

news

September 2019

WELCOME BACK



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A huge welcome back to everyone!

This summer holiday has been exceptionally busy in school with some incredibly exciting developments.

I was so excited about seeing your children's faces when they first arrived back at school that I almost wished the summer away! Almost but not quite!

A WARM WELCOME BACK

Work has progressed really well on the changes to the school to accommodate the extra classes and reconfigure the layout as part of our expansion.

I just couldn't help myself and also began a few other projects!

The library and junior area in the existing school was in need of updating. As our children are so passionate about books and as reading is at the absolute heart of everything we do here at Polegate I felt the library needed to reflect this.

It looks better than I could ever have hoped. I hope you agree- light, bright, modern and a space the children will love to be in.

A purpose built kitchen for the children to use has been installed by your PFA. We are always looking for ways to enhance our curriculum and value those life skills not measured by tests alone. There is far more to school than SATs alone can measure. This is so exciting our aspiration is that all children learn essential cookery skills and knowledge of food and nutrition. By the end of year 6 our aim is that your children can plan a balanced meal within budget and cook this to perfection!

I would like to give a very warm welcome to our new reception children and families. We are really looking forward to getting to know you all.

STAFF NEWS

So the legend that is Kerry Gillbanks is very sadly retiring from Polegate School after a staggering 25 years! It was devastating news for us all.

Her final day is the 25th October. She is a very tough act to follow in many ways not least the ability to always look so glamorous with shoes to match every outfit!

Monika Bailey is working alongside Kerry from September so that the handover will be as seamless as possible but please do be patient with us initially because 25 years' worth of school knowledge cannot be picked up in 8 weeks!



Mrs Bailey

DIARY DATES

**Parent Consultations
Mon 21st & Wed 23rd
October**

**INSET Day
Friday 25th October**

**Last Day of Term 24th
October**

**INSET Day
Monday 4th Nov**

**Start of Term 2
Tuesday 5th Nov**

**Anti Bullying Week
Monday 11th Nov**

**School Open
Afternoon for 2020
Reception Children
Wednesday 20th Nov**

**School Open
Afternoon for 2020
reception children
Thursday 28th Nov**

**Last Day of Term
Thursday 19th Dec**

**INSET Day
Friday 20th December
Christmas Holidays**

**INSET Day
Monday 6th January**

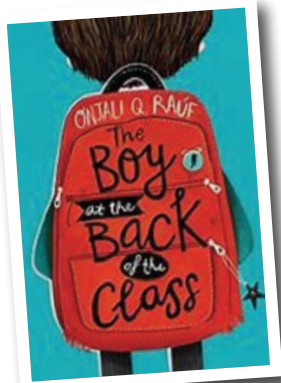
**First day of Term 3
Tuesday 7th January**

BEDTIME STORIES

Ice cream on a sunny day, splashing in muddy puddles, building dens - this is what childhood is made of.

A story before bedtime is another essential part of our younger years and one which has the potential for lasting impact on our lives.

Reading at home not only increases academic ability, but it also helps to strengthen family relationships and foster a lifelong love of books. This is particularly important for primary-age children who go through a period of great change between the ages of 4 and 11: they are learning to read, discovering their likes and dislikes and taking their first big steps into the world.



A bedtime story can be the anchor to all this, helping children to explore new feelings, new experiences and new knowledge in a safe environment.

Cuddling together with your parents, grandparents, carers or siblings to share an adventure or talk about a story before happily drifting off to sleep is an idyllic image that should be every child's reality.

This is why we launched our own Bedtime Story initiative last year. Sadly we can't visit every child at home for a snuggle and a story so this was the next best thing! Each week we share a new story for the infants and a chapter of our longer book for you to share at home. We thought it gives you a night off or in a busy week you can access the whole library of books that have been read previously. There is quite a collection on there now.

It is continuing this year with more stories read by many teachers and staff at Polegate School. Often featuring pets (the animals have been the big hit!)

You might want to buy a copy of the longer story so your child can read along. It is a good way of encouraging them to read a book above their own level. We have 10 copies in the school library as well.



ATTENDANCE

Once again another year to beat all others!

We came so close to reaching our ambitious target of 97.5% and I am delighted to say that all groups have increased and the gap between our SEND pupils, free school meal pupils and all others is closing.

A large number of children achieved 100% attendance and we look forward to giving them their prize within the next few weeks.

This is something worth celebrating!

Each took home a reward for reaching that milestone and I am delighted to say that the numbers of pupils reaching 100% increases each year.

All children that reached over 97% were entered into a prize draw for a new bike. I am delighted to announce that the winner was Natalia Bednarz! She already had a wonderful bike and so opted for some gift vouchers. I can't wait to see what you buy.



