



# Thomas Russell Infants' School

'Our children blossom through nurture and challenge'

Newsletter number 1 08.09.2023

## WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL

### Welcome, Welcome!

Well what a week it has been with fabulous sunshine every day to welcome us back to school. Our new Reception children have now completed four half days and sampled the school lunches. They have been a pleasure to watch, exploring the activities and resources available to them and making new friends. We look forward to seeing them in their full classes from Monday.

We have welcomed back our new Year 1 and 2 children, all looking very grown up and smart in their classrooms and working hard to show their new teachers how fabulous they are.

Week one down!

We also welcome a number of new faces amongst the staff. Changes are afoot in the office as Mrs Shorten (Office Manager) will be leaving us at the end of this half term. We recently appointed Mrs Crowden who will be working alongside Mrs Shorten, learning the ropes, until she leaves in October. Mrs Robinson will then be increasing her hours to support Mrs Crowden.

Miss Brassington is now sharing 1SB with Mrs Sutton in year 1 and will be working all day Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon.

Ms Smith and Miss Hammond have joined our team of teaching assistants with Ms Smith working purely in reception and Miss Hammond working in year 1 and Reception.

### Volunteering in school

Have you got 30 minutes or more to spare each week during the school day? Would you like to support our wonderful school and make a difference to our children? If so, then come along to find out more at our volunteers meeting next Wednesday at 9.15am.

We value any time you can give to listen to children read, support in class or help with classroom admin tasks. If you have ever considered training as a teaching assistant or a teacher then this is the perfect way to gain valuable experience and an insight into what happens in school. Many of our support staff in school started as volunteers with us!



## Safeguarding

We aim to provide you with regular updates on our newsletters about safeguarding. As we begin a new school year, we thought we would introduce you to our safeguarding leads in school.

Designated safeguarding leads - Mrs Burton and Mrs Moore:



Deputy Designated safeguarding leads - Mrs Sutton and Mrs Toft:



Safeguarding governor - Mr Tim Hopkins.

Should you have any safeguarding concerns, you should report them immediately to the appropriate member of staff in accordance with our policy and procedures.

For more information about our safeguarding policies and procedures please visit the safeguarding page on our [website](#).

## Forest School

Forest school starts next week for **2W** on Tuesday 12th and **1SB** on Thursday 14th. A letter containing all the information that you need will be issued shortly.

We are lucky to have a small woodland area within the school grounds that has been specifically designated for Forest School and we look forward to watching it grow and develop during the year.



## PTA News

The PTA would like to welcome all the children back to school, especially Reception and any new starters joining Thomas Russell. We hope you have settled in well over the last week.

The PTA are working hard behind the scenes, organising events to raise money for the children for special occasions.

We will be hosting a coffee morning on Friday 29th September, from 9am for all parents in the school hall. It would be brilliant to see everyone come along so that old and new parents can get to know each other.

It will also give you an opportunity to meet us to find out what the purpose of the PTA is and what we do. We will be able to tell you where and what the money we raise goes towards, events coming up and how you can help going forward.

If you are thinking of joining the PTA and would like to find out more, please get in touch. Our email address is [thomasrussellpta@gmail.com](mailto:thomasrussellpta@gmail.com) you can find us on Facebook: Thomas Russell Infants School PTA, or alternatively have a chat with one of us at the school gate.



## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### **Pupil premium**

If your family is in receipt of certain benefits, your child may be eligible for Pupil Premium—funding (currently £1345) that the Government provides to schools for them to spend on that child. This could be one-to-one teaching time, special equipment, paying for out-of-school activities that benefit the child, paying for school trips and music lessons, to name a few examples.

It is well worth checking to see if you qualify and we would strongly urge everyone to visit this link to learn more about Pupil Premium (referred to as Free School Meals on this site) and use the very quick and easy application form—<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Educational-awards-benefits/FreeSchoolMeals/Apply-online.aspx>

Thank you—if you have any questions, please contact the school office or speak to one of the Co-Heads.

## Dates for your Diary

*Lunch menu from Monday 11th of September will be Week 2*

**Monday 11th September**—Reception children in school full time.

**Wednesday 4th October**—Flu vaccinations.

**Wednesday 13th September**—9:15am. Volunteer meeting.


**Wednesday 18th October**—Open day for 2024 intake.

**Wednesday 27th September**—School photographs: individual and family.

**Friday 27th October**—School closes for half term.

**Friday 29th September**—PTA coffee morning.

**Monday 6th November**—Inset day.



## Exciting Summer Updates

We are really excited to tell you about the improvements which have taken place over the summer, all funded by the MAT or the Government.

Firstly, just before we broke up, the JTMAT informed us that they would be funding the remaining 4 whiteboards required for our classrooms. As you are aware, the PTA have been fundraising for these for quite some time and have already purchased 2. This means that all classrooms now have new, touch screen boards which we are all so pleased about.

Next, we had some major works to complete the refurbishment of our school hall after the redecoration and new curtains and blinds earlier this year. This summer has seen the addition of a new heating system, a new, fully insulated ceiling and a sanded and polished floor which looks stunning. For those of you who have sat in our school hall, the heating will make such a difference.

Finally, we have had our boilers to the main building replaced with much more energy efficient and modern boilers. Being an old school, our energy costs are enormous so these measures will hopefully have a positive impact on our budget, meaning more money going back into teaching and learning.

*We hope you have a lovely weekend*

*Mrs Burton and Mrs Moore*