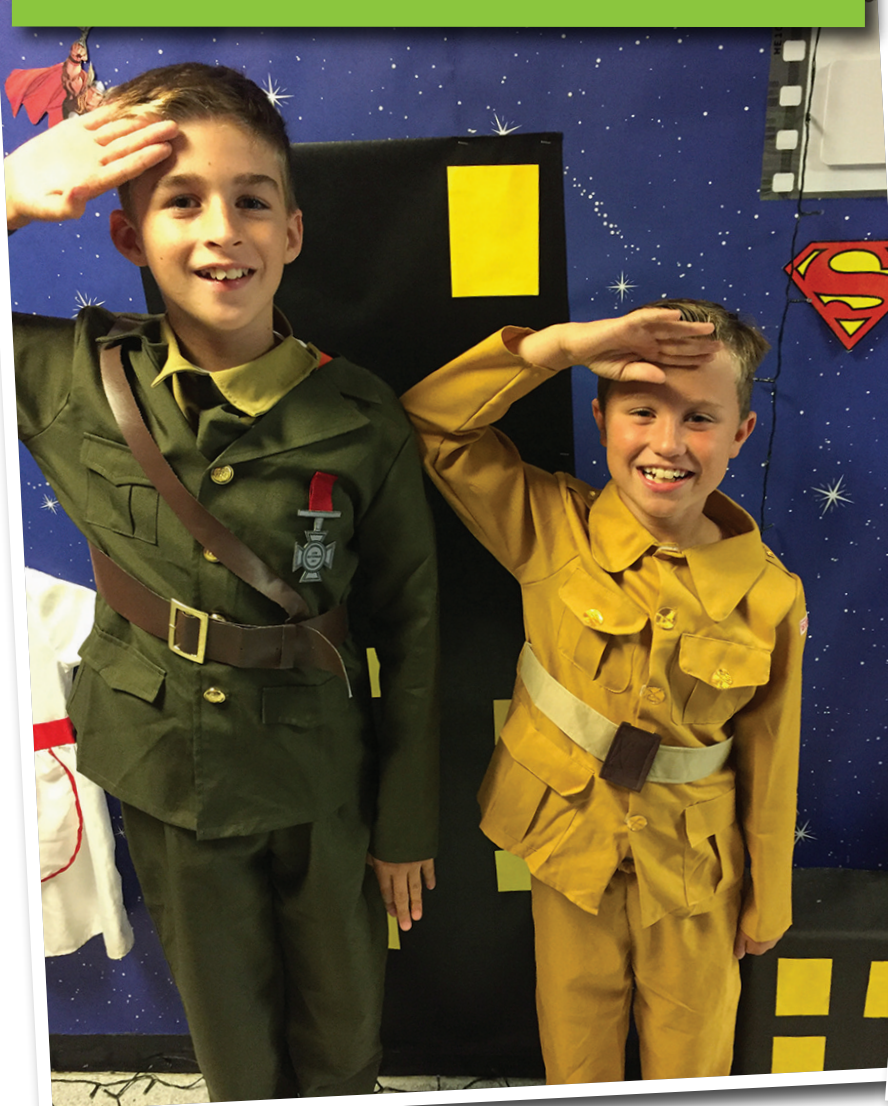


# news

September 2017

## WELCOME BACK



### In This Issue

A buzz around the school	2
In the News	3
Willingdon Expansion	4
New Faces	4
Parking Fines	5
School Clubs	6
New Prefects	7
Leadership	8
Past Pupils	9
Diary Dates	9
Macmillan Cancer	10
PFA	11
Attendance	12
Great Work	13



**Welcome back! Nothing put a smile on our faces quite like seeing your wonderful children come bounding onto the playground on the first day.**

It has been an amazing first week back and the teachers all went to great lengths to make sure the start of this year was stunning! Your children, as expected have been incredible and settled back in really quickly- they are enthusiastic and keen!



