



HEADTEACHER'S WEEKLY BULLETIN

"For I know the plans I have for you... plans to give you hope and a future"
Jeremiah 29:11

ISSUE NO. 8 : 25 Oct 2024

DIARY DATES



w/c 28 Oct
Mon 4 Nov
5—8 Nov
w/c 11 Nov
Fri 15 Nov

Half term
INSET Day—school closed for staff training
No After School Clubs this week
St Peter's Book Week & Anti-Bullying Week
9am—10.30am "Bring Your Grandparent To School"

Dear Parents and Carers,

I cannot believe that we are now at the half term point. To put it another way, the children are already one sixth of the way through their school year! It has been wonderful this week to hear parents' comments at our parent consultations, remarking on the amount but also importantly, the quality of work the children have already done in a short space of time. They have all worked their socks off this first half term; delving into their learning with great enthusiasm and rising beautifully to the different challenges that they have been presented with. They are an absolute credit to you all.

Next half term will be a very busy one with the lead up to Christmas. It will go extremely quickly, and the children will get tired, so I hope you all have a truly wonderful but restful half term. Whether you are simply having a magical weekend together, time at a fireworks display or being able to enjoy the whole week (I know many of you will still be working - sorry), whatever time you have with your child[ren], thoroughly enjoy it!

Enjoying the wonders of nature at Big Wood

This week our Dragonflies children visited The Big Wood Estate on Tandridge Lane. This is a hidden gem that we had been lucky enough to visit last year and were invited back to see how the seasons had changed the environment since our last visit. It was also in the local news last week, having set up a new educational classroom (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cy94w5753lqo>).

Big Wood was absolutely fantastic! The children saw and fed the new piglets born only 3 weeks ago. When I say fed, they were able to throw them lots of delicious apples that we had just scrumped from the orchard. We can honestly say they were the best apples we had ever tasted as they are grown naturally, using no chemicals or pesticides and no laying in storage for a year or two (as we found out supermarket apples are!). We explored the surrounding areas, learned all about the differences between urban and rural areas such as why it is important to grow trees and hedgerows in towns/cities or why temperature differs in each area. We even

found out that the old saying 'if you see a lots of bright berries on bushes in autumn, it will be a harsh winter', is actually true, but unfortunately due to climate change the reality of this has lessened in recent years. As you can see we learned so much in such a short space of time. I do have to mention Lily who gave us a big 'wow' moment when she amazed us with her incredible knowledge of different mushroom species.

These trips really are so valuable for the children's learning and understanding and rewarding at the same time.

We would like to say a big THANK YOU to Charmaine and the Jumping Jacks team for transporting the children to and from The Big Wood Estate at no charge to the school.



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:

The Dragonflies have certainly been very busy this week. After their trip on Wednesday, they went on to lead our Collective Worship yesterday looking at the life and faith of Florence Nightingale. This was a lovely time where the children heard how Florence's faith kept her going at every turn, from starting out as a nurse, through the Crimean war, to establishing the Nightingale Training School for Nurses. The class had reflected carefully about their own personal faith and who they have faith in, representing this for us in a giant montage of footprints. Thank you Dragonflies.

PLEASE KEEP TOYS AT HOME

Parents, we ask that the children please keep toys, including Pokemon cards, at home, unless bringing in for an organised class activity. I am sure you can appreciate that it can cause disruption and squabbles when toys, etc are brought in from home. We cannot accept responsibility for lost or damaged items and the safest place for these treasures is at home. If a child brings in such items, they will be confiscated and will have to be collected from my office at the end of the school day. Thank you for your help with this.

NO TOYS AT SCHOOL

Please support your children by reminding them that toys (including POKEMON cards) are not allowed at school. This will help eliminate distractions here at school. Thank you for your support with this!





Our **Book Week** will be held after half term w/c 11 November but we would like to give you the information now, so children can get an idea of what we are doing, can think about the competitions we are running over the half term, and to give you a heads up for the week. Our Book Week coincides with National Anti-Bullying Week, so we will be very busy looking at both themes with a Kindness Assembly led by Grieg Trout, one of the founders from 52Lives charity 'School of Kindness', during the week. We look forward to telling you all about it.

