



Newsletter

May 2024



A message from our Principal Mrs. Buley



I cannot believe how quickly we have found ourselves at the end of another half term and another newsletter!

Pupils this afternoon participated in an Art afternoon on the theme of the environment – it was fantastic to see pupils engage in these activities and enjoy the afternoon organised by Miss Pirkel and we hope you can attend TVS on 7th June between 1.30pm and 2.45pm to see this for yourselves.

Recently, I met with Symon Cooke, Headteacher of the Avenue School as our next-door school neighbour! This was an initial meeting to discuss how we can work together to provide opportunities for our pupils as well as networking and training for our staff. Following this, we have kindly received an invite to their Music Festival in June this year and Miss Archer has happily accepted and will be taking a small number of pupils with her for this. We look forward to more collaborative working in the future!

Miss Archer also met with Reverend Liz Ratcliffe from our local area. This was regarding community-based projects and how they can support our school in the offering of structured activities and work skills, as well as volunteering opportunities for our pupils. It is important to note this is solely a community engagement project linked to the community centre.



Year 11 have continued to work hard with their examinations and, although feeling tired, they have managed the first half of the exam season incredibly well. With three weeks to go until the end of examinations on our return, we hope they have a restful break.

Next half term, we will say goodbye to our Year 11s as well as support our Year 8 pupils in choosing their options, have our final parents' evening for the academic year as well as our annual Summer Fayre! With a busy half term ahead of us, we hope you are able to enjoy some time together as a family before pupils return to school on Monday 3rd June.

Thank you for your ongoing support and I look forward to seeing you all next half term,

Best wishes,

Mrs. Buley

Pupil Awards

This academic year, in addition to the weekly awards we will be celebrating three pupils each term who have been nominated by staff for consistently demonstrating exceptional standards to our school principles.

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

THOUGHTFUL

CALLUM COLQUHOUN has been awarded this term for always being thoughtful and kind as well as supportive towards his peers.



VALUE

KIAN CHAPMAN has been awarded this term for consistently working hard and valuing his learning with great enthusiasm.

SAFE

AARON BROWN has been awarded this term for continually maintaining personal safety in school, whilst showing great encouragement towards his peers during the vaccinations.

A huge congratulations to these pupils from all the staff.



What's been happening this week

RE DAY



KEY STAGE 3
2024



Christianity Day



Weekly Information

A message from our governing body

Dear TVS Parents & Community,

I am writing to you on behalf of the local committee following the publication of the recent Ofsted inspection report.

The committee members are delighted by the outcome and the overall grading of 'good', with 'outstanding' for behaviour and attitudes. It is our view, shared by Gemma Buley and her team, that Thames Valley pupils and their community deserve a good school.

Naturally, there are always areas for further improvement. The report identifies the need to further work on some foundation subjects and improve the career opportunities for pupils. A plan to address these are already in place and we are confident that within a short time the school will have addressed these.

Gemma's appointment as Principal earlier this year and the great deal of hard work and determination she and her team have shown, have been instrumental in delivering this result. We are enormously grateful and proud of your achievement.

Finally, I would like to add my personal thanks to all of our local committee members who freely give up their time and bring a wealth of wisdom and candour to our meetings. We are keen to increase the membership and I urge any parents or members of the community who might be interested to get in touch. You do not need to be a professional educator to join us, it is your lived experience of autism, special needs and young people which counts.

Thank you to everyone who has stuck with the school during a time of change.

With good wishes,

Chris Rossiter
Chair of Governors



SECONDARY

ENGLISH

This was one more very busy term for our pupils in the English Department at TVS.

In Year 7 students have enjoyed studying 'The Call Of The Wild' and followed Buck in his wondrous adventures while learning how to develop their reading comprehension skills and structuring their answers in Point Evidence Explanation paragraphs.

Year 8 have turned their hands to short stories with a particular focus on cultural diversity, setting, characters and themes. They worked very hard and particularly loved the story of 'The Last Woman On Earth' where they explored the concept of symbolism and how this can be applied to everyday life.

At the start of next term, Year 8 will be embarking their study of 'Oliver Twist'. To kick start this, students will spend their first lessons studying the setting, characters and themes of the novel. We hope that this will ignite their enthusiasm for one of Charles Dickens' most magical and wondrous stories.