# A BUZZ AROUND THE SCHOOL

There was such a buzz around the school from astronauts in year 1 to the soldiers in year 6.

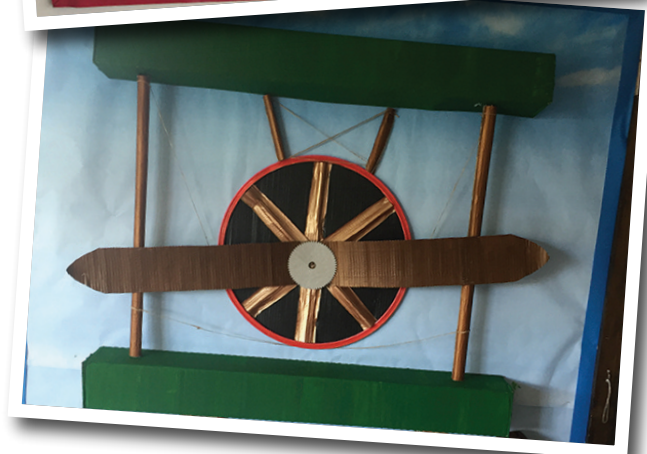
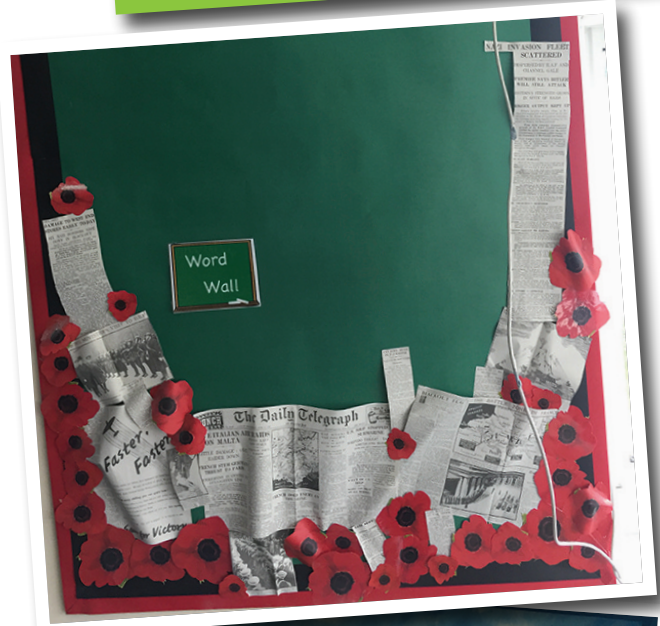
The activities planned were different and engaging and I really hope the children came out of school inspired and excited- that was our aim!

Teachers in year 2 worked tirelessly over the weekend before we came back to make sure their classes were ready for the children. It will be no surprise to you when I tell you the builders still have not completed their work- so frustrating for us all.

The whole school environment looks wonderful with some really stunning displays to engage the children



Great first day back for Year 1. So much fun with space theme.





# IN THE NEWS

**We made the local papers this week as the only school in East Sussex to achieve Flagship Status.**

We are only one of a hundred schools across the county to achieve this prestigious award and we are all really proud. There are some lovely comments in the report about your

children so do please take the time to read it. The full report, which is quite long, is available on the website. I have included a summary in this newsletter.

**Thank you for your really kind comments on Twitter!**

## Primary school is awarded prestigious 'flagship' status

Polegate School is now the only school in East Sussex to have achieved the prestigious status of a Flagship School.

The primary school is one of around 100 schools in the country to be given the award which recognises schools which have held Centre of Excellence status for three years or more.

Headteacher Claire Martin-O'Donoghue said, "Ensuring every one of our pupils achieves their full potential is at the heart of everything we do at Polegate school."

Polegate School was assessed in July this year by



**Assessors say Polegate pupils 'quite simply love their school'.**

the Inclusion Quality Mark to achieve Flagship status.

