



MERRY CHRISTMAS

Welcome to the December bumper edition newsletter!

It's hard to believe how much has happened this term. Our pupils have been busy with trips, visits, nativities,

and class productions, showcasing a wealth of learning and creativity as always. We are incredibly proud of how amazing the children have been, embracing every opportunity with enthusiasm and joy.

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A BIG THANK YOU

A big thank you goes out to our dedicated teachers and support staff, as well as our wonderful office team, lunchtime team, and kitchen staff.

Your hard work and commitment make a significant difference in our school community.

We also want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to our families. School would

not be as amazing without your support, care, and positivity. Your involvement enriches our pupils' experiences and fosters a nurturing environment for all.

As we approach the festive season, we wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

May this time be filled with joy, laughter, and cherished moments with loved ones. We look forward to

welcoming everyone back in the new year, ready for more exciting adventures together!



A HEARTWARMING NATIVITY EXPERIENCE

This year's nativity performances were nothing short of spectacular!

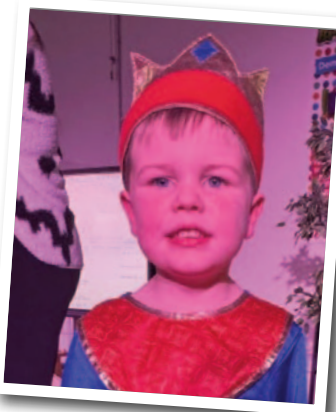
Our exceptional reception team worked tirelessly to produce stunning shows that truly showcased the talents of our brave and confident children. With three wonderful nativities, each performance was filled with laughter, joy, and a few delightful mishaps that made the experience all the more memorable.

From the moment the curtains opened, it was clear that our young stars were ready to shine. Their enthusiasm and creativity brought the

story to life in a way that warmed the hearts of everyone in the audience. The children's funny antics and engaging performances had us all chuckling, reminding us of the magic of childhood.

We are incredibly proud of our reception team for their dedication and hard work, which ensured that

each nativity was a success. The smiles on the children's faces as they took their bows were priceless. Thank you to all the parents and families for your support; together, we created unforgettable memories that will be cherished for years to come!



MEET RUFUS



We have been incredibly lucky to have Rufus, a trained Therapy Dog and his owner, visit some of the children at school each week. Whether it is letting off steam, running around the school field, or relaxing in the Sanctuary with a cuddle. The children absolutely adore him.

.....

FESTIVE MATH CHALLENGE

Answer the question and let Mrs Murphy know the answer for a fun math prize!

These scales are balanced.

Find the mass of each present.



SCHOOL UNIFORM

We want to remind everyone of the importance of wearing the correct school uniform, including on PE days.

It's essential that students wear Polegate School PE logo kit or plain black PE kit without logos or pictures. If

you're finding it challenging to provide the necessary items, please don't hesitate to reach out. Our wonderful PFA is here to assist with school clothing.

We've also noticed some lovely hair designs, bows, and festive headwear

around school! Just a gentle reminder to keep the Christmas headwear for the last day of term, when we'll have lots of festive fun planned.

Thank you for your continued support in helping our students look smart and ready to learn!

Winter Uniform

- Grey or Black trousers, skirt, pinafore dress or culottes
- Polegate School Jumper or Cardigan*
- Plain dark green jumper or cardigan
- Polegate School Logo polo shirt*
- Plain White Polo shirt or White Shirt/Blouse
- Grey or White Socks
- Grey Tights
- Black School Shoes (No Trainers)
- Polegate School Fleece Jacket*

Summer Uniform

- Green Gingham Checked Dress (Optional)
- Grey or black Trousers, skirt or shorts
- Polegate School Logo Jumper or Cardigan*
- Plain dark green jumper or cardigan
- Polegate School Logo polo shirt*
- White Polo shirt or White Shirt/Blouse
- Grey or White Socks
- Black School Shoes (No Trainers)
- Polegate logo Sunhat*
- Plain Green Sunhat

PE Kit

- White Polegate Logo T-Shirt*
- Plain White Polo shirt
- Black Polegate School Logo Hooded or Crew Jumper*
- Plain Black Sweatshirt
- Black Polegate School Logo shorts or jogging bottoms*
- Plain black shorts, joggers or leggings (No Logos)
- Black Trainers

The items marked with a * are available for purchase online at Price & Buckland.

Only small stud earrings and jewellery of religious or cultural significant to be worn. Earrings to be removed for Swimming lessons. Nail varnish, temporary tattoos and hair dye are to be removed before the school day. Long hair must be tied back, hair styles should be natural colour and smart in appearance. Hair bands to be small, discreet and in school colours (Green, Black or Grey). No shaved patterns or close shaving.

