

Thomas Russell Junior School

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



Newsletter



Issue No. 28

Headteacher: Mrs S Sharpe

18th April 2020

Welcome to the Summer Term 2020

This is the start of a term like none we have ever known before and I hope not to experience again. We heard on Thursday that the Government have extended the lockdown for at least another three weeks. Cases of the deadly Covid-19 continue to increase and although measures are helping to curb the spread, they have been very clear that the risks are still incredibly high.

We continue to offer care for vulnerable children and those of keyworkers via the Hub at Thomas Russell Infant School and I would again like to thank parents working in the NHS and carers roles, as well as those providing essential services for everything they are doing.

From tomorrow, you will be able to access work for the Summer Term for your child, which is differentiated by year group. This will be found on the 'Our Learning' section of the school website - just where the Daily Doodle has been for the last four weeks. Follow the link:

<https://www.thomasrussell-junior.staffs.sch.uk/page/?title=Our+Learning&pid=32>

We understand that we have over 250 children, they (and their families) will all be in a slightly different position.

Readiness to learn

Some may be ready for more formalised school work and relishing a challenge, some may be finding the whole experience of lockdown quite an anxious time, and some may find sitting down to learn at home much more difficult than they would in the classroom. Parents may be of the view (like me) that learning is not something which happens just in the classroom and may be relishing teaching their children how to prepare and cook meals, to use a drill, to make the bed, to grow plants and a million other life skill which will be invaluable as they grow up.

Facilities

We also know we have some families who may be sharing one laptop between the whole family and have no printing facilities, whereas other children who have unlimited computer access. Some households may be trying to run a home-school and home office from the dining room table whilst other parents might be working at makeshift desks and have toddlers to teenagers all needing attention at the same time.

Future thinking

We will have children of all ranges of ability and maturity, some who need much more support and guidance where others are more self-motivated. We know we have children who will feel like they were just finding their feet in school and now the rug has been swept from under them, others who grin with glee that they aren't at school and others will feel an emotion similar to grief that they are having precious last weeks at TRJS stolen from them. We have families who will be worried about missing transition activities and those worried about children missing vital teaching.

Outlook

There will be families who are relishing these 'stolen' moments together which they would not normally have had, some who are just trying desperately to keep the fridge stocked and avoid fights from breaking out and some who have huge worries about losing their job or business and livelihood.

Health

Last, but by no means least we will have some parents having to put themselves at risk of exposure daily due to the jobs they do; families with high risk members who are desperately trying to keep safe and sadly some who will themselves be directly affected by the symptoms of coronavirus or the tragic consequences it can have.

For all of these reasons, we want to make clear that what we are offering in terms of learning is a 'take what you want, when you can and leave what doesn't work for you' type of provision.

The work we have set is designed to try and meet the needs of all children. We will be uploading the Daily Doodle the evening before which may be helpful for parents wanting to get their child's work set up for the following day. We have tried to keep instructions relatively simple so that children can self direct as much as possible, but some children will require a certain level of external support and motivation. We have also included some answer sheets where necessary to help parents guide children if required.

Stay at home but stay in touch ☺

We have been delighted to continue to receive photographs over the Easter holiday of children getting up to all kinds of things - camping trips in the garden, painting, baking, singing, building, keeping fit, playing and learning.

Thank you so much for continuing to share these and helping us to feel connected to the children who we really do miss.

Here for you

We are in unprecedented times, but as always if there is anything we can do as a school to help, then please do get in touch. We are still here for children and families, so please do not hesitate to contact us, whether it is support, advice or just a quick answer to a question.

Use questions@thomasrussell-junior.staffs.sch.uk for anything you need, or contact individual teachers and teaching assistants on the e-mail addresses on the last Newsletter.

Best wishes, Mrs Sharpe

