St Mark's C E Primary School

16th October 2026

Newsletter No 7

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

Dear Parents and Carers,

It's been a busy week here at St Mark's with various trips and events. EYFS went to Hargate Forest, Year 4 had a visit from Southeast Rivers and some of the KS2 children went to The Lion King and to view the Bayeux Tapestry.

Bayeux Tapestry

Ms Carville was very lucky to be able to take 16 children from Years 4-6 to the British Museum to see the Bayeux Tapestry. It was a huge privilege to see such an important historical artefact up so close. Ethan (Y6) said, "It was really fun. The detail in the Tapestry was exquisite!". The next day, all of the children in Years 4-6 took part in a live stream from the British Museum telling us all about the events that led up to the Battle of Hastings and the creation of the Tapestry.



Dates to remember.
Added dates in yellow.

October

13th (Tues)EY to Hargate Forest 9am-11.30am
16th (Fri) Show Racism the Red Card
19th (Mon) Harvest Festival at church
21st (Wed) Year 3 & 4 Rock Days
21st -23rd Year 6 Residential -Bowles Rocks
22nd (Thur) PTA Treat sale
23rd (Fri) Last Day of Term 1
26th – 30th Mega Camps

November
2nd (Mon) Term 2 starts back to school
3rd- 6th EYFS Parent 2027 tours
6th (Fri) Y5 to Amelia Centre
9th (Mon) Anglo Saxon Y4 Workshop
12th (Thurs) Van Cols individual photographs
12th (Thurs) Y1 Phonics Meeting – 2.45pm
26th (Thurs) Y5 Tonbridge 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 2026-2027

With the end of term 1 drawing to a close we thought we would share our Frequently Asked Questions regarding our Reading incentive.

How are reads counted?

Reads are counted weekly by either the class teacher or teaching partner and recorded on a school spreadsheet. On occasions they may be counted fortnightly if something unforeseen has arisen in the classroom on the day of the count. Usually, but not always, this count is done on a Friday. Only reads entered into the reading journal count towards the points. Once in KS2 children can write up their own reading but a parent should sign this.



All reading entries need to be signed.

If you are concerned that your child's counts have not been done or are not as you thought, please approach the class teacher and ask about this.

Please ensure that your child is reminded to hand in their reading record for this count. Teachers and Teaching partners do ask for these but a little help from home is appreciated.

How many reads can be earned each week?

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

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. We do not mind if they read their phonics reading book, their accelerated reader text, a book borrowed from the library, a comic, a selection of poems, magazine articles or if appropriate, newspaper entries. Reading everywhere is how we build a love for reading/reading for pleasure and this is the aim of the incentive.

Bedtime stories read together count too.

When and how are books changed?

All children in Early Years and Year 1 should be coming home with a Little Wandle book and a reading for pleasure book taken from the reading corner in class. Please speak to your child's class teacher if this is not the case.

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. You can also speak with your child's class teacher.

Once children have moved beyond the Little Wandle books, usually but not always during Year 2, 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 or anything else you have at home. The book should be changed when they have finished it 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 the reading of anything they enjoy and have chosen to engage in. ANY questions about reading and your child's reading should be directed immediately to your child's class teacher.

Scholastic Book Fair
A huge thank you to all the parents and families who supported our recent Scholastic Book Fair. Thanks to your purchases, we have earned **£240.91** to spend on new books and resources for the school, helping to further enrich our children's learning and love of reading.

Early Years visit to Hargate Forest
On Tuesday morning Early Years went on a walk to the deep dark wood (Hargate Forest!). The children enjoyed a scavenger hunt and were a credit to our school. They particularly enjoyed finding the sneaky Gruffalo...ahem Mrs Parry at the end!




Year 4 River Workshop
On Monday morning Year 4 went to the mini hall for a workshop about rivers. It was very interesting and everyone loved it. We used spoons to try and find invertebrates in river water.
By Gabby




Lion King

On Wednesday, 20 lucky Year 4 and 5 children from St. Mark's enjoyed a truly unforgettable trip to see The Lion King in the West End!