LOST PROPERTY COLLECTION

As we approach the end of term, we would like to remind you to check our lost property collection, which is vast!

We have a significant amount of clothing that has not yet been claimed. If your child has misplaced any items, please check lost property- situated outside the school hall.

Please note that any remaining clothing will be donated to charity at the end of term. Thank you for your support in helping us find these items a new home!

PARKING

Dangerous parking practices are putting our children's lives at risk, and we urgently need your cooperation to keep everyone safe.

We have observed vehicles:

- **Parking on double yellow lines** outside the school entrance
- Stopping on the **tight corner** near the school gates
- Creating **traffic backlogs** that bring vehicles to a complete standstill
- Making it **extremely dangerous for families to cross the road safely**
- Driving across grass verges

These parking behaviours are not only inconsiderate – **they are illegal and potentially life-threatening** for our children and families.

It's important to understand that:

- Parking on double yellow lines is incredibly dangerous
- Stopping on corners reduces visibility for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists
- Obstructing the highway can lead to prosecution
- Endangering children through dangerous parking is a serious offence

We have informed and are working closely with:

- **Our local MP** – who has been made aware of the situation
- **East Sussex County Council Highways** – who are monitoring the area
- **Sussex Police**

What You Can Do

Please help us keep our children safe by:

- **Arriving earlier** to find legal parking spaces further from school
- **Never parking on double yellow lines** or on corners
- **Walking or cycling** to school where possible
- **Parking considerably** in residential areas, respecting residents' driveways
- **Allowing extra time** for your journey to avoid rushing

Alternative Options

- **Park and stride** – parking 5-10 minutes away and walking the rest
- **Car sharing** with other families
- **Cycling**: we have secure bike storage

Blue Badge Holders

If you hold a blue badge and are unsure about where you can park, please visit The Blue Badge scheme: rights and responsibilities in England - GOV.UK for further guidance. Below is the guidance taken directly from this document for further clarification. We respectfully ask blue badge holders not to park on the double yellow lines opposite the school entrance.

Your Child's Life is Worth Five Extra Minutes

We understand that mornings are busy, but **no appointment or deadline is worth risking a child's life**. Please park sensibly and safely – every single time.

If you do witness dangerous or anti-social driving, we have been advised that the best course of action is to report it to – **Operation Crackdown- Operation Crackdown**.

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

MONDAY MINDFULNESS CLUB

The children attending Monday Mindfulness Club have been finding a moment of calm after a busy day.

Developing their feelings of self-belief, and recognising their personal strengths. The children have fully immersed themselves in their favourite mindfulness breathing techniques, whilst enjoying fun and creative sensory play.



WOW – THE WALK TO SCHOOL CHALLENGE

We have chosen to be part of an exciting initiative to encourage more children and their families to walk to school.

WOW – the walk to school challenge is delivered by Living Streets, the UK charity for everyday walking, to help as many children as possible experience the benefits of walking or wheeling to school.

The pupil-led challenge enables children to self-report how they get to school every day. If they travel actively (walk/wheel, cycle, scoot, 'Park and Stride' or hop off) at least once a week, for a month, they get rewarded with a badge. It's that simple!

What are the benefits of walking to school?

- Children feel happier and healthier
- They arrive at school refreshed and ready to learn
- Helps reduce congestion and pollution at the school gates

What if we can't walk to school?

If driving, 'Park and Stride' to help your child earn their WOW badges. Park at least **ten minutes** away from the school

and walk or wheel the remaining journey.

If using public transport, hop off at least ten minutes away and walk the rest of the way (recorded as 'other' on the WOW Travel Tracker).

Where walking to school isn't an option, we work with schools to establish a bespoke approach to WOW that works best for their pupils' needs. This includes pupils becoming WOW Ambassadors, leading assemblies, creating active travel notice boards, and other activities within the school day.

If you have any questions on the adaptability of WOW or have suggestions of how we can improve, we would love to hear your thoughts. Please email walktoschool@livingstreets.org.uk

What is a WOW badge?

There are 11 badges to be earned from September 2025 – July 2026. Each badge has been designed by a pupil as part of our annual WOW Badge Design Competition. A new badge can be earned every month if pupils walk/wheel, cycle, scoot, 'Park and Stride' or hop off at least once a week.

WOW 2025/26 encourages pupils to Walk with Joy, with badges depicting everything from jumping in puddles to painting.

