Gastrells PRIMARY SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER

'A flying start to a life of learning

October 2026

Dear Parents & Carers,

What a busy term it has been! There has been so much happening in school, and it has been lovely to see such a positive buzz throughout the classrooms.

It was wonderful to welcome so many of you into school on Thursday for our Open Classrooms. I hope you enjoyed spending time in your child's classroom and seeing some of the work they have been doing. The children were very proud to share their achievements with you, and it was lovely to see them talking about their work with such enthusiasm. Thank you to everyone who was able to join us. There will be further opportunities throughout the year to welcome you into our classrooms, and we look forward to seeing you again.

I was incredibly impressed by all the design and technology projects on display. I particularly enjoyed the variety, from pencil pots to torches, with so many imaginative ideas and designs. We really do have some budding creators in our school! The children worked hard through each stage of the process, from designing, making, and building to evaluating their finished creations. It was wonderful to see their ideas brought to life.

As part of our work on Black History, we also welcomed a visitor into school to lead a fantastic drumming session. The children explored different rhythms and had the opportunity to join in themselves. It was a lively, hands-on experience and a lovely way to explore culture and music together.

Alongside this, the children enjoyed an art activity and created some wonderful pieces. Hopefully, if you joined us on Thursday, you managed to catch a glimpse of some of their artistic creations.

A big thank you to our staff for all their hard work this term, and to you, our families, for your continued support. It is always a pleasure to welcome you into school and share these special moments with you.

I hope you all have a lovely half term and enjoy a well-deserved rest. We look forward to welcoming everyone back on Monday 2nd November!

Mrs Seward

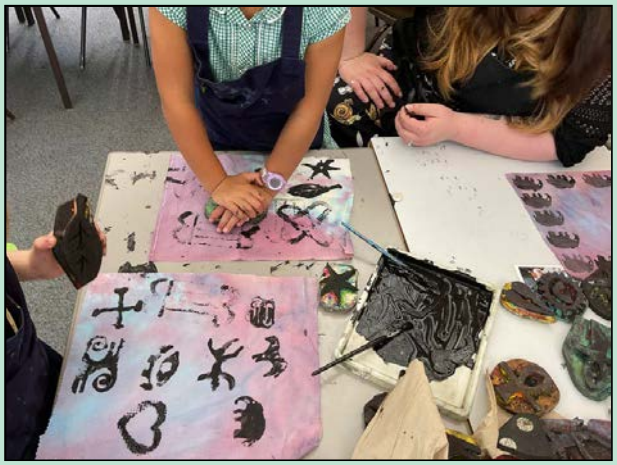


OWLS

Black History Month

We really enjoyed listening to stories, printing with Ghanian symbols and listening to the incredible stories and music from Kulchalee Arts. We even had the chance to have a go at drumming!





Phonics

The Reception children have been working super hard with their phonics this term and some of them are already writing CVC words!





DT

We have all been super busy with our DT project this term and we have really loved getting crafty and independently designing and making our very own pencil pots! We have pots in the style of hot air balloons, volcanos and rocket ships!



Performance



The Owls have also been enjoying writing their own plays this term and performing them to the rest of the class! This week we even had a script to follow and tickets! Luckily, Miss Woolls had a "front row" seat!



Miss Woolls

PEREGRINES

What an exciting month! Peregrines has been incredibly busy getting creative and putting their artistic talents into action.



Black History Month

A big thank you to Miss Mahaffy for organising the celebrations for Black History Month.

The children loved listening to traditional stories and made magic with music.

All the children practised the art of Adinkra block painting and created some wonderful patterns using traditional Ghanian symbols.

DT

In DT, we have created our own Ferris wheels. The children researched and designed their own creations, learning about the importance of stability, wheels, axis and creating a frame.



Outdoor Learning

Even with the changing weather, the children have embraced the outdoors, learning about hockey. We have been practising ball control and passing. We are so impressed with their skills and commitment.

