

Thomas Russell Junior School

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



Newsletter



Issue No. 32

Headteacher: Mrs S Sharpe

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Thomas Russell Junior School



Rainbow Learner

We have nominated nine Rainbow Learners this week.

Every day we are stunned by the children's resilience, determination and commitment to their learning, but also in the million ways they find to entertain themselves.

Rainbow Learners this week: Lucy & William L-J, Olivia Be, William T-W, Beatrice H, Alice R, Sian G, Seb J and Leandro DR!

We've had children heading off on their own family trips, extending their Daily Doodle learning by visiting places of interest, children picking up books and persevering with reading even when it's not their first love, we've got amazing PowerPoints, incredible art work and some all-round superstars who have worked their socks off.

I have also awarded loads of virtual Headteacher's Awards this week again ☺ keep the pictures coming.

So ... that's the awards for the children, let's think about the parents who clearly deserve awards this week... Print and add your name to your chosen certificate!



If you start the day with visions of home schooling like Mary Poppins, but within the hour are sounding more Cruella Deville.

Be kind to yourself... these are hard times.



If the extent of your success is measured by the fact you got your child to change out of their night pyjamas and into their day pyjamas!
Congratulations - celebrate the little wins.



If you sent your child out in the garden to find a four leaf clover or spot a cloud in the shape of an animal, just so you could get five minutes peace.
Well done - creativity is the mother of invention



If you made it to the end of the week with no pupils being expelled for fighting and no staff being suspended for drinking on the job.
Awesome - you rock!

We miss you ... so, so much...

One of the things that has kept us going and brightened our days is receiving your lovely e-mails with photographs of biscuit planets you've baked, trees you've climbed and projects you've completed. We also love the ones where older siblings have photo-bombed and we get a glimpse of how they've grown, or we get to meet younger siblings who will be joining us in the future. And my virtual hug through my office window from a poppet out on their daily walk last week was just AMAZING!

Knowing how much joy they bring, we thought we'd brighten your day (or maybe scare you!) by sending you some snaps of our lovely smiley faces ☺





Today marks the end of Week 8 in Lockdown.

It also marks the end of what should have been SATs week for our wonderful Y6 children, and what should have been our Circus Skills Day in school. We know our bunch of Y6 clowns would have loved every minute!



It is also just one week until we should have been holding Sports Day. If you've walked past school recently, you'll see the field is more fit for a ploughing match than the egg and spoon race.



We are just as disappointed as you are to see these dates slipping by, but please keep your chin up - you're doing a brilliant job in the toughest of circumstances 😊
See you on the other side.

TT Rockstars

Well done to everyone who took part in our latest Rockstars battle boys vs girls! Despite a few technical issues with TT Rockstars this morning, as the site had some downtime for maintenance, 101 children took part.

We saw lots of familiar names joining the battle:

For the girls, we had Y6's King Sally (aka Abi P) and Y4's Bluebell Riddle (Jessica G) and Emily Dropdebas (aka Evie N) led the way with 2,620, 2,491 and 1,796 points respectively.

For the boys, it was a strong showing for Y3 with Tom Ranks (aka Jack K-D) and Lo-fi Ranks (aka Zachai K) taking first and second place with 1,949 and 1,544 points respectively. Y6's Axel Flores (aka Archie R) took 3rd place with 1,065 points.

The final score saw the girls take victory with 20,061 points vs 15,041 points! Well done girls. 😊

All Boys

15,041 **20,061**



All Girls

And last, but by most definitely not least... the Governments' announcement

Thank you for your patience since the Government announcement last Sunday. I can confirm that I have conducted a VERY thorough risk assessment, spoken to SLT, key staff and Governors at great length and come to the decision that we will NOT be re-opening school on 1st June to Y6 children. This decision will be kept under regular review, likely in line with the Governments' three weekly review cycle, but also at a more regular local level.

You will know by now that at Thomas Russell Junior School, the children come at the heart of every decision that we make, and let me tell you this is one of the hardest decision I have had to make as Headteacher. You know I want the children back in school, in their classrooms, with their own teachers, laughing and joking with their friends and finishing their time at Junior School with all of those rites of passage they have so thoroughly earned.

But the truth of the matter is that the risk is too great, and I am not prepared to place any of our children (or families) at such risk. We have established a list of non-negotiables which we feel have to be met to provide the children (and staff) with the necessary protection to keep them safe. There are significant flaws and inconsistencies in the numerous guidance documents which have been sent out and there are some glaring double standards which I am simply not prepared to overlook.

I have significant fears that the cycle of the pandemic hit hospitals first and they were left desperate for the required PPE, then moved to care homes who were left equally desperate for testing and protection. I am not prepared to place my school, staff, pupils and families in the position where we become statistics in the next wave of casualties.

I am aware there are a large number of schools who have surveyed their parents about what they want, I have made a conscious decision not to do that and in doing so I apologise if you feel your views have not been heard. However, I am very clear that this decision could not be made on the grounds of what we want - it had to be made purely on the grounds of health and safety.

We will remain open to Key Worker and Vulnerable children. I would expect us to be increasing the number of Vulnerable children who are accessing school provision too. We have already identified further ways in which we can support parents and children at home and will update you weekly on changes, initiatives and new ways of working together as we find them.

I have attached with this document an outline of just some of the key points around our discussion and decision making process.

We are still here for you.

If you have any questions, concerns or comments, then please do get in touch.

Best wishes, Mrs Sharpe