The badges are made in Cornwall from material that was otherwise destined for landfill, including fridge trays, plastic plates and yoghurt pot off-cuts. For more information, visit:

livingstreets.org.uk/recycling

Last year, around 2,100 schools and over 540,000 pupils across the UK enjoyed the benefits of walking to school with WOW. Will you join us?

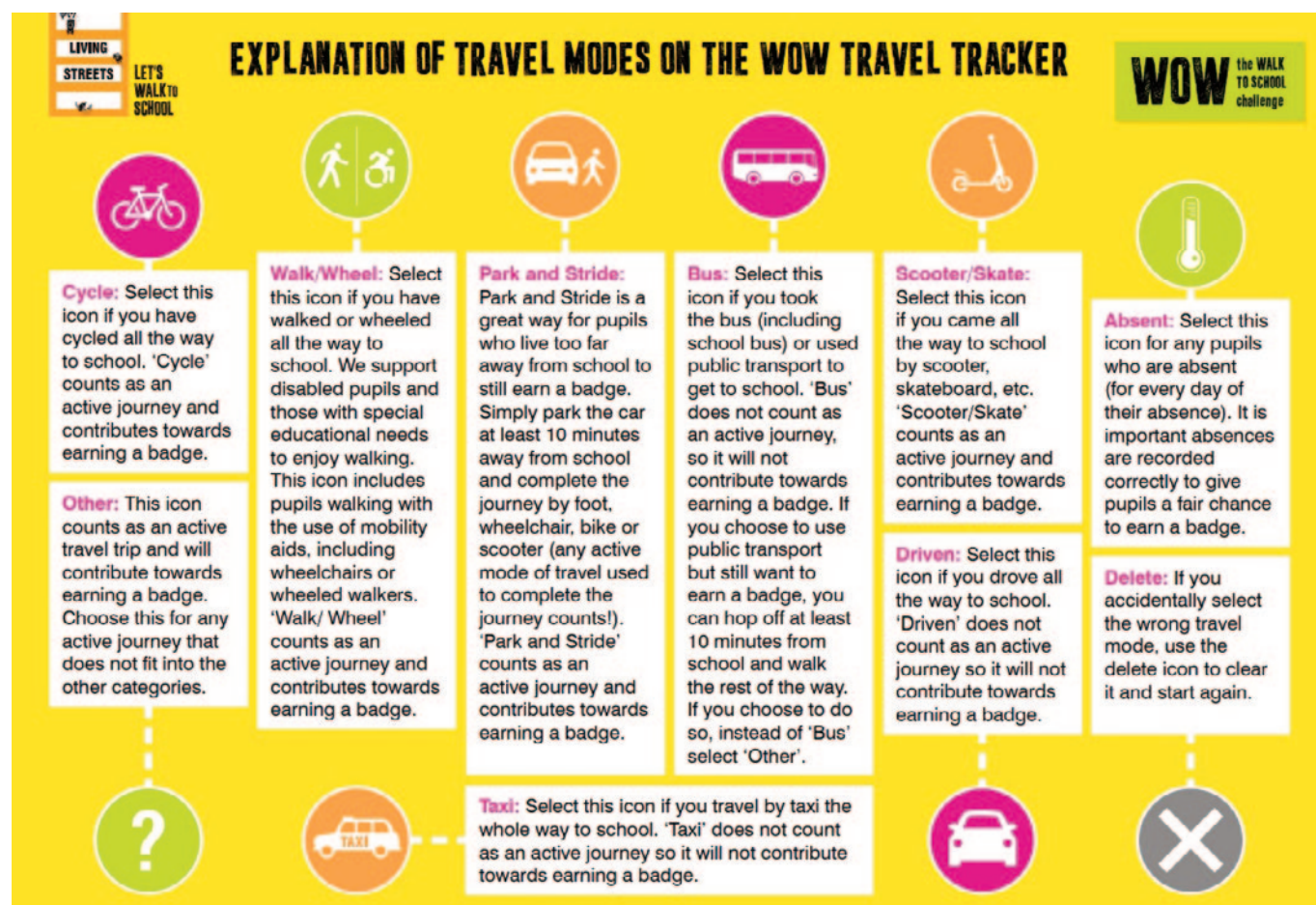
If you have any questions about the programme, please contact

The school office or find more information and useful videos at:

livingstreets.org.uk/wowlaunch

Let's swap those school runs for school walks.

We will launch this new initiative with the children on Thursday 8th January 2026



CHRISTMAS ACTIVE CHALLENGE!

Christmas Active Challenge! Can you do all 25?

