

Headteacher

Mrs R. Foster  
B.A. (hons), NPQML



## Pollington-Balne C.E. Primary School & Preschool

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# NEWSLETTER - 12<sup>th</sup> January 2018

## Happy New Year!

On behalf of all of the school I'd like to wish everyone a, 'Happy New Year'.

## Young Voices:

The tickets for the Young Voices concert are in the school building and ready for parents to collect from the office. Otherwise, we'll hand them out after Wednesday's Young Voices after-school club, (17.01.2018), to avoid the possibility of them getting lost in Bookbags.

Letter about the arrangements for the day is on it's way. We are recommending children are having a school dinner that day, regardless of their usual preference, as they'll need a packed lunch for the evening.

## Student Teachers:

I'd like to welcome Mr West and Mr Perkins to the school. They are two student teachers from York St. John University who'll be completing their final teaching placement with us this term. Mr West is based in Class Two and Mr Perkins in Class Five. Miss Watts and Mr Guest are still with their classes.

## HSA Lottery:

Please see the attached Lottery Fund form. Once completed, you can send your form into the Office. It's a great way of raising funds!

## Bold Beginnings:

During December, Ofsted published a report entitled, 'Bold Beginnings'. The report put great emphasis on the importance of the early development of literacy and numeracy skills and the significant and positive impact it has later in on a child's life. A copy of the report can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reception-curriculum-in-good-and-outstanding-primary-schools-bold-beginnings>

The report has prompted much discussion between Early Years practitioners but does make reference to key findings made during the study of Early Years' settings. Please see the findings at the end of the Newsletter.



**Dare to Dream, Love to Learn**

I would like to draw attention to 'Reading was at the heart of the curriculum'. The impact on children reading from an early age to not doing has been proven to be the difference between a 'C' 'A' grade at GCSE.

Thank you therefore to all parents who read regularly on what I'm sure will be, very busy evenings!

## **Head Lice:**

We still have cases of head lice in school. Can I please stress the importance of checking children's hair. It may not be that children 'itch' when the head lice have taken lodgings in children's hair. Should children have them, a visit to the pharmacy can provide you with free medication to get rid of the pests once asked for, there are a few comb kits in school that are £5.50 and are extremely good used with conditioner.

## **Half Termly Value:**

This term's half termly value is: **Courage**. The focus of Worship will be around this theme.

## **Farewell:**

We did say good bye to Mrs Watson, the School Administration Assistant, at the end of term. Mrs Watson had been offered another position working with her sister. We have appointed Mrs Watkinson as Mrs Watson's replacement. Mrs Watkinson currently works at Campsmount High but will soon be joining our team.

## **Car Park:**

Can I remind drivers to be extra vigilant when exiting the car park. The volume of traffic at that time does make it tricky and visibility can be restricted through other parked vehicles.

## **Dates for the diary, including any changes:**

### **January**

	Mon 8th	Staff Training Day
Tues 9th		School re-opens to children
Mon 15th		<b>Homework Projects sent home</b>
Thurs 18th		Young Voices Concert for Parents, 9:00am in Pollington Church
		<b>Class 2 Cake Sale at 3.30pm</b>
Fri 19th		Young Voices Concert, Sheffield Motorpoint Arena

Mon 22nd

World Religions Day

Fri 27th

### **February**

Thurs 8th

Non-uniform day

Fri 9th

School closes for half-term break

Mon 19th

School re-opens to pupils

Mon 26th

St. David's Day worship, 9:00 in church

Wed 28th

**Homework Projects sent out**

### **March**

**Class 1 cake sale, 3:30pm**

Thurs 1st

World Book Day

Fri 2nd

Tues 13th

Parent Consultation Evening, 2:30—4:30

Wed 14th

Parent Consultation Evening, 3:45—5:00

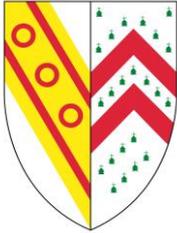
Thurs 15th

Spring Term school debate, 2:30

Parent Consultation Evening, 5:00—7:00

Mon 19th

Easter Service, 11:15 in church



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Tues 20th

Awards Evening and singing competition,  
6:00pm in church

Thurs 22nd

**Class 5 cake sale, 3:30**

**Family Meal, 12:00**

Fri 23rd

Sports Relief, school closes for Easter

## Key findings Taken from 'Bold Beginnings'

The headteachers recognised that a successful Reception Year was fundamental to their school's success. They were clear that children's achievements up to the age of five can determine their life chances. They did not accept the view that some will 'catch up later'.

In the schools visited, leaders and staff had significantly increased their expectations for how reading, writing and mathematics are taught since the implementation of the 2014 national curriculum. Many headteachers expressed considerable concern that simply to meet the early learning goals (ELGs) was insufficient preparation for children's learning in Year 1 and beyond. They therefore designed their Reception curriculum to give children the necessary foundations for the rest of their schooling. **These schools were clear that Reception children need more than a repeat of their pre-school experiences in Nursery or earlier.**

**There is no clear curriculum in Reception.** Most leaders and staff in the schools visited acknowledged that there was little guidance about what four- and five-year-olds should be taught, beyond the content of the ELGs. They therefore determined their own curriculum, above and beyond the statements in the EYFSP, to prevent staff using the ELGs as their sole framework for teaching.

**Many of the schools visited found the processes of the EYFSP burdensome.** Headteachers were keen to reduce teachers' workload by recognising that, although some assessments were best made from observations, others were not.

The headteachers prioritised language and literacy as the cornerstones of learning. They ensured that sufficient time was given to developing children's spoken language and teaching them to read and write.

**Reading was at the heart of the curriculum.** Children read out loud frequently from carefully selected books that closely matched their phonic knowledge. **Story time was a valued part of the daily routine.** Staff recognised it as essential in developing children's language, vocabulary and comprehension.

In schools visited where writing was of a high standard, the children were able to write simple sentences and more by the end of Reception. They were mastering the spelling of phonically regular words and common exception words. These schools paid good attention to children's posture and pencil grip when children were writing. They used pencils and exercise books, while children sat at tables, to support good, controlled letter formation.



**Dare to Dream, Love to Learn**

**Most of the schools had designed their own mathematics curriculum, based on the Year 1 national curriculum programme of study. This provided a strong basis for more complex learning later.** However, leaders were much clearer about their expectations for children's literacy than for mathematics.

**All the schools visited planned a judicious balance of direct whole-class teaching, small-group teaching, partner work and play.** They were clear about and valued the contribution to children's learning from each.

**Play was an important part of the curriculum** in all of the schools visited. The headteachers knew which aspects of learning needed to be taught directly and which could be learned through play. However, except for literacy and mathematics, **the schools were not clear about the time they devoted in a typical week to the different areas of learning.**