

Prospectus

Welcome

to 'an outstanding and improving school'

Ofsted 2019

Choosing the right school for your child is one of the most important decisions any parent will face.

I hope this prospectus will tell you all you need to know about Thomas Russell Junior School, to help you make your decision and give you a feel of what makes our school such a happy and successful place.

At Thomas Russell Junior School, we aim to provide a top class education for every single child in a friendly and caring environment. We take great pleasure in forming good relationships with pupils, parents and the wider community. We place strong emphasis on learning the 3Rs that we believe will equip our youngsters to thrive in an ever-changing world – Resilience, Resourcefulness and Respect.

We want each and every child to discover and achieve their potential, academically and personally. We want them to be stimulated and challenged; to take responsibility and enjoy their time here. Most of all we want them to develop into well-rounded, independent thinkers, ready to excel in the next stage of their education and onward into their future.

Welcome to Thomas Russell Junior School.



Mrs Shelley Sharpe - Headteacher

A word from the Chair of Governors

Welcome to Thomas Russell Junior School. Whether you are new to the school or have older children here, we want your child to feel safe, happy and eager to learn about new things. We encourage good behaviour, a caring attitude and personal responsibility amongst our children.

Our teachers have a wealth of experience and are well qualified to provide a broad range of educational opportunities. We will provide the best possible education that we can to all of the children in our school, and we want you and your family to share in helping us to achieve that.

We welcome you and your family to Thomas Russell Junior School and look forward to you all having a happy and rewarding time here.

Mr Terry Wells - Chair of Governors





An expectation of excellence

Ofsted 2014

A Brief History of Thomas Russell

Thomas Russell Junior School was opened in 1969. It is a co-educational day school, administered by Staffordshire County Council, for boys and girls between the ages of 7 and 11. It serves the Barton-under-Needwood, Dunstall, Wychnor and Woodhouses (end of Sych Lane) communities to the south-west of Burton upon Trent.

Historically the school benefits from strong links with the Drapers' Company. Thomas Russell was a draper who, upon his death in 1593, bequeathed a sum of money for a school to be built in Barton under Needwood. The links with the Drapers' Company continue to this day. Each year, two Year 6 children are presented with the Drapers' Award in recognition of outstanding achievements and contributions to the life of the school.

The school comprises of a two-storey building and two mobile classrooms in extensive grounds. These encompass huge open playing fields, an outdoor classroom, a large playground with trim trail and climbing frame, a specialist Forest School area, vegetable garden and a heated indoor swimming pool.

There are ten classrooms equipped with interactive whiteboards and laptops. Alongside a well-stocked library, we have three trolleys of iPads and two of laptops, which are used to support children's learning.

We have a large hall, which serves as dining room, gym and assembly hall. The school has its own kitchen and all dinners are cooked on site. We are very proud to have our own indoor swimming pool in use throughout the year.

The School Aims

At Thomas Russell Junior, we are committed to developing the highest standards of performance from all of our pupils. We deliver a broad and balanced curriculum and strive to ensure that our children are given equal access to a range of challenging educational opportunities.

Our teaching is geared towards helping each child achieve their full potential, taking account of children's differing abilities and needs.

We believe education involves more than the work that the children meet in lessons and strive to:

In 2021, we planted the first phase of trees in our Hope Orchard and Wellness Walk. Designed as an area to promote quiet reflection and a sense of optimism, our Hope Orchard contains fruit trees, wildflowers and benches sponsored by families and friends of the school.

A large proportion of our children have previously attended Thomas Russell Infants' School. We work closely together to ensure continuity and a smooth transfer. Children have the opportunity to visit each other, establishing 'buddies' for the year ahead.

At the end of Year 6, most of our pupils transfer to John Taylor High School, which is located in the village. We have an excellent system of transition to ensure the move is as smooth as possible whether to JTHS or other local secondary schools. It is our ambition to ensure our children are thoroughly prepared both academically and socially / emotionally for this next phase - we want our children to be equipped to thrive, not just survive. Should families choose an onward route of private education, we have lots of experience supporting successful scholarship applications.

We place emphasis on positive achievement and recognise effort with reward. Our house system, based upon the titles of well-established Staffordshire families (Anson, Bassett, Clinton and Jervis), together with our reward system underline this philosophy and encourage a sense of belonging.