Santa High Knees Do 10 high knees 	Gift Balance Balance a book on your head 	Gingerbread Jumps Do 10 jumping jacks 	Candy Cane Claps Jump in the air and clap 	Elf Dance Dance like a mischievous elf 
Bell Sit-Ups Do 10 sit-ups 	Reindeer Run Gallop like Rudolph 	Decorating the Tree Stand up tall and crouch down low 10 times. 	Snowman Squats Do 10 squats 	Santa Star Jumps Do 10 ten star jumps to warm up 
Snowman Push-Ups Do ten push-ups 	Wrap Presents Sing or play some Christmas music - do a hand jive 	Catch a Bauble Throw and catch an object 	Elf Stretch Stretch high and low to put the present in Santa's sleigh 	Chimney Mountain Climbers Do 15 mountain climbers to reach the top of the chimney 
Christmas Stocking Squats Do 20 squats 	Reindeer Kicks Get ready to go, Rudolph! Do 10 front kicks 	Gingerbread Jumping Jack Do 15 jumping jacks 	Christmas Pudding Roll over 	Tinsel Twists Twist and jump from side to side 
Starry Sky Stretch Pluck a star from the sky - stretch and reach to the stars 	Deliver Christmas Cards Walk around, pretending to post your cards 	Santa's Sleigh Star Jumps Do 15 star jumps 	Nutcracker March March on the spot for 30 seconds like a soldier 	Christmas Dance Party Show off your best party dancing 

RECEPTION CHURCH VISIT

Reception took their first trip to the local church

The children took part and listened well to the nativity story.

We went on a hunt to find objects around the church, followed by singing our nativity songs beautifully, impressing all of our parent helpers.

Thank you to Karen at St John's Church for your welcoming service again this year. And a big thank you to all of the parent helpers! Walking back to school, the children said, "that was the best trip ever!"



WELCOME OUR NEWEST MEMBERS!

We are thrilled to share some delightful news with our school community! We have two new furry friends joining us - two adorable guinea pigs!

Mrs Hibberd has kindly fostered these lovely creatures, and they are currently spending time in her classroom, where the children have already begun to form a bond with them.

Once our new friends have settled in, we plan to move them to a more accessible area so that all children can enjoy their company. We believe that having pets in school can enhance our learning environment and provide wonderful opportunities for responsibility and care.



As is our tradition, the children will soon have the chance to name the guinea pigs through a democratic vote. We can't wait to see what names they come up with! Rest assured, we will keep you updated on the outcome of this exciting process.

Thank you for your continued support as we welcome these charming additions to our school. We look forward to many joyful moments with our new guinea pig pals!

SPORTS NEWS

School Games Cross Country Competition

On an exceptionally cold day in November, twenty year 5 & 6 students braved 2 circuits of Ratton School's field in the annual inter-schools cross country running event.

Schools across the Eastbourne Area were competing to qualify for the next regional round of this popular event on the School Games calendar.

All our runners did exceptionally well - especially given the extreme conditions - with all of them finishing the course, and a few of them qualifying in the top 15 of each section

to see them through to the next round.

Special congratulations to Arabella, Elliott, Toby & James who came in 9th, 6th, 12th & 7th respectively and will represent Polegate in the Regionals soon.

Indoor Athletics - School Games Qualifying event @ Willingdon Secondary School

The walk from Polegate to Willingdon was our warm-up for this annual indoor event taking place over 2 days and with 15 local schools competing for a place in the next round.

With a variety of track and field events ranging from the obstacle relay to the

standing high jump, competitors from our large squad of 25 each took part in at least 1 events during the afternoon.

All our athletes gave it their best and the support from the rest of the group for each event was amazing. Our best showing was in the 6 lap parlauf - well done James and Toby - a relay on 3 laps each over a surprisingly long distance in a big hall!

We didn't finish in the top 3 but had a fun afternoon and caught up with a few past pupils who have continued in their role as Sports Leaders at Willingdon.

FOREST SCHOOL FUN

Whilst exploring the differences between evergreen and deciduous trees we made wreaths at forest school.



MAKE & TAKE CLUB!

