

# *Thomas Russell Infants School*



# *Welcome*

*On behalf of the Governing Body and all members of staff, I would like to welcome you and your child to Thomas Russell Infants' School.*

*I invite you to read and enjoy the information in this booklet, which is designed to give information about our school.*

*Thomas Russell Infants' School is a community co-educational day school administered by Staffordshire County Council.*

*It caters for Foundation Stage and Key Stage One pupils between the ages of 4-7 years.*

*We have a full "Healthy School Status" recognized nationally as we believe strongly in child-centered learning and insist that learning is fun!*

*I look forward to meeting with you should you wish to tour the school with your child in the future.*

*Mrs. L. Farmer  
Headteacher*



## About Our School

The school is proud of its history and heritage that enhances pupils' opportunities for learning.

Thomas Russell, a draper who died in 1593, left £50 in his will for a school to be built in Barton under Needwood.

Our school cherishes the strong links that are still maintained with The Drapers' Company. The Company continues to support the welfare and education of pupils at Thomas Russell Infants' School. It holds a charitable trust for the school and as well as financing the annual prizes, has assisted with special projects such as the establishment of



the Elizabethan Knot Garden and the fundraising of this prospectus. Each year selected pupils from Year 2 are presented with a 'Drapers Prize' in recognition of their achievements and contributions to the school.

A spacious Victorian building stands on the site of the original school. The present building has an extension housing a large multi-purpose well-equipped hall, kitchen and toilet block. Two additional classrooms are situated in the extensive grounds. There are gardens, an environmental area and an adventure playground.

The school is fortunate in having staff who work together as a team, keep abreast with new developments in education and place an importance on continuing professional development.

When the children enter the school they join a team:

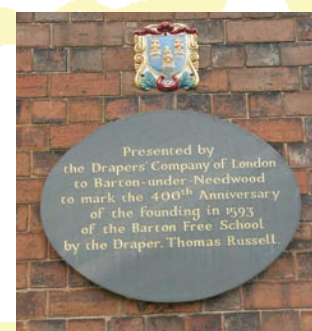
Penguins – Blue

Swans – Yellow

Robins – Red

Owls – Green

The philosophy of the school is to build on achievement and we encourage and reward children as individuals and as part of a team working within school.



## Preparation for School

Long before they start school, most children show an interest in the tools of learning and parents ask us what they can do to help. The most valuable work you can do is to talk and listen to your child, encourage their sense of curiosity, answer questions carefully and encourage learning to be fun. Starting school can be an exciting experience to a small child but also slightly daunting. Our induction programme is tailored carefully so that children and parents have many opportunities to visit school, meet their new teachers and friends and have fun in their new classroom. All reception children are given a photo book prior to starting school with photos of key people and places in school. This ensures all children are familiar with the school before starting in September.

All children begin school in the September after their 4th birthday, and remain in the reception class for one year.

## The Foundation Stage

Our Reception classrooms can cater for up to 60 children altogether. They are bright and stimulating, offering a large creative area, book area and role-play area, as well as interactive whiteboards and computers.

All children learn through socializing, structured play and learning activities in accordance with the DfES 'Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage'.

There are six areas of learning, covering 'Personal, Social and Emotional Development'; 'Communication, Language and Literacy'; 'Mathematical Development'; 'Creative Development'; 'Physical

Development'; and 'Knowledge and Understanding of the World'. Learning through well-designed play opportunities is a strong principal.

Soon after starting school, each child takes part in a baseline assessment process. This is used to identify strengths and areas for development of individual pupils on entry and enables staff to target appropriate areas of learning. Outcomes are shared with parents. Each child has a Foundation Stage Profile that enables continuous assessment, carried throughout the year.

Transition from The Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 is carefully planned to ensure a smooth movement for all children. Learning continues in accordance with the children's abilities and is carefully monitored.

## Year 1 And Year 2 Curriculum Organisation

All children in Year 1 and Year 2 receive full access to the statutory National Curriculum programmes of Study for Key Stage One, regardless of gender, ability, race, culture or religious beliefs. Pupils are encouraged to develop at their own level, to reach their full potential, to develop a lively, enquiring mind and to apply themselves to tasks.

