



Newsletter



Issue No.5 Friday 9 October 2026



	w/b 28.09.26	w/b 05.10.26
Year 3	99%	97.5%
Year 4	99.5%	97.2%
Year 5	99.4%	99.2%
Year 6	98.8%	98.8%
TRJS Overall	99.2%	98.2%

The Autumn Term continues to see excellent attendance at school. Keep going all you HEROES; let's see if we can keep this up all the way to half term. We have got this! #HEROES

HOT CHOCOLATE WITH MR EMERY

Congratulations to everyone who has received the **TRJS Weekly Values Award** and will be sharing hot chocolate and biscuits with Mr Emery. Don't forget to be ready to tell us all about your hobbies and interests out of school. Oh, and jokes are always good!

Year 3	Fred W, Stanley M
Year 4	Nixon H, Jude D
Year 5	Luca W, Marcie G
Year 6	Sam M, Caitlin V-T

Headteacher Appointment

In partnership with the JTMAT and the Local Authority, the school governors spent 2 days interviewing headteacher candidates. The first day was at TRJS, which included various tasks, panel interviews and a presentation (followed by some tricky questions!) with our School Council. The second day was off-site and involved various panel interviews and tasks.

The Governors are delighted to announce that we have appointed the new headteacher with effect from 01 January 2027. Her name is Gemma Meers. Please see a letter from Gemma on page 3 of the newsletter. We are confident that Gemma has the enthusiasm, expertise and experience to be an excellent leader of our school community and ensure that TRJS continues to be a great place for children to learn and be their best.

Phil Evans
Chair of Governors

What	Provider	When	Year Group	Cost	Information
Football 3:30pm – 4:30pm	Soccerstars	Tuesdays 03/11, 10/11, 17/11, 24/11, 01/12, 08/12	Y3-6	£38.50	Thomas Russell Junior School SoccerstarsUK Soccer Stars also accept childcare vouchers. Please check the link for the opening date.
Woodland Warriors 3:30pm – 5:00pm	Mrs Veevers	Tuesdays 10/11, 17/11, 24/11, 01/12,	Y3-6	£40	Available to book on the MCAS App from 6pm on Friday 16 th October 2026 Payment item will be on Parentpay W/C 02/11 PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE ARE ONLY 4 SESSIONS
Keyboard Club 3:30pm-4:15pm	Hot House Music	Tuesdays 03/11, 10/11, 17/11, 24/11, 01/12, 08/12	Y3-6	£12	Please use the QR Code, scroll to the bottom and you will see After School Club 
Cooking 3:30pm – 4:45pm	Cook Stars	Tuesdays 03/11, 10/11, 17/11, 24/11, 01/12, 08/12, 15/12	Y3-6	£87.50	Please visit https://portal.cookstars.franscape.io/class-overview/5747 for spaces or to be added to the waiting list.
Table Tennis Club 3:30pm – 4:30pm	Mr Kerr	Wednesdays 04/11, 11/11, 18/11, 25/11, 02/12, 09/12,	Y3-6	£7	Available to book on the MCAS App from 6pm on Friday 16 th October 2026 Payment item will be on ParentPay W/C 02/11
Woodland Warriors 3:30pm – 5:00pm	Mrs Veevers	Thursdays 05/11, 12/11, 19/11, 26/11, 03/12, 10/12	Y3-6	£60	Available to book on the MCAS App from 6pm on Friday 16 th October 2026 Payment item will be on ParentPay W/C 02/11
Stop Motion Club 3:30pm – 4:30pm	Inclusive Kidz Club	Thursdays 05/11, 12/11, 19/11, 26/11, 03/12, 10/12	Y3-6	£30	Please visit Home Inclusivekidsclubs Bookings open at 6pm Friday 16 th October 2026
3D Printing Club 3:30pm - 4:30pm	Inclusive Kidz Club	Fridays 06/11, 13/11, 20/11, 27/11, 04/12, 11/12	Y3-6	£30	Please visit Home Inclusivekidsclubs Bookings open at 6pm Friday 16 th October 2026
CHOIR 3.30-4.20pm	Mr Emery (Please note that choir will finish at 4.20pm.)	Fridays 06/11, 13/11 20/11, 04/12	Y3-6	Free	The choir will be rehearsing for the following Christmas Performances: TRJS Christmas Fair (Friday 27 November - 4.00pm) Switching on of the Lights (Sunday 29 November - 5pm) Tea and Chat (Monday 7 December - 2.00pm) If your child would like to represent the school at these events, they need to attend rehearsals. 😊 Available to book on the MCAS App from 6pm on Friday 16 th October 2026.

