

Thomas Johnson Lower School

Newsletter 30

5th May 2023



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Headteacher's Introduction

We have had such a positive and eventful week in school. I have really enjoyed seeing the children's enthusiasm and passion for all the various activities and experiences this week.

Learning to read, write and calculate are of course important reasons that children come to school every day - but we must never forget they are not the only reasons. Schools should be places of **opportunity**, **experience** and **creativity** - and all of that should be underpinned by **happiness**.

Back when I was a class teacher, I always tried so hard to make sure my classroom was a place of wonder and curiosity - and then I always saw it as my job to provide the children with motivation (*or ignition, as I like to call it*) to try and become a better version of themselves.

This is my intention for TJLS.

All the activities, experiences and initiatives I am about to summarise below aren't traditionally National Curriculum objectives - but, for me, they give the children so much.

I have felt very proud to be the Headteacher of TJLS this week - and what excites me even more is that I am not even close to being finished with what I want this school to become...

*Simon Bolger
Headteacher*

Word Guerrilla

As part our **Year of Inspiration**, we were excited and delighted to welcome David Bowden AKA Word Guerrilla to TJLS this week.

David is a spoken word poet who also utilises beatboxing, live looping and multi-instrumentalism as part of his performance. He is also a former Headteacher - so he knows exactly how to pitch his workshops so children are able to get as much out of them as possible.

In assembly, he delivered some incredible poems and raps - and got the children up on their feet and joining in. it was amazing!

With Pre-School and Reception, he co-created and helped the children to perform animal sound poetry.

With Year 1, he inspired them to write list poems where they described all of the things in their life that are favourite or special to them.

With Year 2, children wrote their own 'I would never eat...' poems - and lots of laughter and smiling ensued!

With Year 3 and 4 children together, children created and performed their own animal A to Z rap.

Our children got so much out of the day that we are already planning David's next visit for next year!

A huge thank you to the PTFA for funding this experience for all of our children.



Referendum

On Thursday this week, every child in school had the opportunity to express their thoughts by voting in our first ever school referendum.

Children had two options of playground equipment to choose between - and then we held a secret ballot to determine which option we would select. The winning option secured a majority of 73% - and we will soon be purchasing the resources in the picture opposite.

Learning about your right to vote and what it means to live in a democracy is an important part of preparing children for life in modern Britain.

I know the children enjoyed discussing which option they thought would be best and why - and then being able to take part in the ballot.

The school will now hold a referendum as an annual event every May - and we will continue to have School Council elections every September.

#righttovote



Chicks and Ducks

This week we said goodbye to our five ducks and five chicks. They will return to the live on the farm they came from. The children have been engaged, interested and excited at seeing the life cycle in process.

They have also cared extremely well for the animals and really enjoyed being able to “swim” the ducks, handle the chicks and top up their food and drink on a daily basis.

I know they will be missed greatly by the children (*and some of the adults!*).

We’re already looking forward to having a new batch come to live with us next year!

Coronation Tea Party

On Friday afternoon, our children attended an afternoon tea party in the hall to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III. There was a selection of snacks and cakes for the children to sample - and then we took part in some ‘Royal and Regal’ activities such as crown and flag making.

It was great to see the school community dressed in their best red, white and blue outfits to celebrate the Coronation of the King.

I must also say a massive thank you to every member of staff for helping to organise this event. It really wouldn’t have happened without their input.

As a reminder, school is CLOSED for an additional Bank Holiday on Monday 8th May. We reopen as normal on Tuesday 9th May.

Extra-Curricular Clubs

Thank you to everyone who requested spaces at different clubs for children. As per my previous letter, there are limited spaces in all clubs and spaces will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

If your child has been allocated a space then they will come home with a letter today with further details on.

Some clubs were oversubscribed and we haven’t been able to allocate everyone a space. For oversubscribed clubs, children will be put on a waiting list and offered spaces in the event they become available.

Unfortunately, we don’t have sufficient numbers to run Book Club and Computing Club.

Dream - Discover - Flourish

The aim of our curriculum is to open doors of opportunity for our children

The Great Lidlington Bake Off

We are inviting children to bring in their baking creations as part of a bake-off competition.

The rules will be that the cakes need to be homemade, will need a recipe and full ingredients sheet provided alongside the cake on an A4 piece of paper, and will have to be delicious. The sheet that accompanies the cake can be designed, written and illustrated by the children.



A judging panel (*which Mr Bolger has no choice but to join....!*) will sample all the cakes and choose a set of runners up alongside a star baker winner.

We will then sell slices of all the cakes after school - and turn the child-made recipe sheets into a free downloadable .pdf that we will share with the TJLS community so they can recreate all the showstopper creations at home. Yummy!

All entries need to be brought to school **on the morning of Monday 15th May** in a lidded container that is clearly named.

Happy baking!

Weekly Awards

Last week's winners were:

	Star of the Week	Reader of the Week	Sportsperson of the Week
Reception	Arthur	Esme	Lana
Year 1	Beatrice	Amberley	Leo
Year 2	Joshua	Dexter	James
Year 3	Angelica	Patrick	Esme
Year 4	Oscar	Amelia	Noah

Online safety - Screen time Advice

Childnet report that one of their most frequently asked questions is how long children should spend on their devices each day.

In response, they have created a blog discussing why it is difficult to specify a limit and what you should consider:

You can read it here: [Screen Time Guidance for Parents and Carers | Childnet](#)

Dates for your diary - new dates added will be highlighted in yellow

1 st - 31 st May	KS1 SATs period
8 th May	Bank Holiday for the Coronation of King Charles III - school CLOSED
15 th May	The Great Lidlington Bake Off
17 th May	SPLAT session - 9-9.30am. Your child will give you a tour of their classroom.
26 th May	Last day of half term
5 th June	School reopens for Summer 2
5 th - 23 rd June	Year 4 Multiplication Screening Period
12 th - 16 th June	Year 1 Phonics Screening Period
16 th June	Coffee Morning - 9.15-10am
21 st June	New Reception starter information session - 1.30pm
29 th June	Sports Day - 9.30am
6 th July	Sports Day Backup should there be poor weather
10 th July	Art Week
12 th July	Transition morning - meet your new teacher
12 th July	School Picnic
14 th July	PTFA Inflatable Fun Day
14 th July	End of year reports sent out to parents and carers
17 th July	SPLAT - your child can share their learning from this year with you - 3.20-3.50pm
18 th July	Transition morning - meet your new teacher
19 th July	Year 4 Leavers Assembly - 9.30am
21 st July	School closes for summer holidays

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