

news

July 2015



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Yet another successful year is nearly over!

Whilst I think we are all certainly ready for a holiday, it is sad and hard to believe this is the last newsletter of this year!

It has been an incredibly busy, successful year at Polegate. As always the children have excelled and we are incredibly proud of them. I would like to thank everyone: parents and staff for their support during this very busy year.

As usual the newsletter is packed with pupils' recent success stories. As a whole school we had an assessor visit the school to review of our 'Centre of Excellence' status this term which is a status we continue to hold.

Read the Feedback Report on page 2

Feedback Report

The assessor looked at similar aspects to Ofsted with a focus on teaching and learning. It was an intensive day involving visits to the classroom, interviews with members of staff, parents and governors. Here are some of the comments made in our feedback report:

"There is a tangible level of determination from all the staff to aim for the Ofsted "outstanding criteria", with appropriate plans already having been made. The head teacher explained that all the staff wanted the best for the children, and this was evident during the assessment day."

"There is an atmosphere of respect throughout the school, for children of all abilities, which is modelled by the staff. The school's behaviour boundaries are clearly understood by all pupils."

"The staff are willing to give the children a range of opportunities which promote the development of wide ranging skills. There is, for example, an annual "Takeover Day", where children can apply to be a "member of staff". They write an application form and are interviewed for their "suitability", before the day itself, when the children "run" the school for the day in a variety of roles. The children show a remarkable insight into the qualities required, and clearly value the staff."

"The school continues in its highly successful improvement journey which aspires to meet all the strands of the criteria for excellence, for the benefit of the children."

"Children are extremely happy to attend the school and recognise that they are well supported in their lessons."

"One of the great strengths of the school is its ability to constantly analyse and question its own practice. It does this with honesty and reflection. This contributes to Polegate's ability to forge ahead and continually ensure that it is doing its best to serve all groups of children. Senior staff are willing to research and learn from best pedagogy, and equally willing to share the school's effective ways of working, with other schools."

"The recent award for the progress which has been achieved by the Pupil Premium children, is a testimony to the school's inclusive practice, and the results achieved. In particular, it is a measure of the effectiveness of the team work, from staff with a variety of roles. The publicity has enabled Polegate to share this particular area of expertise with other schools in the area, who will be able to learn from Polegate's attention to detail, and the excellent staff training which has taken place."

"Polegate has raised attainment for all groups yet still provides a vibrant learning environment. This includes a wealth of opportunities to cater for the wide ranging interests of the children, and those with complex needs. One parent summed up the school's approach by stating "the staff make you feel that you can ask them anything. I have been very impressed by how much help my children have been given. If they do have any special needs they are never made to feel embarrassed or singled out."

Year 6 Results

We have received our year 6 results back and I will share these in more detail in September. These children should be so proud of the progress they have made. A very high percentage have made better than expected progress! Once again our results have continued to rise with an increase in the number of children reaching the expected standard again!

Thank you for returning the recent flurry of questionnaires related to the school in general and our end of year reports. I will be busy analysing these and writing the school development plan during the summer and will share all the findings with you in September!

I hope you all have a wonderful fun packed summer holiday and I look forward to seeing you in September!

CYCLING STAR

Great sporting achievement Alicia and an excellent write up too!



GOVERNORS

I would like to thank the governors for the work they do behind the scenes in school.

The role of the governors is key to the effectiveness of a school. The school governors provide strategic leadership and accountability in schools. It is the governors who hold the main responsibility for finance in schools. It is a demanding but hopefully rewarding role which they do voluntarily.

From September we plan to introduce an informal 'drop-in' session once a term for parents to meet members of the governing body. One of the governors and a member of the senior leadership team will be available to answer any questions you may have.

The first one will be held on 28th September at 2.30pm. we hope you will visit us, even if it is just to say, 'hello'!

LETTER FROM A RESIDENT

A resident from the flats opposite the school has written to ask that I pass on their concern about children playing in the alleyway and even their back gardens until very late at night, sometimes until 9pm.