Assessor Anita Watts said, "The children at Polegate are the school's greatest ambassadors."

"The school has an exciting buzz and vibrancy and the pupils quite simply love the school."

"Children feel well supported in their progress and have enormous faith in the staff. Their behaviour is excellent. In class, they are focused and hard working, showing interest and enthusiasm."

"The lessons are creative and made fun by very talented staff."

During the assessment, assessors also noted that 'there was a wealth of evidence to indicate exceptional and outstanding practice'.



# WILLINGDON EXPANSION



**Willingdon**  
COMMUNITY SCHOOL



**It looks as though we are not the only school expanding. A consultation has gone out regarding expanding Willingdon Community School.**

Please have your say and complete the short survey, especially as many of our pupils move on to Willingdon.

East Sussex County Council (ESCC) would like to expand Willingdon Community School to provide more places for local children and young people. Demand for school places in

the area the school serves has increased in recent years, and is likely to continue, as a result of new housing developments. ESCC has a statutory duty to ensure there are enough school places and is therefore proposing to expand Willingdon Community School to create additional capacity.

If the proposal goes ahead the school would grow from 1000 places to 1200 places, increasing the published admission number from 200 to 240 with effect from 1st September 2020.

Additional accommodation would be provided to enable the school to expand.

A four week consultation on the proposal will begin on Friday 8th September and run until Friday 10th October. The consultation will go live on the ESCC website on 8th September and can be viewed by the following link below. I would encourage you to give your views on the proposal

<https://consultation.eastsussex.gov.uk/>

## OUR SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT AND NEW MOBILES

**You will see just by looking at these photos just how much work went on during the summer holidays to make the school look so good.**

Who said teachers get 6 weeks off in the summer? Year 2 are very lucky, they have the largest classrooms in the school!



## WELCOME TO OUR NEW FACES

**We welcome a number of new staff to the school this year- 6 in total!**

This is due to extra classes and maternities! They are all really positive, talented and seem very 'Polegate'! If you see them around please do say hello and introduce yourselves. In addition, we are joined by Mrs Townsend-Smith a Science teacher from Willingdon Community

School for two afternoons a week. She will be teaching Science to pupils in Year 5 and 6 this year. We think this will support transition to secondary school really well and enhance the teaching of Science across the school.

**We also have a number of new children across the school, as sadly a few of our families moved away in the summer holidays.**

We are really pleased you have joined us and look forward to getting to know you better.

I am really excited about the year ahead and look forward to many successes to share with you. This newsletter is a good start because already incredible things are happening!



# PARKING FINES BY POST

## East Sussex will be issuing fines to parents that drop off on the zig zags

**Drivers who park on keep clear markings outside schools can now expect to get an unwelcome letter in the post.**

Penalty charge notices issued by East Sussex County Council's civil enforcement officers (CEOs) will be sent to drivers by post if they drive off before they can be issued in person or attached to vehicles.

The move, which coincides with the start of the new school year, is aimed at drivers who park on zig-zag lines or 'keep clear' markings outside schools.

The council says the change will allow officers to work more efficiently and should provide more of a deterrent to stop people from parking in areas with these restrictions, which are there to improve safety for schoolchildren and other pedestrians.

The new system will apply in the boroughs of Eastbourne and Hastings and in Lewes district – the areas of the county where the council is

responsible for parking enforcement.

Karl Taylor, county council assistant director for operations, said: "We know from the feedback we get from the public that parking outside schools is a big issue.

"The roads outside many schools are very busy at the start and end of the school day, meaning some parents may be tempted to stop in places where they wouldn't usually park.

"The 'keep clear' markings are there for a reason – to ensure the safety of children and other pedestrians – and parking in these areas is anti-social and dangerous.

"The switch to posting out penalty charge notices will allow our CEOs to cover more ground and help to keep our roads and our young people safe."

The changes were agreed at the council's transport and environment lead member meeting in March. Errant drivers are fined £70, reduced to £35 if paid within 14 days.