We hope you have the most wonderful, restful half term and look forward to seeing you all after the break!



Mrs Richardson &
Mrs Peach

OSPREYS

Black History Month

Ospreys embraced the celebrations of Black History Month in their African drumming workshop where Kulchalee taught them how to produce a rhythm of drum beats alongside percussion instruments. The children also learned about some of the African tales and how they compare to similar stories in our culture. In the afternoon, the children painted stone casts of a variety of black history symbolism and culture.

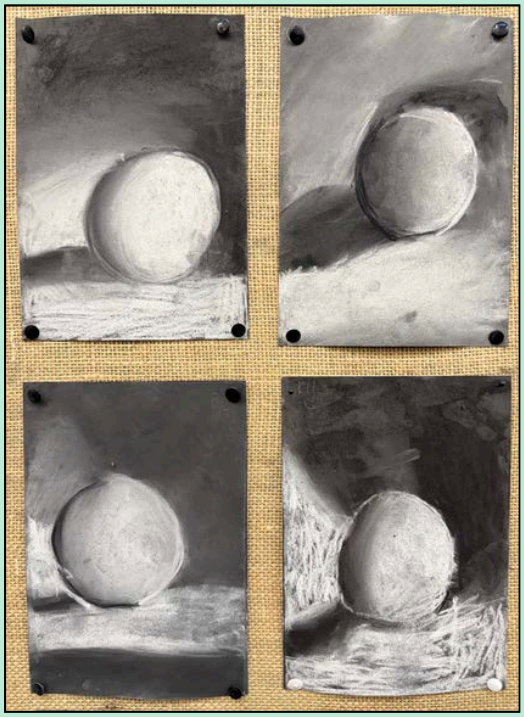




DT

In DT week, we have explored what makes a good design for a torch and then designed and made our very own prototypes!

Art



The children have been busy exploring chalks and charcoal this term, learning how to create value and the illusion of shape through shading and graduating grey tones.



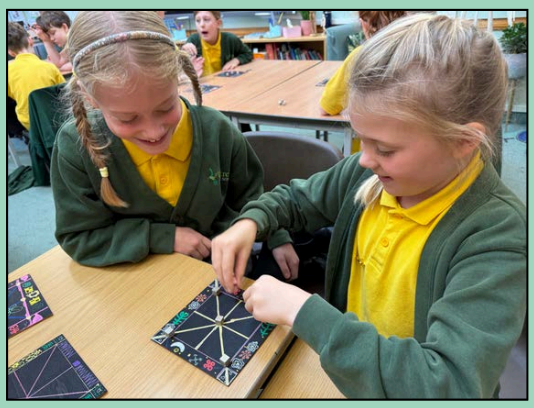
Mr Lowe

SPARROWHAWKS

Black History

Sparrowhawks fully embraced Black History Day, beginning with an assembly full of storytelling and African folklore. The children created Achi boards; a traditional Ghanian game and participated in a very vibrant African drumming workshop. We have also been celebrating many individuals this month including learning about Nina Simone, Catherine Johnson, Nelson Mandela and Stomzy but to name a few.





I just couldn't resist sharing this delightful moment of joy captured in English this term as we watched a rather funny poem!



DT

This term our DT project was to make a functional protector for a book which includes a button fastening. Although we could have stopped at this, we couldn't resist but to also include some impressive stitching including laced double running, whipped running, long tailed lazy daisy and a firm favourite, the French knot! Don't they look great!





What a SUPERB job the children have done creating this 'ambush' of striking tigers. Using acrylic paints, they have observed features well and used a pop out effect on the foliage for finishing touches. They really do look super and I am very proud of you all!







