



Thomas Russell Infants' School

'Our children blossom through nurture & challenge'

Newsletter No.16 11 January 2019

HAPPY★NEW★YEAR

Welcome back to school!

We hope you all had a lovely holiday and enjoyed all your festive activities. All the children came back ready and eager to learn, and we hope that the new year will bring lots of new opportunities for learning. If you're keen to add another new year's resolution to your list, can we encourage you to read the column on the right about reading with your child – it's all too easy to forget how crucial this is for children with all the distractions of everyday life.

Dates for your Diary

Mon 21 Jan-2M Family workshop
Tue 22 Jan - 2W Family workshop
Wed 23 Jan - 2F Family workshop
Thu 24 Jan - 1S Family workshop
Fri 25 Jan - 1P Family workshop
Mon 28 Jan - RR Family workshop
Tue 29 Jan - RM Family workshop
Fri 1 Feb - NSPCC Number day
Thu 7 Feb - Parent Consultations
1.30 - 5.30pm
Mon 11 Feb - Parent Consultations
2.45 - 6.45pm
Fri 15 Feb -Break up for halfterm
Tue 26 Feb - Back to school
Fri 12 April - Break up for Easter



The magic of 15 minutes: Reading practice and reading growth

A study of the reading practices of more than 9.9 million children has found that **more than half** of the children read for less than 15 minutes per day on average when they are not at school. This is quite a scary statistic - although when the children in one class at our school were asked this week who had read anything over the Christmas holidays only four children said that they had.

Extensive reading had been linked to superior general knowledge, vocabulary, spelling, verbal fluency, and reading comprehension. Research has proved that children who choose to pick up a book for pleasure are more likely to succeed in life. It is crucial that we encourage our children to read for pleasure. But that is easy to say and hard to achieve, particularly when children have plenty of other leisure activities to choose from and gadgets to play with!

It has been proved that 15 minutes seems to be the "magic number" at which children start seeing substantial positive gains in reading achievement.

We would really like to encourage everyone to take on the 'Magic 15 Minute' reading challenge in 2019. Don't forget that reading material can be any books - fact or fiction, magazines, comics etc. We also have a fantastic community library in Barton which has lots to offer. Keep an eye on the newsletter for some exciting activities and events linked to reading in 2019 - especially a very exciting author visit coming soon...!



We are delighted to see how many children have been accessing the Spelling Shed website. The teachers in particular have become very competitive about which class is top of the league and we know the children love working hard to get to the top of the individual league. If your child hasn't logged in yet then we urge you to give it a go! If your child doesn't have a log in or has lost their log in then please see the office for a form to gain access.

JT MAT Training Day

On Monday, while the children enjoyed a final day of holiday, our staff attended the first John Taylor Multi Academy Trust training day, where over 600 staff got together at the new John Taylor Free School for a day of learning. The themes were metacognition (how children learn), self-regulation (developing independence) feedback (about the children's work) and collaboration in teaching. After a rousing and inspirational opening speech from CEO of the Trust Mike Donoghue and Chair of the Trust board Gareth Moss, all staff chose from a wide variety of workshop-style sessions. Some were led by national and international speakers such as David Weston, Guy Claxton and Jill Berry and others by respected staff of our own schools. We were delighted that both Mrs Moore and Mrs Warner led very successful and well-attended sessions on areas of their work in our own school. All office staff took part in various team activities, allowing opportunity for reflection and networking. We were thrilled to spend the day thinking about our jobs, which for our classroom staff is all about your children and how we can develop further our skills and abilities to teach them as well as we possibly can.

Children's Mental Health Week

Between 4th and 8th February we will be supporting the national initiative Children's Mental Health Week, as we think it is very important to protect our young people's mental health and help teach them age-appropriate ways to look after themselves. Please look out on the newsletter next week for further information about activities and events.



Sealife Centre trip

Reception had a fantastic day out today at the Sealife Centre in Birmingham. All the children were beautifully behaved and a credit to the school. Thank you to all the parent helpers who accompanied them—we cannot run trips without you! We will have photos and a more detailed report in next week's newsletter.

Maths focus



This week in maths:

Reception have been practising counting different amounts accurately this week. They have been making sure that they touch each object as they count and that they don't count an object twice. The children have been using Numicon to play 'Guess my number' and have been trying to work out which Numicon piece is in a feely bag and then make that number using cubes. Reception have also been seeing how they could share different amounts of pasta between different plates and encouraged to use maths vocabulary to describe their answers.

Year 1 have been adding and subtracting within 20 this week. They have been learning different strategies to help them such as making 10 first eg 'Hannah has 6 balloons and Lilly gives her 7 more. How many balloons does she have altogether?' The children used ten frames to help them showing that they could split the 7 into 4+3 so they could do $6+4=10$ and then $10+3=13$. The children have also been subtracting numbers within 20 using practical resources to help them as well as ten frames and number lines.

Year 2 have been working on multiplication and division this week. They have been concentrating on the 2, 5 and 10 times tables. They have been encouraged to use the correct mathematical language to describe what they are doing so for a multiplication sentence such as $7 \times 5 = 35$ they would say 'There are 7 equal groups with 5 in each group making a total of 35'. The children have been looking at division as both sharing and grouping. For sharing the children have looked at questions such as 'share 15 beanbags between 3 hoops' and asked to write the correct number sentence ($15 \div 3 = 5$). For grouping they have looked at questions like 'Pencils come in packs of 20. We need to put 5 in each pot. How many pots will we need?' and record it appropriately ($20 \div 4 = 5$). The children have used the practical resources and recorded pictorially to help them.

In your book bags

- ◆ Change 4 life booklet
- ◆ Raring2Go
- ◆ NHS letter - Reception only
- ◆ Rainbow photography order form
- ◆ New Kirfs for children to practice

Wishing you all an enjoyable weekend.

Best wishes

Mrs S Burton and Mrs L Farmer