

news

September 2015



In This Issue

Our Great Results	2
New Staff	3
Home School Journals	4
Learning	4
Years 1 & 5 Topics	5
Years 2 & 3 Topics	6
Bonfire Night	7
Years 4 Topic	7
Past Pupils	8
Diary Dates	8
Swimming Gala	9
Governor Corner	10
End of Year Reports	11
Questionnaire	12
Attendance	15

Welcome back everyone

Welcome back everyone. I hope you all had a wonderful holiday!

We would like to give our new reception parents and pupils an especially warm welcome as they join the school. This is quite a long newsletter so make yourself comfortable with a cup of tea before you make a start on reading it!

The school takes pride in all of its achievements and last year (forever to be known as the 'Year of Uptown Funk') was quite remarkable for many reasons especially our results!

It was a testament to staff's hard work, to the loyalty and continued support of all our families and school partners, and to our pupils' enthusiasm and passion for learning. We now have a four year rising trend in all subjects.

Our results exceeded our targets and the average for all East Sussex schools! The progress our pupils make is outstanding. We do set aspirational targets for ourselves and we have exceeded the progress made by schools in the top 25% percentile nationally! A phenomenal achievement!! I am so proud of our pupils.

Take a look at how well they did inside!

Our great results

Our results exceeded our targets and the average for all East Sussex schools! The progress our pupils make is outstanding. We do set aspirational targets for ourselves and we have exceeded the progress made by schools in the top 25% percentile nationally! A phenomenal achievement! I am so proud of our pupils.

Take a look at how well they did!

FOUNDATION STAGE	2015
National	66.2%
East Sussex	74.3%
Polegate	75%

YEAR 2 2B+	2015
READING	
National	82.1%
East Sussex	82.8%
Polegate	90%

WRITING	
National	72.1%
East Sussex	74.2%
Polegate	87%

MATHS	
National	81.6%
East Sussex	83.8%
Polegate	87%

Our teaching, interventions and provisions, delivered by our competent, committed teachers and support staff, have once again delivered outstanding outcomes for pupils.

PHONICS CHECK	2015
National	76.8%
East Sussex	76%
Polegate	86.7%

YEAR 6	2015
Reading, writing & maths combined	
LEVEL 4+	
National	80%
East Sussex	79.7%
Polegate	91.8%

Reading- level 4+	2015
National	89.1%
East Sussex	89.1%
Polegate	93.4%

WRITING LEVEL 4+	2015
National	86.8%
East Sussex	88.3%
Polegate	96.7%

MATHS LEVEL 4+	2015
National	86.9%
East Sussex	86%
Polegate	95.1%

So what has been happening during the holidays?

You will have noticed that during the summer we have had some work carried out.

The bike shed has been moved leaving a wonderful space for the nursery to use and meaning the nursery children can access the Infant playground without having to come all the way through the school! It also means the children with bikes do not have to navigate the car park. I think this is a big improvement.

Work has also started on the extension. This will provide a new space for our Breakfast and After School Clubs. I am hoping we will soon see a building develop.

Year 2 classrooms have benefited from the addition of doors which means they can now use the vast working space outside the classroom for groups without the noise travelling between the working areas.

As usual the teachers and teaching assistants have been very busy creating a wonderful environment for the children's return. We now have a Stone Age cave along the corridor and the classrooms look spectacular. If you get the chance please pop in and have a look.

Our School Priority Areas

We always like to share our school development priorities with you.

These are areas that we focus on throughout the year to improve outcomes for your children. In the past reading was a focus because results in 2010 were low. Through working together we can make such a difference

Just look at the results now!

This year we will be continuing to focus on maths and writing to ensure that progress in these subjects is as rapid as it is in reading.

Last year we introduced the maths passport and we have seen an increase in progress so we will be embedding these this year and continuing to build on their success. We will also continue to send home the writing journals each holiday. Another focus area for us is further accelerating the progress for some of our more able so that our pupils achieve the highest levels beyond the national expectation.

New staff

Whilst Raheem Sterling has moved from Liverpool to Manchester City for £49m we have secured the transfer of two new teachers: Clare Marsh in Year 4 and Helen Philo in Year 5 even combined their price tag is just a little smaller! I am sure they are going to make a big contribution to the school.