They are naturally concerned for the children's safety.

ART CLUB

The art club have produced some remarkable pieces of work this year.

If you get a chance it is well worth a look. They have created a wonderful display in the junior area above the lockers on the theme of the Mexican Day of the Dead. I would like to thank Mrs Bailey for her dedication to providing the after school art club.



Early Morning Interventions

We have a lot of children in school from 8am for extra learning sessions with a range of different adults.

The children must come in through the main entrance and sign in. They should not be brought in through a different door and parents do not need to bring the children through. We need to know how many children we have in school for health and safety reasons.

We try to accommodate any siblings of children doing the interventions at the breakfast club if parents have difficulty dropping off twice but this needs to be arranged early to ensure they have a

place. Unfortunately we cannot have any children in school that are not part of the interventions. Teachers are getting ready preparing for the day ahead and so we have no one to supervise them. Teachers have discovered children sitting in their classrooms before the school days starts that they are not expecting and have not known were there!

It places teachers in a really difficult situation which is unfair.

We will have to phone any parent that has brought their child in without any prior arrangement and ask them to collect their child.

PROMOTING SAFETY

This month children across the school took part in a whole school Safety Awareness Day, the aim was to improve children's awareness of staying safe in the world around them.

As part of the day children experienced lots of different activities from who to trust, e-safety, first aid, road safety and stranger danger.

The day finished with an online live stream of a first aid lesson from St. John's Ambulance, the children had the opportunity to learn basic first aid and try out their new skills by putting each other into the recovery position.

It was a great day which raised awareness within the children of how to keep themselves and others safe day to day. **Ask your child – see what they remember!**



Year 6 also attended the Safety In Action day at Herstmonceux Castle. Photos

As always they have a brilliant day working alongside the police, fire brigade, paramedics and others dealing with real life scenarios and they won first place in the emergency first aid (it had nothing to do with my husband leading this session!). They were awarded with their prize at a special ceremony.



Bike It Bike ride

We enjoyed a lovely ride with Jessie to Abbots Wood. It was great to have so many families join us- thank you.



Empty Classroom Day

On Friday 19th June we took part in a National day to promote learning beyond the classroom.

This fits completely with our ethos and so every class in the school embraced the challenge! Year 4 visited an amazing artist at the Loom Mill, Year 5 took part in a maths trail around the school.

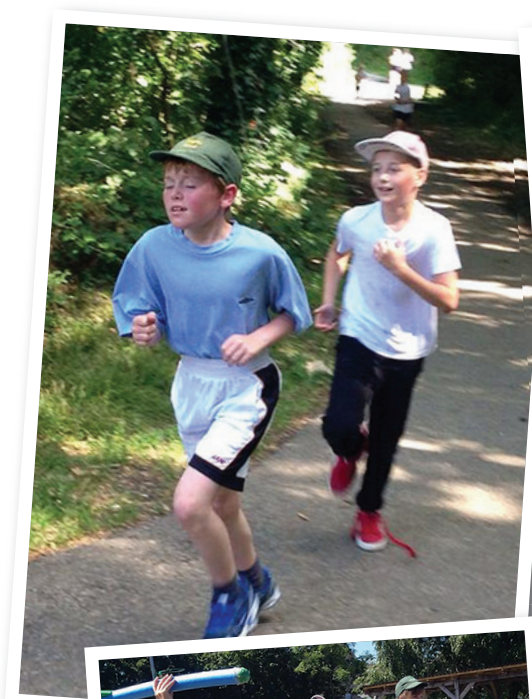
Key Stage 2 Sports Week

The week started with a marathon!

Then a range of team sports followed during the week including basketball, cricket, stoolball, netball and others along with individual events such as triathlons and then the traditional day with a rotation of games followed by an athletics final. We feel that a week gives far more children a chance to be actively involved and participate in a wider variety of sports. We love having families join us for the picnic lunch on the field. All the feedback I have had is that the Friday was a fabulous day. The children really supported each other and that our parents were terrific spectators! Thank you.

