if possible) are welcome at Gastrells on Thursday 4th & Friday 5th June

**Gastrells Primary School,  
Kingscourt Lane | Stroud GL5 3PS**

**REFRESHMENTS WILL BE AVAILABLE**



# 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

06	Gloucestershire Wildlife Quiz - Round 1
06	Pre-loved Uniform Sale - FOG
15	KS2 Handball
20	KS2 Sports Hall Athletics
21	Piano Concert 2.30pm (parents welcome)
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
04	Sparrowhawks Trip, 'Art in Nature' Museum
06	Pre-loved Clothes Sale - FOG
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 <sup>rd</sup> Sept - Fri 24 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2025
Term 2	Tue 4 <sup>th</sup> Nov - Fri 19 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2025
Term 3	Mon 5 <sup>th</sup> Jan - Fri 13 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2026
Term 4	Mon 23 <sup>rd</sup> Feb - Fri 27 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2026
Term 5	Mon 13 <sup>th</sup> Apr - Fri 22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2026
Term 6	Mon 1 <sup>st</sup> June - Fri 17 <sup>th</sup> July 2026

## INSET DAYS

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

## ATTENDANCE ACROSS THE SCHOOL

(17th April - 30th April 2026)

Owls	94%
Peregrines	99%
Ospreys	98%
Sparrowhawks	94%
Goshawks	96%
Eagles	85%

# 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		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
Bank Holiday	

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

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

# SAFEGUARDING

## Anti-Bullying Week

### What is Bullying?

Bullying can mean many different things to different people. These actions can be described as bullying if they happen often and are done on purpose.



These things can happen at school or at home, but they can also happen online and on social networks. If you are being bullied, or someone you know is telling you that they are being bullied, always tell someone. A grown-up will be able to help.



## Many Hands

Pop-Up

Art and Design  
Reading Room

Creative workshops, talks and events

from 06 - 30th May

Open  
9-5 Weds-Fri  
10-4 Sat-Sun  
Closed Mon/Tue

at  
This House,  
Market St,  
Nailsworth

 @manyhands\_readingroom

Many  
Hands

# COMMUNITY NEWS



Pop-Up Art & Design  
Reading Room  
6-30th May  
Closed Mon-Tues

# Words + Pictures

A gentle Thursday morning drop  
in to connect and create.

For parents and carers and under 5's

9.30- 11  
Thursdays

May 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>  
and 28<sup>th</sup>

AT:  
This House,  
2 Market St,  
Nailsworth  
GL6 0BZ



Follow @manyhands\_readingroom for updates and events

# COMMUNITY NEWS

Walk. Eat & Drink. Live Music.

Sat 13 June 2026

10am - 4pm



**LONGFIELD**  
Community Hospice

## Walk 4 Longfield & Summer Fête



Walk 1k Junior, 5k, or 10k across the beautiful Minchinhampton and Rodborough Commons while raising vital funds for Longfield.

Walk in memory or in support of loved ones with life-limiting conditions.

Not a walker? Join us at the Summer Fête for food, drinks, artisan stalls, games, and live music as the walkers set off and return.



[longfield.org.uk/walk-for-longfield](https://longfield.org.uk/walk-for-longfield)

Registered Charity Number 298627



Registered with  
**FUNDRAISING  
REGULATOR**

# COMMUNITY NEWS

## Run the Rainbow



**LONGFIELD**  
Community Hospice

**Saturday 4 July 2026**  
**Frampton Court**  
Frampton on Severn  
11am–3pm

Run, walk, or even skip your way through our colour-filled 5K challenge — and help local people live well, every step of the way.

Expect powder paint, foam, music, and inflatables all while supporting Longfield Community Hospice's care for those living with life-limiting illness and their families.

**Celebrate life in full colour!**

### **SIGN UP TODAY!**

Advance tickets available:

Adult £15

Child (ages 4–16) £10

Family Tickets Available

(up to 4 people:

2 adults and 2 children) £45



**SCAN ME**   
**FOR TICKETS**

[longfield.org.uk/run-the-rainbow](https://longfield.org.uk/run-the-rainbow)

Registered Charity No. 298627. Company No. 2213662.



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