1. Do all we can to help our children grow intellectually, physically, spiritually and emotionally.
2. Foster and develop strong relationships between the school, parents, governors and the community.
3. Encourage positive attitudes where children develop self-respect and consideration for others.
4. Provide and encourage a safe and friendly environment whilst encouraging a sense of self-discovery and independence.
5. Prepare the children for the next stage of their education.







The place to learn

Curriculum

At Thomas Russell Junior School, we aim to provide opportunities for every child to acquire understanding, knowledge and practical skills allied to the confidence and willingness to use them. Our curriculum offers a broad and balanced experience where every child is encouraged to reach their full potential. Underpinning the delivery of all subjects is our desire to nurture the 3Rs – resilience, resourcefulness and respect.

English - through the study of English and its application across the curriculum, our pupils develop their knowledge, skills and understanding to become lifelong readers and writers. By providing opportunities to explore high-quality texts, we aim to instil a love of reading and enable children to express their views, ideas and feelings creatively: listening, speaking, reading and writing for a range of different purposes. Pupils can enjoy books from our structured reading scheme and extensive school/classroom libraries. Writing skills are cultivated alongside reading, focusing on the correct use of spelling, punctuation and grammar as well as effective composition and consideration of purpose and audience. We also support children to develop a competent grasp of cursive handwriting.

Maths - our aim is to create confident, curious and resilient learners who enjoy mathematics and who are fully equipped with the knowledge and skills needed for their transition to KS3. Maths teaching is delivered using spiral learning and involves iterative revisiting, and building on, prior knowledge. It is supported by a range of resources including practical equipment, IT/online applications and books. Children learn to apply their understanding to different contexts (including everyday life) and opportunities are taken to apply knowledge

across the curriculum wherever possible. Problem-solving and reasoning are used to encourage children to explain and justify their thinking and to embed their understanding.

Science - this gives children the ability to acquire key skills and knowledge to help them to think scientifically and develop an understanding of the world. At TRJS, children develop knowledge of the science contained within the National Curriculum; build on their curiosity; and investigate contributions made by famous scientists. By raising questions and analysing information, pupils are able to understand and predict how the world operates - not only for science today, but also for the future.

Computing - pupils experience up-to-date technology with interactive whiteboards, laptops, iPads and internet access in every classroom. They undertake the Computing curriculum where they are taught computational thinking and digital literacy; teaching them how to code and how to create their own programs. Online safety is integral in our curriculum. We model and educate our pupils on how to use technology positively, responsibly and safely.

PE - children make use of our extensive grounds, indoor hall and swimming pool during these lessons. The range of activities includes football, netball, rounders, hockey, rugby, dance, gymnastics, athletics, tennis and swimming. We hold an annual competitive Sports Day and the school is strongly represented in a variety of sporting competitions and pursuits. Whilst we strive to be successful, we emphasise good sporting behaviour, promoting a sense of fair play and the ability to cope with success and failure.



History - pupils explore what life was like in the past – to understand why things have changed and why they will continue to do so. We aim to inspire curiosity – for pupils to question events and make judgements about them. Studying many eras, pupils learn to value both our and other cultures where relationships play an important part in society.

Geography - this is the study of people and places. Our children enjoy making discoveries about volcanoes, rainforests, countries & continents around the world as well as weather and climate. They conduct local field work and visit places of interest to find out about where they live and also use maps and other sources of information to deepen their knowledge.

Music - the children are offered opportunities to participate in a wide variety of music making activities including specialist instrumental teaching, singing and musical composition. Children in Y3 all learn to play the keyboard and in Y5 currently, they play the clarinet. We also have an incredibly strong choir who participate in a range of local and regional events. Private tuition is available for strings, woodwind, brass and keyboards.

Design and Technology - projects are often made cross curricular - linking to other subjects taught. Children design products with purpose in mind and an intended user of the products. It is inspiring, rigorous and practical subject, requiring creativity resourcefulness and imagination. Children design and make products that solve real and relevant problems within a variety of contexts, they learn to be reflective innovative enterprising and resilient.

Art - is a safe space for our children to explore, experiment and take risks without fear of getting it wrong which is the basic essence of what art is and can offer to our children. Children are exposed to a range of media each year giving them the opportunity to explore, develop and embed their skills and understanding of that media.

Religious Education - this is a compulsory part of the National Curriculum and is based on the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus. We live in a multi-faith society; we promote awareness and tolerance of each other's beliefs and an understanding of British Values including democracy, the rule of law and mutual respect. Parents have the right to request for their children to be withdrawn from RE lessons on religious grounds.

