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# CONGRATULATIONS

**You became teachers overnight; you've done home learning and survived, done quizzes on Zoom. We've all done Joe Wicks (well, not every day). We made banana bread together in our cook along. Now what?**

We celebrate your children for their resilience and optimism. Lockdown fatigue is real but their strength of character has shone through. They returned with such positivity and have been simply incredible- a credit to you!

**Read more inside**

# CONGRATULATIONS

**THE GOAL IS NOT TO BE PERFECT BY THE END.  
THE GOAL IS TO BE BETTER TODAY.**

**You became teachers overnight; you've done home learning and survived, done quizzes on Zoom. We've all done Joe Wicks (well, not every day). We made banana bread together in our cook along. Now what?**

We celebrate your children for their resilience and optimism. Lockdown fatigue is real but their strength of character has shone through.

They returned with such positivity and have been simply incredible - a credit to you! They have lifted our spirits. So much pessimism was shared by the media about 'lost learning' and catch up. I am so pleased to share with you that this is not the picture we see in school.

Children have been exceptionally well supported by you at home and in many ways have benefitted from really focused and targeted support. Some have simply flourished!

We carry on with our relentless focus on providing the best for your children and in recent monitoring across the whole school we have seen stunning work in books that does not reflect 'lost learning'

We have observed lessons across the school and seen children that are so enthused and engaged by their learning. Children demonstrating all the positive behaviours for learning that we would expect. I can honestly say that we are all so proud of them and they deserve a holiday and some sunshine!

Scientists say that chocolate helps to raise your happy chemicals. Now there is something to smile about so please have a wonderful Easter break and enjoy all those Easter eggs without feeling guilty. We will follow the science!

# SOCIAL DISTANCING

**The cases locally from a school's perspective seem to be increasing. This term whilst we haven't had any bubbles close we don't want to become complacent.**

It would be reassuring for everyone if parents continue to wear masks on drop and collection. We are keen to revert to normal times and in order to feel confident doing this we need parents to adhere to guidance for social distancing.

**Our previous guidance still remains:**

- We need parents to clear the gates quickly at drop off and collection.

**Please follow government guidance and ensure social distancing at all times.**

- Only one adult can drop children at school. We would request that year 5 and 6 parents do not wait with their child. If you want to see them enter school, please wait on the opposite side of the road. You may want to encourage independence and allow them to walk in on their own.
- As per guidance please maintain a 2 metre distances at all times. Consider wearing a face mask, pavements do unfortunately become congested. Please do not congregate around our site or in the surrounding roads. Please be considerate to our local community and neighbours.
- All plans have been made to ensure that social distancing is possible. This includes introducing a voluntary one-way system on the pavements for drop off and collection.
- Please continue to arrive at your specified time.

**Thank you for your continued help with this!**



# SCIENCE WEEK

## BACK TO SCHOOL WITH A BANG!

**Wow! What a week to return to school! The children were welcomed back to Science Week.**

The theme of the week was tackling science stereotypes and igniting a spark in our young scientists. Every day, children across the school explored wonderful world of science and unlocked the magic it can bring.

From balancing coke cans to exploding volcanoes, the school was alive with the sights, sounds and smells (especially vinegar), that practical experiments bring.

We gained an insight into a wide range of careers that involve science in a variety of different ways. Hairdressers

explained how science is used to colour hair and we even met a midwife who explained the importance of biology and the interesting facts behind the colour of a baby's poo!

Science didn't stop at school that week either! Mrs Giggs has been overwhelmed with the enthusiasm that families showed whilst working together on the Great Marble Challenge and Science at Home Scavenger Hunt.

Prizes will be awarded in due course. We hope that children felt inspired by the special event and who knows, maybe they will be a guest speaker during Science Week in the future!



# CAR PARK HAZARDS

**You will have observed that the car park is being used for staff parking now. I felt there was only so long we could rely on our local neighbours' goodwill and we do need to return to normal where we can!**

We now need to teach the children that they should be vigilant in a car park and to take safety precautions on arriving and leaving school. There will be hazards and this will all be new for the children and we all need to make expectations clear to them. It is not a playground.

It is the responsibility of all of us to ensure that the school car park is a safe environment for children, parents, carers and staff alike.

