

12th March 2021

Dear Parents

We have had a great first week back in school – and the sun is shining on the grounds outside my office window as I type. It has been lovely to welcome pupils and staff back into school and to walk round classrooms and see learning taking place. The noise of children playing at break and lunchtime has been fantastic to hear – and it has even been a pleasure to have students to whom I can say ‘tuck your shirt in’ and ‘roll that kilt down’! All the little commonplace elements of school life have meant a lot more this week as we have all come back together.

I have to publically thank the testing team, who led by Mrs Mogridge and Mrs Farley-Smith, have spent most of the week on the top floor of Mounsey where we have the testing rooms. They have worked their way through an enormous number of tests, keeping their good humour and reassuring pupils, many of whom have been a little nervous. Not long to go now until all Senior School pupils with consent will have taken all three tests. At that point the Department for Education have asked us to give pupils tests to take at home – we will write to you with more information about this when it happens.

It has been British Science Week this week and evidence of scientific endeavour has been apparent throughout both Juniors and Seniors. Mrs Jones has sent me this report:

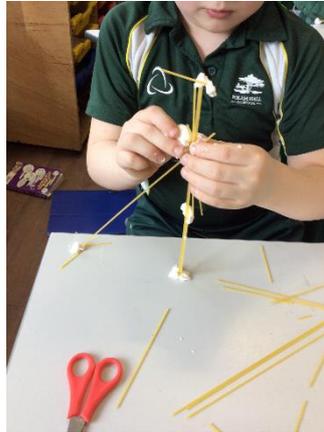
This week has been the start of British Science Week and students across Juniors and Seniors have been getting involved. Mrs Straughan's Science Club Wednesday Period 5, have been making electrical art by having to create a working circuit, using one of our Faraday Curiosity Boxes. The students had to take the artwork home and use a watch battery to make the circuit work. Poppy in Year 7 was the first one to have a go and show Mrs Straughan. We have two more Curiosity Boxes for Science club to use over the next couple of weeks which is a great opportunity to see students enjoy them.

Mrs Price made some videos for Junior students with some home practicals for them to try including making 5 minute Ice-cream and home made lava lamps, lemonade and Polos which all went down very well!

*There have also been some entries to the Design a Lab Coat competition and some very colourful ones so far (including this one by Blake in Year 8), but more entries would be great before the deadline of **April 16th**. I would also love to see some students try out the home practicals I emailed out last week and send me pictures of them doing it, to be in with the chance of Easter Egg prizes! Lots more to get involved in but thank you to all those who have taken part so far and have enjoyed British Science Week at Polam!*



Mrs Goodwin also sent me her comments about Science Week in Juniors: *We have all had a fantastic week carrying out a range of experiments and investigations. It has been great to see all of the children so engaged in science activities throughout the week.*



A lovely gift from our wonderful PHPA this week – to celebrate World Book Day this year they are kindly donating some copies of the book that we all read on the day to school: Charlie Mackesy's *The Boy, The Mole, The Fox and The Horse*. The PHPA have funded six copies for Junior School and 18 copies for Senior School. The copies of the book have been ordered and we hope that we will soon have them in school for everyone to read. The PHPA have said that this is a tradition that they would like to continue yearly to support World Book Day – thank you!

In fact there have been lots of new books in school this week as we have spent a significant amount of money on new books for Junior School during lockdown and Mrs Brown and Miss Spence have now sorted these and have them on the shelves and in brand new trolleys in classrooms for pupils to use. There was great excitement from the children when they saw them! The new books run from phonetically decodable books for Early Years right through to classic novels for Year 6. We are sure that they will re-fresh our reading resources well for children to enjoy!

I think everyone, pupils and staff, have ended the week tired but happy. Thank you to all our parents for helping us to get all the children back in so smoothly – I am very proud of the fact that we had all year groups back in lessons by the end of the day on Monday. We look forward to another positive week next week.

Best wishes

K. Reid

Kate Reid