After School Clubs for Autumn 2

A Letter from the new Headteacher

I am absolutely delighted to introduce myself following my appointment as Headteacher of Thomas Russell Junior School from January. I feel incredibly privileged to have been given the opportunity to lead the school and am very much looking forward to joining the Thomas Russell Junior School community in the new year.



Although I have only spent a relatively short time at Thomas Russell Junior so far, through my visits and the interview process, I have already had the opportunity to see what makes the school so special. I have been struck by the warmth of the school, the enthusiasm of the pupils and staff, and the strong sense of community that is so clearly at the heart of Thomas Russell Junior. It is evident that this is a truly valued school at the heart of its community, with a strong sense of pride in its pupils and everything they achieve.

I have really enjoyed getting to know some of the staff, pupils and parent governors during the process and I have already felt incredibly welcomed. I am looking forward to building on those relationships and getting to know many more of you as I become part of the Thomas Russell Junior school community.

I know that I will be joining the school at an exciting and important point in its journey, with some significant changes and opportunities ahead. I am really looking forward to working alongside the staff, governors, trust, pupils and parents to embrace those opportunities while protecting and celebrating the things that make Thomas Russell Junior such a special school.

Above all, I want every pupil to continue to receive an excellent education, with the support, encouragement and opportunities they need to thrive, grow in confidence and discover their own strengths and interests. I am excited about the opportunities we can create together and about seeing the pupils continue to flourish.

I cannot wait to get started in January and to become part of such a wonderful school and community. I look forward to meeting you all over the coming months and beginning this next chapter of the TRJS journey together.

I hope to see you all very soon!

Gemma Meers

Smart Watches and Devices

A reminder to parents that children are not allowed to bring 'smart' watches or devices into school. For safeguarding reasons, it is not appropriate for children to have devices that connect to the internet, make recordings or take photographs. Thank you for your support.

Calendar Dates

Please find the important dates for the year ahead at the end of the newsletter. Any new dates are in red. A reminder that the Harvest Assemblies are on Friday 16 October (Y3/4 at 9.15am and Y5/6 at 9.45am). We ask for donations of basic supplies including food in packages and tins. We are supporting Burton Hope, who run a food bank in Burton. TRJS are a generous community so thank you in advance for your support.



Year 4 Visit to Packington Farm



Year 4 enjoyed a fantastic educational visit to Packington Farm, where they took part in a range of exciting hands-on activities linked to their learning. During the morning, the children met a couple of farm animals and explored the woodland environment,



discussing different woodland animals and their habitats. They worked together brilliantly to build two giant nest and followed a KS2 woodland stamp trail, which led to an engaging discussion about food chains and how living things depend on one another.



In the afternoon, the children took part in a Wheat Discovery Session, where they learned about crops and farming machinery before experiencing the journey from grain to food. They enjoyed grinding wheat, kneading dough and making their own



flatbreads, gaining a real appreciation of where our food comes from.

The children were well behaved throughout the day, showing enthusiasm, curiosity and a willingness to take part in every activity. We would like to extend a huge thank you to all the parent volunteers who supported the visit, and to Jules and Roy for organising such an enjoyable and informative experience for the children. **Mrs Hiatt and Mrs Smith**

Laps for London!

On **Friday 6th November**, we will be holding a special non-uniform day, with children invited to come to school dressed in their favourite running or sports gear for a £1 donation. Please add a donation to the fundraising page or bring £1 into school.

As part of her fundraising efforts for Asthma + Lung UK ahead of the London Marathon, Miss Hurdman will be taking on a challenge of her own by attempting to complete a half marathon around the school field throughout the afternoon!



Miss Hurdman will begin her effort during lunchtime where children can join her and during the afternoon, each class will have the opportunity to join in and run alongside her, helping to cheer her on and raise awareness for this fantastic cause. Whether they complete one lap or many, we hope everyone will enjoy taking part and showing their support.

