

Polehampton News

Thursday 11th February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,



After a very different few weeks, all the Polehampton staff would like to say a huge well done to everyone in our community. Children and parents, we have been so impressed with your commitment to learning this half term, in such difficult circumstances. Well done for learning to learn online! We absolutely know this has been a real challenge! Have a good break over the holiday.

Thank you so very much for all the kind words, videos of children and some recent deliveries of lovely treats – cakes, biscuits and flowers. We really appreciate your kindness at a time when everyone is working so hard. As we don't anticipate hearing any news until 22nd February, we can all just take this holiday to re-charge the batteries, go on some long walks or bike rides and maybe sneak in some yummy treats – you all deserve it!



Teaching staff, do take a chance to switch off your devices too! We are so proud of the way you have adapted to this new style of teaching this half term - we can see the many, many additional hours you are putting into this way of working. Admin team – you have been the masters of new tech too, as well as being email and phone ninjas! Site staff – thank you for keeping us safe during these chilly winter months. Team Polehampton, thank you!

Our “Inside Out” Slide Show

Thanks to Miss Tibbett for making our new [“Inside Out” slide show](#) – who can you spot which children or staff are wearing their clothes inside out to think about how we can't always see each other's feelings?

**Inside
out day !**



Wokingham Libraries – Click and Collect Service

We've been told that our local libraries are now offering a click and collect service – how fabulous! Do take a look – real books are so important and it's always joyful to have a new collection of books to read. <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/libraries/click-and-collect-library-books/>



Virtual Cross-Country Competition

We have now received the full set of results from this competition and wow, wow, wow!!

First of all, I was absolutely delighted with the number of children who got out and ran in the rather wet and cold weather. In total, 74 children from our two schools took part and submitted their results. A huge well done to all of you - you have

made me very proud.

Children competed in year groups with boys and girls mixed together. In the Infant age groups, there were approximately 150 children in each group; in the Juniors there were well over 200. So, I would like to congratulate the following children who managed to get top 20 positions -

- Reception - George H (4th), Faith I (7th), Ayush R (12th) and Noah G (14th)
- Year 2 - Freya R-E (16th) and Matthias M (18th)
- Year 5 - Sam J (6th) and Kaiya M (18th and 2nd girl)
- Year 6 - Dexter H (17th)

A further congratulations to the following children who ran their socks off and got top 3 positions!

- Year 3 - Wilf May (3rd)
- Year 6 - Ryan J (1st) and Charlie M (3rd)

As well as competing individually, children also scored points for our school. In total, over 30 schools were involved so I was thrilled with how each of our year groups performed:

- Reception - 1st place
- Year 1 - 5th
- Year 2 - 3rd
- Year 3 - 2nd
- Year 4 - 6th
- Year 5 - 2nd
- Year 6 - 1st

By my unofficial calculations, this made our school overall winners!

Many thanks to all the parents who supported their children with this. I look forward to returning to muddy fields for real-life cross-country competitions at some point soon.

Mrs Newman, Cross Country co-ordinator, Junior School - *Thanks for encouraging us to take part, Mrs Newman!*

Parents' Meetings

You should all now have received an email inviting you to book your parents' evening appointments online for after half term. This is a new system for us, recommended by other schools, so we hope it will prove an easier option given these times and in the future.

For separated parents, we can only issue a second account with the written permission from the first account holder - an email to the admin office is fine. Otherwise please call the office who can book you an appointment over the phone.

Bookings will close by

- Infants – Sunday 21st Feb 23.55pm
- Juniors – Friday 26th Feb 23.55pm

This is to allow staff time to check the lists so we know who we will be talking to on each session –then we can have the right notes to hand. If you want to amend your booking after the closing date, please call the office who can do it for you.

As normal, the purpose of these meetings is to have a dialogue about how your child is developing academically and to discuss any other questions you may have. Teachers would usually report on how the children are doing in their everyday lessons.

