



Thomas Russell Infants' School

'Our children blossom through nurture & challenge'

Newsletter No. 28 - 24th April 2015



Thank you to all the children for coming back to school so refreshed and ready to learn. The photograph above is Year 1 children enjoying their jumpstart lesson earlier in the week. All classes have begun their new topics with earnest and have been fantastic this week. Maybe the sunshine has helped! It is lovely to see the children (and adults at our meeting on Wednesday evening) benefitting from the new screen and sound system, recently financed by PTA fundraising.

Please can we ask that children bring a sunhat to school every day now the weather is warming up. We recommend an all day sun cream is applied before they come to school. If you would like your child to reapply cream at lunch time then please send in a labelled tube/bottle in their school bags. We are sorry but staff are not permitted to apply sun cream to the children.

All children will have received a sunsafe leaflet and sticker this week warning of the dangers of the sun. All classes also listened to a story about sun safety as part of our commitment to the national 'sunsafe' project.

Dates for your Diary

24th April - Chocolate bingo

4th May - Bank Holiday

7th May - Year 2 Maypole dancing to parents 2.15pm

7th May - Dance show at Abbots Bromley

13th May - RR class assembly to parents 9.15am

14th May - RL parent lunch 11.30am

15th May - PTA Film night 3.30pm

18th May - PTA AGM 7.30pm

21st May - RL class assembly to parents 9.15am

21st May - RR parent lunch 11.30am

22nd May - PTA sponsored event

22nd May - Break up for half term

Thank you to the parents who attended the Parents consultation meeting with Governors on Wednesday night. The governors will cast their vote on Academy conversion on May 5th.

Recent monitoring of 'reading diaries' has shown the vast majority of parents are writing in the diaries regularly and using the books to talk to the teacher about their child's reading. Thank you.



It was lovely to see all the books some children had read during the Easter holiday. Well done and thank you to the children who returned some amazing book reviews from over the holidays. Mrs Moore is enjoying reading them all.

Please ask your child about their class book, we are sure they will be keen to tell you which book their teacher is currently reading to them.

SPOT LIGHT on.....

In this new addition to our newsletter, we hope to shed light on educational issues and activities which take place in school, things as staff we may sometimes take for granted. The first of these is the **year 1 phonics screening**.

Every year in June, we are required to assess our year 1 children around their ability to sound words out and blend sounds together. Schools are provided with a paper based assessment which the teacher uses to assess each child individually. There is no time limit for the assessment and they take place in a quiet room without any disturbances. The paper has a grid of 40 words, some are real words like 'scrap', others are nonsense words like 'zeb'. The children simply have to read each word 1 at a time. Sometimes the child will just read the word on sight as they recognise it, others they will sound out, (saying each sound one at a time, then blending them together to say the word, e.g. z....e....b is zeb). If they do this correctly they get a mark but if they make a mistake we mark it incorrectly. The child only gets one go at each word. The words get progressively more difficult, but all words use sounds which have been taught throughout reception and year 1. During daily phonics lessons the children learn and practice the sounds and apply them into words. We ensure they can read nonsense words as well in readiness for the assessment as this can sometimes throw the children. Each year the Government set a pass rate. The scores will be reported to you in your child's end of year school report. If you would like to know more about our teaching of phonics please look at the school website under 'our curriculum, literacy support'.

Spring Term Attendance

The Spring term is always a difficult one, when lots of children and staff succumb to various illnesses and this last term has been no exception. We are pleased to announce though, that 62 children achieved 100% attendance last term, despite the illnesses. Well done to all of these children. Certificates will be presented shortly. The class with the highest attendance rate since Christmas was RR, so an extra special well done to them.

Chocolate Bingo Tonight

We look forward to welcoming all of the teams from 5.15pm tonight. Thank you to the PTA for their time and effort once again with a special thank you to Miss Lynette Kelly for taking on the organisation. We are really excited about choosing some furniture for our new canopy area with any proceeds.



Wishing you a lovely weekend

Regards

Mrs L Farmer and Mrs S Burton

Reception Class Assemblies

We welcome the parents of the Reception children on the dates shown on the diary to watch a class assembly. These usually last for approximately 30 minutes and all family members are welcome to attend.

Year 2 Maypole Dancing

The year 2 children are looking forward to you joining us on Thursday 7th May at 2.15pm to watch the maypole dancing. Weather permitting, the performance will be held on the playground, so fingers crossed!