



Year 2 spread some Christmas cheer to our neighbours and delivered their beautiful Christmas cards in the final week - what a lovely gesture!

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HAPPY NEW YEAR

It seems like a lifetime ago and yet we have only been back for a week!

I hope you all had a wonderful break even though it was very different. We ended last term on such a high; this letter celebrates the amazing end of 2020 in school. We have however come back to term 3 with a real bump!

Thank you for your unwavering support, patience and understanding! We have needed this. I'm not going to dwell on recent events as you have been inundated with letters and communication from me about this. Instead, as ever, I want to focus on the

positives, celebrating our school and your children's hard work and efforts. Nothing should detract from this. We are totally committed to it.

We were as determined as ever to give the children a 'Fabulous Finish' and I hope we succeeded.

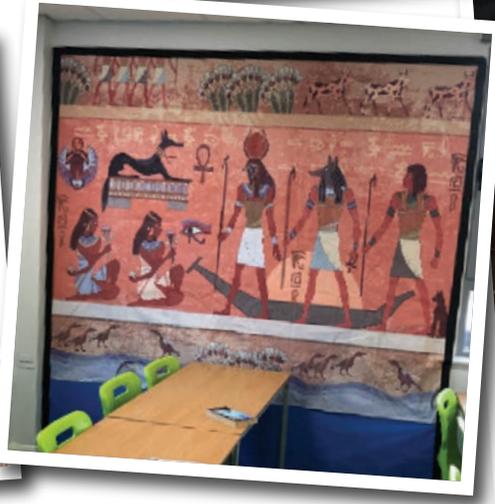
SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

School staff worked incredibly hard in the Christmas break to transform classrooms for the next topics.

This was enjoyed for one day by many children which is great and I just want to share with you as you can't come in to school just how inspiring the school looks!

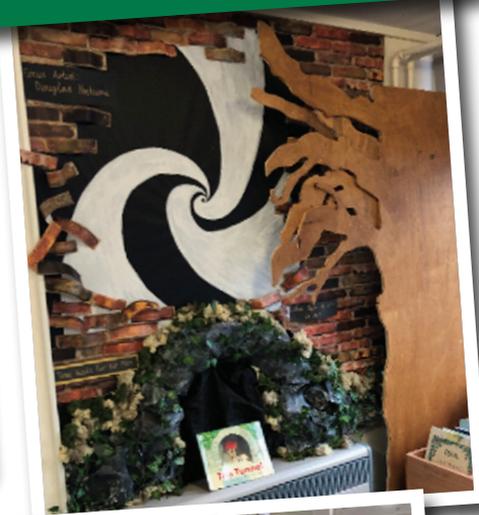
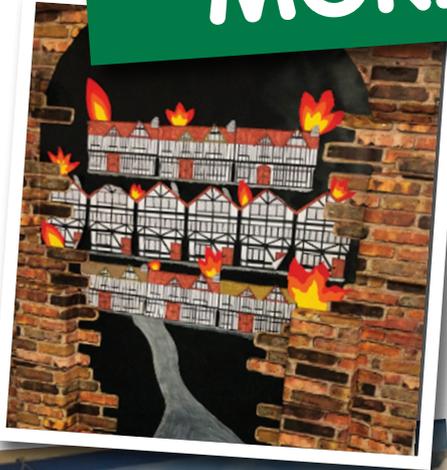
I do know that some children shared with their parents how magical their classrooms looked when they returned home after day 1. It serves to demonstrate again that we put the children at the centre of all we do. We go to such lengths for the children's benefit; not visitors (we don't have any) and not adults (who are not allowed in the building).

Every aspect of our school is important and contributes to children's learning. If we want them to feel passionate and inspired to learn then we believe it is important to create a stunning, vibrant learning environment as this is a visible way for us to show that we value their work and can celebrate their learning.





MORE SCHOOL DISPLAYS



MATHS

Timestables.co.uk
Practise your tables worksheets

We have noticed that many pupils have really lost confidence and fluency with their basic maths skills due to the first lockdown and to address this we are really promoting maths this term.

We want to encourage maths skills to be practised in the same way as we do reading- 7 times a week! The idea is little and often will help pupils' recall and fluency.

In addition to Timestable Rockstars another website that could support your child is:

<https://www.timestables.co.uk/worksheets/>

At [timestables.co.uk](https://www.timestables.co.uk) you can easily practise all of your tables. The arithmetic problems are clear and simple so you can immediately get started on practising your tables. Select one of the times tables you wish to practise from the list below and show what you can do on the speed test, Multiplication Tables Check or printout great worksheets.

The 5-step plan

Learn the times tables with the 5-step plan. We developed an innovative five step plan to help pupils learn the times tables in an effective and efficient way. This method has been tested at several schools and is recommended by teachers.

The benefits of the Timestables.co.uk website is that there are a range of ways of learning the timestables promoted, it is not just a test. You can also download worksheets to practise as well.

We advise to exercise daily for 15 minutes for maximum result.

FOODBANK

Your very generous donations to Hailsham food bank

Thank you all for your generosity. There were massive piles of food at both gates on the last day of term.