During afternoon break, the children will be able to refuel after their run by buying a biscuit, kindly provided for us by Mrs Brammer for a 50p donation.

We look forward to seeing the children in their running gear and thank you for your support of this fundraising event. **Please bring a spare pair of trainers to change into for your run to avoid muddy trainers in school!**

To read more about Miss Hurdman's journey, please visit her fundraising page:

<http://2027tcslondonmarathon.enthuse.com/pf/shannon-hurdman>

Miss Hurdman

TRJS Netball Heroes

TRJS made a fantastic start to this year's sporting fixtures with 15 pupils representing the school across two teams at a recent netball tournament. Although we did not come away with the overall win, the children showed outstanding teamwork, determination, sportsmanship and passion throughout the competition. Every pupil gave their all from the first whistle to the last and represented TRJS brilliantly.

One of the highlights of the tournament came when one of our teams secured a well-deserved victory. The support from our second team was incredible, with the cheering from the sidelines showing just how much the children encouraged and celebrated one another. It was a brilliant example of the team spirit we are so proud to see at TRJS. Our sportswomen and sportsmen never gave up and continued to work hard right until the final whistle of every game. Their attitude, effort and support for one another made the school extremely proud and provided an excellent start to our sporting fixtures for this academic year. A special thank you must also go to the parents who kindly helped with transport and supported the children throughout the tournament. We are also very grateful to Mrs Ahktar, who came on her day off, to help run the teams and support the children. Congratulations to all 15 pupils involved — a fantastic effort and a brilliant start to the year!



TRJS Football Stars

Yesterday, the TRJS football team took part in the first round of the league, playing three matches and coming away with an excellent record of two wins and one loss. We made a brilliant start with a convincing 4–0 victory. Cillian and George L were both in fantastic form, scoring two goals each. At the other end of the pitch, Charlie was on fire in goal, supported superbly by Ted and George Br, who produced some excellent defending. The second match was an extremely close contest, finishing in a narrow 1–0 defeat. Ethan, Otis and Sid worked tirelessly in midfield and helped create a strong end-to-end game. Despite the result, we played some excellent football and continued to work brilliantly together.



We finished the evening strongly with a 2–0 victory, with Cillian and Sid finding the back of the net. Nathaniel and Henry also played excellently in the striker positions, putting the opposition defence under constant pressure throughout the games. Most importantly, all ten players demonstrated excellent teamwork, determination and sportsmanship throughout the evening. It was a wonderful start to the league campaign — and, as an added bonus, the rain even managed to stay away!

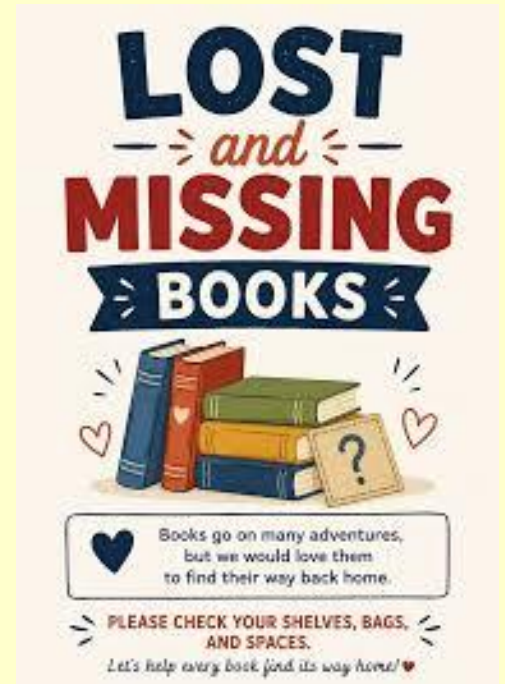
Mrs Chamberlin

Help Us Find Our Missing Books!

We need your help to track down a large number of missing books from our school reading scheme!

At the start of this year, pupils were sent to choose new reading books only to be greeted by several **empty or severely depleted boxes** of our colour-banded reading books 😞. At TRJS, we endeavour to ensure every child has access to a wide variety of relevant and engaging fiction, non-fiction and poetry, investing annually in adding new books to our reading scheme. Yet, we seem to be losing books at a faster rate than we are buying them!