More information is available online at

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/parking/tickets/parking-on-school-keep-clear-markings/>

### Contact information

**Tim Fletcher**

**01273 337258**

[tim.fletcher@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:tim.fletcher@eastsussex.gov.uk)

## PARKING AROUND THE SCHOOL

**Already a number of parents and residents are getting frustrated at selfish parking.**

A number of residents have also suffered abuse when challenging parents which is quite shocking. Please be respectful. One resident has struggled with it for so long they contacted our local MP! All this adds to our increasing workload as I will always respond and try to help. I would far rather be spending my time supporting your children and their learning - this is an unnecessary distraction.

It does not help the school's reputation in the community either which is a shame.

**Dear Claire,**

I have been contacted by a neighbour of Polegate School regarding the driving and parking habits of parents of pupils at the school.

I appreciate that this issue is not an uncommon one and I am sure that you revisit this with parents many times through the school year.

However, due to this gentleman being a close neighbour of the school, I would be grateful for a response that I can share with him.

**Best wishes**

**Maria Caulfield MP**

Member of Parliament for Lewes

House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA



# SCHOOL CLUBS

**I do want to take this opportunity to thank staff for running both after school clubs and before school clubs. I appreciate their commitment because this is entirely voluntary and many schools locally - larger than ours do not have clubs run by school staff.**

I mention this because every term the club letter goes out we get correspondence from parents either saying there aren't enough clubs; clubs aren't open to their child's year groups; the clubs are on the wrong day; the club their child wants to do is not running and the list goes on.

This is so demoralising for us because as much as we try and we really do - we can't please everyone! At some point in the year, for a term or more, every teacher, including me, runs a club to provide additional opportunities for the children. We do this because we love spending time with your

children, we want to provide extracurricular activities and share our interests and expertise. I am a little concerned that this is not appreciated and is becoming an expectation among parents and the result will be that staff are no longer willing to do this for us.

We do try and meet the children's requests and will add clubs they are interested in throughout the year so do please give us feedback that is constructive. We welcome that. If you have any contacts or are happy to help support a club then please let us know.

## SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

**I know that many of you completed the Summer Reading Challenge which is great - thank you.**

Lots of wonderful photos appeared on Twitter over the summer.

I haven't yet heard how many children took part but I am hoping we can beat last year's record of 160. The library will be in touch and will arrange to come in for an assembly when we will present the certificates.



## THANK YOU

**Thank you all so much for the gifts and cards we all received at the end of last year.**

We were all a little overwhelmed and very touched. We treasure these cards and gifts.

During the holidays I received a lovely email from a grandparent! Such a nice surprise to receive in the middle of the holidays and when I shared it with staff on our first INSET day the reaction was wonderful and was a chance for staff to reflect on the difference they do make.

**Dear Mrs Martin-O'Donoghue**

I am writing to you and your team to thank you all for looking after and educating my granddaughter Emily Gardiner.

My granddaughter is just about to start a new stage of her life at Hailsham Community College, but we know she has been well equipped for this by the excellent teaching and pastoral services at Polegate School. Since meeting her from school when she was in Reception to her last day in Year 6 I have always seen her come out with a smile on her face. In fact all the children coming out of the School have had happy faces and look completely relaxed. This is a reflection of the great care and work that all the team take at Polegate School.

We have greatly enjoyed attending assembly's, productions at the Congress Theatre, fetes and a whole host of other events. She really enjoyed her recent trip to Paris and was talking about her school trip to Hindleap Warren the other day. All these experiences have enhanced her personality and I am sure she will remember them into her adulthood.

So please take a moment to think of the great work you all do, I know we all value it highly.



# OUR TEAM OF PREFECTS

**Congratulations to our 2017-2018 team of prefects. They are made to undergo a gruelling recruitment process including submitting an application and an interview.**

Their applications were the best we have ever received so we have high hopes for this group!