PSHE and Citizenship - evident through many themes taught in school, children are given the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives. They are taught to become responsible for their actions and that actions have consequences. Children learn about positive relationships with friends and family, bullying, healthy living, hygiene, money, drug and sex education as well as mental health and wellbeing.

Modern Foreign Languages - children will learn German and French during their four years at the school. We aim to encourage curiosity and deepen children's understanding of the world. Through a range of activities, including songs, games, role-plays and much more, pupils express their ideas and thoughts in another language. They learn, understand and respond both in speech and in writing.

The place to excel

Uniform

There is a school uniform which we like our children to wear. We feel it gives the children pride in their appearance and a sense of identity. The school colours are green and gold.

Uniform consists of:

- White shirt, white or green polo shirt
- Grey trousers, skirt, pinafore or tailored shorts
- Green sweatshirt or cardigan
- Optional school tie (with a formal shirt)
- In the summer term, a green gingham or green and white striped summer dress is permissible

Embroidered uniform items are available from Pupil Schoolwear – Swadlincote, WB Schoolwear – Walton or Schoolwear UK – Burton

Footwear - Children should come to school in sensible shoes, preferably black or grey, with black, grey or white socks or tights. Smart boots can also be worn in cold / wet weathers. Trainers should only be worn for outdoor PE.

Coat - A coat or waterproof is required in school every day, as we will go out to play even during wet weather.

Hair - Children should wear their hair tied up as soon as it is long enough to do so - this includes boys and girls. Long fringes should be gripped or held back with a band so that they do not interfere with children's ability to look between teacher, whiteboard and their written work.

Jewellery - The only permitted item is a standard watch. Pupils with pierced ears should only wear small studs, which must be removed by the child before any PE or Swimming lessons are taken.

Indoor PE kit - Children should wear a T-shirt in their house colour and black shorts. Pumps or bare feet are required for indoor PE. PE kit bags including bag, t-shirt and cap in house colour with black shorts are available to order during Induction Evening.

Outdoor PE kit - Children are required to wear a tracksuit and trainers for outdoor PE lessons. Please note that combat trousers or jeans are not appropriate. Football boots are allowed when

children have football training on the field, but only when all children are wearing shin pads.

Swimming - For swimming lessons, children will require a towel, one-piece swimming suit for girls, trunks (not long shorts) for boys and a swimming cap for all pupils, including boys. Goggles and / or nose clips are also permissible. A qualified instructor provides all lessons.

We would strongly recommend that all items of clothing and belongings are clearly labelled with the child's name before they are brought into school.

Day to day organisation

The school day is organised as follows:

Morning session - 8:50am - 12:15pm
(including 15 minute break)

Lunch - 12:15pm - 1:15pm

Afternoon session - 1:15pm - 3:30pm
(including 15 minute break)

Playground supervision begins at 8:40am and the school day begins promptly at 8:50am; children are expected to be on the playground by this time. The gate will be locked at 8:50am; all late arrivals should use the main entrance and must be signed in by an adult.

Dinnertime arrangements

There is always a choice of main course, including vegetarian option and dessert including fruit. Children bringing packed lunch eat in the hall alongside the dinner children. Please send drinks in non-breakable containers. If a child forgets their sandwiches, we will provide a school dinner and ask for payment.

We operate a cashless office, so all parents are given a log on to Parent Pay where money can be added to cover school expenses, such as dinner money, trips and clubs. There are always lunchtime supervisors in the hall and on the playground during the lunch hour. If children go home for lunch, they should not return before 1:10pm. If a child's behaviour at lunch times causes problems or is a cause for concern, parents may be asked to arrange for their child to spend dinnertime at home.









the place to make friends

Extra-curricular Activities

We offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities before, during and after school. Activities include football, hockey, netball, rounders, skiing and snowboarding, drama, choir, construction, i-Pads, science, Forest Schools and many more. Some of these activities carry a charge and those that take place out of school hours require electronic registration / permission. Each term, a timetable of available activities is sent home to enable children to select the activities they wish to participate in. These can be booked via the online system using the code given.

Extended School Care

We offer 'Early Birds' Breakfast Club every morning from 8:00 to 8:45am. This is based on a range of sporting and creative activities and is available for booking. There is a small charge for the service which includes a drink and breakfast snack.

We also offer 'Night Owls', our After School Club every evening from 3:30 to 5:45pm, again available for booking. Charges include snack and drink, plus all activities and a light tea.

The ethos of these clubs is to provide a 'home from home' rather than an extension to the school day. This is reflected in the family feeling that the staff create and nurture and also in the mixed age friendships that blossom.