**Our winner
Natalia Bednarz**

IQM REPORT

We are once again really proud to be one of the only schools in East Sussex to have gained this prestigious award.

Extracts include:

'Pupils were excellent representatives of the school: they were mature, positive and self-confident and were able to express their ideas clearly and with great enthusiasm.'

A child told the assessor,

"I like the way the teachers interact with us. The SATs were easier than we expected. We have everything we need in terms of doing activities both indoor and outdoor"

'Quality first teaching demonstrates excellent practice and teachers are continually reviewing and further developing their skills to meet the diverse needs of all children.'

Follow this link to read the latest IQM Flagship report in full. It is on our school website.

<https://polegateschool.co.uk/public/data/chalk/file/b/2/Polegate%20School%20Review%20-%20June%202019.pdf>

SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

We had a special visit from galaxies far, far away in the last week of term!

It has become a bit of a tradition now for us to promote the Summer Library Challenge. It is so important that children read and continue their learning during the long holiday.

Thank you to all families that took part and read the six books. All families that take part are entered into a prize draw to win a hamper full of space themed goodies.

If you are stuck for inspiration when it comes to choosing books that might interest your child then a great website is:

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk>

It is full of great books categorised into age groups and even recommends the months best books!

We are waiting for the library to send the certificates but will make sure we award them as soon as we get them. Sometimes there is a delay!



Well done for completing the Summer reading challenge. We are very proud of you



Another summer library challenge completed!

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

As you are probably aware all Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are entitled to a free school meal.

If you are also in receipt of benefits you will still need to complete an application form as this will support the funding the school receives.

For every child that is entitled to free school meals the school receives £1300. This allows us to invest in a wide range of initiatives that the school budget, on its own, just wouldn't support.

You can view the Pupil Premium report on our website which explains how we have spent this money. Obviously with every Infant now automatically getting a free meal the incentive may not be there to register on an application form.

I hope that parents would still take the time to register knowing that the school receives extra funding. For every new application form processed we are offering a free school uniform set to the value of £31.50).

LUNCHTIMES

11.45-12.45	Reception
12.15 - 1.15	Year 1
12.30 - 1.30	Year 2
12.00 - 1.00	Year 3 & 4
1.00 - 2.00	Year 5 & 6

PFA EVENTS FOR YEAR AHEAD

Tuesday 17th September 2019	PFA AGM and meeting
Friday 4th October 2019	School Disco
Wednesday 23rd October 2019	Halloween pop up shop
Friday 22nd November 2019	Winter Extravaganza
Friday 31st January 2020	Family Games Night
Wednesday 5th February 2020	PFA Meeting
Wed 18th & Thur 19th March 2020	Mothers Day/Gifts for Loved Ones
Friday 27th March 2020	School Disco
Tuesday 19th May 2020	PFA Meeting
Wed 17th & Thursday 18th June 2020	Fathers Day/Gifts for Loved Ones
Saturday 20th June 2020	Summer Festival
Friday 10th July 2020	Quiz Night (Adults Only)
Wednesday 22nd July 2020	Leavers Pool Party

STARS OF THE YEAR

A huge congratulations to our incredible stars of the year.

I can honestly say that the bar gets raised every year and teachers really did have a dilemma on their hands this year.

They agonised for weeks and even had a few sleepless nights over who to pick and this is simply because so many of your children display the qualities that make them eligible for Star of the Year.

The criteria for Star of the week is tough and as a reminder this is the criteria set by the children themselves.

Star of the week

Parents and pupils highly value this reward and the children themselves decided on the criteria for being given this.

Children who consistently try their best and who behave in a kind and thoughtful manner, following all school rules are eligible to be awarded 'Star of The Week'.

This involves them being awarded a certificate and parents are invited in for a special assembly/

Guidelines to follow when making decisions about Star of the Week:

- It is designed to reward those children that are always good and well behaved. Therefore behaviour must have been good for at least a term.
- It is not designed to recognise improved behaviour over a short period no matter how tempting this may be for the teacher. There are other rewards that can be used instead.
- Teacher should consider attendance and lateness. A child that has poor attendance (below 90% over a year unless valid medical reasons), lots of holidays should not be awarded Star. Conversations should happen between the teacher and parents regarding this.
- A child may get it more than once.
- A child may never get Star of the Week if they are not meeting the criteria.
- Home/ learning should be considered as well.

GREAT WORK

A World War I tank made during the summer!



Music while we work... Clarinets today!



STUNNING STARTS

INVENTORS

Year 3 started the term by becoming inventors!

