

# Thomas Russell Junior School

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



## Newsletter



Issue No. 22

Headteacher: Mrs S Sharpe

26<sup>th</sup> February 2021

### #LD21 Rainbow Learners



Our Rainbow Learners for this week are:

Evie C, Olive H, Evie R, Laurie H, Libby P, Bella P, Flynn W, Sam G, Lauren H, Arthur M, Zoe B, George J and Lucy T.

Well done to these children for hitting the ground running with our last couple of weeks of Zoom lessons before we are all back in school.

Our final birthdays in Lockdown that will be celebrated this week are:



We hope you all have a lovely day and enjoy your celebrations ☺

### Draper's Award

Draper's Awards are given at Thomas Russell Infants, Thomas Russell Junior and John Taylor High School.

This is a prestigious award, which recognises outstanding effort, academic and personal achievement, consistently high standards of behaviour and valued contribution to the life of the school.

As a result of the pandemic, last years' presentations of the Draper's Awards were affected. We were pleased to announce **Holly B and Bill S** as the Y6 winners from the Junior School. They and their families were told of their nominations via a Zoom Awards Ceremony and we celebrated in our socially distanced Leavers' Parade on the last day of term, as we had Y6 children in school.

Unfortunately, that was not possible at the Infants, but we are now delighted to share that the Infants have announced their winners from Y2, who are now in our Y3 as: **Eleanor P, Rocky H, Isabel S and William O**. Winning this award is a great testament to the children's behaviour and attitude as well as their academic achievements. We know the children and their families will be delighted.

## Return to school ☺

Despite popular news commentary throughout Lockdown that schools have been 'CLOSED', we have been pleased to be able to provide Key Worker and Vulnerable provision for over 80 children since Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January, many of them attending full time or 4 days every week.

We are also really pleased and proud of the provision that we have had in place for our children learning from home and know there has been huge appreciation from across our school community for the Zoom teaching and structure that we have been able to provide.

We are now **delighted**, but cautious, to welcome all children back to school from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March. It is our intention to return in class bubbles for at least the first four weeks up to Easter. We will continue with the staggered arrival that we had in place previously, with Upper School encouraged to arrive between 8:40 and 8:50, then Lower School between 8:50 and 9:00. The school day will end at 3:20 for Upper School and 3:30 for Lower School. Please could we reiterate our request for all adults to wear a mask whilst on site and in busy areas outside of school around Gilmour Lane.

We would like children to return in full school uniform, however totally appreciate that some may have had growth spurts and things like school shoes may no longer fit - we are happy to offer a short period of flexibility to allow for any shopping trips etc. that are required.

With regard to shoe shopping, please could we make one request and that is to avoid purchasing open toe sandals or very flimsy ballet pumps? We find these do not protect children's feet very well at all when they are running around on the playground and field. It is our intention to make as much use as possible of the wonderful outdoor space we have, which will include accessing the field regularly. Shoes that are a little more substantial offer better protection and will also keep feet much drier if the grass is a bit damp.

Please could we request that children continue to attend in Games Kit one day per week:  
Y3 on Friday, Y4 & Y6 on Thursday, Y5 on Wednesday.

It is our intention to keep protective measures in place at a heightened level - this will keep all of our children and staff as safe as possible. These include: individual stationery sets provided for every child, seats in a pew and aisle arrangement facing the front of the class, regular hand washing, regular sanitation of touch points, promoting respiratory hygiene through 'catch-it, bin-it, kill-it' and well ventilated classroom with doors and windows open as much as possible. All staff will be following social distancing measures and wearing masks / visors where this isn't possible.

We will be serving hot dinners from 8<sup>th</sup> March and will assume your child will be following their previous pattern, unless you inform us otherwise via [patrick@thomasrussell-junior.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:patrick@thomasrussell-junior.staffs.sch.uk)

During this initial return period, we are very keen to avoid possible transmission of the virus between home and school and would therefore like to request that minimal belongings are brought in to school, however if children require a school bag to safely carry items, then this is acceptable.

We are anticipating the first couple of weeks might be quite exhausting for some as they re-adjust to being back in school full time, increased levels of physical activity, changes in bedtime and daily routines and prolonged periods of concentration in the classroom. Our focus will be on social aspects of learning, understanding and regulating emotions, re-integrating with peers in the classroom and on the playground. Please let us know via questions@ if you have any specific concerns about your child's return or any information of which you feel we should be aware.

## TT Rockstars House Battle

Before half-term, 131 children took part in our Rockstars House battle that took place over 3 weeks from 25<sup>th</sup> January – 12<sup>th</sup> February.

