

news

September 2014



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Welcome back!

I hope you all had a tremendous holiday. We would like to give our new reception parents and pupils an especially warm welcome as they join the school.

The school takes pride in all of its achievements and last year was quite remarkable. 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.

Our teaching, interventions and provisions, delivered by our competent, committed teachers and support staff, have once again delivered outstanding outcomes for pupils. Our Year 6 and Year 2 interim Key Stage 1 and 2 SATs results show that we have exceeded last year's results and now

have a three year rising trend in all subjects. Over half of our children attained the higher level 5 in reading- an achievement which reflects the work that has gone into improving reading standards at home and at school. Keep going with the reading!

As soon as the results are validated I will share the outcomes in more detail but we are thrilled!



Claire Martin-O'Donoghue
Headteacher



Well done Amy



Youngsters strut their stuff for Matthew 25 Mission

Youngsters from the Willingdon School of Dancing performed at Christ Church on July 13 to support Matthew 25 Mission's open day.

The dance school, based in Elm Grove, offers lessons in ballet, tap, modern, Greek, disco, drama - from the age of 4 to adults.

Amy Bateman is featured in a local paper as part of her dance school

A fond farewell



We said a fond farewell to our year 6 on the last day of term.

They enjoyed a special lunch in the hall. Patsy, our school cook, made them all special cakes delivered in hand made bags by the reception classes.

In the evening the PFA organised a 'Hawaiian themed' pool party at the DGH. They had a spectacular evening. I would like to thank the PFA for arranging such a memorable event. We are thinking of them all as they start their next adventure at their secondary schools.

Thank You

We received some very special cards from parents and pupils at the end of the year. Thank you it means a lot to all the staff. It is nice to share some with you because our pupils recognise the school as a community including parents and pupils.



To Polegate School,

You have helped me through all my years. From reception where you taught me to read and write. To year 6 and completing my SATs and also getting Star of the Year! Which is a definite honour to get but especially in year 6! There are so many pros I could list about this school. I am really going to miss the warm welcome every morning from Polegate. There are barely any cons about this school. But there is one I would think we would all agree on is... Getting a bigger school hall. All the teachers are amazing and in future I doubt they will get worse. But this school wouldn't be the same without the absolutely brilliant pupils. They are all kind people and I hope you all do well in the future. Thank you so much.

Alysha

Yes Alysha, we all agree we do need a bigger hall! I am pleased you think all the teachers are amazing and I shall try my hardest to make sure they don't get worse! I definitely agree with you about all the brilliant pupils!

SPORTS NEWS

Are any of our pupils interested in entering triathlons?

I have discovered a group called Hedgehogtri that arrange triathlons in the local area.

As we have so many talented runners, cyclists and swimmers I wondered if any of our children would like to take part. I would attend the events and could also support

with transport if this was a problem.

The next event is on the 12th October at Crowborough Leisure Centre and I hoped we could enter as Polegate School. It is a swim and then a run and below are the different groups that can be entered.

Age group	8-10 yrs Fun-aqua	11-14 yrs Fun-aqua	Tristar 1 9/10yr	Tristar 2 11-12yrs
Swim	25m	50m	150m	250m
Run	961m	1772m	1772m	2583m

All DOBs as age on 31/12/201. The entry fee is £13.00. Registration is at 9am. For more info visit:

<http://www.hedgehogtri.co.uk/web/kidstri/crow-aq.html>.

You would need to enter your child on line but please complete the slip and return if you plan to enter your child. The Kidstri series was staged for the first time in 2012. A collection of events for young people between 8-14yrs of age.

Encouraging all to try the sport out for the first time in the Olympic year.

Hedgehogtri supported by a Team of volunteers put on the events in the Sussex area with the support of Triathlon England South-east committee. Paul Hedger (Race Director) is an experienced race organiser having been involved in staging multi-sport events since 1998. Races previously organised:

Uckfield Triathlon -Adult and children's, Crowborough Triathlon - Adult and children's, Heathfield Triathlon Adult and children's, Hailsham Triathlon, Ardingly Triathlon, Burgess Hill Triathlon, East Grinstead Triathlon and Ringmer children's triathlon. He also consults on other events in the Sussex area.

