

Thomas Russell Junior School

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



Newsletter



Issue No. 27

Headteacher: Mrs S Sharpe

1st April 2021



Thank you so much - As we reach the end of another gruelling term, I would like to say a **huge** thank you to all of our parents and carers. We are really grateful for the incredible support and hard work that has gone into keeping the children engaged and learning throughout the lockdown, and helped to make our full return to school so enjoyable and positive.

I know some parents have joked that they are not ready for a holiday as the children have only just come back, but I can assure you **all** of the children (and staff) have absolutely earned this holiday. Fingers crossed for some sunshine – the children really need a fun filled break, time with friends, seeing family and hopefully the opportunity to enjoy some carefree times (which have been too few and far between this last year) just being children.



Hope Orchard and Wellness Walk - Thank you so much to everyone who is taking part in the first phase of the Hope Orchard. I am absolutely overwhelmed with the support the project has received and we will be planting over 60 fruit trees and a whole host of bulbs and wild flowers. We will keep you updated as the different trees arrive, but hope to be in a position to begin planting very early in the Summer Term. Depending on delivery times, we are looking at potentially Saturday 24th April or 1st May. Some fruit tree types have a much longer delivery window, but we will keep you updated.



Parent Consultations – It has not been possible to create written reports for the children this term. However, we would like to inform you that we will be holding an additional set of parent consultations on Tuesday 4th and Thursday 6th May (4pm – 7pm) via Zoom, to give parents a vital opportunity to speak to teachers and teaching assistants about their children's progress, achievements and personal development. We will circulate letters to parents with booking details as soon as we return to school.

Don't forget to book your Early Birds and Night Owls requirements for next half term:



www.schoolinterviews.co.uk

Early Bird - 43a9t

Night Owls - 6r5ed

Deadline - Thursday 15th April.

All booking are subject to our standard Terms and Conditions



Summer Term



We are delighted to inform you that when we come back to school on Monday 19th April, we will be returning to year group bubbles. This will mean the children are able to play on the playground with peers from the other class.

We will also be able to reintroduce the three class split which we know works so well at Thomas Russell Junior, returning to classes of 20 for core subjects. Maths will be taught in streamed ability groups and English will be in small mixed ability classes.

We will no longer be operating the staggered start and finish times, so the gate will be open for arrivals from 8:40 - 8:50 for all ages. Children will meet in year group bubbles on the playground, then go in to class for Registration at 8:50. We will continue to have staggered break times and lunch rota in order to ensure the children still have plenty of space to play safely. As voted for by the School Council, we will have an active zone and a calm zone on the playground for each year group, so they will have double the amount of space to play that they currently have. Staggered lunch rotas will continue to ensure we are able to maintain the thorough handwashing regime before children eat and the heightened levels of cleaning between dinner sittings. Other protective measures such as forward facing seats, individual stationery sets, enhanced cleaning of touchpoints and social distancing measures will remain in place. The day that we are asking children to wear Sports Kit will remain the same, but shorts and t-shirts with trainers will be allowed on warmer days rather than tracksuits. **All children will now finish school at 3:30.**



Watch this space for exciting news about our plans for an Olympic Week to incorporate Sports Day activities. We won't be able to hold our traditional Sports Day with audience, but still fully intend to give our Y6 Sports Leaders chance to take on those responsibilities they love and all of our children a chance to shine in sporting events.

Also, watch out for our exciting plans about 'Residentials@Home' and day trips that we are arranging to make the most of the outdoors and compensate for missed residential visits, which we know our children enjoy and gain so much from.



Fingers crossed ... please could we ask parents to remain vigilant for signs of illness, and if any child develops Covid symptoms to take them for a PCR test. It is essential any positive results are notified to the school using the questions@thomasrussell-junior.staffs.sch.uk e-mail so we are able to continue our responsibilities for contact tracing. Please note this will be the only school address that is checked daily throughout the holiday.

Helmets please – it is great to see the number of children cycling and scooting to school has increased this term. Please could we remind children that if they are parking their bike at school there is an expectation they will wear a cycle helmet. Could we also suggest there are some great scooting helmets available, which could protect from potentially serious accidents.



And finally, farewell, to Mrs Newstead who has only been with us for a very short time, in the most unusual of years, but has had such a positive impact in that time. She will be sadly missed as she heads off to pastures new working for Twinkl. The Y3 children and staff team will miss her smile, her positivity and the wonderful support she has offered to these children since Y1.

Best wishes, Mrs Sharpe