We all agree that Flynn Lester-Murphy particularly looked the part!



Miss Wheelhouse said, 'As you can see by my colourful carpet, by the time Ruben came to test his invention out, there had already been many successful trials!'

SPACE

Year 1 went beyond school to space and had an out of this world stunning start!



Our young astronauts found today 'out of this world'!



During their stunning start the children were challenged to plan, design, make and test their own confetti cannons in teams, to celebrate the new school year and starting in the juniors.



Training begins!



Year 1 experiencing space in the safety of the school hall!

STUNNING STARTS

ARCHAEOLOGISTS

Year 4 had great fun being archaeologists on the first day back.

They found Roman artefacts around the school and experienced dressing up like a Roman soldier.

They made predictions about what they were, who used them and how old they were and then researched further to find out.



Great Fun Start for Year 4



OUR BEHAVIOUR POLICY

As you know we are never complacent and always review what we are doing even when it is working well. We have been looking at all the recent research into approaches to behaviour and as a result have made a few small changes to our policy.

Rather than the 10 rules we had previously- I wonder if you can list them? We have reduced these to three which we think covers everything and is far more memorable.

Read on to find out what they are!

Our overarching ambition is to create an inclusive school where children's behaviour is not only managed but is changed so that they become citizens that contribute positively to the communities they live in.

We have one overriding rule, which applies equally to all persons (children and adults) involved in our school:

"Everyone will demonstrate, respect, responsibility at all times and will be ready to learn."

Responsibility

Children should be aware of safety considerations and should be able to take responsibility for their own, and others', safety.

Ready

At Polegate School we expect pupils to come to school to learn and teachers to come to school to teach. Both should be able to do so to the best of their ability. This means that children will begin and end sessions in a courteous and orderly way, listening carefully, following instructions, helping each other when appropriate and being sensible and talking appropriately at all times.

Respect

Children will move quietly and sensibly about the school, never running or shouting: they should be ready to help others by opening doors, keeping to the left, standing back to let people pass, and helping to carry things.

Children and adults should always speak politely to everyone else, using a low voice. (Shouting is discourteous unless someone is in danger). Everyone should help to keep the school clean and tidy so that it is a welcoming place which we can be proud of.

During discussions children should be respectful of others' contributions and concentrate when someone else is talking to the whole class or their group; if they want to ask a question they should put their hand up to answer without calling out; they should work sensibly without annoying or distracting others; when leaving their place they should stand up and push their chair under the table.

When out of school, whether walking locally or with a school group, we expect that children should be aware that the school's reputation depends on the way they behave.

The emphasis remains on the positive and rewards and for detail of these please read the policy in full. These are many and varied!

Ready, Responsible & Respect

If a child is not meeting the expectations above then follow these principles to address and support the child. As follows:

1. 1st Incident – Verbal Reminder referring to the rules – giving reasons
No consequences for this.

2. If continued – the child is needing further support and this will result in the child being:

Unable to achieve Star of the Week.

Kept in for 5mins of their playtime in KS1/ 10 minutes KS2 to have a support discussion in order for the child and adult to understand the specific difficulties and to facilitate the child problem solving so that they come up with a solution for themselves. This will enable longer term changes to behaviour. This discussion needs to take place with the adult involved.

3. If continued – the child is expected to receive coaching.

4. If it is felt that the child and/ or class would benefit from time to cool/ reflect and be in a different environment then there is the option for 15 minutes to complete their work, and have time to reflect without impacting on others' learning.

As soon as possible a coaching session will follow the incident to explore in depth what the difficulty was and reach potential solutions.

The conversation is likely to take place over lunch and will be between 20 minutes and half an hour.

Spend time trying to find the area of need.

5. A repair session

This may be required to support the process and enable the child to understand the impact their behaviour has had on others: staff or children.

This should be built in so the child understands how others have felt. It is not necessary to force a child to say sorry the aim is to develop understanding and empathy.

'restorative five'

What happened?

What were you thinking at the time?

What have you thought since?

How did this make people feel?

At this point give child or adult the opportunity to explain how it made them feel.

Who has been affected?

You will be notified by the class teacher if your child was kept in during lunchtime for a coaching session. A template letter is included in the policy. This would have been the equivalent of our old 'Time Out'.

If misbehaviour is persistent by which we mean occurring 3 times or more then the class teacher should use letter B1 to invite the parents in and discuss a support plan alongside a member of the school's senior leadership team (leader of learning). The system needs to be applied fairly and consistently however it may look different for different children.

6. If the support plan is not working then headteacher, deputy or assistant headteacher will have a further meeting to explore further support and possible involvement of outside agencies. Continued misbehaviour may result in a fixed term exclusion. A behaviour contract may be issued at this meeting.

