

news

October 2016



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END OF TERM ONE!

I am quite sure that none of our new reception families can quite believe that a term is over already! It has just flown by and been just as busy as ever!

All the children seem to have settled really well in their new classrooms and have coped with any changes brilliantly!

As you will see in this newsletter we have grabbed any opportunity going to enhance learning so we have had African dancers, poets, paramedics all in school within the space of a fortnight!

Even this week some children in year 6 will be taking part in a Newsroom Bootcamp, where they will work alongside a BBC South East newsreporter. It takes time and effort to organise all these extra events but I think you will agree that it all helps make learning irresistible for the children which is our aim and makes it all worthwhile!

**Read
more
inside**

STOP PRESS

CONTACT DETAILS

It is important that we keep your contact details up to date so if you change your email or mobile number please remember to let the school office know and to change it on your Parentmail account.

WELL DONE HATTIE!

Hattie was our school winner in the Willingdon Community School photography competition. The photograph had to represent a journey and we all agree this is a stunning photo!



SCOOTERS BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL

Sadly, I have received many complaints from parents about children using scooters and several near misses.

Please can parents supervise children before and after school and ensure they are not on scooters along the paths or in the playground.

WELCOME

I always like to share the school priority areas with you each year because you play a key role and we believe strongly in working in partnership.

As you know our results were outstanding, higher than East Sussex and National however we can always do better!

Our focus this year is to raise the number of children reaching the expected standard in reading. Quite a challenge with the new raised expectation. In this newsletter I have explained some of the new aspects of reading and ways that you can help your child reach this through reading at home to compliment the work we do in school.

Another priority area is to ensure the number of boys in the infants reaching expected standards in writing matches the girls. The

message here is for dads, get writing! Show the boys that it is not a female activity. With text messaging, phones and emails how often do our children see adults writing with a pen in their hand? Children love copying adults so one way to help your child write is to let them see you writing.

Despite all the challenges that have come with an extra 30 children such as: moving year groups around; unfinished building work.... I think it has been a brilliant start to the year. Thank you for your support and patience. I am sure the challenges won't end here but together we will make it all work for the children.

MATHS SUPPORT FOR OUR YOUNGEST PUPILS

You may or may not be aware that as a school we invest heavily over and above in ensuring that all our pupils have the very best possible chance of success.

We offer a number of interventions with qualified teachers who are fully trained in highly regarded, proven specialist intervention packages developed by university based educational experts.

One of these is Numbers Count, a mathematics intervention aimed at catching up our year 2 children to the expected level of attainment for their age. The children work with Mrs Chadwick three times a week on a 1:1 or 1:2 basis. Last year the children made an average of 21 months progress during the two terms that they took part in the programme.

One child managed to make a staggering 34 months progress and received a prize for his achievements! Huge congratulations to all the children for their hard work.

If your child is ever offered an intervention please grab the opportunity and don't allow your child to miss out!

We even offer wonderful learning opportunities before the school day has even begun. Look out in the next newsletter to find out more about these.



BLACK HISTORY MONTH

We are celebrating Black History Month again. This month is an opportunity for us all to reflect on Britain's diversity and rich culture.

We started the month with a stunning start for the children. Two days of African drumming, dance and performance. We are incredibly grateful to the PFA who paid for this event. It was such a highlight for the children. Many of you witnessed their performance at the end of the school day. The smiles on their faces said it all!

Well done to those brave parents who were encouraged to join in!

As part of Black History Month see if you can find out why Diane Abbot made History?

What challenges did Lilian Bader have to overcome?

Who was James Peters?



DROP OFF AT SCHOOL

I have received yet another email from a concerned parent:

"Just wanted to say how disgusted I was with some parents today who seem to feel it's acceptable to park outside the school to let their kids out. Not only are they putting others at risk they are also causing grid lock. They even totally ignored the fact that Mrs Garland was standing out at the gates watching. Maybe if the said parents left home earlier in the morning then they wouldn't be in a rush and could actually park up safely."