It doesn't end with the award of a badge. Prefects have a range of duties throughout the year and have

to uphold all the school values, setting an excellent example. In this role attendance again becomes incredibly important; if they are not in school then they are letting their team down. Their training begins next week- we wish you lots of luck prefects!



## SWIMMING

**We have not increased the cost of swimming to parents in the 6 years!**

Pool costs have increased however in this time. So £10 is very little in relation to the cost and work attached to keeping the pool - it amounts to 50p a lesson!

You can pay this now through Parentpay either in full or in instalments across the year. If you have paid your child has opportunity to swim in both term 5 and 6.

**This article was reported by: the Times, Daily Mail and the BBC.**

**One in three primary school pupils can't swim at 11: Fear millions of young lives are being put at risk because of a lack of lessons**

- Almost a third of pupils leave primary school with absolutely no skills in water
- Many would be unable to get themselves out of trouble according to parents
- One in 20 schools don't teach swimming, despite it being on national curriculum

**By Andrew Levy For The Daily Mail**



# STRONG & DETERMINED LEADERSHIP

**Polegate School continues to be a highly successful school. Its attention to detail in relation to inclusive practice, ensures that the hard working and dedicated staff strive to support the children to achieve their best.**

The Head teacher puts high standards and expectations at the heart of her vision for the school, and is supported in this aim, by an effective, experienced and knowledgeable leadership team. The staff are inspired to give their best, as the Head teacher shows strong and determined leadership.

## A High Proportion of Outstanding Teaching

The quality of teaching is never less than good, with a high proportion of outstanding teaching. The leadership team, are extremely knowledgeable about the individual stages of development of staff, and coach and mentor accordingly. Excellent professional relationships are prevalent, with an ethos of trust and appreciation. This is further enhanced by high levels of dialogue, which take place formally and informally.

## Disseminating Excellent Practice

Staff reach out to other schools and there are many and varied examples of them disseminating their excellent practice. They also exhibit a desire to continually learn themselves, both within the school and outside it. Classroom practice is regularly analysed and dissected, and the school has a reflective and self-evaluative ethos. The Head teacher has emphasised that she too values the learning process, and she has embarked upon additional training for herself, for the benefit of Polegate School. Hence, she recently took the opportunity to train as an Ofsted Inspector, which gave her additional knowledge and understanding in relation to their criteria.

## Regular Pupil Progress

## Meetings

Regular pupil progress meetings take place and there is detailed analysis which leads to the identification of any child who needs additional support to make the expected progress. The Leadership Team monitor the children's workbooks, observe lessons and track data that they can continually evaluate. Governors are also involved in the monitoring and evaluation, and in this respect, ask challenging questions to check that the actions taken have made a difference.

## Outstanding Displays

Displays within the school are truly outstanding. They are an accurate indicator of the high standards the school adopts and a barometer of the expectations that the Head teacher, leadership team and other staff have for the children. Colourful, imaginative and informative displays therefore, combine both the celebration and exemplification of learning. There are high levels of artistic skills within the staff team, which further contribute to the quality of displays. The environment seeks to include all the children, in its aim of motivating their interests.

## An Excited Buzz and Vibrancy

The children are Polegate School's greatest ambassadors. The school has an excited buzz and vibrancy. They quite simply love their school and are articulate in their descriptions of all the school has to offer. Children feel very well supported in their progress and have enormous faith in the staff. They can clearly explain how the teaching team help them in their learning and make the lessons enjoyable. Their behaviour is excellent. In class, they are focused and hard-working, showing interest and enthusiasm. The lessons are creative and made fun by very talented staff.

## Parents are Valued

Parents are a valued part of the school team, and are highly respected by the staff. The school has gone to great lengths to be welcoming and to value all members of the community and different family circumstances. The thoughtful approach taken by the school has served to break down barriers, which in turn helps the children to settle well.