Art

Miss Mahaffy & Mrs Radway

GOSHAWKS



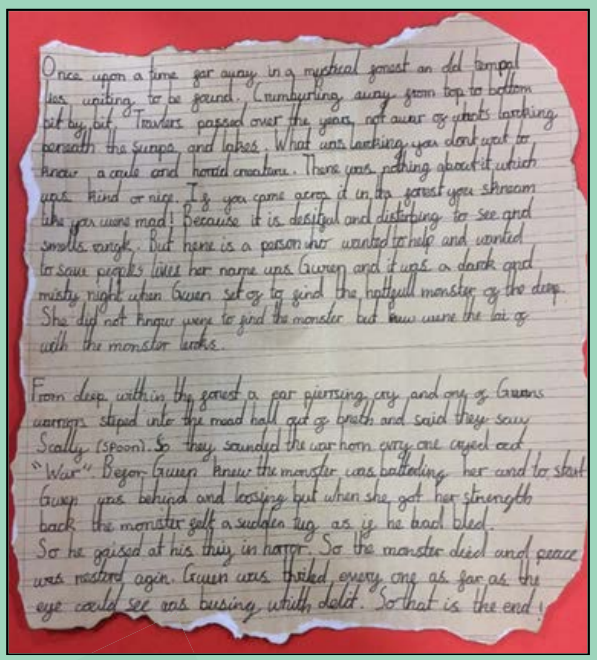
October has been a very busy month for us. We have explored Black History Month through music, stories and art. This was brought together in our experience day last week. The children had an amazing time drumming, dancing and creating beautiful art work all with an African heritage but local flavour. We have also enjoyed the music of Nina Simone and American Gospel songs as we reflected on the experience of slavery and the importance of freedom.

DT

Our DT focus for this term has been digital monitoring devices. We have used the Microbits to programme temperature monitors which play a warning sound if the temperature is above or below a certain level (together with an appropriate icon). They also display the current temperature if a button is pressed!



Reading & Writing



Once upon a time far away in a mystical forest an old temple lies waiting to be found. Crumbling away from top to bottom bit by bit. Travelers passed over the years not aware of what's lurking beneath the swamps and lakes. What was lurking you don't want to know a cruel and horrid creature. There was nothing about it which was kind or nice. If you come across it in the forest you shream like you were mad! Because it is dastful and disturbing to see and smells awful. But here is a person who wanted to help and wanted to save people's lives her name was Gwren and it was a dark and misty night when Gwren set off to find the hatefull monster of the deep. She did not know were to find the monster but knew were the lair of with the monster looks.

From deep within the forest a ear piercing cry and cry of Gwrens warriors stiped into the mead hall out of breth and said they saw Scally (spoon). So they sounded the war horn every one cryed out "War". Bejon Gwren knew the monster was batteling her and to start Gwrn was behind and loosing but when she got her strengths back the monster felt a sudden tug as if he had bled. So he gaised at his thuy in horror. So the monster died and peace was restord agin. Gwren was thrilled every one as far as the eye could see was bussing with delit. So that is the end!

This past two moons, our valiant band of writing warriors have explored the land of Beowulf and Legends! Without fear and much creativity we now publish our work on ancient velum.
Our grammatical focus has been on the correct use of speech in texts which include direct speech, reporting clauses and adverbials
Next term we move on from Beowulf to the thrilling Riddle of the Runes by Janina Ramirez!







Dr Joyce-Gibbons

EAGLES

English

Inspired by the entirely unrelated Mr Browne from our class novel 'Wonder', Mr Brown has shared 2 monthly precepts with the class.
September: Everyone should have a favourite word or favourite words. (Thank you to the children who shared theirs!)
October: The answer is only the beginning

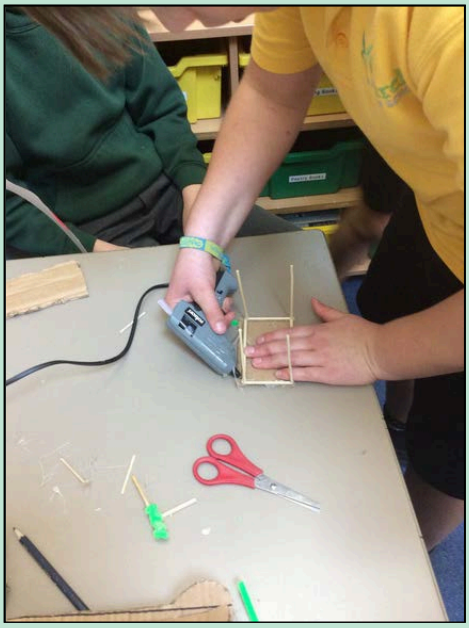


As an exciting and busy first term comes to an end, Eagles have been going from strength to strength.