Class teachers identify any pupil who has a Special Educational Need (SEN) and the school's SEN co-ordinator is informed. With full parental involvement, the child's progress



# Our Prospectus



is closely monitored with targets of achievement set with regular review dates. The Education Authority Special Needs and Psychology services may be called upon to assist with any pupil and to support class teachers. School follows the LEA's SEN procedures. School's SEN policy and breakdown of procedures are available from the Headteacher.

The school recognizes the importance of using a range of teaching and learning styles to meet the needs of all pupils including those with specific learning difficulties, including dyslexia. The school is now recognized as a Dyslexia Friendly School, having achieved this status in June 2007.

Each term the teaching staff work in teams and, using the appropriate schemes of work, plan the curriculum for each year group, ensuring continuity and progression in each subject for all pupils throughout the Key Stage.

Teachers with responsibility as subject co-ordinators monitor the delivery of curriculum and review pupil attainment. The Headteacher oversees the progress of all pupils and leads staff in establishing strategies for improving standards of achievement.

Teachers and teaching assistants work together throughout the day in all aspects of the curriculum.



The National Curriculum subjects are: English, Mathematics, I.C.T. (Information and Communication Technology,) P.S.H.E. (Personal, Social and Health Education), Science, D&T (Design and Technology), History, Geography, Art, Music, P.E. (Physical Education) and R.E. (Religious Education). Staff have drawn up a scheme of work for each subject based on the attainment targets of the National Curriculum.



All pupils receive a minimum of 21 hours a week of curriculum teaching. Children are organized in registration classes of mixed ability, with a balance of gender and social groupings. All classes work to a weekly timetable that is curricular based.

For English and Mathematics, school follows the Primary National Strategy frameworks. This means that each day pupils receive literacy and numeracy teaching sessions. Each session involves a large part of whole class teaching with some differentiated group work. All subjects are taught with a flexible approach of whole class, group or individual activities which are most effective and appropriate to the learning taking place.

R.E. is a statutory part of the curriculum. School follows the LEA syllabus and includes knowledge and understanding of the Muslim and Hindu faiths as well as the Christian faith. School is required to hold a daily collective Assembly that is broadly Christian in nature. If parents wish to withdraw their child from Collective Worship or R.E. they should contact the Headteacher. They may well find that, on discussion, the school's approach does not conflict with their own. Any child withdrawn from R.E. or Collective Worship is given other curricular work under the supervision of a member of staff.

Children are taught in classes of no more than 30 for the majority of lessons. However it is sometimes beneficial to have larger groups and more integration of pupils in the subjects of P.E. and Music. Some of these sessions are therefore taught in year groups with a team teaching approach.



P.E. plays an important part in the development of the whole child. Each class takes part in dance, gymnastics and games lessons with times allocated in the hall. Weather permitting, games sessions are held outside on the playground and large field. An adventure playground provides an extension for physical and social play.



Documentation is available to view, on request from the Headteacher. This includes the following: any statutory instruments and circulars sent to schools by the DfES about the curriculum; school's published OFSTED report; school's schemes of work and policy statements.

The Headteacher accepts full responsibility for the education and welfare of all children in her care. If at any time she is concerned about your child, she will contact you so that the problem can be discussed together. If you have any problems, worries or complaints regarding your child's work or any other area of school life, please do not hesitate to call and make an appointment. Any complaints are dealt with in line with LEA procedures.

## Educational Visits

All classes may at some time during the school year take an educational visit to enhance and enrich the learning opportunities. This will be in school time and parents are asked to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of travel and admission fees.

Often we invite educational visitors into school: theatre groups, musical performers, zookeepers, etc. Again, a voluntary contribution is appreciated to ensure opportunities are opened up for all children.

