

7th May 2021

Dear Parents

I'm starting with sport this week – having got extra-curricular sport and fixtures back underway this term, there is now no stopping our PE staff. The following report is from Miss Coggins about the netball (spoiler alert: we keep on winning!)

On Thursday Night Year 9 netballers played their first fixture against Longfield since being allowed to take part in fixtures. We chose to take two teams and play a rotation. Longfield had one team and put out a strong front. Throughout a fast pace and intense game, the Polam girls held their ground (with the help of being able to swap for breaks) There was some fantastic play (and red faces) from all of the girls.

After managing to keep the scores tight all the way through, matching each goal scored from the opponents. Polam won 16 – 12



Of course the other big event today has been Number Day in Senior School. On my lunch duty, Year 7 came excitedly into the Dining Hall to tell me that they had rescued me from Eric the cat. Mr Robson sent me a report about their achievements:

Year 7 did the escape room challenge as a year group in Year 7 Reading today, with students actively engaged as Mr. Robson went through the number clues (generating discussion on if we add or multiply brackets before numbers outside of brackets) whilst Miss Vanzan attempted to control the theatre technology which Eric the Cat seemed to have managed to sabotage!

Students worked as a year group team to solve the clues and work out the last evil science periodic table conundrum from Eric the Cat who was carted off in a police car whilst Mrs. Reid was freed to do lunch duty, which the Year 7 students picked up on immediately on arrival into the dining room.

A good team effort from Year 7, something Mrs. Ryan can be proud of on her return.

Mrs Bartholomew-Millar, Head of the STEM Faculty, has asked me to tell all parents that Parentpay is still open for number day contributions, the puzzles have been emailed out to all pupils and that I have successfully been rescued from the clutches of Eric!

No doubt to counter the promotion of Maths, Mrs Squires, Head of Languages and Literature, has asked me to write about reading. You will recall that, during lockdown, we invested in MyOn – an online reading platform. Mrs Squires tells me that, so far, we have clocked up

297 hours and 19 minutes of reading via myON - that accounts for 727 completed books which is astounding. Well done to Year 7 who can account for the most amount of hours reading (103 hours and 1 minute). Year 8 follow behind with 56 hours and 56 minutes. Come on KS4, I want to see the numbers improving.

In addition, Year 4 take the lead for the most amount of books read. So far, they have wormed their way through 246 books! Year 7 are in 2nd place with 165. Well done to Ollie Graham from senior school who has read 62 books!

I would also like to congratulate the journalists from Polam Print, who filmed a news report which was circulated to all Senior School forms this week. Their journalistic skills are certainly being honed by the work that they are doing – it was very impressive! Mrs Squires has received lots of entries for this month's creative writing competition - students still have another week to get their entries in, so do get writing this weekend if you would like to enter!

In Junior School this week pupils have spent a lot of time learning outside. Miss Courtney-Walker has told me about Year 2: *This afternoon during activities, Year 2 have spent time weeding and clearing the poly tunnel and planters. They are then going to plan out their own vegetable patch for the junior school to use! Excited to see how their project comes along!*



In Year 5, Miss Blair tells me that the children have been learning about the parts of a flower. They have dissected a flower, labelled each part and written about their function.



Mrs Goodwin has sent me a picture of the children enjoying the new maps which are located on the walls of Elm Grove. The children have been keen to spend time at playtime and lunchtime looking at the maps. We have had some children locating places where they have

been on holiday, where family live and work and even looking to see if the locations mentioned in the books they are reading can be found. We're looking forward to using them as part of our lessons in the coming weeks too.



As part of their English lessons in Year 4, Mrs Staerck tells me that: *the children have been learning about a very inspirational lady named Isatou Ceesay from Gambia who found a way to upcycle plastic waste. So, this week 4HH and 4J had a go at weaving with plastic bags, it would be fair to say that some of the children soon realised how much patience Isatou and her friends must have! The children very much enjoyed this activity.*



Miss Barrass has asked me to say a big well done to Reception for their space work - they are working so hard and are really enjoying the topic. Mrs Crosby even sent me a picture of the children launching off into space, flying into orbit and examining the solar system they have created.



Miss Barrass would also like to say a big well done to Year One for working as a group to create a variety of habitats out of shoeboxes this week! She says that they look amazing!

My final message this week is from Mrs Dixon, who has asked me to remind all Junior School parents about Holiday Club which will be running over the half term. She has sent an email with details if you would like to sign your child or children up. Could I also remind any Year 6 parents who would like their child to access the free Summer School that we are running in the week beginning 23rd August to return the expression of interest slip or to email Mrs Carroll carroll.d@phs.woodard.co.uk The Summer School will be full day provision for the whole week and is open to Polam Year 6 who are transitioning to Seniors and all external new Year 7 students.

I hope you all have a great weekend – I'm just pleased to have escaped the clutches of Eric the cat...

Best wishes



Kate Reid