To minimise the risk of an accident occurring and maximise everyone's safety we request that the following protocols are observed:

- Children should not be left unsupervised in the car park at the end of the school day.
- Children should not play in the car park even under supervision.
- All vehicles should be reversed into car parking bays.
- Staff or contractor vehicles should not arrive between the hours of 8am and 9am or 2pm and 3.15pm.
- Vehicles are never to be parked in a way that could obstruct entry/exit for emergency vehicles.

**Please do not allow children to play in the car park after collection.**

## SAFETY IN THE SUN

**With any luck....**

**Safety in the sun - as we move into the spring and summer months (we may see some sunshine!)**

Keeping your child safe in the sun will be a priority. Please apply sun screen of at least SPF 30 and UVA rating of four, or five stars before you bring your child to school. You are welcome to send them with named sunscreen. They can then apply this before lunch. We will not be able to support them applying this but can supervise and they will not be able to share. Please teach them how to apply sunscreen before they return.

Please send them with a named cap or hat to We will encourage them to sit in the shade

## WELL DONE LOLA

**Lola wanted to cut all her hair off and donate to the charity to help children with cancer who have lost their hair.**





# ON YOUR BIKES!

We are registered for the Sustrans Big Pedal and have been very successful for the last two years running. We have been in the top schools in Sussex and had some great prizes: visits from BMX stunt rider and musicians. I'm sure this year we will do even better judging by the numbers of children arriving by bike or scooter!



To find out more: <https://bigpedal.org.uk/prizes>

## BEHAVIOUR HUB

We had an intensive day long interview with a number of Behavioural specialists from the Department of Education and as part of the process they spoke to a range of staff at all levels and pupils.

We should hear the outcome soon but in the meantime the assessors did share that the group of children they met with were simply incredible!

They were blown away by how well they conducted themselves and the responses they gave to some very tricky questions.

As always the children made us so proud and the verbal feedback we had unofficially made us all feel warm and fuzzy!

# HOME SCHOOL JOURNALS

Does your child have their journal?

**If not rather than an Easter egg hunt could you please search at home for the journal!**

Our expectation is that these are brought to and from school daily. Each morning the children are asked to bring these into the classroom. We do use them daily and they have all their passwords in so are vital for when the children use the ICT suite or access any online. When these are used well it really promotes independence in children and improves progress.

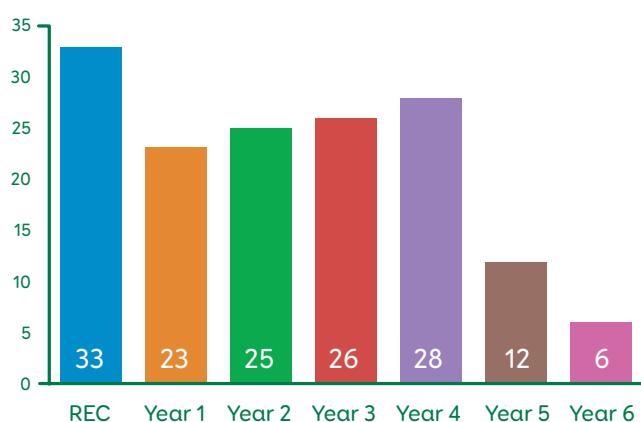
These journals are a significant investment for the school and we cannot afford to replace these when lost. If you discover the journal has been lost then you will need to purchase a new one. Slips will be coming home with the details on.



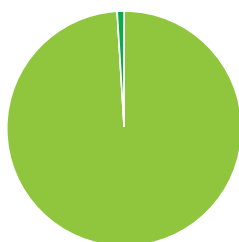
# HOME LEARNING SURVEY

Thank you so much for taking the time to complete the survey. Your comments are so helpful and really constructive. We will use these to review our provision and continue to improve.

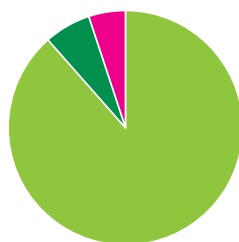
1. Which year group is your child in?