We are now really looking forward to our swimming gala on Thursday evening at the Sovereign Centre.

Overall the winning house for the Sports Week was Orion!



Such determination!



CRICKET OPEN DAY

"Thank you for coming along to the Herstmonceux Primary School Cricket Tournament on Thursday 9th July. It was great fun, very successful and brilliant to see so many children enjoying their cricket. They were all brilliant - and so polite, a real credit to your school."

On behalf of Herstmonceux Cricket Club

Herstmonceux Cricket Club is running a Men's Only Taster Session on Sunday 9th August 11am to 12:30pm. The session is free, with everyone who comes along being entered into a prize draw.

Whether you haven't played cricket since you were at school or have never even picked up a bat - come along, have some fun and find out a bit more about cricket. Open to all men - dads, uncles, grandads, big brothers - bring your trainers and see what it's all about from 11am - 12:30pm, on the Rec at Herstmonceux. Any questions? Ring Alex - 07521 874089



Our PFA Raised £1600 at the Summer Fete!

A HUGE thank you to our wonderful PFA

I would like to thank the PFA for all their hard work this year. A huge amount of preparation goes into the fabulous events they hold throughout the year. Whilst these are great for raising funds for the school they are also wonderful community events. I am incredibly grateful to the PFA for the extra funds they raise.

The Summer Fete was another successful event which raised £1600! I would like to thank Your Move who have been incredibly generous with their donations and support for the school.

This year the PFA has supported the school with a variety of purchases which have really benefited the children.

Our PFA have funded the following:

Lockers, now all the children in school from year 1 now have their own lockers; High visibility jackets for the buddies and prefects which mean they can be spotted easily when they are on duty and Walkie Talkies for our midday supervisors to make communication at lunchtimes more effective.

Dates for your diaries:

FIREWORK NIGHT 23rd OCT

CHRISTMAS FAYRE 18th DEC

Have a look on the PFA board outside the school for updates and information. photo



DIARY DATES

Weds 2nd September
INSET Day

Thurs 3rd September
Term Starts

Mon 28th September
at 2.30pm
Governor 'Drop-in' Session

Friday 23rd October
End of Term 1

23rd October
Firework Night

Mon 2nd November
INSET Day

Fri 20th November-
INSET Day

Fri 18th December
Last day of Term 2

18th December
Christmas Fayre

Days Off

I am astounded and really disappointed by the number of parents in the school that are lying about the reasons their children are not in school!

When you lie about the reasons for your child's absence the message you give to the children is a powerful one: education is not as important as a day out somewhere, you are not committed

to their education, you do not respect the school and its policies and of course it is fine to lie in order to do something that you want. Of course none of us, I hope, would agree that we should be sending these messages to children. It is also obvious when other family members or relatives in school are coincidentally ill at the same time! It is not fair to expect children to lie

about this. The children themselves are always really excited and of course do tell friends and teachers! We have heard about fun days at Drusillas, Flamingo World, Chessington, camping and many others!

Good progress at primary school is essential for future attainment and when attendance is low our pupils do not make the progress we would expect.

The Congress Show

I can't begin to tell you quite how anxious and nervous we (adults) all get in school about this event. As we get closer it is all we think about trying to get those final touches finished in time as well as continuing with all the usual school activities.

On the day we see why we do this to ourselves! Receptions children's astonished faces were fabulous when they arrived on the day and saw the stage and theatre for the first time- the awe and wonder was incredible.

On the evening we watch the children with as much joy as the audience. To see all children excel and perform their hearts out! They love this event and that is why we do it. How many of us can say we have performed in a real theatre to an audience of 1,300? If they can do this, which they can, they can do anything!