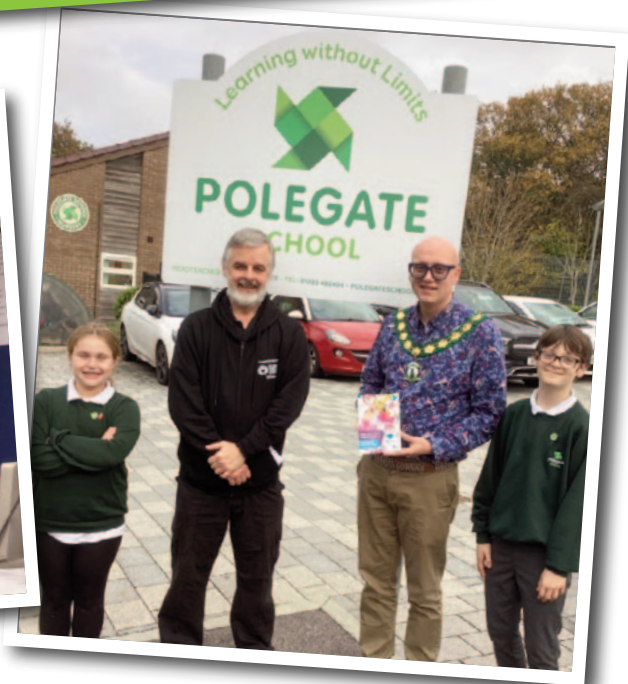
Another busy, creative term for Make and Take club!



DIARY DATES

15th December
Year 1 Space Experience
16th December
One Voice Concert at The De La Warr Pavilion
16th December
Author Visit - Alexandra Benedict
17th December
Reception Enterprise Event After School
18th December
Reception Polar Express Day
18th December
Reading Tea Party
19th December
Christmas Staff Panto
19th December
Christmas Dinner
22nd Dec - 4th January
Christmas Holiday
5th January
Term 3 Starts
16th January
6L Class assembly
23rd January
1RH Class Assembly
26th January
INSET Day
30th January
2H Class assembly
4th February
2nd Hand Uniform Sale
6th February
5D Class assembly
10th February
Parent Consultations
12th February
Reading Tea Party
16th – 20th February – Winter Half-term
23rd February
Term 4 starts
25th February
PFA AGM Meeting
26th February
Parent Consultations

EASTBOURNE YOUTH RADIO



We are thrilled to share some exciting news from Eastbourne Youth Radio, where three wonderful children have taken the stage as DJs!

Their journey into broadcasting has been nothing short of inspiring, showcasing not only their professionalism but also their incredible skills and comedic timing. The energy they bring to the airwaves is truly infectious, and we couldn't be prouder of their achievements.

Recently, they had the fantastic opportunity to interview Trevor Weeks from the East Sussex Wildlife Rescue and Ambulance Service. Trevor, known for his dedication and passion for wildlife conservation, shared invaluable insights about his work and the importance of protecting our local fauna. His commitment to the community is commendable, and we are grateful for the knowledge he imparted to our budding broadcasters.

Additionally, we were honoured to have Daniel Dunbar, the Mayor of

Polegate, join us for a discussion about his current role and career path. Daniel's journey to becoming mayor is a testament to hard work and community service, and he inspired our young DJs to pursue their dreams with determination.

We are thrilled to share the exciting news about our recent visit to Eastbourne Youth Radio, where three of our wonderful children took to the airwaves as DJs! Their professionalism, skill, and impeccable comedic timing truly shone through, making the experience not only enjoyable but also memorable for everyone involved.

During the broadcast, our young stars had the fantastic opportunity to interview two remarkable guests: Trevor Weeks from the East Sussex Wildlife Rescue and Ambulance Service, and Daniel Dunbar, the Mayor of Polegate. Trevor shared insights into his vital work in wildlife rescue, highlighting the importance of caring for our local environment. Meanwhile, Daniel spoke passionately about his role as mayor, reflecting on his career

path and the responsibilities that come with public service.

This experience not only allowed our children to develop their communication skills but also inspired them to think about their future aspirations. We are incredibly proud of their achievements and grateful for the support of our community in making this event possible. adventures!

If you missed the show, do not panic... follow the link to 'Listen Back' <http://www.eyr.org.uk/>

Diary Dates

INSET DAY

Monday 26th January

WE'RE HERE TO HELP

How to Share Worries, Concerns and Feedback... We're Here to Help

At Polegate Primary School, communication is key to ensuring successful and happy children.

We want every child to thrive, and we know that sometimes concerns arise that need to be addressed quickly and effectively.

We value all feedback from our families and want to make sure you always know who to speak to when you have a worry or concern about your child.

We've created a simple flowchart to help you understand the best route for raising concerns:

Step 1: Start with Your Child's Class Teacher

For most concerns, your first point of contact should always be your child's class teacher. This includes:

- **Wellbeing concerns** – if your child seems worried, anxious or unhappy
- **Friendship issues** – problems with peers or social situations
- **Learning concerns** – questions about your child's progress or work
- **Day-to-day matters** – uniform, homework, classroom issues

Your child's class teacher knows them best and sees them every day. They are usually best placed to understand the situation and work with you to find a solution.

