

# news

**November 2020**



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## WELCOME BACK TO TERM 2

**I hope that you all had a great half term break despite the wet weather! This term brings yet more change for us all and our lives will be significantly impacted - presenting challenges, uncertainty and moments of anxiety!**

As you may be aware on Wednesday evening we received guidance from the Department for Education to accompany the national lockdown restrictions which will operate from Thursday 5th November until Wednesday 2nd December.

**Find out more inside...**

# NATIONAL LOCKDOWN

**The government guidance makes clear their intention for schools: 'schools continue to remain open for all children and young people as they have since the start of the autumn term for the duration of the national restrictions.'**

Being at school is vital for children's education and wellbeing. Time spent out of school is detrimental for children's cognitive and academic development, particularly for disadvantaged children. This impact can affect both current levels of education, and children's future ability to learn. It continues to be our aim that all pupils, in all year groups, remain in school full time.' We are pleased that we remain open and agree entirely with this statement.

Our priority at this time is to ensure that the safety and well-being of our pupils and families and staff and their

own families remains central to our day to day protocols. We continue to update our own risk assessments as necessary and these are under constant review. Since mid-July East Sussex has had a weekly rate lower than the national average. We are absolutely determined to promote the best possible learning experiences for your children no matter what and I think this newsletter highlights the lengths staff are going in order to provide irresistible learning opportunities.

**Please read the Covid update included in this newsletter carefully.**

Thank you for your continued support I am very confident that together we can continue to navigate these changes successfully. The most important thing we can do for each other at the moment is to be kind.

**Never more has this been true...**

**'Be kind because everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.'**

I know it has been an incredibly challenging year for everyone, so thank you for being patient with us. School staff continue to come to work every day to continue to provide amazing experiences for the children and I am extremely grateful to them for everything they are doing, day in, day out for your children.

**School is as busy as ever and projects going on behind the scenes to improve the school continue at a rapid pace!**

**There are no limits!**

## Amazing Charity Fundraising

**Sofia makes it to the hairdressers just in time!**

**It seems our Polegate pupils are keeping the hairdressers busy with another pupil getting their lovely locks cut for charity! Sofia has raised an amazing £400 so far!**



## PARKING

**I have had a plea from residents in West Close asking if I could put a notice out to parents to stop reversing and driving onto private drives and also to stop blocking drives.**

I am pleased to say that generally they felt most parents are fine but there are one or two that sadly have been very abusive and have no social regard.

They also pointed out that this route is used by disabled persons, all they ask is for considerate parking and to stop using residents drives. They feel the main problem is parents with very large people carrier vehicles.

# COVID UPDATE

## Keeping you safe and drop off and collection times

**As we are now seeing increased restrictions again across the nation, I want to reassure you that we are doing everything we can to keep you safe. We need your help at the morning drop off and afternoon collection.**

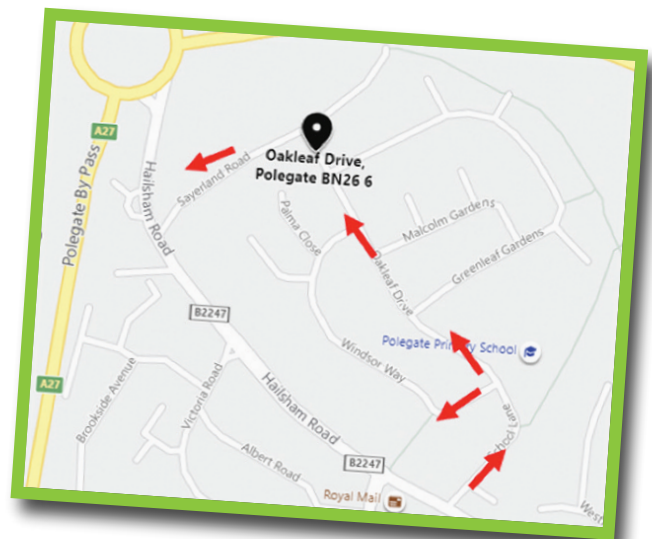
We will continue to have socially distanced queuing systems outside our school supported by staff greeting you. We may have all become a little more relaxed and comfortable but it seems an appropriate time to support the nation's efforts of reducing infection by ensuring we all strictly adhere to this guidance. Please remember that some parents will feel incredibly anxious and nervous and we all need to be sensitive to this and kind. I have had some very worried parents contact me regarding their concerns about parents congregating in groups making social distancing difficult.