We have received many lovely letters and some very kind grandparents even wrote in to the Herald, here are just some that you can share with your children:

"Once again you as a school have excelled yourselves and given parents and friends a wonderful concert. My husband and I enjoyed it immensely and congratulate pupils and staff for such a fabulous evening. The hard work you all put into this show is very evident and I am sure I speak for the majority of people who attended last night, that every bit of your hard work paid off. The show was truly entertaining from beginning to end."

"We have a Granddaughter in yr3 who was very excited about being in the show and where as last time she only made 1 appearance this time she made 4, that is down to the way your school guide pupils and give them the confidence they require to become our So thank you again and keep doing what you are doing as you seem to have got it right."

What a fantastic Polegate school Congress show 2015!

"Thank you so much for all your effort at Polegate school. It was an amazing, seamless, polished and incredibly professional show you put on for us all. From the costumes, the programmes, the script, the music, videos and the performances -captivating us until the end.

The excitement from all the parents and friends in audience was electric and full of pride for your fantastic school. My Children were so happy and full of confidence in the car on the way home, thank you for giving them this experience."

"I just wanted to congratulate you all on a marvellous show.

It was our first experience of the production you put on every other year and we were not sure what to expect but was totally blown away by the standard of the production.

I have worked in professional theatre all my life as a dancer and now teach at Laine Theatre Arts in Epsom and can completely understand how much effort, hard work and dedication it must have taken to create a piece of theatre of that high standard. You obviously have an amazing team.

The children were such a credit to you all and your hard work. It enforced for me what a marvellous choice of school we have made. Thank you for giving the children such a wonderful experience."



Very well done to you ALL at Polegate School.

"I just wanted to let you know what a magical evening was had on Tuesday. I am sure you have been inundated with lovely comments but it's the little people's behaviour that I feel deserves a more in depth mention... not one murmur was had from them and they really were so very well behaved giving off such a fantastic reflection of the school.

The only down side we had to endure in the Grand Circle was the unfortunate parents we had sat next to us who's extremely well behaved Children could have taught them a thing or two about Theatre etiquette! They heckled continually shouting out to their children and also had their feet up on seats bare!! As for the rubbish that was left behind it really was appalling. However that aside it really was very emotional and will be remembered for very many years to come.

I know how very much hard work went into the final outcome and it truly showed!"



Infant Sports Day

I would love nothing more than being able to control the weather! Unfortunately it is beyond Polegate School's power and as much as all the teachers pray to the Gods each year for the sun to make an appearance for our sports days, our prayers went unanswered and it rained on the afternoon of our Infant Sports day.

It is a day we dread! We know that it generates very strong feelings amongst our parents. It always feels as if we just can't quite get it right! Believe me, we want to celebrate children's sporting achievements and share these with you: teachers spend time preparing for this and the children look forward to it.

We are faced with a no win situation.

*Make a decision early by 9.30am based on predictions or current weather to cancel – possible outcome – the weather is fine, it could have gone ahead. Parents had taken time off work and children are disappointed. People moan!

* Leave it until the last possible moment in the hope it can go ahead as many parents have already agreed time off work and children are prepared. We took this decision, unfortunately after the sun made a brief appearance we experienced torrential rain and were forced to cancel. It was not safe to go ahead, I am sure no parent would have felt happy that their child was out in shorts and t.shirts in the rain and it would not have been the nicest experience for the spectators. People moan!

We did not hold a sports day in the hall as some parents believe but instead the teachers organised a 'fun sports' session in the hall so that the children were not too disappointed.

Unfortunately we do not have a day free for the Infants to get together now as we have transition days organised for new pupils or other school events. In a year when we do not have a Congress Show we will hold the Sports Day earlier in the year so that we have time to hold a reserve if needed.

We know we will never please all of our parents, no matter how hard we try but I would welcome your thoughts on when we take that final decision. If we can do things better – we will? Answers on a postcard please!

It is disappointing that in a week when we should have been celebrating our children's fabulous achievements at the Congress it gets overshadowed by negative comments in the playground and on facebook about a sports day being cancelled.

