

Thomas Russell Infants' School

'Our children blossom through nurture & challenge'

Newsletter No. 5 - 9th October 2015

New Parent Governors

We are delighted to announce that our three new Parent Governors are Katie Johnson who has George in 1S, Ali Cotterill who has Olivia in 2M and Rob Brittle who has Isla in 2W. They have already started work as governors and are looking forward to working with the school to achieve a successful future



Bird Spectacular

Reception classes enjoyed an afternoon on Thursday learning about different birds of prey including eagle owls, barn owls, kestrels and a very famous snowy owl named Gizmo 3rd, better known to all as Hedwig, Harry Potters owl! We would like to thank Bob from Armitage Birds of Prey Centre for a most informative and 'hands on' afternoon. The children loved it!



Dates for your Diary

October 22nd 1.30-5.00pm - Parent/teacher consultation meetings

October 23rd 9.15-10.00am - Whole school Harvest assembly - one adult per child welcome

October 23rd 3.15pm - Break up for half term

November 2nd 1.30-5.00pm Parent / teacher consultation meetings

November 27th - School closed for staff training

WORKERS OF THE WEEK

2M - Freddie Yigit for writing a super adventure story for George and the Dragon

2W - Cassandra Parry for super use of exciting and interesting words in a story

1S - Joshua Round for super art using the ipad

1K - Noah Griffin for working really well independently

RR - Nevaeh Hurst for being kind, polite and super at tidying up.

RL - Lauren Harrison for becoming so much more confident in the classroom

Well done everyone!

Burton Mail photo

There will be class photos of our Reception children in next Tuesday's (13 October) Burton Mail. This is quite a tradition and features many of the local primary schools. Don't forget to look at the paper on Tuesday!

School Crossing Patrol

Please note that Mrs Woodward, our lollipop lady, will be leaving early on Tuesday 13 October, so there will be no-one on duty at the Station Road zebra crossing after 3.30pm. If you have children at the junior school who use this crossing, please let them know.

Lunchtime menu

We have sent out lunchtime menus in book bags today, which give details of lunches up until the end of January. Our fantastic cook, Mrs Cullen, has made a few tweaks to the menu as you see it, as she has now had time to see what's popular with the children and what's not! Two main courses have been substituted and one changed slightly - Week 1 Tuesday is now savoury lamb mince, Week 3 Tuesday is lamb shepherd's pie and Week 3 Thursday is now lamb mince instead of beef mince. She has also made some minor changes to the vegetarian options, side dishes and puddings. Hopefully, these changes will both be popular with the children and reduce food waste. All the changes are in line with the County's healthy eating policy. If you would like to see all the changes made, please ask at the School Office.



Open day for prospective children and parents

Wednesday 14th October 2015

We are holding an open day for parents and children due to start school in September 2016.

They will have the chance to look around the school and see all the classes at work. The 2 sessions available are 9.30-10.30am and 2-3pm. Please share this information with anyone you know who may be thinking about school places for September. Thank you

Dyslexia Awareness Week

This week has been National Dyslexia Awareness Week and to acknowledge this we are holding a special day.

On Wednesday 4th November we are having a 'No Pens Wednesday' and attempting all our learning during that day without putting pen to paper. There will be lots of speaking and listening, practical and problem-solving activities and interesting ways of learning. We look forward to sharing them with you.

Music for toddlers

MelodyBugs Music Classes for children aged 2-4 are held every Tuesday in Barton Village Hall at 11.45am during term time. The first class is free then £5 per class to pay as you go or £4 if a block of classes is purchased. Contact Jo on Jo@melodybugs.com to reserve a place.

Harvest Assembly

This will be held on Friday October 23rd at 9.15—10.00am in the school hall as already mentioned in the diary of events. This year we have once again decided to donate food to the Burton YMCA Food Bank. The YMCA have listed the foods they are in need of, these are:

Tinned Goods

Vegetables e.g. potatoes, carrots etc

Soup, Spaghetti, Beans, tinned tomatoes etc

Corned beef, ham, other cold meats, tuna, sardines etc

'Meals' i.e. Stew, curries, chilli con carne, stewing steak, mince beef & onion, casseroles, hot dogs and meatballs etc

Milk puddings, fruit, Custard (or instant packet to be mixed with water) etc

Cereals

Breakfast cereals

Pasta, rice, savoury rice, noodles, pot noodles

Biscuits, cream crackers, savoury biscuits, crisps

Drinks

500 ml (not 1 litre) cartons of UHT milk (not dried milk) – Urgent, regular need for these – we like to put one in every food parcel so need at least 90-110 each month, Small screw top bottles of UHT milk also urgently required for the Rough Sleepers bags

Instant coffee, tea, cuppa-soups etc

If you could spare any of the above items we would be extremely grateful. Donations can be brought into school on the morning of the assembly.