Therefore, we are kindly asking all parents and carers to please **do a thorough search at home** for any outstanding school reading books, which can be returned (no questions asked!) Maybe they are tucked away on a bookshelf, hiding under a bed, or slipped behind the sofa? You can easily identify them by a TRJS stamp in the front and a coloured book label on the spine.



There is some good news, too! Thanks to your incredible generosity at last year's Book Fair, **Miss Murfin has added £2,000 worth of brand-new books** to our reading scheme this September, made possible by using the **Scholastic rewards** our school community earned.

To make sure these brilliant new books—and our existing ones—last for a long time, please talk to your children about looking after them carefully. We are encouraging all pupils to:

- **Pack with care:** Be gentle when sliding books in and out of school bags and classroom trays to avoid torn covers and bent pages.
- **Return books to their homes:** Always put books neatly back into their correct colour boxes at school so the next child can enjoy them.
- **Keep them clean:** Keep all reading books **strictly away from food and drinks** to prevent accidental spills and stains.



Thank you for your continued support in keeping our reading scheme vibrant and fully stocked for our young readers. Happy hunting!

Miss Murfin

Christmas Fair Returns to TRJS!



We are delighted to announce that TRJS will be holding a Christmas Fair on Friday 27th November from 3.30-5.00pm. This will be the first Christmas Fair at the junior school for quite some time; we are excited to bring our school community together for what promises to be a fantastic festive event.

The PTFA will be raising funds to support the development of our new school library, helping us to create an inspiring reading space for all of our children. The library is an exciting project for the school and we hope that our Christmas Fair will give this development a real boost.

To help us prepare, we will be holding a non-uniform day on Friday 20th November in exchange for a bottle donation for our bottle tombola. Bottles can be anything from bubble bath and toiletries to soft drinks or a bottle of fizz 😊. Every donation will help make our tombola a great success.

We would also love your support with our raffle prizes. We know that many of our families have some fantastic connections and we are hoping to secure some exciting prizes that will help maximise our fundraising efforts. Whether you can donate a prize yourself or help us make contact with a local business, organisation or attraction, we would be delighted to hear from you. We're aiming high and hoping to offer some really special prizes this year. If you think you may be able to help, please get in touch.

Together, let's make the return of the TRJS Christmas Fair a memorable occasion for our children and school community.

TRJS PTFA

Christmas Wreath Making

Mrs Brammer (TRJS Catering Manager) is organising an evening for parents to make a Christmas Wreath while fundraising for the school.

This event is always well-supported, so come on down!

Please contact Mandy directly if you are interested.






InclusiveKidsClubs
Explore, learn, grow
 We are so excited to be offering the following clubs!

All prices and dates are on our booking system

Stop Motion Masters
3D Design & Printing

 InclusiveKidsClubs
 @InclusiveKidsClubs
www.inclusivekidsclubs.co.uk

Stop Motion Masters (Thursday)

Join the Stop Motion Masters club, where children from Reception to Year 6 can discover the magic of stop-motion animation! In this exciting club, students will learn the steps of creating their own stop-motion films, from planning and making to editing their projects. Using a variety of materials, such as play dough, paper, and toys, kids will have the chance to bring their ideas to life through creativity and fun. Whether you're a beginner or have some experience, this club is a fantastic way to explore the world of animation and become a stop-motion master!

3D Design & Printing (Friday)

3D Printing and Design is an exciting, hands-on club where children will explore the world of 3D design and technology! Using state-of-the-art software, they'll learn how to create their own digital models and test their ideas in a fun and interactive way. Along the journey, children will discover how a 3D printer works and get to see their designs come to life. Each child will have the chance to 3D print one of their creations and take home unique keepsakes made during the club. It's the perfect blend of creativity, design, and cutting-edge tech! By enrolling on this club you are thereby giving permission for Inclusive Kids Clubs to create a Tinkercad user for your child to access.

To book: Scan the QR code or visit us at our website
www.inclusivekidsclubs.co.uk
Booking is deemed acceptance of our Terms & Conditions. Available on our website and booking system.