Clare Marsh
Teaching Year 4



Helen Philo
Teaching Year 5

OUR NEW POLEGATE NURSERY TEAM

We have also gained a new team over in our nursery: Taeko, Olivia, Jo, Meghan and Lottie.

STARS OF THE YEAR



A very big well done to our Stars of the Year for 2014-2015.

They did not get a mention in the final newsletter of last year but they certainly deserve one now. I would like to congratulate them on their hard work.

This is such a special achievement and I loved listening to the reasons why each child was selected by their teachers

especially as the reasons were so varied. They were not the children who were necessarily the most confident or the most academic but they were the children who perhaps quietly 'got on', who behaved all the time and were exemplary role models for others.

I was delighted to see their beaming smiles as they were announced!

New home school journals

We have invested in a new journal for 2015-2016. We think will be much more useful for the children and they are personalised for our school and the work we do at Polegate.

We think these are a huge improvement and it has been great to hear such positive feedback already from parents. The children certainly love them!

We hope you find them helpful in giving suggestions about ways to help your child further at home. It contains all the basics and should be a really useful reference.

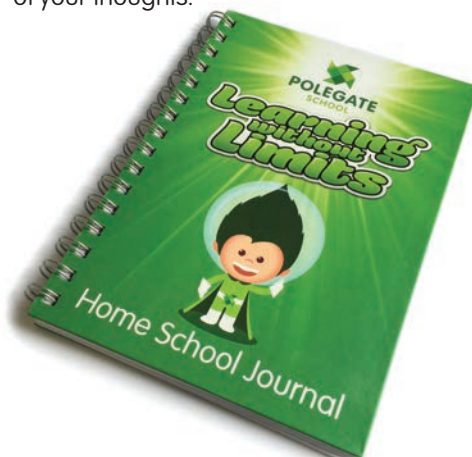
I would like to thank the Think Tank who spent time with me, helping to plan what they would find useful, as parents, in them.

These have been more expensive for us to produce than buying the old reading records and so as a result we can only provide one per child. You will want to make sure your child looks after theirs because unfortunately there

is a cost if we have to replace any and we only have a limited number. A new journal will cost £4.50.

The book is designed to last for the full year and provide a record for you of your child's progress. We hope you like them.

I am sure that as we use them we will find ways to improve them and so your feedback is vital before the end of the year when we will print these ready for the next September. Please share any of your thoughts.



LEARNING

We promote good learning through our 'Learning without limits' bookmarks.

On these the children need to collect 10 stickers to move up each rung of the ladder. Once they reach the top they are rewarded with a 'Learning without Limits' certificate in assembly. The stickers are awarded for 'Good Learning'. After collecting 6 Learning without Limits certificates they achieve, bronze, then silver then gold progressively.

We have yet to have a pupil achieve a silver or gold! That is the challenge for the pupils this year!

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Behaviour

September is always a good time to revisit some of our policies, not only for our new parents but also a reminder for existing parents.

As a school we pride ourselves on the behaviour of our pupils and have very clear policies in place to encourage good behaviour. To view the policy in full have a look on our website at <http://polegateschool.co.uk/about-us/school-policies/> and click on our code of conduct policy.

We think it is vital that children can enjoy uninterrupted learning free from any distractions. 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. To support this we will follow a 'good to be green' system. Every child in the class has a named card which is green on one side and amber on the reverse which is kept in a pocket on display in class.

- After an incident of poor behaviour all teachers will follow these steps initially with a verbal warning no consequence for this. Clear explanation for child to ensure they understand.
- If behaviour continues the child is expected to turn their card to amber. This will result in the child being unable to achieve Star of the Week; in KS1 kept in for 5 minutes; in KS2 kept in for 10 minutes. The incident is recorded.
- If continued the child is expected to place a red consequence card in their pocket. At this point they are referred to a member of SLT to complete work, discuss behaviour...
- If it continues they will place a Time Out card in their pocket.
- If your child is sent to Time Out you will receive a letter home informing you why. If your child is repeatedly receiving warnings you will be notified by the class teacher so that together we can work together to prevent poor behaviour escalating.