Residential Visits

We really value the learning experiences that residential visits offer the children. We use a selection of Outdoor Education Centres in Staffordshire. In Year 4, we offer an overnight stay. In Y5, children can attend a four-day residential and in Y6, we offer a three day residential towards the end of the year. Children participate in a range of adventurous activities including archery, zip wire, bush craft, climbing, BMXing and high ropes. The experiences that children gain on these often form some of their strongest memories of their time at Junior School.

School Council

Our School Council is elected democratically with representatives from each class. The School Council meets regularly and addresses issues raised by children across the school. Recently they have been involved in the interview process for new teachers, meeting with school kitchen staff about dinners and reporting back to classes on playtime rules and behaviour. Further projects the School Council have led on have included the installation of lockers in the cloakrooms and choosing a team sports kit to wear when competing against other schools. The Council also supported and co-ordinated the school's Anti Bullying Pledge recognition.

Emotional Health and Well-being

The emotional health and well-being of our whole school community is of utmost importance and good mental health is embedded into the culture of our school. We hold 'Helping Hands' meetings for parents and carers on topics such as anxiety and mindfulness and our children have the opportunity to become 'Mindful Mentors' to lead and encourage a positive mental attitude within our school.

School Environment

We are very fortunate to have such wonderful school grounds and use these to teach children about environmental issues as well as running regular Forest Schools sessions with our own fully qualified Forest School teacher. The environment has been improved by the children planting bulbs, flowers, vegetables and trees. They have also instigated a school wide recycling programme and we now have paper and plastic banks on site.

the place to grow

School Rules and Discipline

It is a stated aim of the school that we develop self-respect and consideration for others. We feel that this serves as a foundation for good discipline. We also expect politeness and caring for others. Rules are discussed with the children at the beginning of each school year and are revisited at appropriate intervals. Each classroom displays a set of rules, which the children contribute to.

We have a clear 'Rewards and Consequences' Ladder to ensure consistency in expectation across school. We teach the value of integrity as doing the right thing even when no-one is watching. We want our children to make good choices and behave well because they know morally it represents the right thing to do rather than for fear of the consequences.

Within our weekly house point system, children will be rewarded for a wide range of achievements both academic and personal. Each teacher awards a Weekly Merit to a child in his or her class who has demonstrated good behaviour, achieved something special or to reward consistency.

Where serious or ongoing behavioural issues arise, parents will initially be invited to speak to the class teacher to discuss concerns and approaches. Failure to resolve the matter will lead to it being referred to the deputy or headteacher for further discussion.

Special Educational Needs

Our SEN co-ordinator is Mrs Kate Jones who manages our team of teaching assistants. Together the team of SENCo, TAs and teachers support children with a variety of additional needs. Children may require extra support within class or withdrawal groups and will work towards set targets, which are communicated to parents through Support Plans.

Thomas Russell Junior School has achieved Enhanced Dyslexia Friendly Status and the staff have well developed skills in identifying and working with children who are on the dyslexic spectrum.

We are well supported by the Education Authority's Special Needs Service, the Psychological Service

and Behaviour Support. We have received praise from a number of authorities for our SEN provision. The School's SEN Information Report is in line with the new Code of Practice; a current copy is available on the website.

Golden Time

From parachute games to playdough, from decorating biscuits to finger painting, everyone in school looks forward to enjoying fun together in a relaxed half hour. Golden Time is used to reward children for good social behaviour, such as kindness, helpfulness and teamwork, as well as good learning behaviour, such as listening, participation and taking responsibility for their own learning.

Equal Opportunities

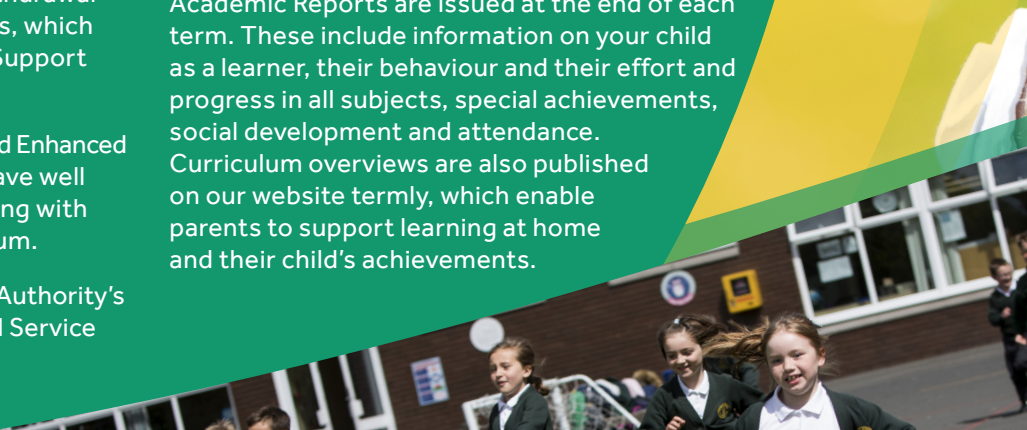
The entire curricular provision is available equally to all children and discrimination on any grounds is unacceptable. The school is committed to a policy of Equal Opportunities in accordance with the Staffordshire Guidelines.