As a school we have no way of enforcing our guidance outside the school gates but we would hope that parents understand the reasons for the measures we have taken and follow this.

- Please queue a safe distance of two metres apart.
- If you feel more comfortable wearing a mask then we would absolutely encourage you to do so.
- We ask that only one family member drops off or collects in order to reduce congestion. This helps us to maintain social distancing.
- Ensure your child has had their cuddle and kiss along with their bag and everything they need before you reach the gate to drop off so the queues move quickly.
- We ask that you leave promptly as soon as you have dropped your child off or collected them.
- Please do not congregate and chat with friends, as tempting as this might be!
- Please arrive at your allocated time and wait until the previous year group has been dropped off or collected before joining the queue.

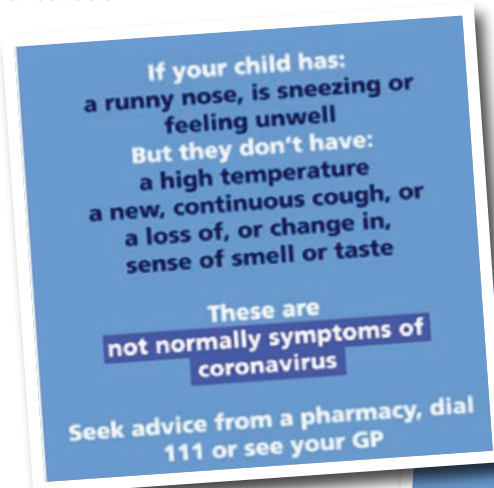
We totally appreciate the challenges caused by the narrow paths and barriers which is why there are four entrance points. If everyone follows the advice above then it should make it as pain free as possible.

**We also suggested a voluntary one-way system for traffic:**



Please do not pull up opposite the school gates to drop children off. This is dangerous and could potentially cause a serious accident. We have observed this happening and very embarrassed children getting out of vehicles.

**I know that a huge number of you are cycling, walking or scooting in - thank you!**





# SEPTEMBER 2021 INTAKE

**We would normally be holding open mornings for prospective parents this term which for obvious reasons cannot happen.**

We decided instead to create a virtual film to share with any parents considering Polegate. It was filmed over two days and captured the school as it was over those days. It really was us as we are! Nothing was scripted or planned and was very spontaneous which is what we wanted. An honest reflection of the school and range of experiences. From hours of footage a 7 min film was created. I shared it with you on Twitter at the end of last term and the feedback has been incredible. It made us cry the first time we watched it, it brought pure joy seeing the children's faces and hearing their thoughts.

A huge thank you to the team of two that created this magical film - David Sheppard at Proworx (past pupil and past parent!) and Owen Wood.

If you haven't seen it please take a look on the school website and share with other parents considering schools for September.



**WATCH THE VIDEO ON OUR WEBSITE**

## Our message to new parents

**We welcome you to our virtual open day.**

**We are sorry that we cannot welcome you personally to see the school in action due to the COVID situation.**

We are always very proud of our wonderful children who love visitors and take a pride in showing prospective parents around. We look for the positive in every situation and whilst this has given us a new challenge we are going to embrace it!

We are delighted to give you a glimpse into the school. This was filmed this year over a day and everything you see was actually

taking place in our school at that time. We share our school vision with you and explain what makes our school special.

We recognise it may leave you with more questions and so are hosting a live talk with a question and answer session to follow through Teams:

Please email the school to request the date you would like to 'virtually attend', stating your name and please feel free to email any questions you might have in advance so we can address them in our talks.