How to contact class teachers:

- Speak to them at pick-up time
- Send an email
- Request a phone call or meeting for more detailed discussions

Step 2: If Concerns Continue or Escalate - Contact Your Leader of Learning

If you've spoken to the class teacher and:

- The issue hasn't been resolved
- You have heightened concerns that need additional support
- The matter requires senior leadership input

Please contact your **Leader of Learning** for your child's phase:

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) – Reception
Mrs Trent: s.trent@polegate.e-sussex.sch.uk

Key Stage 1 – Years 1 and 2
Miss Durbidge a.durbidge@polegate.e-sussex.sch.uk

Lower Key Stage 2 – Years 3 & 4
Mrs Barden: s.barden@polegate.e-sussex.sch.uk

Upper Key Stage 2 – Years 5 & 6
Mrs Barnard: s.barnard@polegate.e-sussex.sch.uk

Our Leaders of Learning oversee the curriculum, pastoral care and wellbeing for their phase. They can provide additional support, coordinate with other staff members, and ensure that concerns are addressed appropriately.

Please Bear With Us: Response Times

We want to be clear about our response times to help manage your expectations:

Our teachers are committed to responding to emails within 24 hours during the school week. However, please understand that:

- **Teachers are busy working with children throughout the school day** – their priority is always the children in their classroom
- **Teachers attend important meetings** – including planning sessions, safeguarding meetings, training and staff training
- **Emails sent after 3:30pm or at weekends** may not receive a response until the next working day

We ask for your patience and understanding. Our teachers are dedicated professionals who care deeply about every child, and they will respond to your message as soon as they are able to give it their full attention.

If your concern is urgent, please:

- **Call the school office on 01323482404**
- **Speak to a member of staff at drop-off or pick-up**
- **Ask to speak with a member of the senior leadership team**

Why This Approach Works

- 1. Quick Resolution** Starting with the class teacher means issues can often be resolved quickly, without unnecessary delays.
- 2. Better Understanding** Class teachers have daily insight into your child's experiences, friendships and learning, which helps them address concerns effectively.
- 3. Clear Escalation Path** If additional support is needed, our Leaders of Learning can step in with a broader perspective and more resources.
- 4. Consistent Support** This structure ensures everyone is working together with the same information to support your child.

Whether your feedback is positive or relates to a concern, we want to hear from you. Your insights help us:

- Understand your child's needs better
- Celebrate successes and achievements
- Identify areas where we can improve
- Build strong partnerships between home and school

Please don't wait if you have a concern. Early communication helps us address issues before they become bigger problems.

Working Together for Happy, Successful Children

We know that when families and school staff work together, children feel supported, safe and ready to learn.

Communication is a partnership, and we're committed to:

- Listening to your concerns
- Responding promptly and professionally (within 24 hours during the school week)
- Working with you to find solutions
- Keeping you informed about your child's progress and wellbeing

If you're ever unsure about who to contact, please don't hesitate to call or email the school office, and we'll point you in the right direction.

Quick Reference Guide

TYPE OF CONCERN	FIRST CONTACT	NEXT STEP IF NEEDED
Wellbeing, friendships, learning, day-to-day matters	Class Teacher	Leader of Learning for your child's phase
EYFS (Reception) concerns	Class Teacher	Mrs Trent
KS1 (Years 1-2) concerns	Class Teacher	Miss Durbidge
Lower KS2 (Years 3-4) concerns	Class Teacher	Mrs Barden
Upper KS2 (Years 5-6) concerns	Class Teacher	Mrs Barnard

Expected response time: Within 24 hours during the school week

Thank you for your continued partnership in your child's education and for your understanding regarding response times. Together, we can ensure every child at Polegate Primary School is happy, confident and successful.

EVERY MINUTE MATTERS

School Gates and Registration Times – Every Minute Matters

We wanted to remind all families about our school gate and registration times, and explain why punctuality is so important for your child's learning and wellbeing.

Our School Day Timings

Key Stage 2 (Years 3-6):

- Gates close: 8:30am
- Register taken: 8:30am

Key Stage 1 (Years R, 1 and 2):

- Gates close: 8:40am
- Register taken: 8:40am

Why Punctuality Matters

When children arrive late to school, they miss out on much more than you might think:

Missing the Start of Lessons

The beginning of each session is when teachers introduce new concepts, explain the day's learning, and set expectations. Teachers present information clearly, promote appropriate discussion, check pupils' understanding systematically, identify misunderstandings and adapt teaching as necessary to correct these. Arriving late means your child misses these crucial explanations.