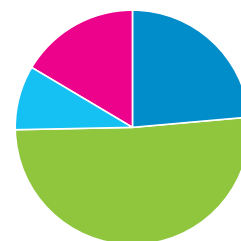
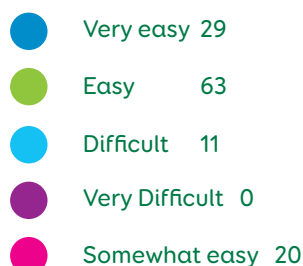
2. Did you follow lockdown learning



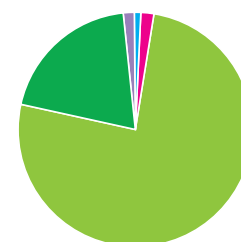
3. Did you find the planning easy to follow?



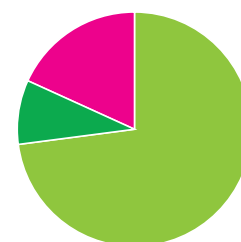
4. How easy did you find it to understand what the children were being asked to do?



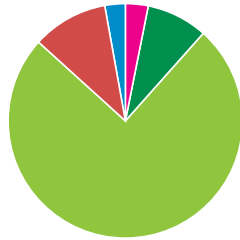
5. What were your thoughts on the amount of work set?



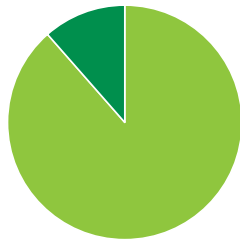
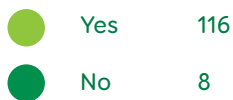
6. Did you child engage well in the live lessons?



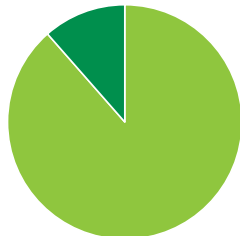
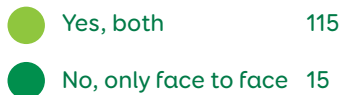
### 7. How did your child find the work set?



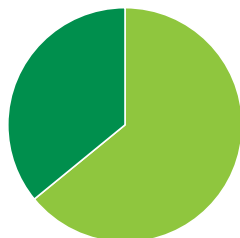
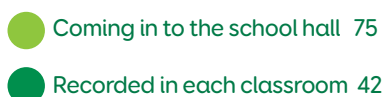
### 8. Did we get the balance right for the way learning was set?



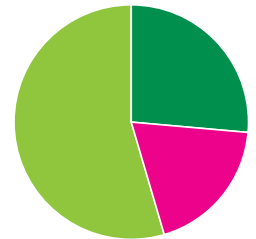
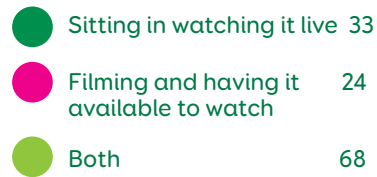
### 9. Should we keep two options available for parent consultation? A virtual and face to face to give choice.



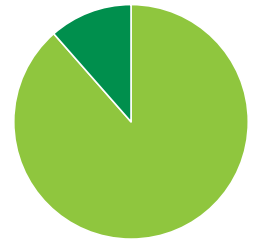
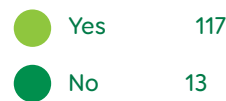
### 10. Which Star of the Week assembly have you preferred?



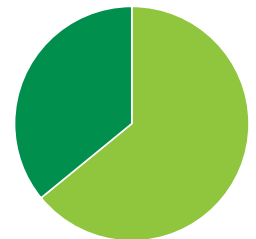
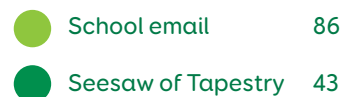
### 11. Which way of presenting class assembly do you prefer?



### 12. Do you use Seesaw or Tapestry at least weekly?



### 13. How do you prefer to communicate with the teacher?



**Thank you**

**Thank you to everyone that took the time to complete the survey**

# YOUR FEEDBACK

## A SAMPLE OF THE FEEDBACK WE RECEIVED FROM YOU

The support you have all offered and given throughout this pandemic has been incredible. I cannot thank you enough for everything you've been doing and continue to do for the children.