Maths

In maths, we have finished looking at place value and moved onto focusing on multiplication and division. We've enjoyed exploring factors using cubes in arrays, and multiples with the original and unusual question, 'When will Mr Brown, Freddie, Josh and Nancy next have their hair cut on the same weekend again?' (Kudos to Jamie for finding the correct answer!)

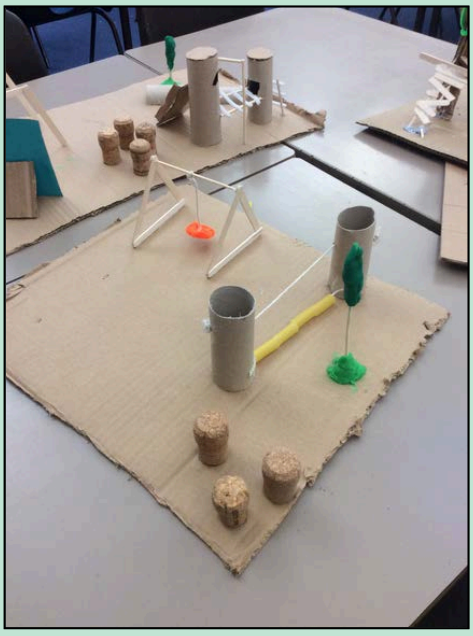




DT

A peek behind the curtain here: I'm writing this before we complete our projects and before we welcome parents into class! I do, however, have every faith the children will produce playground projects to be proud of, and their enthusiasm has been fantastic.



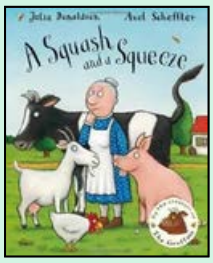




Mr Brown &
Mrs Evans

MERLINS

What a busy term we have had in Merlins! The children have explored a wonderful range of books, including The Big Book of the Blue, Harry and the Bucketful of Dinosaurs, Funnybones and A Squash and a Squeeze. We have also enjoyed discovering fascinating animals through Deadly 60 and continued learning about hot and cold places, habitats and living things.











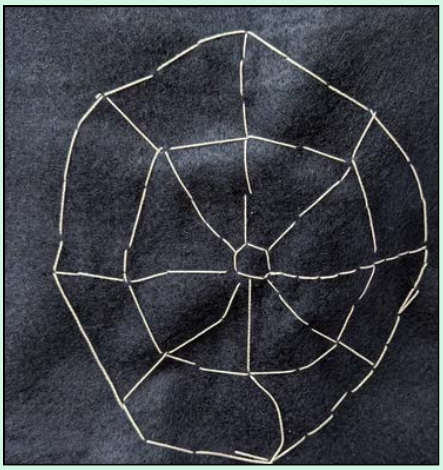


This month, children in the centre have continued learning alongside their mainstream peers, joining lessons including DT, PE and Forest School. These shared experiences have provided valuable opportunities to practise taking turns, following instructions and learning together.



DT

There have been plenty of opportunities to develop our cutting and creative skills through practical activities. In Design and Technology, the children have been making torches and Ferris wheels, as well as practising their sewing skills by creating spider webs



It has been lovely to see the children's enthusiasm and engagement in their learning throughout the term. We are proud of their efforts and achievements and look forward to another term of discovery, creativity and progress!