Polegate School

collected 397kg of food for Christmas.

This is enough to provide 945 meals for individuals and families in crisis within Hailsham and the surrounding area.
Thank you so much for your support.



Registered Charity in England & Wales (1041018)

CHRISTMAS ESCAPE ROOM CHALLENGE

What a special morning we all had across the whole school from arrival until the final class left on the last day of term! It really was magical and our traditional Christmas panto may never look the same again after this year's success!

Every class was immersed in solving each challenge throughout the morning. They were part of the performance with our escape room styled performance. Their mission was to save Christmas and Mrs Bailey who had been kidnapped by the evil maleficent. The special effects were second to none, Mrs Bailey and I flew (no stunt doubles!) You could feel the excitement in school. As I made surprise visits around the school checking on classes the reactions were varied from the whole class hiding under desks to booing and even being chased out. Nursery however loved me and made me feel very welcome!

One very insightful comment from a child in Year 5 that showed real empathy was that Maleficent 'must only be bad because people must have treated her badly when she was a child and really underneath she is a good person.'



'BOO! Go away.'



CHRISTMAS DINNERS



A huge thank you to our incredible kitchen staff and Chartwells for providing a delicious Christmas dinner!

New Millionaire Readers

Eva 6R: 1, 095, 893

Arianwen 4E: 1, 040, 831

Lucy 5M: 1, 016, 071

We have even hit 2 million words! This milestone has never been reached so early in the year!

Otto in 4BD has now passed 2 million words!! Congratulations Otto, that's incredible!

DIARY DATES

Parent Consultation
Monday 8th February

Parent Consultation
Wednesday 10th
February

Friday 12th February
Last day of term 3

February Holiday
No remote learning –
school shut for all.

Monday 22nd
February
First day of term 4

YOUR EMAILS

Never apologise for sending emails like this!

Hi,
I just wanted to send a little message before Christmas takes over and I forget.
Sorry to email again when you probably have hundreds every day!
But I really wanted you to know how fantastic teachers have been this week, my children are absolutely loving seeing them and doing their work at home. I can't believe how its all working so well!
We are so lucky to have you all!
Anyway I will stop emailing now I promise!
Thank you for everything you all do, I know lots of parents are so happy too and appreciate all the hard work everyone is doing.

Thank you Mrs O'Donoghue for not only coping with the extra issues covid has brought but for maintaining a wonderful learning environment. I can't imagine the stress. All of the staff I've have seen have been amazing.
Everyday there is a happy welcome for every child. Mrs Bailey is already a legend, so helpful and reassuring even in the pouring rain!
To be honest I wasn't sure how my son would be at school, I feared many yellow cards but he loves being at school. He loves his friends and his face lit up seeing Mrs Miller on teams during home school. I could see from his reaction and joining in with day of the week songs that he has a fantastic relationship with her. He talks about how Mrs Worrell helps him and how he will try hard for her, I think he may be a little in love with Zara the dance teacher.
Our other child continues to be happy and confident. I asked him if there was anything particularly awesome about his year so far 'its all awesome because you are always learning something new'.
Merry Christmas, fingers crossed the New Year will be easier.

Donation

We received an incredibly generous donation from a family of £200 to the school.

Thank you so very much, we will ensure we use this for something special to benefit the children but also thank you for your very kind words!

'Secondly to your wonderful teachers and staff that, as with you, went above and beyond your normal duties with what you have done this past year... obviously, I am sure that the school finances and PFA contributions have suffered and are much lower than they would normally be.

Therefore, please accept my small contribution.
Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year to you, your family and all the staff and teachers at the school.

FREE RESOURCES

Free resources to support lockdown learning

First News is a weekly newspaper aimed at 7 to 14-year-olds. We report the news in an age-appropriate and non-scary way that gets children engaged.

We cover issues which are relevant to children and which specifically affect them. Inside you'll find a mix of world news and UK news, but also loads of fun stuff, such as entertainment, games, animals, sport and puzzles.

Even at the moment not all news is bad and we passionately believe there are lots of positive stories out there. We love to cover the nice news too and celebrate what is good about the world.

To access the latest issue simply enter your email address at

<https://subscribe.firstnews.co.uk/free-downloadable-issue/>

You will then be given an access code that you can use each week to read the latest issue of First News on a tablet, phone, laptop or desktop.



<https://subscribe.firstnews.co.uk/free-downloadable-issue>

PHONICS PLAY



<https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/>

So, here we all are again.

Thank you all (teachers and parents alike) for the extraordinary efforts you are going to and for the sacrifices you are making. Apologies for the delay in updating the site in the light of the new school closure announcements. We were inevitably, like everyone else, running around like headless chickens trying to sort out the practicalities of home learning for our own kids.

We had reflected hard yesterday on what options we could offer that would be most useful for all of us who are in this mess together. However, a morning of sorting out devices, apps, lost passwords, sound settings and a particularly annoying printer jam for our own kids, really helped to focus our minds. In complicated times, simple solutions are often the right ones. And so... the site will once again become free for a period of time whilst the majority of UK primary schools are closed.