Year 9 pupils have been introduced to the Gothic genre this term and analysed the concept of morality and how far science can affect the human lives through the study of 'Frankenstein.' Next term they start to look at John Steinbeck's novella 'Of Mice and Men'.

In Year 10, pupils have studied non-fiction writing this term and have carried on making a really pleasing effort to continue to develop their knowledge of writing for different purposes and audiences. Students have developed their understanding of the assessment objectives and produced high-quality reports and articles. Next term they will be focusing on reading, speaking and listening. Students can begin to prepare for this by reading a range of fiction sources and working on learning some of those tricky spellings.

Year 11 have been working very hard to complete their English GCSE, Functional and Entry Level exams and we wish them the very best of luck for their exams after half term!

The collage displays various student assignments:

- Self-Assessment Sheet:** A purple-bordered sheet titled 'Summer 1 KS3-V8 Self-Assessment' with five questions about learning, enjoyment, challenges, and targets. Handwritten answers are provided in blue ink.
- Worksheet:** A sheet with a picture of a planet and seven questions about tone and message. Handwritten answers are in blue ink.
- Handwritten Report:** A page titled 'I can show understanding of... How technology affects society' with handwritten text in blue ink.
- Table:** A table for a 'Wednesday 15th May 2024' language analysis assessment. It has columns for 'What are they presented as?', 'How (connotation and connotation) does London present them in the text?', and 'Why does London present them in this way?'. The table contains handwritten analysis of 'Fierce/Hearty Huskies' and 'Famished beings'.

GEOGRAPHY

Some Geography classes at TVS will be starting a new topic after the half term!

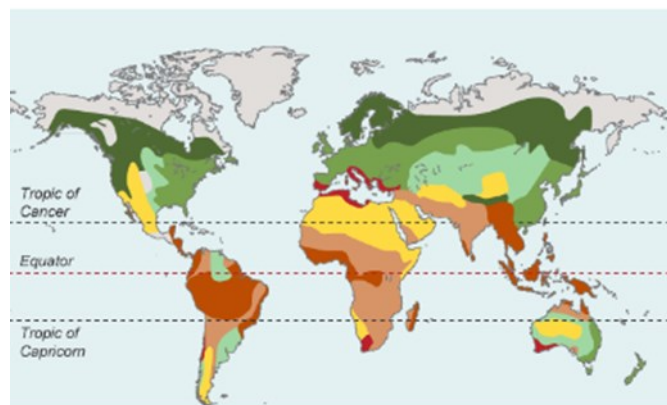
Year 7 classes will start a new topic on how Asia has developed



Year 8 classes will start a new topic on Weather and Climate!



Year 9 and 10 classes will use knowledge they have learned this half term to delve deeper into GCSE content on The Living World.



Key	
Tundra	Desert
Taiga (coniferous forest)	Tropical rainforest
Temperate deciduous forest	Savanna grassland
Temperate grassland	Chaparral or evergreen hardwood (Mediterranean)

As the weather begins to change, it might be a fun idea to create your own weather station and investigate these changes as we move through the seasons.

Here are some fun activities you can do at home to become your own weather person!

Make your own rain gauge

You can find out how much rain falls where you live by making your own rain measure.

What you will need:

- An empty plastic bottle (2 litre fizzy drink bottle would be ideal)
- Scissors
- Jelly (3 or 4 cubes made up as directed)
- Sticky tape
- Ruler
- Paper
- Pencil

What to do:

1. Cut around the plastic bottle about two thirds of the way up.
2. Your bottle needs a flat bottom to be able to measure the rainfall properly. Pour a few centimeters of jelly into the bottle to create a flat bottom.
3. Turn the top part of the bottle upside down and place it inside the bottom part - fix it in place using the tape.
4. Make a scale in centimetres on a piece of tape, using a ruler, and fix it to the side of your bottle.
5. Find a place outside to put your rain gauge. It must be open and away from trees.
6. Dig a hole and bury your rain gauge so that the top is sticking out of the ground. This will stop the rain gauge from blowing down on windy days.
7. Check the rain gauge every day at the same time, measure the amount of rain collected, and empty the bottle.
8. Don't forget to write down the amount of rain collected in your weather diary.



Make your own wind vane

Measure wind direction by making your very own wind vane.

The instrument used for measuring wind direction is called a wind vane.

