

# Thomas Russell Junior School

'Ambitious culture, strong team ethos, outstanding academic achievement, high expectations, exemplary behaviour' Ofsted 2019.



## Newsletter



Issue No. 33

Headteacher: Mrs S Sharpe

28<sup>th</sup> June 2019

### Parent Forum Update

Our Parent Forum met on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> June to look at a range of items. As promised, Miss Branson held a short discussion on the new Relationships Curriculum. Please find below a summary of the details discussed:

#### **Relationships and Health Education**

From September 2020, Relationships and Health Education for primary schools becomes compulsory. We are very excited to be incorporating this new guidance into our already comprehensive PSHE curriculum and assemblies starting this September (2019).

The focus in primary schools is on positive and healthy friendships and family relationships, building solid foundations for respectful, safe and loving relationships as our children grow into young people. For example, teaching about permission-seeking in primary school leads on to talking about consent in secondary school.

We have updated our long term plan for assemblies to be on a 2-year cycle, which you can find attached. It has remained broadly the same as our previous plan, with RE objectives and important work on road and water safety, financial understanding, human rights and responsibilities, and community engagement. Many of the new objectives on positive relationships fit very well with what we have previously taught. Our whole school ethos, values and behaviour policy reflects much of the content, such as the importance of courtesy, respect, self-regulation, resilience and acceptance of others.

You will also notice that some of the objectives reflect the current views, concerns and attitudes of today's society: that mental wellbeing is a normal and natural part of daily life, in the same way that physical wellbeing is; isolation and loneliness; the benefits of rationing time spent online and the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices; the science of immunisations and vaccinations; families and relationships of different types.

Through Relationships and Health Education we teach children about:

- the characteristics and importance of a healthy family life and secure, positive and welcoming friendships
- stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, including marriage, single-parent, foster and adoption, LGBT+
- managing conflict
- self-respect and an understanding of feelings, boundaries, privacy and contact (including inappropriate and unsafe contact), including online
- respect for the different backgrounds, personalities, choices and preferences of other people
- mental wellbeing, self-care and how and where to seek support
- the characteristics and benefits of an active lifestyle and healthy diet
- signs and causes of physical illness, including harmful and illegal substances
- basic First Aid
- the changing emotions and adolescent body through puberty, and menstrual wellbeing

Most of the objectives will be taught through our assembly planning, differentiating the content of our lessons to be appropriate to the age of our children and any specific needs or vulnerabilities they may have. More sensitive content will be taught in class groups, to ensure open and safe discussion. Some objectives will be taught through Science and Computing lessons where it is more appropriate to do so.

Parents and carers retain the right to withdraw their child from Sex Education, as stated in our Relationships and Sex Education Policy, but from September 2020 will not have the right to withdraw their child from Relationships and Health Education. The government has put together FAQs which can be found at: [gov.uk/government/news/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education-faqs](https://gov.uk/government/news/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education-faqs).

We also discussed Parking at Thomas Russell Junior School. Again, please find a brief summary of our discussion:

There are currently 32,113 schools in the UK. It would probably be fair to say that over 32,000 of them have concerns over the safety of their pupils at drop off and pick up time. We want to do all we can to keep the children at Thomas Russell Junior School safe.

Parking is always at a premium at the busiest times of day – between 8:30 and 8:50, as well as around 3:30 when school finishes and 4:30 when extra-curricular clubs finish.

Parents can help by remembering that it is illegal to stop or park on the zig-zags outside schools (such as those on Efflinch Lane) and also illegal to park on double yellow lines. To ease flow of traffic, it is helpful if drivers leave the turning bay (denoted by the yellow criss-cross lines) empty and ensure there is sufficient distance clear at the end of Gilmour Lane for pedestrians to cross safely and vehicles to get in and out of Gilmour Lane. Speed kills. The Police and Highways Agency recommend no more than 20 mph in school zones. *'Twenty is Plenty'* outside our school.

When children are walking, we encourage them to use the zebra crossing properly, to walk on the pavement and to dismount scooters / bikes around pedestrians. Why not try parking in one of the areas within the 10-minute walk zone (attached) and completing your journey on foot? Holland Sports Club and Barton Marina both offer excellent alternatives to Gilmour Lane, often being much easier to find a parking space.

We all lead busy lives and occasionally we are all held up in a meeting that ran over, a traffic jam we were not expecting or have a delivery arrive late. Simply give us a call and let us know, we would much rather look after your child until you arrive safely than have you rushing to get to school and the worst happen.

I hope that by working together we can help to make the area around school as safe as possible for all of our children. Please show your commitment to our pledge to make the area outside school as safe as possible by cutting out the badge below and displaying it in the windscreen of your car – let's see how many people we can get signed up!



We gave a copy of these to new parents in their induction pack as suggested at the meeting too. If you would like a colour copy of the badge, please send your child to the office where we will be more than happy to distribute them.

Other items for discussion also included:

**Sports Kit** – we have purchased a small amount more kit from Sports Premium funding and may have funding to purchase even more in the near future, but would continue to ask parents to wash and return kit as soon as is practically possible and not hold on to it for the next time your child plays – on average we are entering between 1 and 3 competitions each week.

**Enterprise Projects** – some members present felt the younger children in school may not have gained as much from the project as older children given their limited understanding of business. There were also some concerns about the 'competition' element and the amount of time taken up completing the project. We will certainly be taking this feedback into account before

making plans in the future. I have to say, we have been absolutely overwhelmed by the response and to date have received over £4,500 in profit with nearly ¼ of this coming from Y3. Classes have seen some absolutely fabulous presentations about such a broad range of ideas. We know there are still a few projects running, but would be grateful of final monies uploaded to Parent Pay this weekend please. If your child signed up, but has not completed the project, we would ask that their £1 is returned to school please. Children have been meeting in year groups to make suggestions to the School Council about how they would like the money they have raised to be spent. Once again I would like to say a HUGE **THANK YOU** for your phenomenal support.

Final discussion items included parental thanks for **Sports Day** – complementing the school on excellent organisation, some generous offers of help to allow us to reschedule the **Aquathlon**, which we were delighted to inform you about last week. And finally, parents helped with a look over the **'Checklist'** which was going into the Y2 packs – actually parents felt it could be really helpful in the move up to any year group, so again that is attached.

Overall, a very productive and rewarding meeting – we would love to see more parents joining us next year. If you were able to give up an hour of your time, once per term, we would be very grateful – and we can also use the discussions to help to make experiences for your children even better.

*Best wishes, Mrs Sharpe*