

## **Mrs Buley—Interim Principal**

What a busy first full week back for us all!

It has been fantastic to welcome back all pupils and they have settled well into the new year in school. This week, staff were involved in a Quality and Standards visit carried out by Miss Galloway (Liberty Academy Trust's Director of Education) where practice and implementation of policies was reviewed, as well as Miss Galloway looking at pupils' books and learning so far, this academic year. She commented on the pride that pupils take in their learning and how eager they are to share what they are achieving in lessons, as well as being pleased with the quality of feedback that staff are providing to pupils to support them in developing further.

Over the last few days, we have also taken delivery of many new class sets of our core texts and it has been wonderful to see these being used across the school during English lessons already - Year 7 have been particularly enjoying *Holes* and Year 8 were really interested to see the graphic novel version of *Macbeth* alongside traditional Shakespeare. We are so grateful to the Trust Executive team for agreeing to finance these for us to ensure pupils have access to all of the materials they need to succeed. Further opportunities for reading have also been implemented with all classes receiving copies of the *First News* newspaper and particularly enjoying an article about a three-legged cat called Tuna! Classes will receive these weekly and have the opportunity to access these at break and lunch times as well as provide valuable discussion opportunities during tutor time.

Members of the staff team have accessed training regarding supporting 'Emotionally Based School Avoidance' this week with this to be cascaded to all staff in the coming weeks. We have also met as a whole staff team to review our 'Curriculum intent' statement and are currently collaborating on how this can be written to accurately document our school aims. School council will also be consulted regarding this document to ensure that their voices are reflected in this.

On our INSET day last week, all Learning Mentors received training from Dr Nic Crossley regarding 'Maximising the impact of Teaching Assistants' which they thoroughly enjoyed. We have already seen direct implementation of some of the strategies discussed, for example, staff using 'Bloom's taxonomy's question stems' to further pupils critical thinking skills. Next week, all teachers begin a series of CPD led by Dr Crossley where we will look at further developing our Autism specific teaching strategies as we look at putting pedagogy into practice!

Planning is also underway for a variety of offsite trips and visits over the next term for a range of pupils and we look forward to sharing more information with you about this very soon. As we look to continue to expand our enrichment opportunities, it was great to welcome local artists to school today with some of our pupils contributing to the newly commissioned art project which will be featured at Reading train station. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity and Kev Munday and Stuart Melrose commented on the positive engagement of the pupils and how welcoming the school was to them both!

Wishing you all a lovely weekend,

Mrs Buley



### Pupil Awards

This academic year, we will be celebrating three pupils each week who have been nominated by staff for demonstrating our school principles.

We are pleased to announce that this week's winners are:

**Thoughtful – Marshall Collins** has been awarded this week for supporting our new staff with technology and being helpful in the classroom.

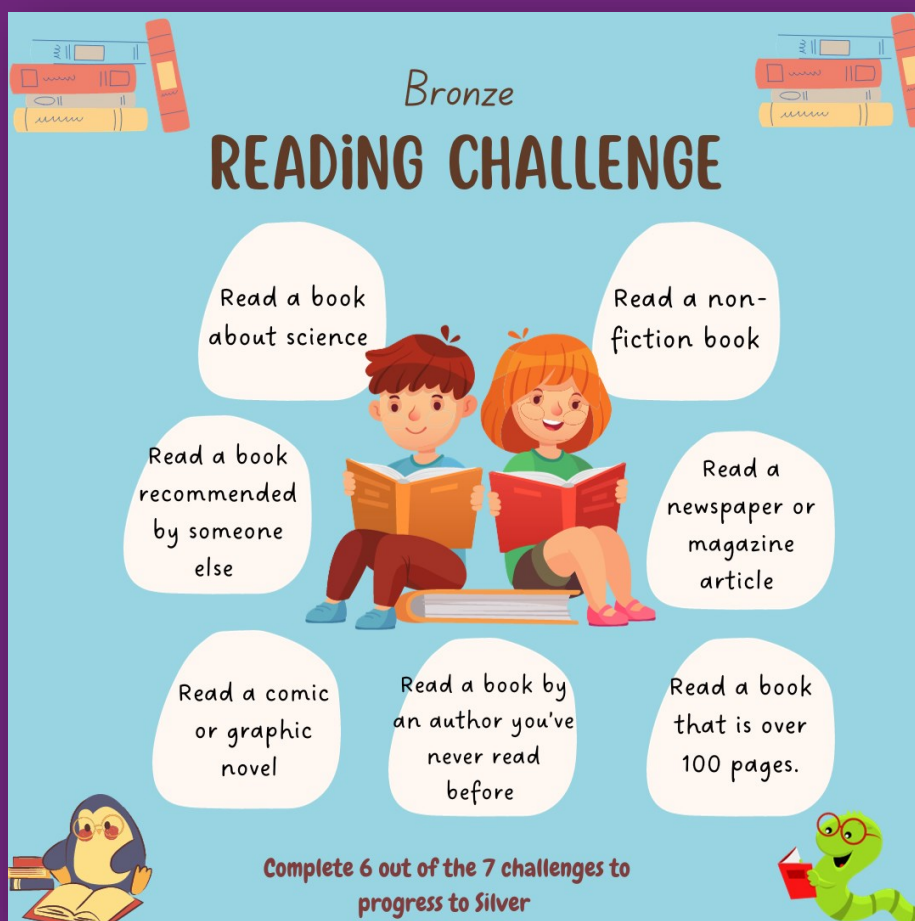
**Value – Zayn Aslam** has been awarded this week for fantastic engagement in all his lessons.