Lost Learning Time

Even 5 or 10 minutes each day adds up quickly:

- 10 minutes late each day = 50 minutes of learning lost per week
- That's nearly an hour of teaching time missed every week
- Over a year, this equals weeks of lost education

Time with Friends & Peers

The start of the school day is an important time for children to:

- Settle into the classroom environment
- Chat with their friends
- Feel part of the school community
- Develop positive relationships with peers and staff

When children arrive on time, they can engage in these important social interactions that help them feel happy and secure at school.

Preparing for the School Day

Those first few minutes allow children to:

- Unpack their belongings calmly
- Organise their materials for learning
- Mentally prepare for the day ahead
- Transition from home to school in a settled way
- Follow the established routines that help them feel secure

How You Can Help

- Leave home earlier – build in extra time for unexpected delays
- Prepare the night before – lay out uniforms, pack bags, prepare packed lunches
- Establish a consistent morning routine – children thrive on predictability
- Set alarms – give yourself plenty of time, especially with the dark mornings!
- Plan your route – especially if parking is difficult

If You're Struggling with Punctuality

We understand that sometimes families face challenges with morning routines. If you're finding it difficult to get your child to school on time, please speak to us. We're here to help and can work with you to find solutions.

Diary Dates

**Last Day
of Term**

**Friday 19th
December**

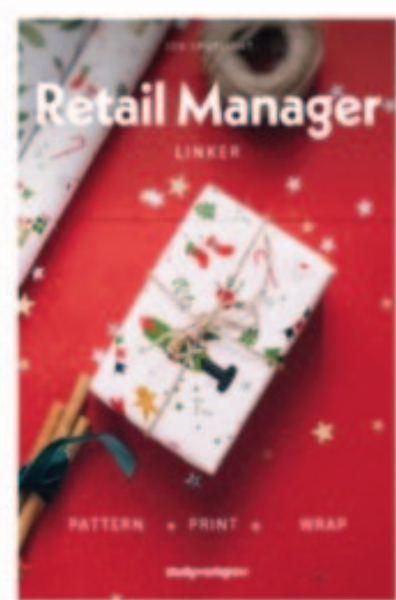
WHICH FESTIVE JOB?



Christmas is a busy time with lots of exciting job opportunities:

- Retail helpers
- Delivery and postal workers
- Santa's Grotto team
- Catering and hospitality
- Warehouse and packing staff
- Event organisers
- Entertainers

Talk as a family about the different festive job you might like to try and what this might entail!



THERE ARE NO LIMITS



Mrs Stockdale

READING RECOVERY AND
SPEECH AND LANGUAGE
TEACHER

JOB HISTORY

- Worked in supermarkets
- Sold jewellery
- Taught English to Foreign students
- Sold equestrian clothing as I would get free things to wear myself.
- Class teacher in different schools

WHAT WAS YOUR CHILDHOOD DREAM JOB?

I dreamed of galloping across the countryside as a cross-country horse rider!



SKILLS THAT ARE IMPORTANT IN MY ROLE:

- Being able to work in a team
- Being adaptable
- Patience
- Kindness and empathy
- Remain motivated and be able to think on the spot.



IF YOU COULD SWAP CAREERS IN THE FUTURE, WHAT ADVENTURE WOULD YOU CHOOSE?

Working with animals is the dream! I enjoy their company and like to help them. A vet would be absolutely top of my list.



GREATEST ACHIEVEMENTS

- Being successful gaining my first teaching job - I wanted to make a difference!
- Coming first in cross country horse riding event - even on an unfamiliar horse!
- Raising 2 sons to be decent human beings!

THERE ARE NO LIMITS!

E-SAFETY

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about **MAKING FRIENDS ONLINE**

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

In today's digital world, it's increasingly common for children to form friendships with people they've never met in person. While online connections can offer children a sense of belonging, they also carry significant risks. Around 19% of children aged 10 to 15 in England and Wales have chatted online with someone they've never met face to face. This guide offers expert advice for parents and educators on helping children navigate online friendships safely.

ONLINE GROOMING THREATS

Predators can use games, chat apps or social media platforms to build relationships with children and gain their trust. This may quickly develop into grooming or exploitation. Between April 2017 and March 2023, UK police recorded nearly 34,000 online grooming offences – an 82% increase in just five years.

EXPOSURE TO INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Children may encounter distressing or explicit material while interacting with online contacts – especially via TikTok, Instagram or Snapchat. This is evidenced in a survey by the Children's Commissioner for England, which found that 45% of children aged 8 to 17 had seen content online that made them feel uncomfortable, worried or upset.

PRIVACY AND DATA RISKS

Children and young people often overshare personal details – such as where they live or go to school – without understanding the consequences. In fact, 4.4% of 10 to 15-year-olds in the UK have met up in real life with someone they'd only spoken to online.