## Involvement of Parents

We have the support of parents at all stages in their child's schooling. We involve parents here at Thomas Russell Infants' School in every aspect and take into account your views and suggestions through questionnaires and meetings. Parents are

asked to attend three evening consultation meetings each year to discuss the progress of their child. This is an opportunity for parents to see their child's work and ask questions. We offer several opportunities throughout the school year for parents to come in and work alongside their child, such as family workshops and open days. We share with them the topics that their child is learning about on a half-termly basis and send home many ideas about how they can support their child's learning at home.

Our Home School learning logs are vital in the communication between home and school. They are written and sent home each Friday and parents and children are encouraged to write in them too.

Our open door policy and willingness of staff mean that parents can approach any adult working in school if they have a question or concern at any time.



## The School Day

**9.00a.m. – 12noon**

**1.15p.m. – 3.15p.m.**

The school gates open at 8.50am and are supervised until 9.00am when a bell goes for registration. Pupils go straight to their classrooms to be met by their teachers. Parents are invited to accompany their child to his/her relevant cloakroom if they wish.

Please see that your child is at school for the beginning of each session. Children need to be in their classrooms ready to start work at 9.00am. They can be distressed as a result of a late or hurried start.

After the 9.00am bell, the only access into school is through the main entrance.

Registration ceases at 9.15am. If a child is brought after this time, or is collected before 3.15p.m, the parent/carer must sign appropriately in the In/Out book, so that an accurate monitoring of attendance is in operation throughout the day.

At the end of the day parents are invited to wait on the playground to collect their children from the class teachers.

All children have an outdoor break between 10.30am and 10.45am and 2.15pm and 2.30pm. Lunchtime is between 12 noon and 1.15pm. Each class has a lunchtime supervisor assigned to them. Children can choose to have a cooked meal which includes a drink. These meals are served on a cafeteria basis and even the youngest children behave independently and manage very well. Payment for school dinners can be on a weekly or half-termly basis. All cooked meals are of a high standard, are nutritious and varied and very popular.

Alternatively children may bring a packed lunch from home. As a healthy school we do ask that packed lunches are balanced nutritionally and do not include sweets and/or fizzy drinks. Thank you.

All children are asked to bring a water bottle into school. These are stored so children can access them at any time and are taken home to be cleaned and refilled each night. We believe that maximizing the hydration of the brain is essential to enhance learning.



Children do not need to bring any other kind of food/snack into school as free fruit is provided each day for the morning break. Children in reception also receive a free carton of milk.

Toys should not be brought into school. Playground toys and equipment are provided at lunchtime for indoor and outdoor use by all children.

## Enhancing Positive Behaviour

Unacceptable behaviour is very rare in school.

The aim of the school with regard to discipline is that children should develop self-discipline and understand the need for self-control.

The method is to create a friendly but well-ordered and busy school life. The emphasis is on encouraging positive behaviour and the school has various strategies in place: team points, achievements book, reward badges and achievement assemblies.

School rules are few, but definite:-

1. Support and help others;
2. Take care of everything around us;
3. Treat other children and adults with respect.

Children are reminded of these simple rules regularly and there are sanctions in place for those who break the code of conduct.



If a child misbehaves persistently the parents are invited to discuss the problem with the Headteacher in order to find both causes and solutions.

A full copy of the school's Discipline and Anti-Bullying policies are available from the Headteacher.

## School Uniform

Our uniform consists of the colours grey and bottle green. Bottle green cardigans, jumpers and sweatshirts should be worn over a white or green shirt or polo shirt. Trousers, skirts and pinafore dresses are to be grey. Please can all shoes be sensible (no heels). All items of clothing must be labelled clearly with your child's name and class.



To participate fully in P.E we ask that a named bag containing a pair of pumps, a tee shirt (team colour) and a pair of shorts be brought to school.

Jewellery should not be worn in school at any time.

## Illness and Absences

If your child is absent please notify the Headteacher as soon as possible by one of the following methods:

1. A phone call.
2. A written note handed in by another child/ adult.

If we do not know why your child is absent from school this will be marked in the register as an unauthorized absence. School has a legal requirement to monitor absence rates and regular unauthorized absence could result in the involvement of the LEA's Educational Welfare Officer.