We will be reporting any cars that we see causing an obstruction or parking illegally to the Crime stoppers website. Anyone can report a crime on line using this website. You can upload photographs and police will take action if a car is reported.

www.sussex.police.uk/contact-us/report-online/parking-issues

DIARY DATES

Friday 11th November

A quiz night at Willingdon Secondary School - for more details contact Willingdon

Friday 21st October

Last day of term 1

Monday 31st October

Start of term 2

Monday 7th November

Parent Consultations

Wednesday 9th November

Parent Consultations

Wed 9th November at 2pm

Wed 16th November at 10am

Wed 23rd November at 5.30pm

New parent meetings for Sept 2017

Monday 28th November

Year 6 London trip

Tuesday 6th December

Wednesday 7th December

Thursday 8th December

Reception Christmas Show

Fri 16th December at 3.20pm

Our Wonderful Work

Tue 20th December 2016

Last day of term

Wed 21st December

INSET DAY

Wed 4th January 2017

First day of Term 3

Tue 3rd January 2017

INSET DAY

HOMework SURVEY

Thank you to all the families that completed the recent survey.

We are finding out what the children think as well. When we have all the results back we will use your thoughts and current research to help us create a new 'Home Learning' policy.

This is a breakdown of your views as parents:

Worksheets are an effective way of learning

Yes 91%

No 4.5%

Mymaths is effective

Yes 78%

No 9.5%

I like creative projects

Yes 63%

No 36%

I like open ended tasks

Yes 86%

No 3%

I would prefer a choice of tasks so we can select one

Yes 91%

No 8%

Most of you (86%) thought that 1-3 hours was enough a week

I like a grid for the whole term explaining what is coming up

Yes 93%

No 3.7%

Do you practice your times tables with your child

Yes 34%

No 66%

Do you practice spelling at home

Yes 44%

No 56%

Do you read with your child each day

Yes 92%

No 8%

On the topic of spellings...

Quite a number of parents indicated that they would like spelling tests and lists. I am going to disappoint you on this one because they do not help children to spell.

Sending a list of words home on Monday to be tested on Friday is not teaching. Nor is getting children to write their spelling words out 10 times, even if they have to do it in rainbow colours. If spelling words are simply strings of letters to be learnt by heart with no meaning attached and no investigation of how those words are constructed, then we are simply giving our children a task equivalent to learning ten random seven-digit PINs each week. That is not only very very hard, it's pointless.

The only people who benefit from spelling tests are those who do well on them - and the benefit is to their self-esteem rather than their spelling ability. They were already good spellers.

The people who don't benefit from spelling tests are those who are poor at spelling. They struggled with spelling before the test, and they still struggle after the test. Testing is not teaching.

The next parent Think Tank is on 8th December and I will be sharing various ideas with the group.

SPORTS NEWS

SWIMMING GALA

Our boys who achieved a marvellous second in the gala competing against other local schools such as Pevensey and Westham, St Andrews, St. John's Meads... Our girls achieved a 4th place.

A brilliant result, each year we get better and better. I was so proud of our swimming team.



FOOTBALL

Our football teams enjoyed friendly matches against Willingdon School one especially cold day after school. We have a really strong team so are looking forward to great success this season. Watch this space!



SPORTS STAR OF THE TERM



Well done Oliver!



SPORTS LEADERS

A group of pupils in Year 5 have been on training to become Sports Leaders and learnt all the skills at a special training session this term.



READING

SHOULD YOU ALWAYS READ ALOUD TO YOUR CHILD?

Often as children become more fluent with reading and capable of reading texts alone we reduce the amount of reading aloud we do as parents. Should we?

NO! It is more important than ever to continue reading to your child even in year 6 especially when we consider how high expectations have become in the year 6 tests. You should not be reading books at their level to them though.

It is the type of book you read to them that matters. Read them books that are far more advanced than they could read on their own. This is vital because it prepares them to engage with difficult texts and complex ideas.

Your child will learn challenging vocabulary before they are able to read it on their own. And at a faster rate. When they then encounter these words in their independent reading, they will have the benefit of knowing more of the words they are trying to read. This will help them to decode them. I am doing exactly this myself and last night within a page we found vocabulary such as, emaciated, bedraggled, rivulets, palpable and incessantly. I don't know about you but these are not the type of words that often come up in conversation at home! Words like this do not tend to occur in spoken conversation. They only show up in written texts-

specifically, in the kind of advanced complex texts that children must read in the SATs.

So children who have been read to are likely to be familiar with the words at the next levels of their reading, words that will be barriers to other children.

In challenging books sentences are longer. In *Oliver Twist* for example, one sentence is 37 words long. It takes skill to master and understand the meaning within this. To give you an idea in the last year 6 reading test a sentence was considered a grade 26 by the Flesch reading age test. Children aged 11 are considered to be grade 5! This one sentence had 64 words and it tells us just how much expectations have been raised.