The school's senior leadership team will be there to answer any questions as they arise:

**18th November at 7pm  
26th November at 7pm**

**You will then receive a Teams invitation to gain access to the meeting.**

## Reminder

**A reminder - bring anything for Bags to School on Monday 16th November by 9am**

# YEAR 5 MARVELLOUS MIDDLE

On Tuesday 3rd November, Year 5 were transported to 221b Baker Street for our marvellous middle: **The Game's Afoot!**



**On arrival, we found Sherlock Holmes and Watson waiting for us to help them crack cases as we became super sleuths and daring detectives!**

We did some wonderful science involving Victorian methods to collect forensic evidence. We made our own detective ID's (with cool names and our own catchphrases), used clues to learn more about Sherlock and Watson and examined fingerprints using traditional charts (we never knew that everyone had unique prints!).

**Finally, Sherlock felt we had proven ourselves worthy to solve a crime for him - The Case of the Messy Miscreant!**

We had to find out who was leaving dirty cups, plates and glasses piled up in poor Mrs MOD's office by collecting and comparing fingerprints of our suspects (the culprit was found and made to apologise!). We had a fabulous journey!

**by Lucy, Elouise and Ceryn**





# WHAT IS PHONICS?

## Research is clear that using phonics to teach reading works.

Scientific studies have repeatedly found that explicit systematic phonics instruction is the most effective way to teach children how to read. Without it, some children will end up having serious reading difficulties. But what is explicit systematic phonics?

**Phonics** – teaching children the sounds made by individual letter or letter groups (for example, the letter “c” makes a k sound), and teaching children how to merge separate sounds together to make it one word (for example, blending the sounds k, a, t makes CAT). This type of phonics teaching is often referred to as “synthetic phonics”.

**Explicit** – directly teaching children the specific associations between letters and sounds, rather than expecting them to gain this knowledge on their own with no teaching.

**Systematic** – English has a complicated spelling system. It is important to teach letter sound mappings in a systematic way, beginning with simple letter sound rules and then moving onto more complex associations.

We have noticed that some children have fallen behind with their phonics due to lockdown especially in years 1 and 2. We will be prioritising this and increasing support for children accordingly. You may notice that home learning is focused more on phonic sounds.

This is something you can easily do at home through a range of simple games. Here is one you might want to try!

### I Spy-A Fun Phonics Game

Invite children to play a guessing game. Without revealing it to the child, select an object in the room and provide phonics clues to help the child guess what it is. For example, “I spy something that begins with the sound /t/.” Keep offering clues until the child guesses that the object is a table.

To find out more about how to pronounce the letters watch this short clip on Letters and sounds.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TTe5\\_Em0BHQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TTe5_Em0BHQ)

## YEAR 3 WENT BACK IN HISTORY

### Year 3 went back in history for their Marvellous Middle to the Stone Age!

The Stone Age began about 2.6 million years ago, when researchers found the earliest evidence of humans using stone tools, and lasted until about 3,300 B.C. when the Bronze Age began. It is typically broken into three distinct periods: the Paleolithic Period, Mesolithic Period and Neolithic Period. Our Year 3s know these facts and many more!



# WILDLIFE GARDEN

**Exciting news! As many of you will know the funds raised by the PFA last year were to support a project to further develop and improve the school's wildlife garden.**

**This area of the school is well used and loved by the children across the school and adds important enrichment opportunities to our curriculum.**

The project is about to start and will recreate areas within this wildlife and pond area so that the pond is able to be used safely by all ages for pond dipping and learning about aquatic creatures, vegetable patches will be built up to a better height for again all ages of children to be able to use and weed safely and one for each class or year group.

A bird hide with bird tables so children can not only learn about creatures but be able to have an area to watch quietly.

A woodland area up by the gateway in for storytelling and other outside teaching this area will have seating for a class of children. A fire pit area so we can have a fire in safety.

New planting and many other features like habitats for creatures some for children to use

As another for sanctuary for wildlife this then helps in the increase of biodiversity to the area but add to children's enjoyment.

**We try to ensure that PFA funds are used on projects that benefit ALL children and this one certainly ticks that box.**

## BABY NUMBER TWO!

This is going to be a regular feature as there is more to come!

Jennie Everett, a TA in 2MC has welcomed a beautiful new addition to her family. Baby Austin, 8lbs 6oz.



**WELCOME AUSTIN!**

# ATTENDANCE

**We are realistic about attendance this year and aware that while we have a statutory duty to report and record these figures the issues surrounding attendance this year are more complex!**

Children however are expected to be in school and if attendance drops below 95% then we will start having conversations to find out if we can support.