Mrs Hyatt



FOG









Autumn Fayre: thank you! What a day! The sun shone, the choir sounded lovely, and it was wonderful to see so many of our community pitching in and enjoying the Fayre together. A huge thank you to every volunteer who baked, cooked, ran a stall, set up, packed down or simply turned up and helped.

Thank you to Ush for the soup, Annie and Ed for the apple press, and Rebecca, Louisa and Ella for the amazing decorations. Thank you to Rachana and Rillan for the Human Fruit Machine, Dylan, Lyra and Aoife for the live photobooth, Stasia for Silly Science, Charlie for guess the conkers, Emily and Gilly for the craft table, Louisa for her embroidery workshop, and Lucie and Carly from Parents For Future. Thank you to Karen for another spooky treasure trail, to everyone who brought such lovely bakes, and to the local businesses and families whose generosity filled the raffle table with prizes.

And thank you to everyone who took part or helped out in any way. We couldn't have done it without you. Best of all were the smiling children. 😊 Together we raised **over £1,500,** which we'll using towards fun learning days for the children.



Coming up

🎄 Christmas cards: the children are making their cards at school again this year.

🎁 The Treasure Room: returning in November.

We'd love to hear what you thought of the Fayre, and any ideas for next year. If you'd like to get involved, please email us atfriendsofgastrells@gastrells.gloucs.sch.uk.









TERM DATES

AUTUMN 2 TERM

NOVEMBER	
02	Term Starts
02	Prospective Parent Viewings Week
02	Forest School Begins Year 4
03	Sparrowhawks Bake Sale Fundraiser
04	Stroud Book Festival Y5 & Y6
05	Stroud Book Festival Y3 & Y4
06	Stroud Book Festival EYFS, Y1 & Y2
10 - 11	Parents Evening
18	London Trip - Year 5
20	Children in Need

DECEMBER	
01	Christmas Panto (in School)
02	School Nurse EYFS & Y6
04	Stroud Good Will & Lantern Parade
10	Christmas Jumper & Christmas Lunch
14	Prospective Parent Viewings Week
15	Nativity Production KS1
17	Tabernacle Carol Concert 6pm
18	Term Ends 12.15pm

SPRING 1 TERM

JANUARY	
05	Term Starts
08	Swimming Begins Y3 & Y4
13	Young Voices
25	Bikeability Y5
26	Y4 Class Trip
29	The Big Bird Watch

FEBRUARY	
12	End of Term 3.15pm

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

TERM DATES 26-27	
Term 1	Tue 1st Sept - Fri 23rd Oct 2026
Term 2	Mon 2nd Nov - Fri 18th Dec 2026
Term 3	Mon 4th Jan - Fri 12th Feb 2027
Term 4	Mon 22nd Feb - Thur 25th Mar 2027
Term 5	Mon 12th April - Fri 28th May 2027
Term 6	Mon 7th June - Wed 21st July 2027

INSET DAYS	
Tue	1st September 2026
Wed	2nd September 2026
Fri	23rd October 2026
Mon	4th January 2027
Mon	22nd February 2027

ATTENDANCE ACROSS THE SCHOOL (October)	
Owls	96% average
Peregrines	
Ospreys	
Sparrowhawks	
Goshawks	
Eagles	

TERM DATES 2026-27

SCHOOL TERMS AND HOLIDAYS
2026/27

Gloucestershire COUNTY COUNCIL

SEPTEMBER					
Mon		7	14	21	28
Tues	1	8	15	22	29
Wed	2	9	16	23	30
Thur	3	10	17	24	
Fri	4	11	18	25	
Sat	5	12	19	26	
Sun	6	13	20	27	

OCTOBER					
Mon		5	12	19	26
Tues		6	13	20	27
Wed		7	14	21	28
Thur	1	8	15	22	29
Fri	2	9	16	23	30
Sat	3	10	17	24	31
Sun	4	11	18	25	