Communication

Parents of children new to Thomas Russell Junior School are invited to visit with their children, either during an open day or for an individual tour. This will be an opportunity to meet the headteacher and staff who will be responsible for your child, which should make the move more comfortable.

There are termly opportunities for parents to meet their child's class teacher at Consultation Evenings. The Headteacher and staff are also happy to meet parents at other mutually convenient times should the need arise.

Academic Reports are issued at the end of each term. These include information on your child as a learner, their behaviour and their effort and progress in all subjects, special achievements, social development and attendance. Curriculum overviews are also published on our website termly, which enable parents to support learning at home and their child's achievements.







the place to aim higher

Home - School Links

We strongly believe that the education of each child is a partnership between home and school, and there are several ways in which we seek to develop and maintain our links.

Parents are informed of forthcoming events through weekly newsletters and we have an informative website, which is updated every week.

Children are given a reading record and homework book, which form a vital part of home school communication. We ask parents to record all reading at home in the record and communicate any written messages through the homework book. We have clear evidence that children who have a strong network of support in their learning from home make significantly better progress.

We encourage parent helpers in classes and supporting our swimming. We are always looking for individuals who have the time to help and support the school, be it in the class, organising resources or supervising groups during visits.

Medical and Pastoral

Should your child become ill or get injured during the school day, this will be dealt with by our staff all of whom have first aid qualifications. Incidents that are more serious will be referred to our nominated first aider. From time to time, it may be necessary for the school to contact you urgently. It is therefore important that the information we request from you is accurate, and that you inform us of any changes e.g. change of address, place of work, telephone numbers, emergency contacts etc. In such a situation, should you be unavailable, we will take whatever action we feel to be in the child's best interests.

If your child requires any medication during the school day, then it is necessary to complete a 'Consent form for inhaler or other prescribed medicine to be kept in school'. This sets out diagnosis, prescription / administration instructions and covers inhalers, Epi-pens and all other medications.

Children should not be sent to school with medicines or tablets of any kind to administer themselves. Children are encouraged to apply sun cream regularly during the summer.



Absence

The law now states that Leave of Absence for family holiday is no longer permissible. Headteachers are delegated the authority to authorise leave from school only in exceptional circumstances. Please contact the Headteacher for confirmation of the regulations before making any holiday bookings. All instances of unauthorised absence are recorded. If your child is unable to attend school for whatever reason, it is important that we are notified as soon as possible, preferably in writing before the absence. In the event of illness, you are requested to let the school know by phone or in person on the first day of illness as early as possible.

Mobile Phones

Whilst we embrace technology as a key part of learning and wholly support parents' wishes to protect their child's safety, we request that mobile phones are only brought to school when deemed absolutely necessary and not as a fashion statement. These should be handed in every morning to the school office for safe keeping and collected at the end of the school day.

School Closure

Should it be necessary to close the school due to adverse weather or any other serious issue, which would make it unsafe for the school to remain open, then the news would be communicated via text message. If closure were necessary during the school day, then parents would receive a text asking them to collect children as soon as possible. Children who walk home would not be released early unless they were collected by a responsible adult, or with express permission from a parent.

Complaints

Any complaint regarding the curriculum or any other issue should, in the first instance, be made to the Headteacher. Any matter not satisfactorily resolved in this way should be referred to the Governing Body, through the Chair of Governors. Details of the correct procedures are available from the school or the Local Authority.



Gilmour Lane, Barton-under-Needwood, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs. DE13 8EU
 Tel: 01283 247505 Email: office@thomasrussell-junior.staffs.sch.uk
 Website: www.thomasrussell-junior.staffs.sch.uk
 Headteacher: Mrs Shelley Sharpe