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. Fi

We are able to offer our new reception children a free school uniform if they are eligible for free school meals (to value of £31.50).



Year 1 - The spacemen have landed!

Year 1 blasted back to school on the first day for their 'Out of this World' topic.



Year 5 The Victorians

Year 5 discovered that life in Victorian times was not quite so much fun.

For their first day they experienced life in a Victorian school, working as a chimney sweep, going down the mines and of course all the chores a maid would do in a Victorian household!

We hope they have been able to transfer some of these skills to helping at home but somehow I doubt it! Needless to say they were pleased to be back in their school uniform the following day!



A stunning start from Year 2



Back to the Stone Age for Year 3



BONFIRE NIGHT

Our fantastic PFA Bonfire Night is on Friday 23rd October 6pm-8pm

It will happen whatever the weather and is always an amazing event. The display is organised by Frontier Fireworks who were runners up in the National Fireworks Championships, have performed regularly with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Katherine Jenkins, The X Factor finalists, performed two of the most important fireworks displays for the British Olympic Association Chairman in London Olympic Year, commemorated the 800th Anniversary of the Fire of London from the roof of Southwark Cathedral and of course our proudest moment to date with the RAF Red Arrows Aerobatic Display Team.

We are very lucky to have secured them for our event!

TICKETS ON SALE

Tickets are costing £15 for a family: 2 adults and up to 3 children, An adult ticket is £5 and children will cost £4 in advance. More details to follow but definitely a date for your diaries and please tell friends and family.

We would love to see you all there!

STALLS

Do you know anyone that would like a stall at this event or our Christmas Fayre on the 18th December. Let the PFA know now.

Year 4 Viking Day

On Monday year 4 were visited by a real life Viking!

After being shocked into silence by the sudden arrival of this fierce Viking warrior, the children learnt how to make a shield wall and a series of battle commands. They then spent some time handling replica Viking weapons, discovering just how strong a Viking warrior would have to be!

The children finished the morning by dressing a Viking slave (Mrs Murphy) and a Viking lady (Miss Marsh) in the appropriate clothing, also finding out about the jewellery and artifacts that they would have carried.

In the afternoon, the children enjoyed playing some Viking games and then preparing the body of a dead Viking warrior for their journey to Valhalla (Viking heaven).

The children were actively involved all day, participating in activities and enthusiastically asking and answering questions. A fantastic day was had by all and we are now looking forward to the rest of our topic!



Please welcome this year's prefect team



OUR PAST PUPILS

We all love hearing about the success of our past pupils and we were thrilled to hear just how well some of them have just done in their GCSEs!

My name is Charlotte Weyland and I am a previous pupil of Polegate School.

I have recently received my GCSE results after 12 years in education, 7 of them spent at Polegate and the other 5 at Willington Community School and many long weeks of revision and exams.

Although I hoped I was going to achieve well, I never expected to get 8 A* grades and 3 As. I was extremely proud and excited for what this meant for the next part of my life.

In September I will be starting college at BHASVIC and studying A-Levels in Biology, Chemistry and Physics with the hope to continue on to Cambridge University to complete a degree in Veterinary Medicine. For as long as I can remember it has been my dream to become a vet, and I have been lucky enough to have had brilliant teaching and support at both my

primary and secondary school to help me to where I am today.

I am not from a family who have had lots of money to buy extra tutoring, or send me to the best private school in the area or have been to the most prestigious Universities in the country. What I have achieved proves that anyone, regardless of how 'normal' or unimportant you feel, regardless of your social background or perceived intelligence, can achieve whatever they set their mind to.

Determine what you want, and why you want it. Once you understand what's important, you can utilise your passions and achieve anything.

Charlotte Weyland

I have no doubt at all that Charlotte will achieve her ambitions, congratulations Charlotte. We are proud of you.

