



Newsletter



Issue No. 18

Headteacher: Mr J Emery

Friday 27 February

Staffordshire County Council
HERE EVERY DAY READY ON TIME
Little Heroes Assemble
Find out more SCAN ME
visit staffordshire.gov.uk/littleheroes

	W/B 23.02.26
Year 3	97.9%
Year 4	95.6%
Year 5	97.7%
Year 6	97.5%
TRJS Overall	97.2%

Wow! We have 3-year groups who have hit the school target of 97.5%. Well done to Y3,5 and 6!

HOT CHOCOLATE WITH MR EMERY

Congratulations to everyone who has received the **TRJS Weekly Values Award** over the last 2 weeks and will be joining Mr E for hot chocolate and cookies. Yum! We are looking forward to hearing all your news and maybe a joke or two!

Year 3	Daniel W, Cabhan Mc, Grace B, Henry H
Year 4	Hannah D-K, Aemilia T, Zaki Y, Max D
Year 5	Archer C-J, Avery S, Luca C, Milo W
Year 6	Millie C, Aadham M, Alyssa P, Amber W

KEEPING SAFE ONLINE

Please see this useful guide which explains how group chats can expose young users to pressure, unwanted contact and inappropriate content. A reminder that the age for such group chats is 13 and above. As a school and community that are working together to delay the use of smart phones until secondary age, we strongly recommend parents to restrict children's access to such group chats and be aware of the risks to our young people. You can download the free guide here: <https://vist.ly/4ryfx>

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about WHATSAPP

WhatsApp is a free messaging app owned by Meta, allowing users to send text and voice messages, share multimedia, make video calls, and chat in groups. While end-to-end encryption only the sender and receiver can view messages. This may offer privacy, but it also comes with risks that parents and educators need to be aware of.

13+ (Age Restriction)

- WHAT ARE THE RISKS?**
 - GROUP CHAT PRESSURES:** WhatsApp is designed to be used in one-to-one conversations. It is not designed for group chats. Group chats can be used to pressure young users into doing things they don't want to do, or to share inappropriate content.
 - SCAMS TARGETING YOUNG USERS:** Scammers are increasingly using WhatsApp to target young users. They may use fake profiles, impersonate friends, or offer prizes to lure them in. They may also use phishing links to steal their information.
 - DISAPPEARING AND HIDDEN MESSAGES:** WhatsApp offers features like disappearing messages and hidden messages. These features can be used to hide inappropriate content or to communicate with someone who is not supposed to know about the chat.
- EXPOSURE THROUGH CHANNELS:** WhatsApp offers channels, which are public groups where anyone can join. Channels can be used to share inappropriate content or to spread misinformation.
- UNWANTED CONTACT AND LOCATION SHARING:** WhatsApp users can share their location with others. This can be used to track their movements or to contact them without their consent.
- COMMERCIAL AND AI CONTENT:** WhatsApp offers features like sponsored messages and AI-generated content. These features can be used to target young users with inappropriate content or to spread misinformation.

Advice for Parents & Educators

- REVIEW PRIVACY SETTINGS TOGETHER:** Help young users check their privacy settings, status, and location. Discuss their choices and help them understand the risks of sharing their information.
- TEACH HOW TO SPOT SCAMS:** Encourage young users to be cautious of unsolicited messages, especially those that offer prizes or ask for personal information. Teach them to be skeptical of offers that seem too good to be true.
- BE OPEN ABOUT HIDDEN CHATS:** Discuss why children and young people might use features like disappearing messages or hidden messages. Encourage them to be open about their online activities and to report any suspicious messages to a trusted adult.
- TALK ABOUT ADVERTISING AND AI:** Explain that WhatsApp now includes ads and AI tools. Discuss the difference between organic and sponsored content, and the potential for AI-generated content to be used to target young users.

Meet Our Expert: Claire Buchanan, an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented and leading level 2 digital literacy for the staff and has been successful in helping young people understand the risks of using mobile phones. She is also a member of the National College for Digital Literacy.

Wake Up Wednesday | The National College

Twitter: @wake_up_weds | Facebook: /wakeupwednesday | Instagram: @wakeup.wednesday | YouTube: @wakeup.weds

Y6 Viking boats

Y6 have been hard at work making Viking boats using a wooden frame. They have shown excellent teamwork and co-operation which helped them to measure and cut the wood accurately. The children really enjoyed testing the boats on the water!

Both classes earned a "SUPER CLASS" award for their achievements.



OPAL



WANTED FOR OPAL – LARGE WOODEN CABLE REELS

Does anyone have any to donate or know where we could acquire any from? If so, please contact Mrs Graves or Mrs Vardy. Thank you.

Year 4 Design and Technology Lamps



Year 4 have worked incredibly hard this term to design and make their own lamps, using a range of materials and electrical components.



They showed great creativity, resilience, and improved their design skills throughout the project. The children had lots of fun experimenting with their ideas, and they produced some excellent work. Well done, Year 4!



Young Voices 2026

What a day! On Friday 13 February, the TRJS Young Voices choir travelled all the way to the Manchester Co-Op Live Arena to join 7,500 children performing a wide range of songs. The choir were brilliant! They sang beautifully and behaved with



kindness and respect and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the day. Despite the heavy rain in the morning, we arrived ahead of time in Manchester (for lunch!!) and spent the afternoon rehearsing all the songs and performing with some outstanding singers, musicians and dancers.



Thank you to all the parents for your support over recent months and for all those who made their way up to Manchester. I hope you enjoyed the experience as much as we did! Thank you to all the staff and parent helpers who volunteered to be on duty, help supervise and look after children when they needed it. A huge thank you to the Ovenden family for creating the fantastic TRJS banners. An amazing experience!