Crossing Patrol Vacancy

There are vacancies in our locality for crossing patrol wardens. Please see this link and visit the Staffordshire website:

<https://careershub.staffordshire.gov.uk/members/modules/job/detail.php?record=4767>

October

Fri 16th Harvest Festival Y3/4 9:15am, Y5/6 9:45am

Wed 21 - Fri 23rd Y6 Whitemoor Lakes

Thurs 22nd JTHS Open Evening for prospective Y7 students. (Please see individual high school websites for dates for other local schools).

Mon 26th - Fri 30th Half term

November

Mon 2nd INSET day – school closed to pupils

Fri 6th – Laps for London – run with Miss H and fundraising day

Mon 9th Y5 Fire station trip + **Y6 Library visit**

Wed 11th Remembrance Day – House/Vice Captains to the War Memorial.

Fri 13th Children in Need non-uniform day

Mon 16th **Y4 Library visit** Book Fair Y4/6

Wed 18th Book Fair Y3/5

Fri 20th Non-uniform (bottle for the tombola) + Flu immunisations

Mon 23rd Y3 Library visit

Fri 27th PTFA Christmas Fair 3:40pm

Mon 30th Y5 Library visit

December

Tues 1st SEND Support Plan reviews Y4/5 1:20pm-3:20pm

Tues 1st Parents Evening – Y3/4/5/6

Thurs 3rd SEND Support plan reviews Y3/6 1:20pm-3:20pm

Thurs 3rd Parents Evening – Y3/4/5/6

Wed 9th Christmas Dinner

Tues 15th Christmas production in church – please note change of date. + Christmas Disco 3:30-4:30pm Y3/4 4:45-6pm Y5/6

Fri 18th Cinema trip – all years

January

Mon 4th INSET – school closed to pupils

Tues 5th School opens to pupils

Thurs 21st Full Governing Body Meeting

TBC Library Grand Opening

February

Fri 12th INSET Day – school closed to pupils

Mon 15 – Fri 19th Half term

Thurs 25th Full Governing Body Meeting

February

Mon 22nd Y6 Library Visit

March

Mon 1st Y5 Library visit

Thurs 4th World Book Day

Fri 5th Nurse to visit Y6 for puberty talk + Y5 girls for menstruation talk

Mon 8th Y4 Library visit

Wed 17th – Fri 19th Y5 Laches Wood

Fri 19th Comic Relief non-uniform day

Mon 22nd SEND Support plan reviews Y3/4 1:20-3:20pm

Mon 22nd **Y3 Library visit** Parents' evening Year 3/4/6

Tues 23rd SEND Support plan reviews Y5/6 1:20-3:20pm

Tues 23rd Parents' evening Y5

Wed 24th Parents' evening all years

Thurs 25th Last day of spring term

Fri 26th - Fri 9th April – Easter holidays

April

Mon 12th School opens to pupils

Thurs 29th Full Governing Body Meeting

May

Mon 3rd May Day - school closed to pupils

Mon 10th - Thurs 13th SATS for Y6 pupils

Fri 14th Y6 Fun Day TBC

Thurs 27th – Sports Day

Mon 31st - Fri 4th June Half term

June

Mon 7th School opens to pupils + **Y6 Library visit**

Mon 7-18th Y4 MTC window

Mon 14th **Y5 library visit** Introduction to Y3 parent meeting for prospective Y2 parents

Thurs 17th Reserve Sports Day

Thurs 17th Full Governing Body Meeting

Mon 21st Y4 Library visit

JTHS Induction TBC (28/29/30th June – children to attend on ONE day TBC by JTHS)

Mon 28th Y3 Library visit

July

Fri 2nd INSET – school closed to pupils

Mon 5th Y3/4 SEND Support Plan reviews 1.20-3.20pm

Tues 6th Hot House Y3 Keyboards performance to parents 1:15pm-3:30pm (exact timing for each class TBC).

Wed 7th Hot House Y5 Ukeleles performance to parents 1:15-3:30pm (exact timing for each class TBC).

Thurs 8th Y5/6 Support Plan reviews 1.20-3.20pm

Thurs 15th Y6 Leavers' Party 2-6pm

Fri 16th Leavers' lunch

Fri 16th End of Year Reports

Wed 21st Y6 Performance to parents + Break up for the summer