

# THOMAS JONES

*an Ofsted outstanding school*

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Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

## **Looking Outward**

*'The stars that shall be bright when we are dust,  
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain'*

Last Friday, pupils and staff silently assembled in the hall to contemplate the significance of Remembrance Day. It was humbling to see everybody embrace the opportunity to pause and consider the notion of looking outward. The focus was the Second World War and in particular the sacrifices made by ace Jamaican Spitfire pilot Ulric Cross, Trinidadian cricketer and volunteer munition worker, Learie Constantine, who later in life became the first black peer to sit in the House of Lords, and Noor Inayat Khan. Noor served in the Secret Operations Executive. She was the first woman wireless operator to be parachuted into Normandy to assist the French resistance and to send back messages to Britain. Captured in 1942 and sent to Dachau concentration camp, tragically, she died the following year. Noor was posthumously awarded the George Cross.

## **Deft Performance**

Yesterday, the Year 4 scholars excelled in an inventive and language-rich depiction of our fragile eco-system. The staging, costumes and face paints were exacting. The previous day the same class donned welly boots and sou'westers and ventured to the Kew Bridge Thames Trust, where they explored the foreshore to classify native and invasive mini beasts. The visit forms the nucleus of a cross curricular science and geography topic. Yesterday, unperturbed by the prospect of rain, Year 1 visited the Holland Park Ecology Centre.

## **Priorities**

Priorities going forward at Thomas Jones are, as always, to sustain the quality of what has been achieved and to further improve. I want all pupils to shine. Gaps and anomalies in learning must be remedied. The thrust of our professional development programme is triggered by rigour and an uncompromising set of standards and the scrutiny of outcomes remains absolute. Insightful, visceral teaching is, by far, the single most influential factor and the most ambitious venture continues to be the revisiting of precisely what is taught.

## **In Demand**

The deadline for applying to join Reception in September 2023 is January 15<sup>th</sup>. If the volume of enquiries from a universally discerning group of parents and carers is anything to go by, we are, once more, expecting a high number of applications. In recent years those naming us as their 1<sup>st</sup> choice school has been disarming, with a five-year mean average of 230 applications per year for 30 places.

## **Reading with Your Child**

*'One of the greatest gifts an adult can give, is to read with a child'*

Please read with your child as much as possible between now and the end of term. Consider visiting the library or one of the nearby bookshops. For older individuals, delving into the National Geographic magazine or The 'I' newspaper will reap rewards.

Yours sincerely,



DM Sellens