After illness, please do not send your child back to school until he/she is fully recovered. The LEA guidelines state that after sickness or diarrhoea, children should not return to school until 48 hours after the last attack.

Children cannot stay indoors during playtimes unless authorization has been sought and special arrangements for supervision have been agreed between parent and class teacher.

Staff are not authorized to administer medicine. Any child with asthma tendencies, who needs immediate access to an inhaler, may have his/her medication in the classroom. As school needs to keep a record of all medications that are on the premises, you will need to complete a medical form if this is the case.

A copy of authorized and unauthorized pupils' absence rates for the preceding school year is to be found in the back of the prospectus.



## Holidays

Enclosed with this booklet is a list of the school terms, showing the holidays. Apart from the official holidays, your child/children will have an additional 5 days which are staff training days. Although strongly discouraged, if you need to take your child out of school in term time you will need to complete and return a holiday form. If this is the case, these can be obtained from the school secretary.

## The Parents/Teachers Association (T.R.I.S.P.T.A.)

The school is fortunate to have the support of its parents in this hard-working association. This association not only forms an important link between parents and school but also raises funds for items of equipment. You are all members of the association and can help by contacting any of the committee members (names on the parents' Notice Board). They provide beneficial services for parents and families, e.g. sale of DVDs of school activities, and provide numerous fund-raising social events for parents and children.

## School Volunteers

We are very fortunate in having a large number of school volunteers made up of parents, grandparents and local residents who give up some of their spare time on a regular basis to help out in school. All are police checked and are a valuable asset to our school. If you are interested please contact us.

## Governors

The school has a governing body consisting of 14 members, 4 of whom are Parent Governors serving 4 years. These Parent Governors are nominated by parents, shall be parents of pupils attending the school at the time of nomination and shall be chosen by a majority of the parents voting.

## Extra Curricular Activities

Thomas Russell Infants' School prides itself in offering an education beyond that of the National Curriculum. It offers all pupils a time to build on existing interests and skills, with opportunities to learn and develop something new. The opportunities are built around people's expertise and links are available through the local community.

Throughout school, pupils' individual interests or special events are valued. Time is given in classes to include these items.



Year 2 pupils have the choice of learning to play the recorder, violin and /or keyboard. After-school clubs are also offered to Year 2 pupils and vary from year to year reflecting staff expertise and availability. Over the last few years the clubs have included Country Dancing, Mini Morris Men; 'Fit and Active'; Music; Environmental; Drama; Writing; Computer; Art and Crafts.

music tuition. The cost is divided by the number of children taking the lessons. The fee is paid termly and cheques are made payable to the L.E.A. and are paid into the school's budget.

The fee for the keyboard lessons is paid directly to the teacher who provides a private facility to the parents.

## **Charging and Remissions Policy**

Any child whose parent is in receipt of the necessary State Benefits will not be excluded from activities or visits through inability to pay. Further information and details are available from the Headteacher.

Charges are made for violin and keyboard lessons, as the budget is unable to sustain them. Violin lessons are provided during the lunch hour by a Local Authority peripatetic music teacher and are charged as per LEA guidelines for



## Finally

We believe it is important that we work in close partnership with you in order to provide the best learning and enriching opportunities for your child. Therefore we hope that you will sign and agree to our home-school agreement.

Our school is a happy environment – your children are at its heart. It is a wide community, wider than just the individuals who work “on site”. It includes you as an essential part of the education partnership. With you we seek to develop and provide good grounding in many skills which help the children to become happy and successful adults.

We look forward to having your child with us at Thomas Russell Infants' School.



Headteacher: Mrs L. Farmer

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Presented by  
the Drapers' Company of London  
to Barton-under-Needwood  
to mark the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
of the founding in 1593  
of the Barton Free School  
by the Draper, Thomas Russell.

If you need a copy of this information in large print, braille, another language or on cassette, please ask us