Your child will love sharing more advanced books with you because you will bring them to life! These books will be far more exciting than anything they could read on their own. They will find the challenge engaging because you can explain and stop at key points to discuss and talk about characters, emotions, events; you can reveal subtle messages they may have missed and above all else this is such a special thing to do.

Ask your child's class teacher for a suggested book list.

SUMMER LIBRARY CHALLENGE

Mr and Mrs Twit worked their magic and we had a record number of children taking part in the Summer Library Challenge!

A total of 160 children completed the challenge during the holidays. In a special assembly on Friday Mr and Mrs Twit may reappear with a prize for all the children that read the required 6 books during the summer holidays. We will have to wait and see which child is the lucky winner of the Golden Ticket and wins the gift box full of Roald Dahl goodies!

This number of children is a record for us. A massive thank you to everyone that took part.



RESPECT!

I have been devastated to hear that on more than one occasion our site officer has been verbally abused by our parents.

It is incredibly hard to find good site officers - we are very fortunate to have Nigel as part of our team and I would like to keep hold of him! He goes above and beyond voluntarily offering to run the girls' football team and has such a generous, good natured spirit. He is not the only member of staff to

face this type of behaviour since returning to school in September.

Speaking to anyone in this way is absolutely unacceptable whether that be: a cleaner, a teacher, the site officer and the list goes on. I expect everyone to behave respectfully - you would not wish to be spoken to in this way.

No matter how you may feel there are polite ways to communicate this. I am shocked that any parent would expose young children to bad language. I

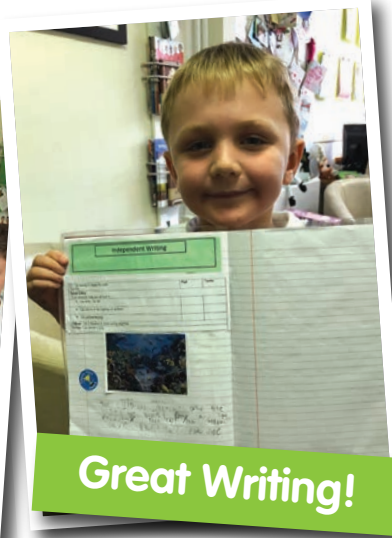
speak for most families when I say that they do not want to hear this and especially not their children!

Every single member of staff works exceptionally hard to achieve the best for your children. I am more than prepared to take a very firm stance on this. There are consequences: records are kept on file and if necessary shared with other professional agencies and schools are within their rights to ban individuals from the premises.

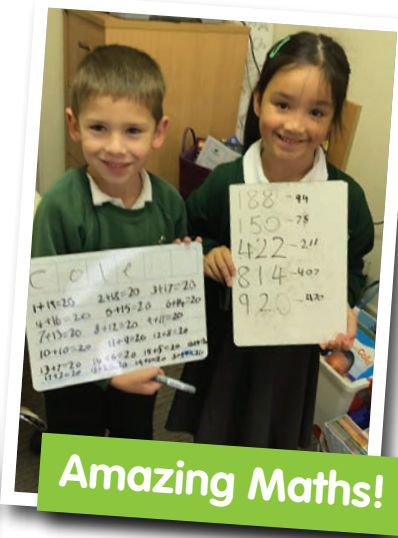
Great art in Year 6



Great Writing!



Amazing Maths!



RESTART A HEART

We were very fortunate to be selected for a visit from East Sussex Ambulance Service.

Every pupil in Year 5 learnt how they would use basic lifesaving skills to restart a heart.

What made the day even more special was that a past pupil was one of the paramedics! It was great to welcome Tom Meredith back to Polegate School. It is always such a pleasure to meet past pupils even if they do remind us of how old some of us are!

The children were all very enthusiastic and loved showing me their new skills. I hope you got a demonstration at home!



POETRY

Following a Year 4 visit to the De La Warr for a poetry workshop. Rachel Rooney, a poet then visited us to inspire the children in year 4 to write creatively.



FABULOUS FIREWORKS

Once again the PFA organised a wonderful night which was really well supported.

This is one of the biggest fund raisers of the year and just as important, an event which brings the whole community together. It was a special evening and I have heard many lovely comments about it.