Jervis took an early lead and managed to maintain it throughout the competition finishing with an amazing 104,894 points. Lo-Fi Ranks (aka Zachai K) and Fee Rock (aka Robert B) led the charge for Jervis with 45,237 and 42,458 points respectively. Bassett took a very respectable second place with more than 60,000 points, championed by siblings Linda Wood (aka Lana M) and Shawn Woods (aka Lawy M) who earned 20,828 and 8,768 points respectively. Anson took 3<sup>rd</sup> place from Clinton in fourth.

1<sup>st</sup> Jervis - 104,894

2<sup>nd</sup> Bassett - 63,838

3<sup>rd</sup> Anson - 20,498

4<sup>th</sup> Clinton - 17,665

A special mention also goes to the following children who scored 3000 points or more for their house and achieved an individual top ten position:

Aston Reed (aka Ethan K), Axle Keene (aka Isaac O), Mia Belle Bernard (aka Mia F), Chuck Wolf (aka William D), Annie Graziadei (aka Charlotte E) and Robert Stump (aka Oliver W).

It is super to see a few new names in the top ten. Well done to everyone who took part. It is a great way to practise your times tables practice whilst also competing for your house.



## Interschool 'Top of the Rocks' Battle

This week, Christ Church Primary School has challenged TRJS (along with five other primary schools) to a 'Top of the Rocks' battle. The battle starts next Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> March and will continue until Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March. Points earned between 6am & 9pm each day will count towards the total for TRJS.

This is our third Top of The Rocks battle and, after having **won the previous two**, we would love to make this a hat trick! It won't be easy and I have no doubt that the other schools will be battling hard to take our crown so let's make it as difficult as we can for them. 😊

To take part, you just need to login to Rockstars and play. Points earned in any area of Rockstars will count towards the battle.

The winning school is the one that has the highest number of points per child. As the points are averaged across the whole school, the more children that play, the more chance we have of winning. Every point counts so log in and play! If you need any further information or have forgotten your password, please contact Mrs Preston on [DPreston@thomasrussell-junior.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:DPreston@thomasrussell-junior.staffs.sch.uk)

## SpringBoard Maths Challenge 21

The US-based online learning programme SplashLearn is launching its SpringBoard Maths Challenge to the UK to for the first time in 2021. The competition is open to all primary aged children from Year 1 to Year 6 and will run for ten weeks from Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March – Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> May, 2021.

SpringBoard is an online competition where children solve game-based maths problems to earn points. All points count towards a total class score. The best performing classes with the highest points win weekly prizes at a regional and national level.

We feel that participation in this challenge would be a fun and engaging way for TRJS children to practise and master their maths skills, whilst also working collaboratively with the other children in their class. The programme is free of charge and parents can register with the site so that children can play at home too. Children can earn extra points for activities completed at home.

The SplashLearn site collect limited personal information about the children who are registered, specifically first name and gender. However, parental permission is required for this data to be held by SplashLearn.

**If you do not give permission for your child to register with this site in school**, please contact me directly so I can ensure they are not included in the competition - [DPreston@thomasrussell-junior.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:DPreston@thomasrussell-junior.staffs.sch.uk)

If we do not hear from you by 1<sup>st</sup> March we will assume that you are happy for your child to take part. A copy of the SplashLearn Privacy Policy can be found at <https://uk.splashlearn.com/privacy>



## World Book Day

We will be celebrating this day with special Zoom activities on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March.

Schools across JT MAT are taking part in a 'Toilet Roll Book Character' Challenge. As we have many families with children at TRIS, JTHS and JTFS we thought it would be nice to offer our children the opportunity to do similar.

### **The challenge is as follows:**

- Make a cardboard roll into your favourite book character
- Use any size cardboard roll e.g. toilet roll, kitchen roll, wrapping paper tube.
- Keep the toilet roll in its original shape to make your character!
- Use felt pens, crayons, paint, collage, paper and glue to create your book character.
- Send a photo of your toilet roll character and the book they are from (if you have it) to [questions@thomasrussell-junior.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:questions@thomasrussell-junior.staffs.sch.uk) by Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> March \* (different to JT MAT) or bring it to school during our first week back (clearly named)
- Winners will be announced on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> March in Zoom Merit Assembly 😊



Please note there will be **no** Zoom lessons on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March as all staff will be in school preparing classrooms and resources for the children's return on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March.

### **Early Birds and Night Owls**

Please ensure you have booked any provision for between 8<sup>th</sup> March and 1<sup>st</sup> April as soon as possible. Bookings will close next Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March and we cannot guarantee availability after that.

### **Spring is here ...**

If you are anything like me, then the sight of blue sky and sunshine this week, along with the snowdrops, crocuses and daffodils all beginning to flower will have brightened your mood no end.

Enjoy the weekend and take care

*Best wishes, Mrs Sharpe*