I thought everyone did an amazing job and my child was able to work independently and did not need me.

I think you've done amazing again!! You always do!!

100% would like the option of telephone or teams parents evening. Makes it easier to manage with school and work - we didn't like the use of nearpod when home learning. We had to use several devices which meant one of us had to sit with my son - the pre recorded lessons were good, perhaps an option to help children catch up during the summer (?) - having a recording of the assembly would be great for parents who are working - at times the work was easy, others it was too much to do in the time but that varies with child ability - love seesaw - overall the homeschooling allowed us as parents to see what our son does at school. Which I found beneficial to help talk about what he's been doing and sharing his school journey. No hope of getting it from our son! it's like getting blood out of a stone!! He should work for M15!!!

I attended Polegate school when I was younger (a fair few of the teachers are still there!) It was a great school back then, but today it is Outstanding. Witnessing just how brilliant the school has coped in the last year; the resilience, planning, keeping positive and going all out to try and maintain as much normality as possible has really impressed me and reassured me that my two daughters are in the best possible place for their education. Thank you to everyone at the school for doing what you do.

I think the work set and how the school managed it was amazing, especially hearing how it was managed in other schools. In hindsight it was the right amount and kept him busy. I did find it overwhelming to try and fit it all in, and do the extra activities and I think the way the extra activities were managed at the end of lockdown was better than the beginning.

The way the school operated during such a difficult time was exceptional. I was blown away by the dedication of all the staff at the school.

I explained in a previous survey that I split the kids across 2 floors so running up and down to each made it difficult to keep track of work set at times. The hardest thing was the level of continuity between which software was being used. When not all of the softwares (MS Teams, One Drive, Tapestry and Seesaw) work on any one IT device it's hard to keep changing devices so that they can access and complete work set. Having lessons at the same time also made it hard to have one on one time with multiple children and support them in starting a task as the other would also need help. I have no idea how on earth parents with 3+ children managed it! Again, thank you to the school and teachers for persevering and trying to maintain the same level of education.

I thought the school did fantastically in their organisation and the teachers were amazing with their enthusiasm and commitment to the pupils. Things I found hard were: 1. Lessons became quite long. 15 minutes was a good length, but they became longer, half an hour or more as time went on. 2. The spread of lessons meant it was hard to fit in other daily tasks. It would have been better for us to have morning lessons, with afternoons free. We did sometimes watch lessons back, but it was harder to see what the teacher was doing, as we couldn't pin them on the screen. 3. The extracurricular lessons were great and important, but adding a fourth lesson into a day was a struggle. We were spending about 4-5 hours schooling each day, which would have been impossible had I been working at the time (as many parents were). I was signed off sick, so it was still a struggle for me. 4. The planning was very structured, but there seemed to be a lot of different apps and portals containing information, so sometimes it was easy to get lost and miss things.

I felt that some of the work was really difficult to navigate with two children and one iPad. I do wish the live lessons were at slightly different time but again I'm sure there will always be challenges that occur so we can only try our best. I think you worked extremely hard and we are very grateful



# READING

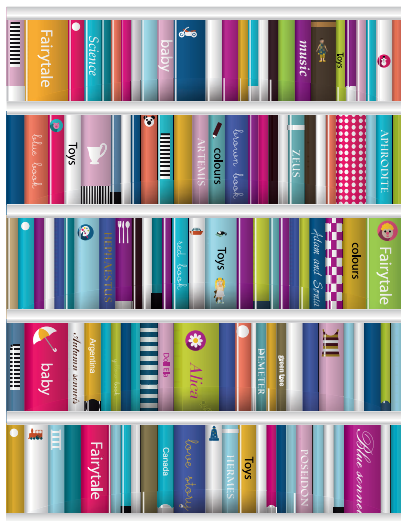
AS YOU KNOW, READING IS A  
PRIORITY FOR THE SCHOOL

WHY CAN'T I SKIP MY READING AT HOME TONIGHT?