COMPROMISED PERSONAL SAFETY

Meeting an online 'friend' in real life risks placing a child in serious danger. From abduction to coercion, the consequences can be devastating. Reports of children being harmed after such meetings are becoming increasingly common in the UK, highlighting the need for safeguarding intervention.

PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS

Online harm – such as cyberbullying, grooming or exposure to disturbing content – can lead to long-term emotional issues, including anxiety, depression and PTSD. 'Sextortion' gangs, who threaten to release sexual information about a person unless they pay them money, have reportedly targeted children as young as 11, leaving them traumatised and ashamed.

LONG-TERM REPERCUSSIONS

Children exposed to harmful online relationships early on may develop unhealthy beliefs about relationships, consent, or self-worth. In a recent case, a 26-year-old posed as a girl on Snapchat to befriend children aged 10 to 16, manipulating them into sexual activity and causing profound emotional distress. One 12-year-old tragically died by suicide, highlighting the long-term psychological harm online friendships with strangers can cause.

26 FRIENDS
ONLINE NOW

Advice for Parents & Educators

TEACH SAFE ONLINE HABITS

Help children understand how to use privacy settings, protect their personal information, spot fake profiles, and report anything suspicious or concerning, like pressure tactics. Encourage them to think critically about what they share – and whom they're talking to.

KEEP CONVERSATIONS OPEN

Let children know they can talk to you about their online life. Avoid reacting with anger or judgement, as this may prevent them from opening up in the future. A child who feels listened to is more likely to disclose problems before they escalate.

ENCOURAGE REAL-WORLD CONNECTIONS

Support children in building friendships through school, clubs, hobbies and activities in the real world. Strong offline relationships help reduce children's reliance on online platforms for social interaction, and can help them develop resilience and social confidence.

USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Parental control settings on devices, games and apps can help manage screen time, filter out inappropriate content, and monitor activity. While no system is perfect, they provide a valuable layer of protection as children explore digital spaces.

Meet Our Expert

Gabriella Russo is a safeguarding consultant with over 30 years' experience in supporting children, families, and adults across education, local authority, and mental health settings – both in the UK (including at Parliamentary level) and internationally.



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ATTENDANCE

As this is the time of year where we find ourselves in the midst of seasonal illness the Department for Education (DfE) have asked that we share the information below with our parents and carers to help manage seasonal illnesses and keep our school community well:

- **Education Hub Blog:** Reducing the spread of illness this winter: Seven steps to healthier schools and higher school attendance – a helpful blog for parents and staff.

[Click here to read more](#)

- **NHS Guidance for Parents:** Is my child too ill for school? – a useful resource to help parents decide when children should stay at home.

[Click here to read more](#)

- **Preventing and Controlling Infections Guidance:** Includes advice on vaccination, ventilation, and good respiratory hygiene.

[Click here to read more](#)

- **A-Z of managing Infectious Diseases:** Practical guidance on managing specific illnesses.

[Click here to read more](#)

ATTENDANCE FIGURES

RJ	95.3%
RKH	96.8%
RS	93.4%
1RH	95.7%
1L	96%
1M	97%
2B	98%

2D	95.8%
2H	97.5%
3B	96.8%
3C	94.8%
3H	95.8%
4D	97.1%
4H	95.6%

4T	96.6%
5D	97.2%
5EK	95.3%
5K	96.7%
6M	95.5%
6L	95%
6W	93.3%

Diary Dates
Start of Term 3
Monday 5th
January
2023



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
1,331 followers!



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East Sussex BN26 6PT
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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

RARING2GO! WINTER MAGAZINE



PLACES TO GO
Pg 5



THINGS TO DO
Pg 14-15



COMPETITIONS
Pg 30



EASTBOURNE

CLICK
HERE TO
READ IT



MAGAZINE & WEBSITE

THE GO-TO GUIDE FOR YOU AND YOUR CHILD

raring2go.co.uk

WINTER 2025/26

FAMILY GRAPEVINE WINTER 2025/26

EASTBOURNE, WEALDEN & LEWES | NOVEMBER 2025 - FEBRUARY 2026

FREE!

family grapevine

LOCAL
INFORMATION
FOR FAMILIES:
BUMP-TEENS

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Inside...

DAYS OUT
around Sussex

WHAT'S ON This WINTER
and lots more...

WIN!

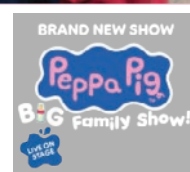
Prizes from:

WILDERNESS
WOOD

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THE FAMILY FESTIVAL



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A - Z of Sport & Leisure • Childcare • Education • Parties • Places to Visit • Toddler Groups • and more...