

15th January 2021

Dear Parents

It has certainly been a cold week at Polam! The grounds look beautiful in the snow – though the site is rather treacherous and you have to keep an eye out for ice as you are walking. The photo below is the view from my office window on Thursday morning – it doesn't convey how cold it was in my office though!



Mr Wilkinson took the Key Worker children out at lunchtime to make snowmen – though I think he probably enjoyed himself more than the pupils did! Here are the results of their handiwork:



At home and in school there has been plenty of hard work going on – I have sent a letter to all parents this afternoon with details of some of the developments that we are making to our Home Learning over the next week or so. I will update the Plan B documents and new versions of them will also come out to you next week. We are all very much learning together – Mrs Bailly has asked me to give a special mention to Jayden Hayre in Year 7 for being so helpful to both her and the rest of his class as they all learn together how to make Teams work!

The letter I have sent informs you about the move to Teams for Years 3 and 4 – Miss Hopper has sent me this message: *Miss Hopper, Mrs Staerck and Mrs Johnson would like to praise Year 4 for their sensible and positive attitude to online learning. They are in the process of moving learning platforms and have shown enthusiasm and resilience when faced with something new. They have also remained calm during a few technical glitches this week. Well done Year 4.*

Mrs Jones has also sent me a report about the work that her Year 11 Chemists have been doing:

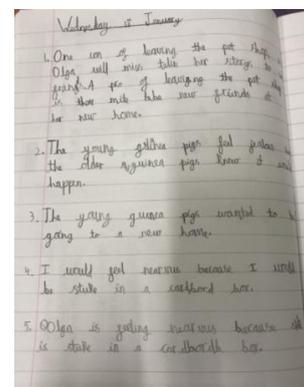
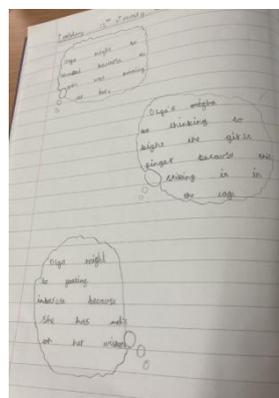
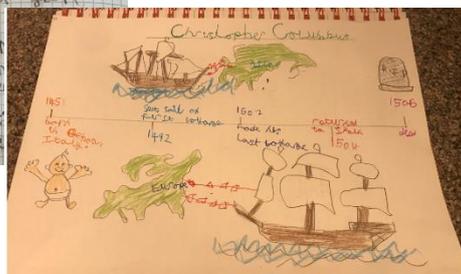
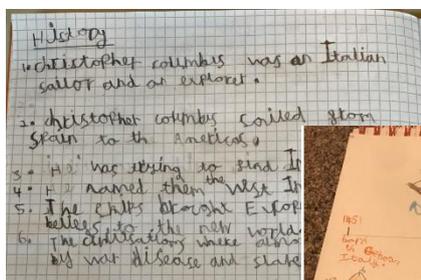
11 set 1 Chemistry have really impressed me this week with their determination and application to calculating stoichiometric coefficients and understanding how to calculate reacting masses using the mole equation. This week we tried the online whiteboard application Whiteboard.fi so I could see their working out and methodology when tackling exam questions on this. It was a great opportunity for me to observe that they really have mastered this part of the difficult Quantitative Chemistry topic at GCSE, by seeing their whiteboards and how they approached the questions and it meant I could offer tips and corrections to individual students. I have even had some students attempt some of the harder A Level questions as well on this part of the topic which is brilliant. Keep up the impressive effort and focus Year 11 Separate Chemists! One very impressed Mrs Jones.

The whiteboard application that she has mentioned was recommended by Mr Turnbull (thank you to him!). I have also been using it in my teaching as it allows pupils to do their own work which only the teacher can see. It is amazing how much we assess and guide pupils while looking over their work as they do it, something which has been hard to replicate online. The whiteboards and other applications such as Class Notebook in Teams are helping us to achieve this.

The Year 2 staff, Mrs Elsdon and Miss Barrass, have sent me reports about how well their classes are doing:

All of Year 2 have impressed me again this week with their enthusiasm and positive attitude towards their Home Learning. Here are some examples of the amazing work I have received this week from 2E at home - Zachary and Teddy for History - and from the Key Worker children in school - Eloise and Isabel for English.

Thank you Year 2 and have a lovely weekend! Mrs Elsdon.



From Miss Barrass: *"I am so proud of all the children as they adapt to working from home - they really have shown determination and have sometimes even commented on how proud they are of themselves which is amazing! Arthur has worked on his multiplication work at home*

- at the beginning of the week he struggled with the work. However, when he used his lego to 'group' he had a lightbulb moment mum said and now he is doing amazing with multiplication!!