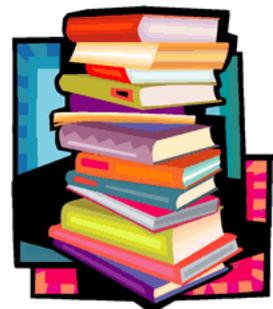
We have also decided to issue food baskets to a few needy senior citizens in the village, and as in previous years, we will ask the year 2 children to help.

In addition, because of the current refugee crisis, we will put out a donation basket in the hall where money contributions will be sent to 'Save the Children - Child Refugee Crisis Appeal'. If you are unable to attend on the day, donations may be sent via book bags.

Many thanks in advance for your support.

The Summer Reading Challenge

Our Year 1 and Year 2 children were given the opportunity to take part in the Burton Libraries summer reading challenge over the summer holidays to read six books. Thank you to all the children who took part; we have found out recently that there were an equal number of children from each team - Robins, Swans, Penguins and Owls - so all teams are joint winners. Well done, children!





Spotlight on:

Last night we held our year 1 and 2 curriculum evening for parents. Thank you to all who attended and we hope you found it informative.

Many changes have taken place in education since September 2014, with significant changes to the curriculum we follow and the way we assess our children. These changes and the new expectations were shared at last night's meeting. If you were unable to attend and would like further information about this, and ideas for how to support your child at home then please call in to the office for a pack of information.

The rationale driving the changes is to ensure that children are learning fewer things in greater depth rather than children making over rapid progress through the different levels of the curriculum, which previously existed. As a school we have spent time reflecting on how our teaching approaches support this and how we might best provide for all of our learners, enabling them to achieve to the best of their ability. Our lessons therefore look slightly different to how they may have looked in the past, particularly in maths.

We aim to give every child the opportunity to succeed in the same skill or learning objective by often teaching the concept initially to the whole class, rather than offering differentiated activities from the outset. Once a child has demonstrated that they are secure in that skill or concept, they will then be provided with various opportunities to use and apply the skill or knowledge in differing contexts: embedding their learning and gaining that deeper understanding. For those children who do not demonstrate a secure understanding, the skill will be retaught to them using a different strategy and possibly even a third strategy, until they show a secure understanding. There are many different ways of teaching one skill and individual children often have a preferred learning style. It is our job to ensure we find the way that suits each child, ensuring they secure their learning.

Even though our maths lessons have always been of a practical nature, practical resources will feature even more heavily from now on. Equipment to help our children visualise what they are learning and equipment they can physically move to help them with the calculation will be the starting point for most new learning. This will then move to picture representations followed by written or mental strategies. Again this supports different ways of learning and helps to embed the understanding.

The children are already enthused and engaged with their learning, as we have seen in our recent learning walks around school. There is a real buzz in classrooms when maths lessons are taking place and the children are excited and rising to the challenges presented to them. 'This is really exciting' were the words of a year 2 child last week.

We look forward to sharing further progress with you soon and our plans for the introduction of a whole school resource called 'Numicon' to support this further. Funding raised at forthcoming PTA events will be used to purchase this.

PTA NEWS

The children's halloween party will be on 23rd October at school from 5pm - 6.30pm. If you are able to help at this event please can you send an email to thomasrussellpta@gmail.com or send a text to the new PTA phone on 07596437552. We really do rely on adult help and supervision to enable these events to take place, so please help if you can.

Our wine tasting event is taking place on Friday 13th November, please make sure you get that baby sitter ready! Full details out very soon.

We will be running Christmas Craft sessions again this year so can we ask you to please bring in any spare buttons that you have lying around at home in preparation.

Pre-order forms for the school calendar and Christmas cards are also on their way.

Thank you

Half-Term Football opportunity for girls

Enjoy the FIFA Women's World Cup? Enjoy playing football? If so, the FA Skills Team is running a GIRLS' ONLY Football Session at The National Football Centre!

Date- Friday October 30th 2015

Venue- St George's Park

Time - 10am – 12pm for girls aged 5 to 11 years old

Cost - FREE

If you would like more information, please contact FA Skills Coach Brent Freeman on 07507 687857 or Brent.Freeman@thefa.com



Wishing you an enjoyable weekend.

Regards

Mrs L Farmer and Mrs S Burton