I have the upmost respect for parents that raise their dissatisfaction directly with the school even if I don't agree. At least we have the chance to respond and sometimes change things for the better. A moan on facebook achieves nothing but undermines our efforts at creating a school we can all be proud of.

I have mentioned this before in a newsletter and I am quite sure I will need to mention it again because I will defend the school and the teachers who work incredibly hard. It is unfair to post comments on facebook – we have no voice and can't respond. I wonder if parents would consider it appropriate for the school to post comments about children or families on social media. Please work with us, I am not only a headteacher but also a parent and I know we all want the same thing ultimately and in school we believe that relationships are key to our success; professional dialogue which is both open and honest; positive relationships need to underpin the school systems and we include parents in this.

Amazing homework



Leah with superb homework



Joshua made an amazing African mask



Well done to our Year 2 engineers

School Handbook

If you are ever unsure of school policy and procedures please check the school handbook which is available on the school website. This is up to date and contains a lot of information, see the list below:

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We have policies for a reason and recently we have needed to liaise with some parents regarding hairstyles and uniform. We know that parents are not deliberately flouting the school policies but have been unaware of our expectations. If you haven't please read through the school handbook when you first sign the home school agreement as a parent you are agreeing to follow the school's policies. If you are not sure it is probably best not to do it or check first before you spend any money.

Hairstyles

When considering what is appropriate for school regarding hairstyles we have to make a judgement as to what is in the best interest of the school overall. Allowing children to adopt the latest fad or trend is not always consistent with this. Extreme haircuts are not allowed but this is open to interpretation, so in the interest of clarity we have tried to be specific about what this means.

- Girls hair should always be tied up
- No elaborate hair bands/clips/braids or wraps. Any hair accessories should match school uniform and be discrete
- Hair should be neatly cut, combed and maintained
- Undercut styles are not acceptable any version
- Tracks and lines are not acceptable
- Dramatic layered effect of levels are not permitted
- Hair should not be tinted or coloured
- No Mohicans or similar.

If a child has an inappropriate hairstyle we will obviously raise this directly with you. Inappropriate hairstyles could result in a child working in seclusion which would obviously be a last resort and not something we have ever needed to do.

Year 5 Taster Day at Willingdon



Y5 making fire at WCS

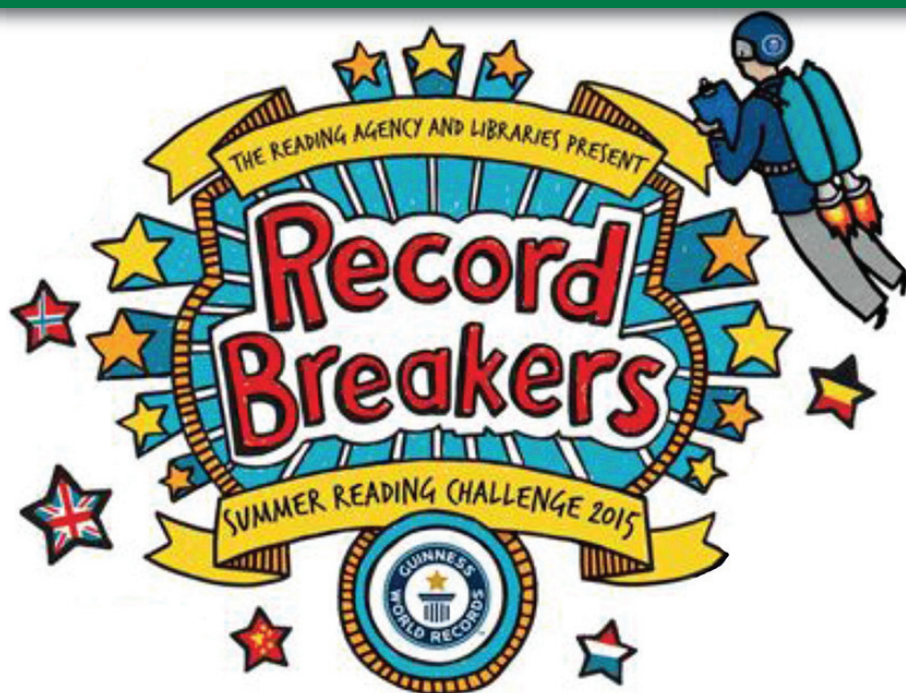


Goggles on!