Any Covid illness are not included in absence figures so allowances are made for this.

These figures may well surprise you. Our attendance is remaining high! This is really positive to see. You will notice that certain groups of children still have a lower attendance than others and this will undoubtedly disadvantage them.

Whole school	97%
SEN	94%
Free School Meals	94%

**Congratulations to those children that managed 100% attendance last term!**

## DIARY DATES

**Wed 18th November**  
New parents 2021  
Question and Answer  
session 7pm

**Thursday 26th November**  
New parents 2021  
Question and Answer  
session 7pm

**Thursday 17th December**  
Last day of term 2

**Friday 18th December**  
INSET day

**Monday 4th January**  
First day of term 3

**Friday 12th February**  
last day of term 3

# YOUR FEEDBACK MEANS SO MUCH!

## Keeping you safe and drop off and collection times

**Thank you for taking the time to share feedback, I include both constructive as well as positive messages of thanks.**

It's more important than ever that we maintain these open channels of communication and we welcome all feedback. We always want to do better. We are partners in your child's education and really value your voice.

It was lovely on Friday to have a teacher bring this email to my attention – it means so much and certainly put a smile on her face and mine!

"Having a class of 30 children all at different points and with different needs and styles must be challenging and we want you to know how grateful we are that you and your team are being so proactive in finding what works for each individual to get the best from them.

Our child has really thrived and grown in confidence enormously since joining Polegate School and you are continuing this with great alacrity. Please know that we've noticed real strides in her education, and recognise this is

entirely down to the quality of teaching she is receiving at school.

Thank you to you and your team for your continued hard work and skills in teaching her and finding what works best for her."

Best regards

**And another one following a 'Marvellous Middle' experience.**

"I just wanted to say that my child is absolutely buzzing this evening after his Roman day today.

He has taken so much away from it and has shown us the war dance, talked about all the different foods and explained how they got to make the bread as well as eat it! Thank you as always for making it come to life!"

And that's exactly why we do these special experience days. Thank you for supporting these because we are well aware occasionally a costume or two is required but I think you will agree it is more than worth it to inspire and bring learning to life for the children.

## SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHS

**We can't wait to get your feedback on your child's photographs.**

**We used a new company for these. We think all the children's photographs look stunning and because the photographers had such a lovely manner with the children the expressions and smiles look so natural. Your only challenge will be trying to pick your favourite!**





# PFA NEWS

## Why not join our School Lottery?

There is a guaranteed winner every week from our school, as well as the chance to win **£25,000!** The more players we have the bigger our school winner's prize will be!!

### Sign up at...

<https://www.yourschoollottery.co.uk/lottery/school/polegate-primary-school>

## Join our school lottery today

All funds raised go to a school  
A chance to win 325,000 jackpot  
Guaranteed winner every week

## Raise Donations for Polegate School PFA whenever you shop online

Turn your everyday online shopping and free donations



Using this link and signing up to the easyfundraising site also earns us money...just for you doing your shopping!

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/polegateschoolpfa/>

## Winter Extravaganza

Just wanted to let you all know, that we may not be able to hold a winter extravaganza but that doesn't mean we can't still hold our raffle.

It's all online this year. First prize is £100 in cash with many other prizes to be won too. If any of you would like tickets, they are available here.....

<https://raffall.com/136312/enter-raffle-to-win-polegate-school-pfa-raffle-2020-hosted-by-polegate-school-pfa?fbclid=IwAR3m59BPBqyeIC9V76W0ajS-EBYlfbicyqyQl-ZchigiVUQ1FEYnxCQClc>

## Amazon Smile

You could also link your amazon account and support us by using Amazon Smile! It costs you nothing, but generates funds for us! Win win!

Simply shop at [smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/1177773-0](https://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/1177773-0) or with AmazonSmile ON in the App and AmazonSmile donates to us!



## WE NOW RECYCLE BATTERIES

We have small recycling battery boxes in the office.

# 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

Thursday 17th  
December  
**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  
**1,115 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)

Designed by Proworx: [www.proworx.co.uk](http://www.proworx.co.uk)