At the moment, whilst teachers will be able to give you some feedback based on what they can see on Google Classroom or Purple Mash, they can't observe the learning process or know the level of support each child has received to do the work we can see uploaded. Your insight into this will be invaluable for us to understand their current strengths and areas for development.

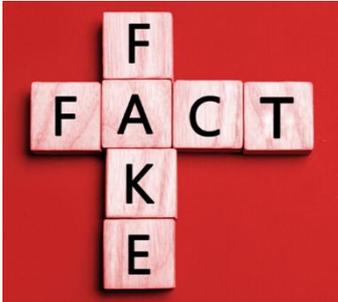
So please come along to those meeting with your thoughts on

- what's going well
- what areas need further support

We will be able to support in a number of ways

- specific advice at the meeting for your child - if we need more discussion time, we can book another meeting to talk more or review later
- If we hear frequently mentioned issues, we can respond in several ways depending what the issues are, for example
 - send out top tips to support parents
 - adjust lessons
 - use the Zoom sessions to unpick misconceptions

Please note - during those afternoons, we won't have the Junior School afternoon Zoom sessions or mark any work.



Safer Internet Day – 9th February #AnInternetWeTrust

The internet can be wonderful but we know it can be full of mis-information. The **UK Safer Internet Centre** has produced some [handy information for parents](#), suggesting ways to talk to children about checking out things that might be trying to trick them. Check out their parent information page. <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2021/i-am-parent-or-carer>

We know everyone is on screens more than usual right now – it can raise concerns about what the children are seeing when they are online. I sometimes use the analogy of a cinema – we would never let our children go and see a 18 rated film; however, they could easily see an adult rated excerpt on you tube or by clicking into an intriguing link if parental controls have not been set up. Think U Know have great advice for parents on this and lots of other issues.

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/Parental-controls/>

The Big Lockdown Learning Parent Survey

Whilst we have really good home/school communication about how things are going at the moment, it would be very good to capture the picture more widely. The [Education Endowment Foundation](#), [Teacher Tapp](#) and Parent Ping are working together to understand what learning is (or isn't!) happening in pupils' homes across the country while they are unable to attend school in the normal way due to Covid-19. Parents will be asked to download the free [Parent Ping app](#) and answer a few questions each day. Please click the link to find out more and take part. <https://parentping.co.uk/bigsurvey/>



Lunar New Year

This holiday lands on a different day each year according to when the first new moon appears in the lunar calendar. This year, the **Lunar New Year** celebrations begin on 12th February. Although often called Chinese New Year, it's celebrated as a national holiday in many other countries across Asia. The celebrations of Lunar New Year vary from culture to culture. Lunar New Year is an incredibly important festival, especially for being with family. For our families who will be celebrating this holiday, our thoughts go out to you as you celebrate in a different way this year.

Sad News for Twyford

We were all saddened to hear that Mr Gordon Storey passed away this week. Gordon was such a driving force for good in our village, working tirelessly to create events and opportunities for all to enjoy, particularly the children. Gordon was a regular visitor to assemblies in both schools, always bringing great news about exciting local events for our children. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Gordon's family and friends. He will be sorely missed but his legacy will live on.



Inset Day and Half term – Track and Trace

As Friday 12th is an Inset day so school will be closed. Just a reminder that we will not be setting any work or having Zoom sessions tomorrow.

Critical Worker and Vulnerable Children Group – school will be closed over half term.

Please continue to check your emails for school notifications as we will continue to be involved with track and trace over the holidays, as we are every weekend.

Attachments

- **Screen savers – top tips for children and adults when working on devices for extended periods**
- **Safer Internet Parent resource sheet**
- **Nursing Team February newsletter**
- **Infants – reading challenge**

We hope you all have safe and happy half terms.

Best wishes,

Miss Ball, Mrs Castell, Mrs Scott, Mrs Medcalf and all your Polehampton Team