Ella has created a beautiful landscape picture using the skills we learnt in Art this week. I thought it would be lovely to share! Camilla has been doing some amazing work with Mrs Page in school this week. She blew my socks off with her amazing maths work!! Well done to all, you are all superstars!"

Miss Dawson has been thinking of new and creative ways to keep developing the Junior School pupils' art skills, without the resources that she would normally be able to use in school. Here is her report:

Because our pupils cannot go out and play with their friends at the moment, I challenged Years 3 and 4 to create their own robotic friend with things they could find round the house. I am



thrilled with what they came up with which shows how hard they are working at home. Love to see their creativity and ingenuity.

Miss Ritchie would like to say a big well done to one of her pupils in particular: I would just like to give Eloise Weadock a massive shout out. This term in English we are looking at the book *The Great Kapok Tree*, with a focus on deforestation.. Eloise has created her own poem, without being asked. I believe using this initiative is something that other students should be able to see as it embodies Polam's 4Cs. She will be getting our 4C award this week for this.

Well done Eloise – here is her poem:

Deforestation

Oxygen, that is something that we need.
Cutting down trees takes that away, indeed!
The cutting people come with their massive saw.
It should be against the law!
Poor trees come crashing to the ground.
It makes a deafening sound!
So how can you help?
Just spread the word!
I am sure, it can be heard.
Without the trees soil would wash away.
It happens every single day, I wish the wood cutters would let them stay!

I hope this stops, do you?
If not, new trees will never get through!

The final piece of teacher praise comes from Mrs Roberts, who would like to: *give a shout-out to Y9 set 2 French, 8V German and 8WX1 German for their hard work and enthusiasm (and for making me laugh!)*

I have saved it until last because it is exactly that sense of humour that I think we all need at the moment. I know that, for most staff that I have talked to this week, it is the interactions with pupils and parents that have been the best parts of their week. None of us came into this job to sit at a screen all day – so it is great to have the live connection with our pupils. Similarly we know that our pupils are spending much more time in front of a screen at the moment and so I hope the weekend gives you all some time to get outside and be active.

Over the course of the last term we have formed a good connection with Speakers for Schools. They are an organisation that I've worked with before – normally they organise high profile speakers to go into secondary schools for free! The only catch is that each school can only have one speaker per year. However, the expansion of the virtual world has meant that they are able this year to supply schools with many more speakers – you may recall that our GCSE PE groups met Gareth Southgate virtually last term and we have had some STEM events too. This week they have sent me the following opportunities for pupils, which I pass onto you at home. They are generally more appropriate for Senior School pupils – age guidance is in the table below:

WEEK STARTING MONDAY 18th JANUARY 2021

DATE	SPEAKER	INFO
Tues 19 th January 5-6pm LINK TO JOIN	Anthony Salcito, Vice President of Microsoft Worldwide Education for KS4-5/S4-6	Anthony Salcito is the Vice President of Microsoft Worldwide Education and was previously the Vice President of the Public Sector & Government. Anthony's role involves empowering educators and inspiring students to achieve more. He aims to transform the way we all learn, with the support of the best technology, to help build the skills needed for the 21st century workplace. In this SFS broadcast, tune in to hear Anthony's thoughts on how technology has impacted education, what skills are important for your future career and get the opportunity to ask your questions!
Wed 20 th January 10-11am LINK TO JOIN	Sophie Darlington, Wildlife Cinematographer for KS3-5/S1-6	Join us to hear Sophie Darlington share insights into what it is like to be a Wildlife Cinematographer. Sophie will be interviewed by SFS on what it was like to work on "Our Planet" and "Perfect Planet", where she gains her inspiration from and will be sharing some top tips on filmmaking. A broadcast not to be missed for students interested in nature and filmmaking.
Wed 20 th January on ZOOM 2-3pm FORM TO SIGN UP	Introduction to Animation & VFX with Industrial Light & Magic for KS3/S1-3	Join Industrial Light and Magic for this ZOOM webinar about what it's like to have a career in VFX! There will be the opportunity to hear from people who work for ILM and how they started in their careers and more about their work. There will be the opportunity to ask the speakers questions too.

HOW TO JOIN THE LIVE BROADCASTS

- Join 10 minutes before the broadcast to be ready
- You can join without needing an account – [Watch how here](#)
- For full speaker descriptions visit the [Broadcast Schedule here](#)

Do let me know if you get the chance to participate!

I hope you all have a good weekend – and re-charge the batteries ready for more Home Learning next week!

Best wishes



Kate Reid