What you will need:

- A ruler
- A pen top
- A plastic fizzy drink bottle
- Card
- A knitting needle
- Matchsticks
- A cork
- Sand
- Blu-Tack (or similar)

What to do:

1. Draw an arrow 25 cm long on the card and cut it out.
2. Make another arrow by drawing around the first arrow and cutting it out.
3. Place the pen top between the arrows, in the centre facing down, and glue together.
4. Push four matchsticks into the long edge of the cork at right angles to each other.
5. Cut out four small squares of card and label with the four main points of the compass; N, E, S, W. Attach these to the end of each matchstick with Blu-tack.
6. Fill the bottle with sand.
7. Push the knitting needle into the cork and push the cork in the top of the bottle. Now balance the wind vane arrows on top of the needle.
8. Choose an open area, perhaps near your rain gauge, to place your wind vane. Ask an adult or use a compass to point the N label on the bottle towards North.

The arrow always shows the direction the wind is blowing from.





School Council News



23/05/2024

School council attended a meeting to reflect on the past term and put forward any ideas for the coming Summer Term 2!

Feedback regarding the term was positive overall and members took time to comment on some examples of 'things that have gone well' such as:

- sports day
- use of the sensory zone
- lesson content across subjects
- R.E. days including practical activities such as cooking
- cycling in school



Reflection



Ideas and suggestions



Members discussed possibilities for next term or next academic year at TVS. Discussion included:

- Break and lunch-time activities
- School environment improvements
- R.E. day activity and structure suggestions
- School council in-class communication
- Technology to support lessons

Safeguarding at Thames Valley School

Thames Valley school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

As we head into the school holidays, the Safeguarding Team would like to share some useful contact information with you.

If you have immediate concerns about a child's safety, please contact the police:

For emergencies, call **999**

For non-emergencies, call **101**

If you think a child is at harm or at risk of being at harm, please contact your local Children's Services:

Reading - 0118 937 3641

Wokingham - 0118 908 8002

West Berkshire - 01635 503090

Slough - 01753 875362

Bracknell - 01344 352005

Windsor and Maidenhead - 01628 683150

Out of Hours - 01344 351999

NSPCC : 0800 800 5000

Childline : 0800 1111

Think You Know : is the education programme which gives advice about staying safe online <https://www.thinkyouknow.co.uk>

CEOP : Child Exploitation & Online Protection is a law enforcement agency to help keep children and young people safe from sexual abuse and grooming online. Reports may be made safely and securely online at: <https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/>

Mind : Provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem they can be contacted online <https://www.mind.org.uk/>



Samaritans : Available, day or night, for anyone who's struggling to cope, who needs someone to listen without judgement or pressure.

Samaritans is not only for the moment of crisis, also taking action to prevent the crisis. Offering people ways to cope and the skills to be there for others call : 116 123

"It's alright to ask for help"

SAMARITANS

116 123

Text **SHOUT** : Shout is a free, confidential, 24/7 text support service for anyone in the UK who is struggling to cope. To start a conversation, text the word 'SHOUT' to **85258**.

In crisis? Need support?

Text **shout** to **85258**

The safeguarding team would like to wish you an enjoyable half term and we look forward to welcoming students back to school on **Monday 3rd June 2024**.

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one platform of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about NETFLIX

Netflix is a subscription-based streaming service that allows users to watch TV shows and movies on any internet-enabled device that supports the software, such as smart TVs, phones and tablets. The pandemic saw a surge in children consuming on-demand content as many families relaxed their screen-time rules. Netflix's diverse range of programming caters for all age groups – so it's important for parents to recognise the potential risks of children using the service and the measures to help their child enjoy a safe streaming experience.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Netflix produces and curates an extensive catalogue of content that can provide hours of entertainment. If they share the same user account as an adult, this can potentially lead to children accidentally viewing all manner of inappropriate content, including nudity, profanity and extreme violence. This can happen easily on shared accounts as Netflix cannot establish who's watching.

BINGE-WATCHING

Netflix allows users to view shows and movies quickly and easily without adverts or interruptions, making excessive screen time a concern. Binge-watching has become more common during the pandemic, due to Netflix's regularly updated content and algorithms which recommend content very similar to what's previously been enjoyed. Marathon viewing sessions can lead to children staying up too late, affecting their mood and concentration the next day.

SCREEN ADDICTION

From TVs and phones to consoles and tablets, Netflix is available on almost any device with an internet connection – making it extremely difficult to manage children's screen time. The service is now adding games to its mobile app, tempting users to spend even more time on the platform. Screen addiction can distract children from important activities like schoolwork and socialising, and can impact their health by reducing their exercise and sleep.