DIARY DATES

28th Sept at 2.30pm
Governor 'Drop in'

INSET DAYS
2nd November
20th November

21st October 3.30pm
Our wonderful work

23rd October
Last day of term

23rd October 6pm
Bonfire Night

4th Nov at 2pm
Open afternoon for
prospective parents
2016

11th Nov 10am
Open morning for
prospective parents
2016

18th Nov at 5.30pm
Open evening for
prospective parents
2016

9th & 11th November
Parent Consultation
Evening

18th December
Last day of term 2

Swimming Gala

A lot happened at the end of last year.

We held a wonderful swimming gala at the Sovereign Centre which was as always well supported by parents who offered lots of encouragement to all swimmers.

Each year we see some amazing swimming, determination and this was the best yet! The sportsmanship and encouragement they offered each other was terrific and there were a few very close finishes which all added to the excitement!

Well done to all our swimmers.



Our Wonderful Work

21st October 3.30pm - Our Wonderful Work

We would like to invite in all parents after school on Wednesday 21st October to share with their child the wonderful work they have completed.

This is a chance for your child to show you their classroom and share all their work. We will be doing this at the end of every term as another way for you to be informed about the work they do in school.

The teachers may be in the classroom but it will not be a chance for an individual consultation about your child. These will take place in November.

SOME KIND WORDS FROM A PARENT

I just wanted to say thank you for providing such a wonderful event for Year 6 in the Masquerade Ball, they obviously all had a fantastic time and I appreciate all the hard work and time that went into making it such a special night for them to celebrate with each other.

On a slightly different note I wanted to thank you for being such a brilliant school for our son to be a part of. He has really blossomed with your help and has turned from a pupil who couldn't stand school to being a young man who now loves school and learning new information. Your teaching staff are all superb and he has had a fantastic time in your school, learning and making new friends. You have enabled him to grow in confidence and skills, and provided so many great opportunities for him to experience.

Polegate provides, in my opinion, a fantastic education to their pupils and one that is a great preparation for their rest of their educational lives and beyond.

So thanks again for being such a fantastic school.

Thank you

Thank you for the lovely gifts and cards I received at the end of the year. We received some very special cards from parents and pupils- thank you it means a lot to all of the staff.

Governor Corner

Welcome back all parents and carers and a very warm welcome to all of you new to Polegate School. This is a new section to the newsletter and we, as Governors, hope to keep you updated with relevant information and news from us.

A very well done to Polegate school for the great success of last year's year 6s who achieved amazing results and now place us in the top 25% of schools nationally for progress. As governors we would like to thank the staff for their hard work.

In this first newsletter we want to introduce ourselves and explain the role we carry out in school.

Governing Bodies represent all parts of the community: Parents, Teachers and Support Staff, Community Governors who represent local organisations and businesses, and some are appointed by the Children's Services Department. We are all volunteers, but it is very satisfying to know that we are doing something worthwhile for the children.

The Governing Body at Polegate is committed to doing all that it can to ensure that children here get the very best. Governors are often referred to as "critical friends", and our role is to support and question on all aspects of school life. We are involved in recruiting staff when the need arises.

We also keep an eye on the school budget, the state of the building, and attendance & welfare as well as, most importantly, the curriculum.

If you want to talk to one of us and if you are unable to see us in the playground, please contact Kerry in the office who will pass on to us any questions or suggestions you may have.

Who we are:

Miranda Thorpe (Chair)	Parent
Suzy Donovan	Parent
Jan Gough	Local Authority
Debbie Jones	Teacher
James Martin	Parent
Sue Heather	Teaching Asst
Nicole Franklyn	Parent

Governor Drop in

We are trying something new this year to raise our profile and give you the opportunity to meet us. We are holding a 'Governor Drop in' on 2.30pm on Monday 28th September. We hope to do this termly.

The hub will be open and a governor and Mrs Martin-O'Donoghue will be available. Come along and meet us, have a chat, ask any questions you might have or raise any ideas you would like taken forward. Please make sure we are not lonely and pop in even if just to say 'hello'! It would be lovely to meet you.

Well done Angelina

Congratulations Angelina on winning a Talent Contest



LIBRARY

I received a letter in the holiday from an elderly library user who was very frustrated at the end of term.

She was unable to park in the library due to Polegate School parents using the library car park.