**This is only a summary, to see the full report please look on our website.**

## CONGRATULATIONS



**Now you are going to have to get used to seeing lots of baby photos in this newsletter- there's more to come! Mrs Barnard has started the trend!**

I would like to introduce Stanley Barnard who was so keen to arrive that Mrs Barnard didn't even have time to make it to the hospital!

Big congratulations to the Barnard family, we are so pleased for you all.

**In total we have 5 staff on maternity or about to take maternity leave!**

So now I just need Mrs Barnard to come in and spread the word amongst staff about how tough it is being a mum! In fact, parents you are very welcome to come and share with teachers the horror stories of becoming parents!

**I'm afraid I won't have any staff left at this rate!**



## DIARY DATES

Friday 13th October  
Firework Night

Monday 30th October  
Inset Day

Monday 6th November  
Parent Consultations

Wednesday 8th November  
Parent Consultations

Weds 8th & Weds 22nd  
November  
New Parent meetings

Thursday 16th November  
Individual Photographs

Tuesday 5th  
Wednesday 6th and Thurs  
7th December 10.00am  
Reception Christmas show

## BUSY START

**I think you can probably tell from this newsletter what a busy start to the year this has been!**

Please be kind to teachers and speak to them respectfully. They work incredibly hard for the benefit of your children and give so much.

You can appreciate with all the hard work and time they devote this is very upsetting for them and demoralising. It is incredibly hard to recruit exceptional teachers currently (the news tells us that no one wants to do the job) and when they are subjected to abuse, Facebook comments, rudeness I will struggle to keep our outstanding teachers who go above and beyond.

Model to your children the behaviour we expect from them and consider how you would like to be spoken to by us.

## PAST PUPILS

It is great when we hear about the achievements of past pupils and I always love sharing this with the school community. These past pupils demonstrate how you can achieve your hopes and aspirations with a lot of hard work and determination. It also makes me feel so proud. If you were a past pupil or know of one then we would love to hear what they are up to now.



**In September 2003, I had my first day at Polegate primary school. Now, 14 years later, I am preparing to move to Edinburgh to begin my life at university, studying for a degree in Veterinary medicine.**

I was at Polegate primary for 7 years, where some of my best memories include being in two congress performances, going on trips to France and York, becoming a prefect and sitting on the red and white toadstools in the garden!

I then went to Willingdon secondary school, where I worked hard to get 11 GCSEs.

For the past two years I have been studying Biology, Chemistry and Physics A-levels at BHASVIC college in Brighton, along with completing the Biology Olympiad and Cambridge Chemistry challenge, as well as applying to university.

I applied to four different universities for the Veterinary medicine course, and after having interviews at three I

was awarded a place at Edinburgh University, my favourite of them all!

I have spent my entire life with the dream of becoming a vet and I have always worked to the best of my ability to give myself the best chance of my dream becoming a reality. The chances of getting a place to study veterinary medicine first time are about 1 in 10. So out of the six other people that were in the interview room with me in Edinburgh, either one or none of us were going to get a place.

**And I managed to get in!**

It just goes to show however much you might think that something is never going to happen, or that the work you're doing is too difficult, or that you can't do something, if you persevere and always try your best, then anything can happen and nothing is impossible.

**Charlotte Weyland**

# MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT

We sadly know many families at school that have been affected by cancer. We know of children that have lost wonderful mums and dads as a result of this terrible illness and so wanted to do something to support Macmillan cancer. A charity that have provided brilliant support to these families. Please support our event. You could just turn up and enjoy some cake or bake a cake and bring it along in the morning or help make teas and coffees on the day- we are grateful for anything!



## APPLYING FOR YOUR CHILD'S SECONDARY SCHOOL

### Going up to Secondary School?

If your child is in Year 6 you must apply by 31st October 2017.

Apply online - don't miss the deadline!

[eastsussex.gov.uk/schools](http://eastsussex.gov.uk/schools)

Step-by-step instructions will guide you through your online application.

Applying online means:

- your application is safe
- you can be sure your application has been received; and
- a decision can be emailed to you.