HACKING ATTEMPTS

With millions of users worldwide, Netflix is often targeted by hackers who try to steal usernames and passwords to gain access to people's accounts. If successful, they can then steal payment details or try to sell stolen personal data on the dark web, providing other criminals with a profitable opportunity. Netflix also doesn't provide two-factor authentication, making the hackers' task that little bit easier.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

Netflix's Teleparty feature became popular during lockdown periods as it allows users from different households (friends and relatives, for example) to synchronise when they watch content. It requires an access link to be sent to the people you wish to invite; the link, however, can also be distributed to other users in real-time. This represents a risk to children if a stranger gains access to the Teleparty.

Advice for Parents & Carers

KEEP ACCOUNTS SECURE

Netflix doesn't use two-factor authentication, so a strong password is vital. Your child's Netflix password should be unique (not one they've used elsewhere) and a minimum of eight characters with a mix of letters, numbers and symbols. Emphasise not to share their login details with anyone and remind them to always log out after using the app – so their account remains inaccessible, even if their device is lost or stolen.

SET UP PROFILE PINS

Netflix account holders can lock profiles using a four-digit PIN. Doing this can prevent your child from accessing the wrong account and viewing content that isn't appropriate for their age. Try setting a PIN for each account on your Netflix app – ideally avoiding numbers that would be easily guessed, such as dates of birth. Remember not to share these PINs with anyone, including family.

CHECK MATURITY RATING

Netflix warns about content that includes violence, sex, profanity and nudity. These warnings form part of the show or movie's maturity rating. Users can restrict age ratings to avoid children viewing age-inappropriate content. On their profile, open the Profile and Parental Control settings and choose the maturity level for the shows and movies you want to allow.

SWITCH OFF AUTO-PLAY

When a show or movie concludes, Netflix's algorithms select content with similar themes that it thinks your child will enjoy next. This new content starts automatically after a 10-second countdown. Disabling this auto-play feature reduces the possibility of your child being shown something inappropriate and provides a natural break to help prevent them becoming too immersed in Netflix.

CREATE A KIDS' PROFILE

Setting up a Netflix Kids experience profile means your child can only access content which is suitable for children aged up to 12 years. All other content is automatically blocked. This rating can be further restricted via the child's profile settings. Setting up a Netflix Kids experience profile will help to prevent your child from viewing age-inappropriate content.

CHECK VIEWING HABITS

Netflix has tools which enable parents and carers to monitor what their child has been watching. Selecting 'Viewing Activity' in each profile's account settings displays a list of what content has been viewed (and when). This can reassure parents that their child is watching age-appropriate content and can open avenues for discussing your child's favourite shows and movies, and why they like them.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



Sources: www.netflix.com, www.bbc.com/news/technology

www.nationalonlinesafety.com @natonlinesafety /NationalOnlineSafety @nationalonlinesafety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 10.11.2021

FRIDAY 7TH JUNE

1.30 - 2:45

TVS'S
Art
Exhibition



In the main hall, at school come and view our pupils art work

Options Event – Year 8 parents

To ensure you and your child have all the necessary information you require to make the most beneficial decisions regarding 'Year 9 options', you are invited to attend Thames Valley School on Monday 10th June from 2.30pm – 4pm.

This is an opportunity for you to come and view some of the resources, materials and final examinations that relate to each subject and course, as well as speak to staff about the content and qualifications.

Teachers will be available to join this meeting from 3.15pm, and your child is welcome to join the event, with you, at 3pm.

If you wish to attend, please confirm your attendance with office@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk

Key Dates

May	27 th – 31 st	Half Term
June	3 rd 7 th TBC 21 st w/c 24 th	Pupils return Arts Exhibition Event Careers Day Year 11 Leavers Assembly Enrichment Week (students)
July	1 st 4 th 12 th 24 th 25 th	Transition Commencement Parents Evening & End of Year Reports Summer Fayre Inset Day Summer Holidays Start

Contact Details

Thames Valley School | Liberty Academy Trust

A: Conwy Close | Tilehurst | Reading | Berkshire | RG30 4BZ

T: 0118 9424750

E: office@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk

W: [Liberty Academy Trust - Home \(libertytrust.org.uk\)](http://libertytrust.org.uk)

HAVE A NICE

weekend