She mentioned this to staff in the library who said this was a frequent problem and that she should write to the school. I have responded and apologised for any inconvenience caused but I should not have to do this. Please do not park in the library to collect from school. Many library users during the day are elderly and need to park in the vicinity. It is selfish to prevent them having access to their library.

I would like to thank you all in advance for your cooperation with this.

Breakfast Club

The Breakfast Club has been so popular and is in such demand due to its success that unfortunately for the first time ever we could not accept all the children wanting places.

Lorraine has a waiting list and as soon as spaces become available she will notify you. Sorry to any disappointed parents.

END OF YEAR REPORTS

Thank you to everyone for commenting on the new style of reports. We had a total of 103 responses to our questions.

Many of you noticed the absence of levels and some of you commented that you would have liked these. I'm afraid you can't have them back! This is not a decision we have taken as a school but the government have removed levels as a way of measuring attainment! I have mentioned this in a previous letter.

We did adapt the end of year reports last year; they haven't changed for a very long time. Your responses will help us improve them further for next year. For those of you that want more detail on them, we agree. The template we used did not provide enough space for a full comment from the teacher and we are in the process of adapting these now. Overall as you will see the new style was incredibly popular and we hope with the changes we make we will keep everyone happy.

"As part of our reforms to the national curriculum, the current system of 'levels' used to report children's attainment and progress will be removed from September 2014 and will not be replaced. By removing levels we will allow teachers greater flexibility in the way that they plan and assess pupils' learning."

Department for Education 2014

Parent view	Strongly agree	agree	disagree	Strongly disagree
1 I like the comments my child has made	58	40	2	0
3 it is important to give the children a chance to comment	68	31	2	0
3 it tells me about areas to develop for my child	54	40	6	0
4 It tells me what my child is good at	58	38	2	2

"Really enjoyed reading the report. It is really nicely detailed without being overly long. We feel it fully reflects our child and his individual personality."

"I love the new report format, especially the focused child comments and the photos!"

"Another great report. Very grateful for the fantastic teaching and support at Polegate School."

"I can only sing Polegate School's praises as it has taught all three of my children to an excellent standard and I will miss the school very much."

"What a fantastic report, and my child was happy with it."

"Perhaps you could mention if they won any awards or were rewarded within the school for doing something special or kind?"

"There is some mention of what my child could improve but I would like a little more so we know what to work on."

"I'm sorry to say but I do believe there could have been more. I was a bit disappointed as it was the last report of the year. I totally understand how it must be to work your way through a whole class."

"In comparison to previous reports, we feel this is poor and not informative."

Questionnaires

A total of 61 questionnaires were returned to school. This represents 45% of the families we have in school. We would have loved to get 100% of families to respond however this level of response is the highest yet.

We had promised a prize for the class that returned the most questionnaires. That class was in fact 2M and they received their prizes on Friday. They were each awarded with a watch.

As you can see your responses were really positive but as always we have identified areas that we can look at based on your feedback. These areas are around giving feedback on homework and knowing ways to support and help your child at home.

We have tried holding events in school to address the issue of supporting at home and these have been really poorly attended to the extent that we have had more staff there than parents! I would welcome any suggestions on what you would like because we want to help as much as we can.

I will include some more information in the next newsletter and we hope that the information in the home/school journal will help address this issue too.

Thank you very much to everyone that took the time to respond to our questions.



Parentview

As you are all aware we are accountable to Ofsted and they release their own online questionnaire called Parentview.

Ofsted look at the results during an inspection and use any information to inform their judgements. It is also helpful for us as a school as it provides another way of collecting your views.

You may already have completed one but each new academic year Ofsted archive the previous year! You know what's coming next! Please could I ask you all to register with Ofsted, it takes seconds.

We want as many responses as possible because Ofsted do view the school negatively if it does not promote and encourage parents to complete this and so does not have many responses. Pop in any time and we are more than happy to help set you up.

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



Parent Questionnaire July 2015

The Results

QUESTION 1

My child is happy at school

strongly agree	82
agree	16
disagree	2
strongly disagree	0
don't know	0

"Polegate is an amazing school - we are appreciative and grateful for staff, facilities and excellence."

