

Thomas Russell Junior School

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



Newsletter



Issue No. 4

Headteacher: Mrs S Sharpe

1st October 2021

Parent Consultations

The vast majority of parents have now booked their consultation appointment(s), in fact it seems there were a lot of people sitting with their finger on the refresh button at 5:30 on Tuesday!!

If you are yet to book, please do so using www.schoolinterviews.co.uk using the code: **jnr vz**

Cauliflower Cards

It feels far too early to be thinking about Christmas, but we have been pleased to see the children create some beautiful card designs. Thank you to everyone who has already placed orders for items such as cards, wrapping paper, mugs and t-towels. The deadline for placing online orders and returning completed artwork is Monday 4th October.

Covid Update

You may be aware that SCC held an emergency briefing for Headteachers earlier this week and have also issued a letter to parents of school age children this week regarding the escalating Covid situation across Staffordshire. I have attached a copy so you are able to view the full content.

You will have seen the signs re-stating our request for all parents (unless exempt) to wear a mask on site. You may also have noticed an increased level of mask wearing by staff as they teach, care for and support the children.

At Thomas Russell Junior, our first and foremost priority is the children's safety and the safety of the whole school community. Whilst we totally appreciate the situation is escalating across Staffordshire, we feel the situation within school is currently slightly more stable and we are very keen to do everything we can to keep it that way. To our knowledge, we currently have one positive case.

We want to be able to offer the most consistent 'normal' school environment to our children who have already suffered so much disruption, therefore our current risk assessment indicates a 'graduated response' will best meet the needs of the children socially and academically, whilst also providing increased protective measures to safeguard the staff and children.

We are very clear that constant chopping and changing of arrangements can, in itself, be more unsettling than adapting to tighter restrictions. However, we are also aware that children will be mixing in sports teams, at parties and other activities out of school and therefore there is only so much we can do as a school to control any outbreak. This is where we are looking for the support of each and every one of our families.

Our graduated response splits the measures discussed at the briefing and in SCC letter to parents into three suggested groups (and add some personalised TRJS measures): 'steps we take now', 'steps we take if we have individual cases' and 'steps we are ready to implement if we have more than two (linked) in any given year group'. These categories, and the precautions within them, may change as the situation evolves.

Steps we take now

- Enhanced cleaning,
- Requests that close contacts of positive cases are asked to get a PCR,
- Asking household members of positive cases to get a PCR and stay at home until they get results,
- Promote vaccinations,
- Limiting unnecessary visitors,
- Risk assessing open / parents' evenings, attendance at sport events against other schools / choir events where there may be large crowds, on a case-by-case basis and seek postponement, cancellation or alternative provision if risks cannot be suitably mitigated.
- Asking all adults on site to wear masks.
- Encouraging self-administration of medication where possible and returning to a supervisory role
- Taking enhanced precautions when administering first aid

Steps we take if we have individual cases (or earlier at the teacher's discretion)

- Rearranging classrooms to give 2m teaching zone
- Organising tables to provide optimum social distancing.
- Notifying parents of individual cases within their child's class

Steps we are ready to implement if we have more than two (linked) in any given year group / class

- Reintroducing cohort bubbles / zones
- Stopping whole school assemblies (although children will be able to tell you how we have zoned the hall to give 2m separation between year groups)
- Staggered lunchtimes and start/finish times

Should an outbreak occur - and only in consultation with the Local Outbreak Team and / or Public Health England, as a last resort, we may be required to move to remote learning if a class / cohort or the whole school is closed.

Individual photos

Don't forget we have our photographer in school on Monday 4th October to take individual photos. Please could we ask parents who have booked for the family groups to arrive from 8:15

#Hello Yellow

We are very much looking forward to our non-uniform on Friday 8th October, raising money for Young Minds and offering a range of wellbeing activities for children and adults in school.

Children can wear anything which is weather suitable, ideally with some yellow, but please do not feel you need to rush out and buy something if you don't have anything yellow!

We have been looking at Feelings in assemblies this week. This Young Minds resource might help to promote a conversation with your child about what they learned should you wish to discuss the 'Feelings Iceberg'



Best wishes, Mrs Sharpe