* If a serious incident occurred (aggression, defiance or abusive language) the above scale of sanctions may be bypassed and the Headteacher involved immediately to decide an appropriate course of action. The parents would be involved as soon as possible.

The cards that each class displayed have now gone. Behaviour in the school is exceptional and we felt these were no longer needed as a visual reminder. Time Out is no longer used as a sanction it has become a coaching session with the teacher concerned and this will be so much more powerful as a means of changing behaviour through support.

We fully acknowledge that parents have the prime role in the upbringing of their children and the school has a supportive role. Where the children's behaviour is concerned we see this as a shared responsibility between home and school and aim to establish mutually supportive partnerships.

If you want to ask any questions about this please do speak to us. Nothing is a silly question.

OUR HOUSES

Children are awarded housepoints in the form of coloured tokens which match their house for good behaviour eg. being kind, courteous or helpful. A maximum of 3 tokens can be awarded at any time. These are collected in the classrooms then collectively put into their house tubs in the entrance and counted each week on a Friday. The winning house is announced in Monday's assembly.

The four houses are:

Orion - reflective.

Phoenix - resilient

Pegasus - aspirational

Hercules - determination

Our new behaviour policy has been uploaded to the school website, please follow this link if you would like to read it in full.

<https://polegateschool.co.uk/public/data/chalk/file/d/5/Polegate%20School%20Behaviour%20Policy.pdf>



TOP OF THE CLASS IN SCIENCE!

We are delighted to inform you that our submission for a Round 17 Primary Science Quality Mark Gilt was successful. Congratulations! 303 schools have achieved a quality mark this round and you should feel very proud to have led your school to gain this nationally recognised status.

Under Amie Ashdown's leadership and hard work our school has gained this prestigious award.

Science is a subject loved by the children and staff at Polegate school and they have now received an award to recognise the commitment to excellence the school has to science.

Primary Science Quality Marks have been awarded to 200 infant, junior, primary, middle and special schools to celebrate a commitment to excellence in science teaching and

learning. The Primary School Quality Mark ensures effective leadership of science, enables schools to work together to share good practice and is supported by professional development led by local experts. It encourages teacher autonomy and innovation while at the same time offering a clear framework for development in science subject leadership, teaching and learning. Schools that achieve PSQM demonstrate commitment and expertise in science teaching and leadership. As part of the process

Polegate were commended as having a curriculum where 'science clearly enjoys a high profile' and 'children enjoy enriched experiences'.

Another aspect of our work we should all feel exceptionally proud of!



PREFECTS & BUDDIES

We are very proud to announce this year's prefects.

Pupils applying for the position of prefect had to demonstrate leadership qualities and a willingness to help others.

They had to show they were able to organize and delegate tasks and have proved their integrity and ability to follow school expectations throughout their time at Polegate School!

We set the bar high at Polegate and put them through a rigorous selection process. Mrs Jones said

their application statements were AMAZING! Such a high standard- each year they get better and better.

Mrs Jones and I are really looking forward to working with them.

Buddy positions have been filled with 30 dedicated pupils who want to help and contribute to school life.

We are so grateful to the willingness of your children to help and care for others.

We are very proud of you all. Good luck with your positions in the year ahead.

SAFETY

We are quite concerned a child could have an accident playing on the railings by the hall as we have seen quite a few children do this while they are waiting with parents for siblings.

Please be vigilant and supervise your children after school.

The gym area is sadly also out of bounds for the same reason so as tempting as it might be children and older brothers and sisters must not use this equipment.

PARENT VIEW OFSTED

<https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/>

If you could follow this link and complete the survey we would really appreciate it.

The questions have changed this year in line with the new Ofsted framework which has become far more challenging!

On our parent consultation evenings we will once again be encouraging you to fill them in and you will again be eligible for entry to our prize draw if you complete the survey on the night.

SCHOOL DINNER?

Have you thought about a school dinner on Thursday 3rd October?

It would be wonderful if as many children as possible had a school dinner on this day. It is a census day and some of our funding is calculated based on the numbers of children eating a school meal.

The kitchen are offering a special 'Best of British' menu on the day which should prove very popular. It's fish and chips on a Thursday!

Diary Dates

Friday 25th
October
INSET DAY

Archive



You can read all the previous newsletters on our website.

Twitter

Be the first to hear the news.
Follow us on Twitter.
We now have
1004 followers!



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Feedback

We'd love to hear your feedback and any new ideas you have. Please send us your thoughts via the contact us page on the school website:

www.polegateschool.co.uk

Designed by Prowork: www.prowork.co.uk