

THOMAS JONES

an Ofsted outstanding school

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Friday 20th January 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Disarming Staging

Year 1 impressed and enchanted in equal measure yesterday, performing songs that focused on the theme of helping others. Attired in a multitude of costumes - representations of a teacher, a vet and librarian, paramedics, a doctor and a nurse, construction workers and fire fighters, they performed with brio and a boldness that belies their tender years, to a capacity hall. Congratulations are due to Ms Ellie Hanbury, Ms Stella Cant and Mr Weit Sittichai for their exactitude.

Professional Development, Robotics and a Phonics Workshop

On Monday evening Ms Verity Handyside led an interactive art seminar for class teachers that explored mark-making techniques, using charcoal, graphite stick and chalk. It is my view that quality professional development remain one of the single most important elements, ensuring that the curriculum and what is taught, continues to be valid. Mid-week, a new Reception and Year 1 robotics venture was launched. By 4.00 last night, every metre of Ms Polly Holmes classroom had been transformed into a phonics emporium, with families immersing themselves in various games that develop pupils' phonological awareness, all of which are transferrable to the home environment.

Hockey Success

Once again, the Thomas Jones hockey players have shone, winning all their recent matches against talented opposition. Usually loathe to single out individuals – this sport is, after all, about the strength of the team, on this occasion it would be remiss not to mention Amira Turay – our top goal scorer – who deserves to take all the plaudits.

Oversubscribed

Earlier this month, there were over 200 applications for 30 Reception places. This is remarkable and testament to the on-going success of the school. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all staff and pupils who were involved in this process. Throughout the autumn and in the first two weeks of January over a hundred prospective families visited Thomas Jones, all keen to enrol their children.

The Year's Turning

*'That stride, huge giants, o'er the shining frost,
In the pale splendour of the winter sun'*

John Clare

Winter for many pupils is defined by the eager anticipation of snow, surpassing by its glamour the more common days of wind and rain. In our grounds, life persists, readying itself for the age old cycle to begin again. Landscaper Mr Joseph Fada has been busy tending shrubs and tackling a multitude of tasks. Soon, we will commence a planting programme curated by a group of volunteers.

Yours sincerely,



DM Sellens, OBE