**Safe – Junior Ndah** has been awarded this week for evacuating quickly and safety in our fire drill.

A huge congratulations to these 3 pupils from all the staff

**Date Change:** Sports Day will take place on 24th April

## Reading Challenge - Encourage your child to take on the challenge





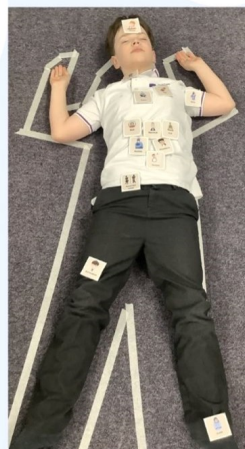
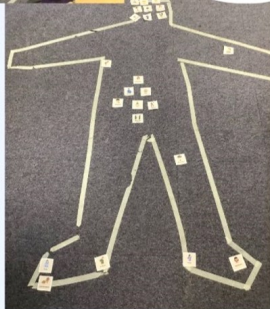
## TDT Updates



This week the focus in Speech and Language Therapy was idioms.

<p>The pen can be a mighty tool</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. you can use a pen to fight your friends</li> <li>2. pens are mighty and strong</li> <li>3. we can use pens to create new and big ideas</li> </ol>	<p>She gave me an icy stare yesterday</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. she gave me some ice</li> <li>2. she stared at me with ice in her hands</li> <li>3. she gave me an unfriendly look</li> </ol>
<p>Something fishy is going on around here!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. there's a fish here</li> <li>2. you think there's something suspicious happening</li> <li>3. it smells fishy</li> </ol>	<p>He crept as quietly as a mouse</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. He moved very silently</li> <li>2. He wants a mouse</li> <li>3. He wants to go somewhere with a mouse</li> </ol>
<p>I'm so hungry I could eat a horse</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I want to eat a horse</li> <li>2. I could eat a horse if I get hungry</li> <li>3. I'm extremely hungry and want to eat</li> </ol>	<p>She sings at the top of her lungs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. She sings with an extremely loud voice</li> <li>2. She wants to sing softly</li> <li>3. She does not have lungs</li> </ol>
<p>That exam was a piece of cake!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The exam went well</li> <li>2. There was a piece of cake on the exam sheet</li> <li>3. The exam was about cakes</li> </ol>	<p>She ate a mountain of food</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. She wants to eat a mountain</li> <li>2. She ate a lot of food</li> <li>3. She ate food on top of a mountain</li> </ol>
<p>You are as tall as a skyscraper</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. They want to climb a skyscraper</li> <li>2. They are extremely tall</li> <li>3. They want to go see a tall building</li> </ol>	

In personal development lessons, pupils have started learning about interoception and doing experiments to see how different parts of their body feel.



This involved labelling where different body clues are felt in the body and in George's case - being the body outline!

## Dates for the Diary

**17<sup>th</sup> January**—Year 6 SATS information – 15.15 – 16.00, Thames Valley School

**24<sup>th</sup> January**—Year 9 and 10 information – *time TBC with parental feedback*

**Parent Reading Event**—date TBC (Feb 2023)

Please do confirm your attendance, by contacting [office@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk](mailto:office@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk) and we look forward to seeing you then!

## Art workshop with Kev Munday and Stuart Melrose

Pupils listened to a presentation about the new art project that Kev Munday and Stuart Melrose are doing at Reading train station

Then they got to draw their own characters or buildings of Reading to contribute to the mural

We were fortunate to have 2 artists visit on Friday to work with some of our pupils.

There was lots of fun learning had by the pupils, and exciting artwork produced.