QUESTION 2

The school keeps my child safe

strongly agree	82
agree	18
disagree	0
strongly disagree	0
don't know	0

QUESTION 3

My child likes the curriculum

strongly agree	74
agree	26
disagree	0
strongly disagree	0
don't know	0

"My child feels valued at the school and knows teachers and staff are there to help her."

QUESTION 4

My child is making good progress.

strongly agree	74
agree	25
disagree	0
strongly disagree	1
don't know	0

QUESTION 5

Pupils have high standards of behaviour

strongly agree	82
agree	18
disagree	0
strongly disagree	0
don't know	0

"Tapestry is great!"

QUESTION 6

Teaching is good

strongly agree	82
agree	16
disagree	2
strongly disagree	0
don't know	0

QUESTION 7

The homework builds well on what my child learns.

strongly agree	57
agree	39
disagree	4
strongly disagree	0
don't know	0

QUESTION 8

Pupils get feedback on their homework

strongly agree	64
agree	28
disagree	8
strongly disagree	0
don't know	0

"When attending school events I have always witnessed excellent behaviour. Adults are excellent role models! 'Excellent communication throughout the year- the school explains how I can support my child.' 'Well developed displays throughout the school which celebrate children's achievements.'"

QUESTION 9

I am kept informed of my child's progress.

strongly agree	66
agree	33
disagree	2
strongly disagree	0
don't know	0

"Where else can you find the underground, David Cameron and Oscar academy?"

"Teaching is excellent."

"Polegate School always deals effectively with any concerns I have."

"Vibrant stimulating classrooms and shared areas- a joy to see."

"Our daughter has made huge progress!! Thank you for this!"

"Love the idea of the older children in the playground to help the younger."

QUESTION 10

I feel comfortable approaching the school

strongly agree	80
agree	13
disagree	4
strongly disagree	2
don't know	2

"Really enjoy class assemblies."

QUESTION 11 The school helps my child become mature and take on responsibility

strongly agree	66
agree	30
disagree	2
strongly disagree	0
don't know	2

"Teachers are great, Kerry in the office is a star and extremely helpful."

QUESTION 12

My child enjoys reading and reads for pleasure

strongly agree	74
agree	25
disagree	2
strongly disagree	0
don't know	0

"Congress... amazing!"

QUESTION 13

the school has an exciting and engaging environment

strongly agree	79
agree	20
disagree	1
strongly disagree	0
don't know	0

"Behaviour always seems exceptional."

QUESTION 14

The school provides additional opportunities

strongly agree	87
agree	13
disagree	0
strongly disagree	0
don't know	0

QUESTION 15

The school has explained how I can help my child with their work

strongly agree	62
agree	31
disagree	6
strongly disagree	0
don't know	0

"The school does its utmost to help in any way."

QUESTION 16

Pupils are encouraged to strive for excellence

strongly agree	74
agree	23
disagree	2
strongly disagree	2
don't know	0

"I do feel that more homework could be set.' Reception."

QUESTION 17

The range of communication is efficient and effective

strongly agree	77
agree	23
disagree	0
strongly disagree	0
don't know	0

QUESTION 18

The school teaches British values

strongly agree	66
agree	28
disagree	0
strongly disagree	0
don't know	6

"My child always enjoys lessons especially the maths passport."

100% Attendance



A small but very healthy group of children achieved 100% attendance last year.

Good attendance remains vital if your child is going to do their best. We achieved an average of 95.4% last year which was a little disappointing. Our aim is 97%.

Holidays

You can demonstrate your commitment to your child's education by not taking holidays during term time. Any child or young person who is absent from school due to a holiday will miss out on important learning and will fall behind with their school work.

Every School Day Counts

You might think it does not matter when your child is young but all the research shows that Young people who regularly miss school without good reason are more likely to become isolated from their friends, to underachieve in tests and exams and/or become involved in anti-social behaviour when they reach secondary school. This is the age when we want children to develop good habits.

For some parents, 90% may seem like an acceptable level of attendance, but the reality is that 90% attendance means that your child will miss half a school day each week or 19 days of school during the school year – that's nearly 4 school weeks.

INSET DAY

**The next
INSET DAY
will be
MONDAY
NOV 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
507 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