You can access the internet at your local library.

If you prefer a paper form please email:  
[cs.customerrelations@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:cs.customerrelations@eastsussex.gov.uk)



# Parents & Friends Association

**The PFA held its first meeting on Monday 11th September. Rachel Keene a new reception parent has taken on the role of chair, which I think is very brave!**

It was a brilliant meeting with lots of new ideas and it was great to see so many new faces! Thank you to everyone that turned up. Many year groups were represented which is great.

Ideally we would love a representative from each year group so that we gather views from across the school.

It may seem daunting to walk in to the school at 7pm in the evening but I can promise you that it is really relaxed and informal. Everyone is very friendly and will make you feel very welcome. The meeting is always held in the staffroom and the next meeting is on Wednesday 4th October at 7pm. Come along and find out more!

## PFA DIARY DATES

**Friday 13th October**  
**Firework Night with Pumpkin carving competition.**

Sure to go off with a bang - don't be put off by the date! They would appreciate any donations of cakes for this event.

**Christmas Fayre**  
**Friday 15th December 6-8pm,**  
joined by our school choir!

I am delighted to tell you that last year the PFA raised a phenomenal £12,000. A total £6,163 was net profit and £5,193 went straight back into the school for the benefit of your children. This is a massive achievement and has made a difference to the school.

I would like to thank the PFA for all their hard work and everyone that has supported events. These events bring us together as a school community and this is so important!



**The new PFA chair**  
**Rachel Keene**

Money raised has been spent on an African dancer, rewards for attendance, equipment for lunchtimes when it is raining, Craze of the Week signs and equipment, ukuleles for music, prefect tabards and certificates!

**This year funds raised will go towards an outside gym!**



**The first PFA meeting in the Staffroom**

## LIBRARY

**We have just heard today that there may be a possibility that Polegate Library will be closing. The children are outraged as we are. We are planning a big campaign – more details will follow.**

# SCHOOL FAMILY SUPPORT ADVISOR

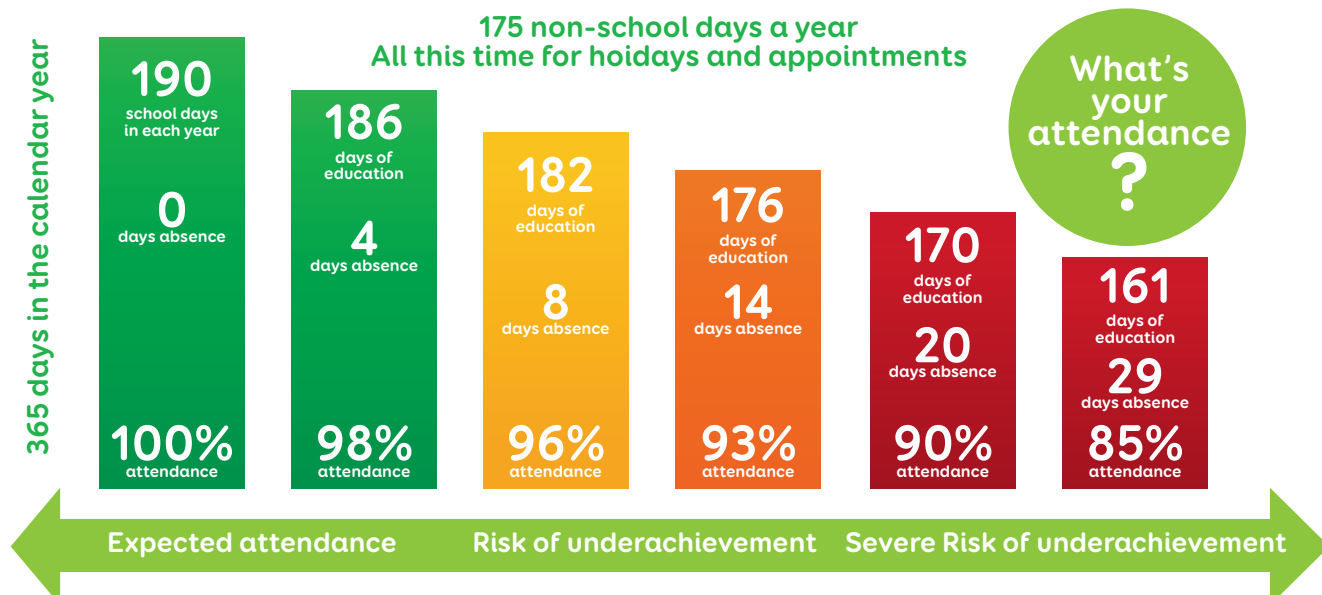
**Amanda Nippard is the school's Family Support Advisor. She will be in school on Thursdays and she will be available in the School playground in the morning's if you have anything you would like to discuss with her, catch her then or contact the school office.**