Neave, year 5 completed her first triathlon on Saturday.



Child's Name:

Class:

Race entered:

Would like help with transport: ☐ yes ☐ No

PAST PUPIL

Georgia Johnson attended Polegate school until 2008.

She is now at Harrogate Army Foundation College doing her basic training and passes out in February 2015. Georgia will then go on to phase 2 training before joining her regiment The Royal Horse Artillery based at Kensington.



Naturally her family are incredibly proud of her as she was only 16 when she left home in March. We are proud too Georgia! Thank you for sharing this with us.



NEW CURRICULUM

We are teaching a new national curriculum. We spent last year preparing for these changes and whilst you will be hearing on the news that it is much harder, don't be alarmed.

We were already teaching some of the more demanding concepts last year and so your child will not notice any difference. Our expectations have always been high and we will continue to differentiate to make sure the curriculum is appropriate for all pupils.

There is a renewed emphasis on mental arithmetic and problem solving in maths. ICT is now known as computing. Pupils will begin to write in code.

The government is also removing those national curriculum levels which we currently use to measure progress. These are the levels that you will be familiar with, level 4 is the standard expected of 11 year olds. There is no replacement however! The government have



decided it is up to each individual school to decide how they would like to record progress. We are continuing for this year to use the levels we are all familiar with until we find a suitable replacement. It could be a disaster if all primary schools decided to measure progress in a different way and prove very challenging for our secondary schools. We are liaising with Willingdon Community School about any changes we make and will keep you informed.

From 2016, the average score attained in national tests will be set at 100 and each child will be given a score at, below or above that, to show their ability in relation to the average. Our current year 5 pupils will be the first to sit the new tests.

Behaviour in Polegate School

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.

Winning House

**Winning house of the year:
Orion with
3,893
house points**

Hercules gained 3,755 closely followed by Pegasus with 3,663 and then Phoenix with 3,311.

The contest begins again this year!

STAFF



We welcome **Maisie Palmer** as a permanent member of staff. You may recognise Maisie because she spent the year with us as part of her teacher training last year. She is now teaching in Year 3.

Hayley Giggs now takes on the role of Pupil Progress Champion



Many of you will remember **Mrs Giggs** as she is a very familiar face. She has just returned from her maternity leave and takes on a new role in school. She will be working to ensure that all our pupils are given the chance to reach their full potential. A particular focus group are those children that are, or have been on Free School meals over the last 6 years. You may have heard about this through the media. The government are concerned about the progress that this group makes nationally which is why they have invested so much money through 'Pupil Premium' to ensure there is no gap between their attainment and all other children. Nationally their attainment is significantly lower than other groups and widens as they move through secondary school. This is not the case in all circumstances obviously, and Mrs Giggs will be working to ensure that all ability children on the free school meal register have access to appropriate support that enable them to excel. Your child may be exceeding expectations but is there even more we can provide for them? Obviously a large influence on attainment and progress is attendance so this will be an area that Mrs Giggs will be closely tracking. If you are invited in for a meeting I would encourage you to take up the opportunity.

Governing Body News

Our Governing Body has elected a new chair - Miranda Thorpe who has a daughter in year 4. The Vice-Chair has also changed and is now Nicole Franklyn who also has a son in year 4.

Thank you to both of them for volunteering for these vital roles.

I would also like to say a huge thank you to Tim Fellows who has been a governor at Polegate School for the last 12 years! His daughters left quite a while ago now and he still continued to support the school. It could well be a record length of time to serve on a governing body!

Each school has a governing body which comprises members of the local community, parents, teachers, staff and representatives of the Local Education Authority. Our governing body consist of:

Governors have three main roles:

- To provide strategic direction for the school
- To act as a critical friend to the headteacher
- To ensure accountability

They also carry out a number of other important duties, which include:

- Determining how the school's budget is spent
- The appointing and dismissing of staff
- Hearing appeals and grievances
- Forming policy on the school's curriculum and collective worship
- Setting standards for pupils' behaviour and discipline
- Making sure school buildings are welcoming and safe
- Setting and monitoring the school's aims and policies

Polegate Playscheme

After a lot of hard work over the year the PFA successfully ran another Playscheme during the first week of the summer holiday.