More Science fun!

Get Reading - 453,879 books read so far!



A Record-Breaking Team

We've teamed up with Guinness World Records this summer, to bring you Record Breakers.

Hurrah, a new theme!

We're getting excited about this year's theme, Record Breakers! This year we've teamed up with GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS and it's going to be record-breaking.

What do you want to do before you grow up?

Hurrah, a brand new competition for you!

What is the Summer Reading Challenge?

The Summer Reading Challenge takes place every year during the summer holidays. You can sign up at your local library, then read six library books of your choice, collecting stickers and other rewards along the way – all FREE.

And now, all year round, the Summer Reading Challenge website helps you keep track of your reading, find new books to read, take part in competitions and play games.

Find a book to read. Play our games
Find out which books your favourite celebrities recommend.

Parents or carers

Looking for information about the Summer Reading Challenge and using the website? You can find out more at: www.summerreadingchallenge.org.uk/parents-carers

Volunteering for the Challenge this summer? Get rewards and prizes.

Please, please, please take part in this. The children that achieve this are awarded with their certificates in an assembly in September and are always really proud!

Can we break our school record of 148 readers?

It is so important because children's reading can 'dip' during the long summer holidays. The annual Summer Reading Challenge helps gets three quarters of a million children into libraries to keep up their reading skills and confidence.

The Summer Reading Challenge encourages children aged 4 to 11 to read six books during the long summer holiday.

There is a different theme each year. Children can read whatever they like -

fact books, joke books, picture books, audio books - just as long as they are borrowed from the library.

Every time children finish a book they get stickers and rewards and there's a certificate for everyone who finishes.

The Summer Reading Challenge is open to all school children and is designed for all reading abilities. The theme for the 2015 Summer Reading Challenge is Record Breakers.

They produce super-sized materials for children who are visually impaired, or have visually impaired parents/carers. This material can also help children with learning disabilities and dyslexia. The RNIB National Library Service subsidise this super-sized material.



Expectations in the new curriculum

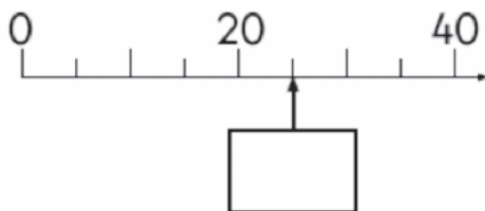
Next year pupils in year 2 and year 6 will sit new tests based on the new curriculum. The expectations for children have risen and I know I have shared this with you in a previous letter but I thought I would include some examples for you to see for yourselves just how much is expected from such young children.

Year 2 - Maths

These questions come from the reasoning paper:

20 Look at the number line.

Write the correct number in the box.



21 Draw a line of symmetry on each of these shapes.



These questions come from the arithmetic paper:

$$\frac{1}{3} \text{ of } 21 = \boxed{}$$

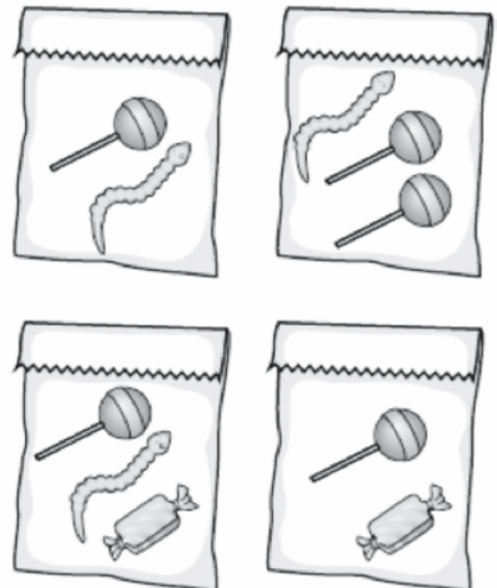
$$65 + \boxed{} = 93$$

15 A shop sells these sweets.



Abdul spends exactly **20p** on sweets.