Dove Valley Football Festival



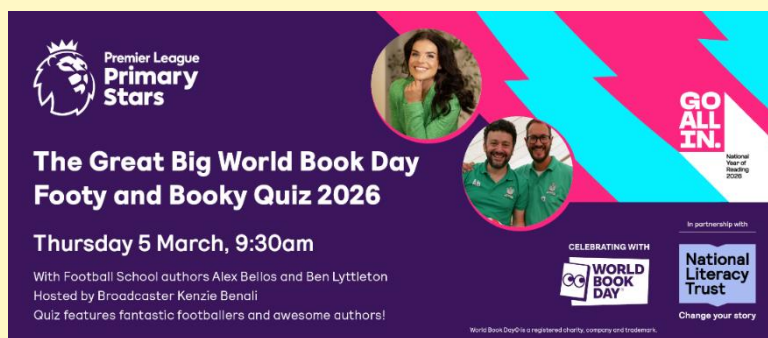
On Thursday 5th February, TRJS took part in the Dove Valley Football Festival. Both of the TRJS teams played really well, showing resilience and determination and pushing themselves outside of their comfort zone in terms of football playing positions. Both teams gave their all, scoring some great goals, defending well as a team and being supportive team players. Well done TRJS.

World Book Day (5 March)

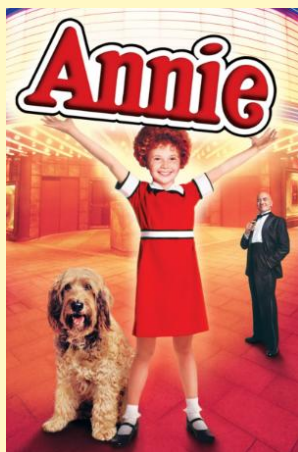
A reminder that next Thursday is World Book Day. Miss Murfin is planning a range of activities to inspire children to love reading!

Activities on the day, will include:

- A Reading for Pleasure survey
- World Book Day Assembly
- Live Streamed World Footy & Booky Quiz
- 'Top Hat' Favourite Book/Character Craft
- Ten Word Tiny Tale of Kindness competition



Some parents may be relieved to know that we will NOT be dressing up this year (we like to mix it up!) so children should come to school dressed in school uniform as usual. Instead, we will be designing and making a 'top hat' to wear, based on a favourite book or character. We have some special prizes and book tokens ready for the winners of the various competitions.



A Message from Mrs Thompson:

Regarding costumes, I am hoping that most of the cast are managing to find suitable items to wear. I will speak directly with the main cast so they know what they need.

Costumes:

Servants - black skirt/trousers, black/white shirt or blouse, white apron and possibly white gloves

Orphans - ragged clothing, ill-fitting and rumped, mismatched and faded, socks with holes)

Tourists - skirt/dress/blouse or trousers/shirt/t-shirt.

Please remember that it is set in the 1930s so looking online would be a good starting point and places like charity shop or Vinted would have cheap suitable clothes.

Props:

As far as props are concerned, I am trying to keep it as simple as possible. However, items needed include the following:

Small basket

Broom

Laundry basket that is easy to carry

Rope for the Dogcatcher

Clipboard

Christmas presents (empty boxes covered with Christmas wrapping paper)

Walking stick



The OPAL Shed is taking shape!

Logan (Year 4) and his mum (and grandad) volunteered to help Mr Bradley on the Friday in half term. Using their amazing digger, they excavated 9m x 4m of earth and deposited a bed of hardcore by hand. On Saturday morning, the Tipper family (Vaughan Y3 and Farren Y5), having



donated not only the shed and the hardcore, provided a concrete lorry and very helpful chap. With a little help from a few friends, including Mr Rowe (William Y4), we managed to lay the concrete and the base of the shed is now complete. A huge thank you to the Tipper family for their amazing generosity, Logan and his family for all the hard work and all the volunteers on Saturday morning. A big

thank you to Mr Bradley who worked hard behind the scenes setting up the job and preparing all the framework. Top job guys!!



Spring Term: Dates for the Diary

HALF TERM	Monday 16 - Friday 20 February
Monday 23 February	Y6 Library Visit
Thursday 26 and Friday 27 February	Pickleball Workshops in school
Monday 2 March	Y5 Library Visit
Thursday 5 March	World Book Day
Friday 6 March	School Nurse to talk to Y6 (girls and boys) and Y5 girls
Monday 9 March	TRJS Governors visit school
Wednesday 11-Friday 13 March	Y5 Residential to Laches Wood
Monday 16 March	Y3 Library Visit
Monday 16 March	Community Fundraiser event (Chocolate Bingo at 3.45pm)
Friday 20 March	Reading Ambassadors meet (3.30pm)
Tuesday 24 and Wednesday 25 March	Parents' Evenings (4pm-6.45pm)
Wednesday 25 March	ALL DAY rehearsal for Annie (in school)
Thursday 26 March	Annie - Performance to the school (10am)
	Annie - Performance to parents (6pm)
Friday 27 March	LAST DAY OF TERM

Summer Term: Dates for the Diary

Term Starts:	Monday 13 April
May Day:	Monday 4 May
Sports Day:	Tuesday 19 th May
Half Term:	Monday 25 May – Friday 29 May
Inset Day (School closed for pupils):	Friday 3 July
Term Ends for Pupils:	Friday 17 July
Inset Day (School closed for pupils):	Monday 20 July
Holiday:	Tuesday 21 July – Monday 31 August



Thomas Russell Junior School



Term Dates 2025-2026

Spring Term 2026

Term Starts:	Monday 5 January
Half Term:	Monday 16 February – Friday 20 February
Term Ends:	Friday 27 March
Holiday:	Monday 30 March – Friday 10 April
Easter Sunday:	Sunday 5 April

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