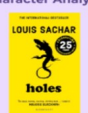






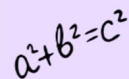
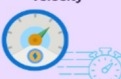













## PSHE and RSE This Half Term

Year 7 pupils will be considering their personal learning goals in and out of school as well as thinking about what motivates them to do well. Year 8 pupils are exploring the dangers of gambling and how this can affect their personal wellbeing, with this linked to online safety and legal responsibilities. Year 9 have started to discuss what mental health is, how this affects individuals' wellbeing and where they can go to for additional support. The pupils in Year 10 will consider relationship goals and the connections these can have on mental health, as well as exploring personal resilience. Year 11 have begun building up their strategies on managing anxiety, stress and exam pressures.

Within RSE, it has been a positive start to the lessons, with pupils showing open mindedness, maturity and a keen interest in personal growth and development. Year 7 are exploring how their bodies are changing, what might happen to them during puberty and the human life cycle. Year 8 have already had a lesson on developing realistic and healthy relationships, values and expectations, leading onto gender identity, consent (avoiding assumptions) and an introduction to contraception. Year 9 will begin to further understand about relationship choices, how vital consent is, understand sexual relationships and the law, as well as learn about the different types of contraception available. The Year 10 pupils are discussing the emotional impact societal change can have on young people, building further understanding of the spectrum of gender, including respectful ways of using appropriate vocabulary. By the end of the half term, pupils should be able to list sources of help and support in relation to changes young people may find challenging. Year 11 pupils have played an active role in planning their final two terms of content and will therefore explore mental health challenges, including eating disorders, stress and anxiety, alcohol misuse and intrusive thoughts. There will be a focus on where support can be sought and what support might look like.

If you wish to discuss further what your child will be learning in PSHE and RSE this half term, please do not hesitate to get in touch via [becca.archer@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk](mailto:becca.archer@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk)

## What we are learning this term - Spring 1 2024

	English	Maths	Science	Humanities	Art	Computing	Food Tech	Life skills
Scorpius	Instructional Writing 	Multiplication & Division 	Skeletons and Rocks 	The railways and investigating India 	Puppets 	Stop frame Animations 		First Aid 
Phoenix	Creative Writing 	Fractions 	Circulatory System, drugs and diet 	South America and the Maya 	Puppets 	Programming - physical computing 		First Aid 
Year 7	Character Analysis 	Application of Number 	Introducing forces 	Local History - Henry II 	Food Sculpture and Picture Frames 	Using Media 	From Farm to plate 	Food Prep and Hygiene 
Year 8	Shakespeare 	Algebraic Techniques $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$ 	Forces - speed, distance, velocity 	The British Empire 	Architecture and Perspective 	Mobile App development 	Food Origins 	Household Management 
Year 9	Shakespeare 	Reasoning with numbers 	Forces - Energy Transfer 	Elizabethans / Resourceful World 	Architecture 	Computer Networks 	Food Commodities 	Travel in the Local Community 

## Term dates for 2024/2025

### 2024/2025 School Calendar

#### Autumn Term 2024 (72 school teaching days)

<b>INSET Days</b>	<b>Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> - Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2024</b>
<b>School Opens</b>	<b>Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2024</b>
<b>School Closes</b>	<b>Friday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2024</b>
<b>Half Term</b>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> October – 1<sup>st</sup> November 2024</b>
<b>School Opens</b>	<b>Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2024</b>
<b>School Closes</b>	<b>Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024</b>
<b>Inset Day</b>	<b>Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December 2024</b>
<b>Christmas Holiday</b>	<b>23<sup>rd</sup> December 2024 – 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2025</b>

#### Spring Term 2025 (59 school teaching days)

<b>School Opens</b>	<b>Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025</b>
<b>School Closes</b>	<b>Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2025</b>
<b>Half Term</b>	<b>17<sup>th</sup> February 2025 – 21<sup>st</sup> February 2025</b>
<b>Inset Day</b>	<b>Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2025</b>
<b>School Opens</b>	<b>Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2025</b>
<b>School Closes</b>	<b>Friday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2025</b>
<b>Easter Holiday</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> April 2025 – 21<sup>st</sup> April 2025</b>

#### Summer Term 2025 (59 school teaching days)

<b>School Opens</b>	<b>Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025</b>
<b>May Bank Holiday Monday</b>	<b>Monday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2025</b>
<b>Inset Day</b>	<b>Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2025</b>
<b>School Closes</b>	<b>Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2025</b>
<b>Half Term</b>	<b>26<sup>th</sup> May 2025 – 30<sup>th</sup> May 2025</b>
<b>School Opens</b>	<b>Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025</b>
<b>School Closes</b>	<b>Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2025</b>

**Academic Year 2024-2025 (190 school teaching days)**

Wishing all our families a lovely weekend

*Have a lovely weekend!*