The PFA have worked so hard to raise funds to contribute towards our Multi Use Games Area (MUGA). This area should be completed ready for the start of term 2 and will be such an asset to the school. Lunchtimes will never be the same again as it will provide a wonderful space for ball games!

This year the PFA would like to raise £8000 towards an outdoor gym. This is an ambitious figure so they will need all the support they can get to reach this.

Anyone is welcome to attend a meeting. Meetings are in the evenings at 7pm in the school and are very friendly. You may not realise this but as a parent at Polegate School you are automatically a member! If you want to contact the PFA their details are on the school website and they do have a Facebook page.





NURSERY NEWS

The nursery really is going from strength to strength now. We had a visit from a consultant whose report was glowing! Here is an extract:

The nursery teacher demonstrated outstanding skills of interacting with the children through learning conversations, modelling, extending and expanding language and questioning. This was done through exceedingly effective and well-honed relationships which meant that the children felt particularly safe and nurtured. Relationships with parents were outstanding and sign language was used to support communication to an excellent standard. The outdoor space enabled the children to engage and develop in a wide range of activities. High levels of engagement, motivation and independence were observed.'

I love visiting the nursery and I would fully support these observations. The nursery children have settled in very well and have a fabulous start to the year. I always see a fabulous range of activities and enthusiastic, happy children. It is brilliant now that I have a chance to get to know the children before they start in reception.

The nursery children have settled in very well and have a fabulous start to the year. This is a taste of what adventures have been happening in Nursery:

We have had a mini child led theme on superheroes as the children have shown such lovely enthusiasm and knowledge for this topic we sharing our interests and playing together.

Our outdoor learning has primarily been focussed on Autumn after the children noticed the changes in our outdoor environment and started collected Autumn treasures to share. We have enjoyed using natural Autumn materials in all areas of learning and going on welly adventures and scavenger hunts.

We saw the African drummers over at the school which fitted in beautifully as we were exploring instrumental sounds as part of our letters and sounds programme.

Pumpkin exploring



Flying Superheros!



Autumn scavenger hunt



We made our own Supertato!

RACE FOR LIFE

000504



CLASS OF 2016
WELL DONE!

Polegate School

Raised a total of £ 1,962.50

This year thousands of students, teachers
and parents took part in Race for Life and
united to help beat cancer sooner.

THANK YOU FOR BEING FUNDRAISING HEROES

Signed: *E. Hyatt*

Title: Head of Race for Life

Date: September 2016

Cancer Research UK is a registered charity in England and Wales (1089464), Scotland (SC041666) and the Isle of Man (1103)

REC100-008

Attendance!

We continue to do all we can to ensure that children are in school every day.

Please help us hit our target of 97% this year. We have not quite reached this level yet which is disappointing because it impacts on the progress our children make.

We continue to reward children with 100% each term and we have a special experience at the start of every term for the class with the

highest attendance. This year that reward will be a forest school experience with an expert. The children love getting outside and so we hope this is a great incentive!

East Sussex Behaviour and Attendance Support (ESBAS) are monitoring our pupils' attendance each term and will be contacting any families with attendance below 95%.

Class figures

Overall school attendance is currently at 96.5%. Our school target this year is 97%.

RP = 98%

RH = 97%

RJ = 98%

1A = 97%

1N = 97%

2M = 95%

2B = 95%

3B = 97%

3W = 94%

4M = 97%

4EM = 95%

5R = 98%

5G = 97%

6M = 96%

6O = 96%



Diary Dates

**Friday
21st OCTOBER
LAST DAY
OF TERM**

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 692
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 Prowor :: www.prowor.co.uk



MAYOR'S JUNIOR ART/PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

UNDER 16S POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL MAYOR'S JUNIOR ART / PHOTOGRAPHY SUMMER 2016 CASH PRIZES!!

Polegate Town Council is holding a Mayor's Junior Art & Photography competition open to all children resident in the Town of Polegate (see rules) 16 years or under.

The winner will be awarded a certificate plus **cash prizes** of **£50 for 1st place**, **£30 for 2nd place** and **£20 for third place** for the 11-16 category and **£25 for 1st**, **£15 for 2nd** & **£10 for 3rd** for under 11s category. Judging will be carried out by three independent judges.

Entries to be submitted to the Council Offices, 49 High Street, Polegate, East Sussex, BN26 6AL. **Closing date for entries 31st October 2016.** Please visit www.polegate-tc.co.uk for rules.