The children were captivated by the spectacular costumes, stunning scenery, and incredible music, bringing the magic of the African savannah to life on stage. From the much-loved songs to the amazing performances, there were plenty of smiles, wide-eyed expressions, and moments of wonder throughout the show.

My favourite part of the Lion King was when Simba and Nala were in the hyena's cave and Mufasa came and rescued them**. Sienna**

I loved the Lion King because all the actors were fantastic and had great voices. Also the beginning and the ending were really emotional. **Carter**

My favourite part of the show was when all the animals walked on the stage at the start of the show and when the elephants walked past. I also liked it when Simba pushed the villain off the stairs after the villain had pushed his dad off. **Finley**

My favourite part of the show was when they were singing and when Simba was playing with Nala. **Aya**



Year 2 Victorian Day

On Thursday, Year 2 finished off their History unit, 'School's in the Past,' with a Victorian school day. The children came to school dressed as Victorian children and spent the day experiencing lessons as they would have been over 100 years ago. In the morning, all children participated in reading, writing and arithmetic through a mixture of dictation, chanting and copying teaching techniques. They found it very different to the way they learn in English and Maths today. They also experienced PE drills where the children stood in rows on the playground and completed a sequence of exercise. In the afternoon, the girls and the boys split. With the girls baking bread and sewing and the boys making Victorian toys - a thaumatrope and a cup and ball. We then discussed the life of a Victorian school child, and we all decided that we preferred school today!







PTA News

There are several events coming up and you may want to make notes in your diary.
Friday 6th November- Bottle donations -for Firework hair.
November 16th- Money Tree envelopes will go out- Jolly Jam Jars will be given out.
November 20th- Elfridges Items- own clothes day.
November 27th- Jolly Jam Jar donations - Wear a Christmas colour or accessory.
December 4th- Chocolate and cake donations-own clothes day.

Reminders

- Lunch menu next week: **Week 8** Menu can be found on our website St Mark's Church of England Primary School - Lunches
- **No nuts or nut spreads please**. Please click below for lunchbox ideas and recipes. Lunchbox ideas and recipes – Healthier Families - NHS (www.nhs.uk)

Head's Heroes, Attendance and Punctuality

On Fridays we celebrate children for their effort and achievements throughout the week**:**
Extra playtime goes to:

Attendance:	Year 5 Hever
Punctuality:	Year 1 Bodiam
This week's Attendance:	**94.1%**

This week the Head's Heroes are:

Y1 Arundel	Maisy	For super independent writing this week and trying really hard with her reading. 😊
Y1 Bodiam	Jake	For positive attitude and enthusiasm. Keep smiling Jake 😊
Y2 Leeds	Phoebe	For working hard to improve her handwriting and presentation.
Y2 Pevensey	Arthur	For fantastic participation and observation during Victorian day.
Y3 Lewes	Reggie	For always being ready to learn and showing everyone respect
Y3 Deal	Imogen	For being a role model for excellent learning behaviours. Keep it up!
Y4 Dover	Layana	For her creativity and superb presentation of her double page spread in science.
Y4 Farnham	Sophie	For encouraging teammates and making everyone feel included!
Y5 Hever	Carter	For excellent orienteering skills and being so lovely on our trip to London this week
Y5 Tonbridge	Asterix	For your enthusiasm on our trip to the British Museum and for the enormous effort and care you put into your recount. Fabulous effort! 😊
Y6 Oxford	Alex	For working so hard on improving his presentation and persevering when things get hard. 😊
Y6 Rochester	Reuben	For perseverance and hard work! With encouragement, you completed all tasks and exceeded by carefully selecting words to express poetic feeling. 😊

This week's Unsung Heroes are:

Hever: Ellie, Logan, Siena W, Avery, Orla
Rochester: Selena, Sumayah, Florence. Jasmine
Dover: Amaeyah, Oscar, Ollie

Yours sincerely,

Mr S Bird
Headteacher