You may log in with the following details:

username: jan21

password: home

The username: march20 with the **password: home** will also work as we know that this will still be on lots of existing home learning documents and web pages that remain from the previous lockdown.

Our wonderful existing subscribers won't be disadvantaged as they will have their subscription extended to compensate. Thank you for the countless lovely messages from the previous lockdown telling us about the fun you were still managing to have with phonics. The days are darker now but we all know so much more about what does and doesn't work for our situations. Hang on in there. You've got this. Stay well.

CARE HOME GIFTS

Polegate's Now That's what I call Christmas'

As our school choir were not able to visit the local care homes we decided to visit them virtually instead and so we sent our number one Christmas DVD to four local care homes to cheer them up.

There are always positives from difficult situations and the creation of our school DVD was certainly one of them. Look out for the 'Now That's What I Call Christmas 2021' – wouldn't it be great to have a parents song on the next one?

If you missed out on purchasing one before Christmas it's not too late. We have extra copied available to buy.

Dear Mrs Martin O'Donoghue,

My son and I have just been watching the Christmas DVD which you put together and I simply had to write.

It is BRILLIANT!

We have watched the staff song on repeat and love that all members of the Polegate School community have been included.

The lyrics are inspired. We have been grinning from ear to hear and crying with laughter. It has honestly made our year!



It was also wonderful to see all the children having fun and really getting into the Christmas spirit so thank you for giving them this exciting opportunity and allowing them to still feel the build up to Christmas in a safe way.

I know the organisation of this and hours spent editing it must have been onerous to all involved so thank you thank you thank you. Please do pass this on to everyone.

We really appreciate all your efforts, especially when you are dealing with teaching in completely different circumstances to normal and there is so much else going on.

Lots of lovely messages from grandparents that watched at home

'I am watching with tears in my eyes it is so special'



STAFF NEWS

Goodbye Gary

Sadly, we say goodbye to Gary Moore our caretaker who is off on new adventures but thankfully we still see him as a parent and he has promised me he will still support whenever he can! We welcome Stuart Block our new, apprentice caretaker who has joined at the start of this term! What a time to start a new job in a school!

Welcome Rebecca

We also welcome Rebecca Kay who has joined as a teacher in year 6 covering Miss Regan's maternity. It is a real challenge to start teaching a class in the middle of the year, never mind when you are thrown into teaching remotely! I know that the class we will be kind and welcome her warmly!

I want to thank every single member of school staff

GOOD NEWS

Some good news to start 2021!

Spreading some joy amongst the COVID crisis is Harlow Jennifer Stevens, born on 2nd January at 11:58am. Congratulations to Louise Belmore-Child and family!



STUNNING STARTS

An Egyptian mystery to solve!

Those children that joined us on day 1 enjoyed their own stunning start to their new topics.



Year 6 were busy solving the Egyptian mystery and in the process gaining an introduction to the mysterious world of Ancient Egypt!



DEVICES FOR LOCKDOWN



Tony Holter our ICT technician has worked tirelessly to arrange 50 loans of devices to families in need of this extra support. We only provided with 22 through the DfE scheme which has not been enough to meet the need.

YOU CAN CONNECT TO MICROSOFT TEAMS USING A PLAYSTATION OR X-BOX

For help follow this link: <https://binged.it/3oCfKcP> which includes a step by step guide that talks you through how to do this or follow the instructions.

How to use your console to access Microsoft Teams

XBOX

1. Plug a keyboard into the XBOX USB slot
2. Go into my games and apps
3. Find Microsoft Edge and select
4. Type in: teams.microsoft.com
5. Use your username and login to access Teams
6. To move around use the XBOX controller or plug in a mouse.

PLAYSTATION

1. Identify the PlayStation internet browser icon (it is the WWW with dots around it)
2. Press the PS4 logo on the controller
3. Go to the library and find the options for games and applications
4. Go in the applications and you will find the internet browser
5. Type in: teams.microsoft.com
6. Use your username and login to access Teams.

WHOLE SCHOOL PROJECT

LAUNCH OF A NEW PROJECT TO INSPIRE CREATIVITY

10 X 10 PROJECT

Here at Polegate, we love creativity. We want to encourage and inspire your creativity over this lockdown period, and the best way we could do this is with a whole school project.

This where the 10x 10 project comes in. Inspired by the October Gallery, who in the first lockdown created a country wide exhibition, we are encouraging you to create a 10x10 art piece all about YOU.

We encourage you to explore, develop and investigate yourself and things that are important to you. Follow the steps below and be sure to tag us @polegateschool through every step of the way.

For more information follow this link:

<https://www.octobergalleryeducation.com/10-x-10-project>

More information will follow.



RESOURCES TO SUPPORT WELL BEING

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/your-mind-plan-quiz/>

<https://woebot.io/>

The mindshift app

<https://www.headspace.com/>

Royal Academy

Crisp packet recycling

Please take your empty crisp packets to the school office



WE NOW RECYCLE BATTERIES

We have small recycling battery boxes in the office.



Diary Dates

Friday 12th
February
Last day of
term 3

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
1144 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

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