Tick (✓) the bag of sweets he buys.



Year 2

Reading & Writing

These questions come from the reasoning paper:

An example of the spellings Year 2 are expected to know:

Knew, group, petal, model, peaceful, teddies, sweets, fingers, faster...

From the grammar test in year 2:

- 9 Tick the sentence that is a **statement**.

Tick **one**.

What an interesting painting!

☐

Can you collect the crayons, please?

☐

James washed the paintbrushes.

☐

Check that your tables are clean.

☐

- 3 Tick one box to show where a **comma** should go in the sentence below.

Tick **one**.

Aisha found some red blue and purple beads in the box.

☐
☐
☐
☐

- 18 Joe wanted to buy a present. He asked his mum if Gran would like flowers.

Write Joe's question to his mum in the speech bubble. Remember to use correct punctuation.

Year 6

The questions look like this:

18

100 girls and 50 boys were asked which kind of chocolate they like best.

These two pie charts show the results.



100 girls



50 boys

Dev says,

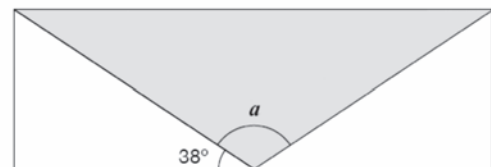
"The pie charts show that more girls than boys liked milk chocolate best."

Dev is correct.

Explain how you know.

15

A shaded isosceles triangle is drawn inside a rectangle.



Not to scale

Calculate the size of angle a .

			6	7	8
				5	4
x					

$$\frac{2}{5} \div 2 =$$



$$1\frac{1}{5} - \frac{1}{4} =$$

Year 6

The Grammar Punctuation and Spelling Test for year 6 will include questions like this:

Tick to show which sentence uses the past progressive.

After Ali finished his homework, he went out to play.

Tick one.

☐

Gemma was doing her science homework.

☐

Jamie learnt his spellings every night.

☐

Anna found her history homework difficult.

☐

Which sentence has been punctuated correctly?

Tick one.

Immediately after, dinner we did the washing up.

☐

Immediately after dinner we did, the washing up.

☐

Immediately after dinner, we did the washing up.

☐

Immediately, after dinner we did the washing up.

☐

Tick one box to show which part of the sentence is a relative clause.

The table which is made of oak is now black with age.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

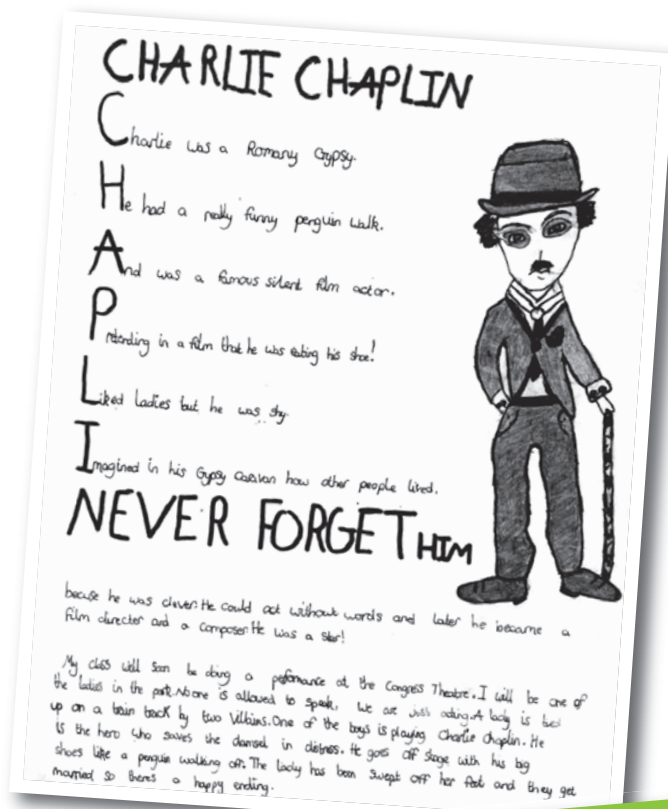
Rewrite the sentence below, adding a subordinate clause. Remember to punctuate your answer correctly.