## Pupil A

Reads 20 minutes each day  
3600 minutes in a school year  
1,800,000 words

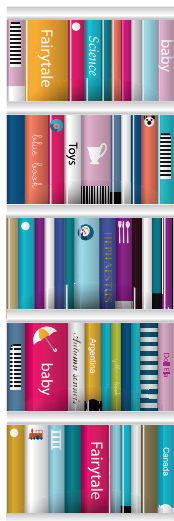
90th Percentile



## Pupil B

Reads 5 minutes each day  
900 minutes in a school year  
282,000 words

50th Percentile



## Pupil C

Reads 1 minute each day  
180 minutes in a school year

10th Percentile



By the end of Year **Pupil A** will have read the equivalent of 60 whole school days. **Pupil B** will have read only 12 school days.  
Which pupil would you expect to have a better vocabulary?  
Which pupil would you expect to be more successful in school?  
...and in life?

**What about a pupil that doesn't read regularly at home or perhaps not at all? What are their chances of success?**

This is why, at Polegate, we place so much importance on reading at home. All research and studies show that

children who read every day do better at every stage of their education. We see it in school; the pupils that read at home are making better progress.

We are very fortunate at Polegate school to have so many supportive families that promote regular reading and learning at home and this reflects

in the results our pupils achieve.

The majority of our parents do find time to enjoy books at home with their children and do record this in the home school books.

**Thank you for supporting your children and the school's vision and aims!**

# READING - ARE YOU SITTING COMFORTABLY?

**We live in an age where we can spend hours bingeing on TV box sets or surfing social media. But despite these distractions, reading remains a popular pastime.**

The reading raffle continues and teachers are checking the home school journals each week to award raffle tickets. Reading is a priority at Polegate. I am sure you know this by now and it is our expectation that children read or are read to daily. Please keep it up because it is the one thing that is proven to make such a difference in so many ways.

We know that reading is good for us as it improves our literacy, but what other benefits does it offer?

There are hidden health benefits. Studies show that it can increase our emotional intelligence as we understand a range of perspectives and motivations.

## **1. Relieves anxiety**

## **2. Helps you sleep**

## **4. Improves your memory**

It may not seem like it, but remembering simple plot lines can activate neurological pathways in your brain, which can overall improve memory and keep the brain healthy!

## **5. Improves motivation**

As well as this long list, research suggests that reading for 30 minutes a week increases health and wellbeing. Reading for pleasure has been found to improve our confidence and self-esteem, providing the grounding we need to pursue our goals and make life decisions. It can also reduce feelings of loneliness.

To the onlooker, reading can appear to be a solitary and passive activity. But the simple act of picking up a book can do us a world of good.

# DOODLE MATHS

**We are so pleased with the feedback we have had, this is proving to be a BIG hit! The children are loving it. Please feel free to continue using across the holiday- little and often! There is a challenge that your child can take part in.**

## **Doodle Spring Challenge**

Between the 1st of April and the 30th of April, Doodle are invited to join one of our Spring Challenges — the DoodleMaths Challenge!

At a time when rebuilding confidence is more important than ever, the Spring Challenge helps children to get back on track in their learning by encouraging daily Doodling.

Most excitingly, all those who take part can earn a FREE pin badge and certificate for their hard work!

The challenges will run from Thursday 1st of April to Friday 30th of April. The last day to start the Challenges will be on the 23rd April.

Children need to earn 450 stars (or 350 stars if they were born on or after 01/09/13) and achieve a 7-day streak during the Spring Challenge period.

## **How many streaks can you get?**



# CHANGE OF INFORMATION RELATING TO YOUR CHILD

We just wanted to let you know that due to the new GDPR regulations we will not be sending out data collection sheets any more. We do still need to know if there are any changes to information relating to your child.

## Changes we need to know about are:

- Medical details (any new allergies, asthma etc)
- Change of address, telephone numbers or email address

## Keep us informed

It will be up to you to keep us informed and you can do this by emailing the school office at:

[office@polegate.e-sussex.sch.uk](mailto:office@polegate.e-sussex.sch.uk)

with any changes or by completing the form which you can find on the download section on our website

[www.polegateschool.uk](http://www.polegateschool.uk)

## Crisp packet recycling

Please take your empty crisp packets to the school office



## Diary Date

Start of Term 5  
2020-21  
Monday 19th  
April 2021

## 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  
1,164 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](http://www.polegateschool.co.uk)