



St Mark's C E Primary School

4th September 2026

Newsletter No 1

<https://www.st-marks.kent.sch.uk/>

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you have all had a relaxing and enjoyable Summer and managed to enjoy the fabulous weather! It has been lovely welcoming the children back to school this week and meeting all of our new joiners both in Early Years and across the year groups. All of the children are looking very smart and ready to learn!

Message from David Hill

"As the new school year starts with St Marks in the Tenax Trust, I have been able to resign from my role as Chair of Governors. This is not because of joining the Trust, it is because I have been Chair for 12 years and I am 74. I have enjoyed the journey, and all the wonderful teaching staff and children and parents and governors I have met on the way. The first day that I set foot in St Marks what struck me was the calmness in the school, and the children's good manners. My grandchildren were in Early Years and year 2. I am pleased to say that the calmness and good manners never stopped. My granddaughters are now 18 and 21. Since Mr Bird became headteacher, and Mrs Crane his deputy, there has been a steady improvement in the school results, the progress the children make and the numbers who pass the Kent Test. They have done a wonderful job steering our school through Covid, snowfalls, water shortages, dodgy boilers, the list is long and there always seems to be something new. Thank you to both of you for your dedication to being the best we can be. I think we now have the best group of teachers we have ever had, and the best group of governors. I have enjoyed meeting the Parent Reps and the members of the PTA, particularly at Christmas. I look forward to seeing the school improvement continue within the Trust. Thank you all for the commitment and love you give to the children in your care. Every child deserves a great childhood. Warm Regards. David"

Added dates in yellow.

September

10th (Thurs) Kent Test

11th (Fri) PTA meeting

18th (Fri) McMillan Coffee morning

25th (Fri) Inset Day

Wb 28th EYFS 2027 Tours

21st (Mon) EYFS Phonics

Workshop 2.30pm

29th (Tues) Year 2 Pevensy Sharing Assembly

Term Dates etc are on our website.

www.st-marks.kent.sch.uk



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Aspire, Believe, Succeed

Read to Succeed 2026

We are delighted to be able launch Read to Succeed 2026 thanks to the continued support from the PTA.

We were thrilled with the reading that went on last year and the number of rewards the children earned was phenomenal.

This year's challenge is launching **MONDAY 7th SEPTEMBER**.

As in previous years we are encouraging the children in EYFS and KS1 to read for 15+ mins and KS2 up to 40 mins. Each day that this happens they will be awarded a 'read'.

This year's rewards are as follows:

Number of Reads	Reward
25	Reading pencils/bookmarks
50	Reading bugs
75	Early Lunch (11.45) on a special reading table
100	Wear your own clothes for a day
150	Book, from The Book Cabinet
200	Sport/Art afternoon out of class
250	Forest school for an afternoon
300 plus	Waterstones trip to buy book of choice

FAQ's

How are reads counted?

We ask that reads are counted weekly by either the class teacher or teaching partner and recorded on a spreadsheet. However, on occasions this may be fortnightly if something unforeseen has arisen in the classroom on the day of the count.

Only reads entered into the reading journal count towards the points. Once in KS2 children can write up their own reading but a parent must sign this.

All reading entries need to be signed.

How many reads can be earned each week?

A maximum of 7 reads can be earned weekly. This is 1 read per day for the allotted time. We ask that you aim for 5 reads a week.

They may read more than once a day, but this counts as 1 read.

Reading points can be earned over a school break. Therefore, if a child reads every day for the allotted time during the Christmas holidays they could earn 14 reading points.

How long should each read be?

Early Years and Key Stage 1 children should read for 15-20 mins per day

Key Stage 2 children should read for 30-40 minutes per day.

They may read for longer than this, but this will only count as 1 read.

What can be read?

Anything can be read as long as it adds up to the allotted time for their age group e.g., fiction and non-fiction books, poetry, magazine articles, newspaper entries (if appropriate). This is how we are building a love for reading/reading for pleasure.

When and how are books changed?

All children in KS1 should be coming home with a Little Wandle book **and** a reading for pleasure book taken from the reading corner in class. The reading for pleasure book could be one that they read with you at bedtime.

In Early Years and KS1 the Little Wandle books are changed weekly. This is so that each book is read covering the appropriate teaching as per instructed by the scheme.

Please visit <https://www.littlewandle.org.uk/> for further information about Phonics and early reading or look in the back of the Little Wandle books.

Once children have moved beyond the Little Wandle books they will move to a levelled Accelerated Reader text and will continue have another pleasure for reading text. Either of these can be read for the reading points. They should be changed when they have been finished or if your child decides that they are not enjoying the story.

From Year 2 the children are responsible for changing their book when they need to, this is to encourage independence. Books are available in all corridors and classrooms for the children to access with ease.

What is reading for pleasure?

This is children engaging in reading of anything they enjoy and have chosen to engage in.

Macmillan Coffee Morning

We are delighted to, once again, hold our Macmillan Coffee morning on **Friday**

18th September. We would like to invite all parents, carers, and the extended community into school to join your child's class for our coffee morning and raise funds for Macmillan. Please come to the main school hall at the following times:

9:00 – 9:20 am – Early Years

9:25 – 9:45 am – Years 1 and 2

9:50 – 10.10 am – Year 3 and Year 6 Oxford Class

10:15 – 10:35 – Year 4 and Year 6 Rochester Class

10:40 – 11 am – Year 5

We would be very grateful for any cake donations (home-made or shop bought) to be dropped into the school office from Thursday 17th September please. **NO NUTS PLEASE.** If your child has a dietary requirement (e.g. gluten/dairy/egg free) then please can your donation be suitable for them and labelled with their name and class. Thank you.

A just giving page will be available for donations towards this charity.

Yours sincerely,

Mr S Bird
Headteacher