She will be running drop in coffee mornings on 21.9.17, 5.10.17, 19.10.17 so please pop along to meet her and some other parents. She will work directly with children in school running nurture sessions and supporting pupils with their well being.

Amanda has another very important role and that is supporting parents with attendance. She will be monitoring attendance across the school on a weekly basis. The focus is on pupils with historically very low attendance over a number of years.

# Good Attendance Means...

Being in school at least 98% of the time or 186 to 190 days  
That's no more than 4 days off a year



Nationally it is expected that children are in school at least 98% of the year. We are so nearly there!

Thank you for your on-going support with this. When we talk to parents about attendance please remember it is only because we care! Sadly county and schools only have to take a firm stance on attendance because some families and these are a small minority abuse the system, lie and keep their children off school resulting in low attendance year after year. We can't ignore this! We are failing children if we do because their life chances are being affected and if that means we have difficult conversations with parents then that is what we have a duty to do. Believe me I would rather not!

## LAST YEAR'S FIGURES

Whole school	97%
Improvement on last year!	
Pupils with SEN	95%
Big improvement - thank you	
Pupils without SEN	96%
Pupils with free school meals	92%
Pupils without free school meals	97%

## Attendance Miles

As a school we focus far more on positives and rewards- recognising success and this is our way of promoting good attendance.

We launched this initiative last year with support from the PFA with huge success. The children all loved receiving an

individual reward at the end of every term if they were in school 100% of the time. This is continuing and each term every child has the chance to collect a prize- at the end of the year there is a bigger prize for each child.

In addition to this we have a class prize for the class with the highest attendance each term. Last year roller discos were very popular! This recognises the team effort of the class.

County released an article this week and launched a campaign on attendance.

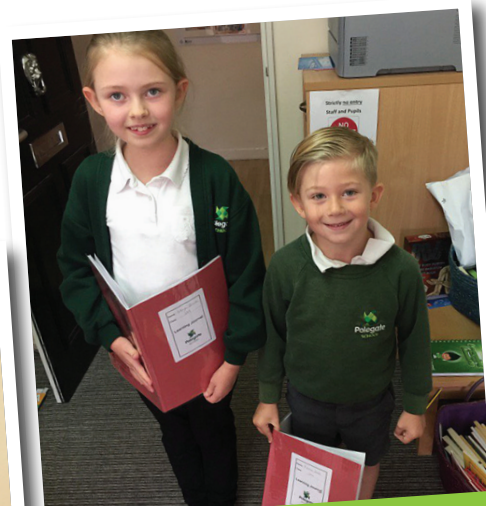




# Great Work



Faye is very pleased to be back at school & is so proud of all her home learning... there's no stopping her!



Our first visitors of the year with amazing writing! Well done Maya and Vinny!



Simply out of this world Take Home Tasks!



## Diary Dates

**Monday  
30th October  
INSET DAY**

## 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 **786** 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 Prowork: [www.prowork.co.uk](http://www.prowork.co.uk)