NOVEMBER					
Mon		2	9	16	23	30
Tues		3	10	17	24	
Wed		4	11	18	25	
Thur		5	12	19	26	
Fri		6	13	20	27	
Sat		7	14	21	28	
Sun	1	8	15	22	29	

DECEMBER					
Mon		7	14	21	28
Tues	1	8	15	22	29
Wed	2	9	16	23	30
Thur	3	10	17	24	31
Fri	4	11	18	25	
Sat	5	12	19	26	
Sun	6	13	20	27	

JANUARY					
Mon		4	11	18	25
Tues		5	12	19	26
Wed		6	13	20	27
Thur		7	14	21	28
Fri	1	8	15	22	29
Sat	2	9	16	23	30
Sun	3	10	17	24	31

FEBRUARY					
Mon	1	8	15	22	
Tues	2	9	16	23	
Wed	3	10	17	24	
Thur	4	11	18	25	
Fri	5	12	19	26	
Sat	6	13	20	27	
Sun	7	14	21	28	

MARCH					
Mon	1	8	15	22	29
Tues	2	9	16	23	30
Wed	3	10	17	24	31
Thur	4	11	18	25	
Fri	5	12	19	26	
Sat	6	13	20	27	
Sun	7	14	21	28	

APRIL					
Mon		5	12	19	26
Tues		6	13	20	27
Wed		7	14	21	28
Thur	1	8	15	22	29
Fri	2	9	16	23	30
Sat	3	10	17	24	
Sun	4	11	18	25	

MAY					
Mon		3	10	17	24	31
Tues		4	11	18	25	
Wed		5	12	19	26	
Thur		6	13	20	27	
Fri		7	14	21	28	
Sat	1	8	15	22	29	
Sun	2	9	16	23	30	

JUNE					
Mon		7	14	21	28
Tues	1	8	15	22	29
Wed	2	9	16	23	30
Thur	3	10	17	24	
Fri	4	11	18	25	
Sat	5	12	19	26	
Sun	6	13	20	27	

JULY					
Mon		5	12	19	26
Tues		6	13	20	27
Wed		7	14	21	28
Thur	1	8	15	22	29
Fri	2	9	16	23	30
Sat	3	10	17	24	31
Sun	4	11	18	25	

AUGUST					
Mon		2	9	16	23	30
Tues		3	10	17	24	31
Wed		4	11	18	25	
Thur		5	12	19	26	
Fri		6	13	20	27	
Sat		7	14	21	28	
Sun	1	8	15	22	29	

Term Time		Holidays	
Bank Holiday		INSET	

Term 1:	Tue 1st Sept – Fri 23rd Oct 2026	39 days
Term 2:	Mon 2nd Nov – Fri 18th Dec 2026	35 days
Term 3:	Mon 4th Jan - Fri 12th Feb 2027	30 days
Term 4:	Mon 22nd Feb – Thur 25th Mar 2027	24 days
Term 5:	Mon 12th April – Fri 28th May 2027	34 days
Term 6:	Mon 7th June – Wed 21st July 2027	33 days
	Total	**195 days***

Christmas Bank Holidays	25th December 2026
	26th December 2026
New Year Bank Holiday	1st January 2026
Good Friday	26th March 2027
Easter Monday	29th March 2027
Early May Bank Holiday	3rd May 2027
Spring Bank Holiday	31st May 2027
Summer Bank Holiday	30th August 2027

**195 days are defined as "School days". In the school year 2026/27 pupils must attend for 190 days. Schools may decide individually or collectively which 5 days in the year are INSET or non-contact days (days pupils do not need to attend). Academies and free schools are not legally bound by school day and school year regulations; however, the DfE has stated they should be working towards a minimum of 32.5 hours per school week by September 2024 at the latest.*

Please Note: *As per the Governance handbook, academies and free schools can choose to set their own term dates. Schools considering alternative dates or considering changes to their school opening times may wish to contact our Transport Team to discuss transport implications and contact local childcare providers to discuss what impact this could have.*