The children played on the swings.

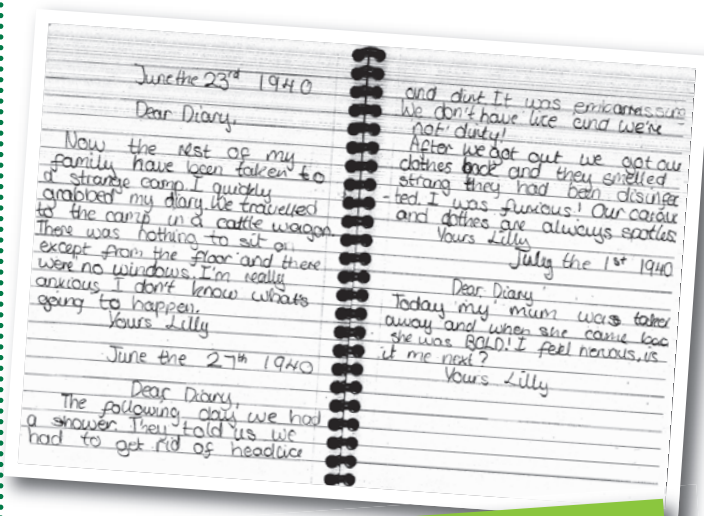
It is good for you to be aware of what is now considered the 'expected standard' nationally as set by our government. We will be holding information sessions at the start of next year for each year group so you will be able to find out more then.

Amazing Work

Take a look at these amazing pieces of research carried out by two of our pupils on the genocide of the European Roma during World War II and famous European Romas. These pieces of work are being entered into a national competition.



Shekira King - Charlie Chaplin



Sarah-Mae Doe - Dear Diary

Attendance

The whole school average is now only 95.5. Last year the average was 97% so we are a little disappointed that this has dropped. It will be an on-going focus next year.

Congratulations to those children that have achieved 100% over the year. You have a book token coming your way!

These were the very healthy children out of the whole school that managed to achieve 100%

Samuel & Jacob Lain	Matthew Redstone
Mason Partridge	Joshua Lavender
Jai Ming Goh	Sam & Jessica Stephens
Jessica Wagstaff	Ben Board
Fletcher Sheppard	Luke Izzard
Charlie & Jake Nash	Angelina Sidwell
Thomas Stuart	

Win a book token with 100%

As an added incentive we offer all children that achieve 100% for the year a £5 book token.

Class figures

Overall school attendance is currently at 95.5%. Our school target this year of 97%.

RP = 95%	2R = 96%	5B = 97%
RH = 94%	3B = 96%	5C = 97%
1A = 92%	3P = 95%	6T = 96%
1J = 96%	4M = 96%	6M = 94%
2M = 97%	4B = 96%	

97% is our target

Research also shows the positive impact that good school attendance has on the academic achievement of pupils:

- 94% = Very good chance of 5A* - C Grades.
- 93% = Good chance of 5A* - Grades.
- 92% = Fair chance of 5A* - Grades.
- 90% = Less than 50% chance of 5A* - Grades.
- 88% = Less than 35% chance of 5A* - Grades.
- < 88% Less than 30% chance of 5A* - Grades

INSET DAY

The next
INSET DAY
will be
WEDNESDAY
SEPT 2nd

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
490 followers!



Polegate School
Oakleaf Drive
Polegate
East Sussex BN26 6PT
Tel: 01323 482404
Email: info@polegateschool.co.uk



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