If you think you might like to get involved next year why not come along to the next PFA meeting. It is **at school on Tuesday 9th September at 7.15pm**. They would love to see some new faces!



BUILDING WORK

The summer holidays were very busy in school.

The builders are creating a new room alongside year 2 which fills in an unused space and will provide a room for various learning activities including a sensory area and dark den as part of our inclusion provision.

Our reception toilets have been refurbished and the Juniors now have some new playground markings including basketball and netball.



Ice Bucket Challenge

I knew it was coming and it has! I have been nominated but we are going to discuss the issues surrounding this in assembly and I am going to let the children decide if this is something I do or not!

When there are 748 million (that's 1 in 10 of the world's population) people without safe, clean water is it right that we are being so wasteful?

Watch this space to see what they decide I should do.



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. For every new application form processed we are offering a free school uniform set to the value of £31.50).



Learning without Limits

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!

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.

School Priority Areas

Whilst writing progress increased again last year we still want to do more.

We will be continuing with the writing journals that the children have. They bring these special books home during the holidays. Please encourage your child to write in them, they are not just a diary but can be used for any style of writing your child would like to explore. They are not marked by the teacher but they are all read by the teacher and shared and celebrated when they are brought back at the start of the term. Certificates are issued for the best ones in each class.

Highly impressive handwriting

'Pupils are determined to do their very best work. Handwriting is highly impressive...' This was a comment Ofsted made in their report and was an area we focused on relentlessly from the start of last year. Obviously our approach worked and we would like to once again have a focus on handwriting before school from the very start of the year. If you remember you dropped your children off that little bit earlier before school to allow a 15 minute handwriting focus. We would like to ask you to do the same again this year. We will open the doors at or just before 8.45am for children from year 1 upwards. It might be a little too much to ask of our new reception children!

Thank you in advance for supporting this. It did make a big difference last year to their presentation and handwriting.

Maths

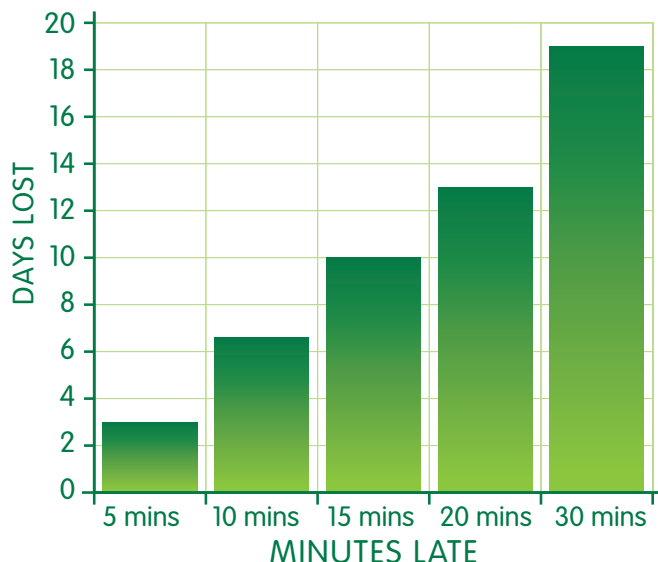
We are introducing several new initiatives this year and a great deal of our staff training opportunities after school will be focused on maths especially as the new curriculum has changed. All children by the age of year 4 are expected to know their times tables by heart up to 12x12 and in school all classes will have weekly times tables challenges.

More information will follow about an exciting new 'maths passport' we will be introducing.

Every School Day Counts

Being Late adds up to a loss of learning

- If you are 5 minutes late every day that adds up to over 3 days lost each year.
- 15 minutes late is the same as being absent for 2 weeks a year.



97% is our target

Last year we reached our highest attendance level over a 3 year period of 96%. Thank you all so much. This year will be striving for the 97%.

- Being late every day can add up to a lot of lost learning time
- Please help your child to be punctual

If you are worried about your child's attendance please talk to us at school about it or speak to:

Education Support Behaviour & Attendance Service on **01273 481967**

Diary Dates

INSET Days

Monday 20th October
Friday 19th December

Parent Consultation Evenings

Mon 10th or
Wed 12th
November

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 **348** 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 Provax: www.provax.co.uk