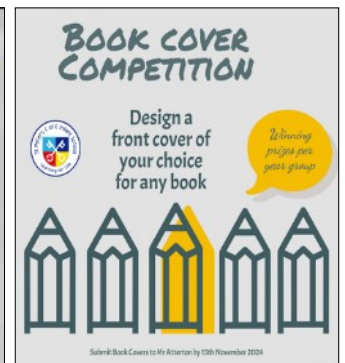
BOOK WEEK w/c 11 November

We will be doing all things book related in this week with visits from Oxted library staff, Theatre-in Education workshops - 'Blast off like a rocket', House carousels of reading, as well as the teachers reading their favourite books to different classes. We encourage parents to join in with lots of fabulous home reading and sharing stories and books that have become favourites for your child, your child-hood self, or both!

COMPETITION TIME

As a half term activity we are asking all the children to design a book cover for a story. Please encourage your child[ren] to create their colourful designs on A4 white paper and hand them in to the class teacher or directly to Mr Atterton **before Friday 15 November**. Please write your child's name on the back of the design. The winning designs from each class will receive a prize.

There will also be a story writing competition open to all children in all classes. The children will need to write an exciting story opener (200 words) for a story of their choice. The story can be about anything (unicorns, wizards, space, aliens,...). Prizes will be awarded for the most exciting, judged by Mr Atterton on Friday 22 November. **Entries should be submitted by Friday 15 November** (named originals handed to class teachers or emailed to info@stpetersinfant.org).



BOOK FAIR Monday 11 November—Thursday 14 November

Throughout Book Week we will have a Book Fair and Pop Up Book Shop running in the library before and after school. The children will visit the Book Fair with their classmates on Monday to look at all the wonderful books available and maybe choose a book they would like to purchase. We would be grateful if you could take some time to look at the [website](#) during the next few weeks with your child and choose any book or books you might like to purchase. There is something for every pocket available to assist with the rise in the cost of living—approximately 24% of titles are under £5 and there are Book packs starting from £1.99. With Christmas just around the corner you may even find some ideal gifts for Father Christmas to bring. If you wish for your purchase to be put aside and not given to your child to bring home please email the school office and we will make sure it is kept to one side to collect.

The school receives great commission on the value of books sold, so the more books that are bought, the better! We will then be able to supplement our growing reading scheme and library with up-to-date and exciting new books using the commission earned.

The Book Fair is open at drop off and pick up Monday – Thursday.

DRESS UP DAY Friday 15 November

The children are invited to dress up as their favourite book character or author on the last day of Book Week. Please bear in mind that the children will still be taking part in classroom activities and outdoor play on this day so costumes should be practical please. If you do not have a costume or your child does not want to dress up, a t-shirt with an image of their favourite book attached is more than adequate! Princesses and superheroes are also usually very popular!

BRING YOUR GRANDPARENT TO SCHOOL Friday 15 November 9am—10.30am

Book Week will conclude on the Friday 15 Nov with our special 'Bring Your Grandparents to School' morning. This is always such a magical time. We would like to invite **one grandparent** from each family to come into school 9am – 10.30am. The children will be placed in their Houses so siblings are together. The grandparents will join us for Collective Worship in the school hall first – for our Friday 'Great Learning' assembly and then have some special time to read and play traditional board games with their grandchild[ren] or a small group of children in the classroom—so please do dig out all those lovely games, books and stories that take us back to childhoods past. Grandparents are very welcome to dress up as book characters too if they wish!!

With this I would just like to say that we know not all children have grandparents who will be able to join them (for many reasons), but that is okay. What makes this so special is that the children do understand this, and they are always taken under the wing by other grandparents or staff. It is a fact of life that we don't all have the same family make-up, so we spend a lot of time talking sensitively to the children about this and how parents/carers can't always come to events that are at school (for a multitude of reasons). The children are superb at accepting this and knowing that their loved ones are 'still in their hearts' even if they are not there, physically, in person. To help us plan and manage numbers, please sign your grandparent up via the link.

Why fostering a love for reading is one of the most important gifts we can give our children?

Reading not only enhances language and comprehension skills but also opens up a world of imagination and learning. That is why we are always so keen to dedicate a full week to books and reading. We use rich texts all the time to delve into our topics and open up exciting and creative avenues for the children, but some may ask why reading is so important, especially if it hadn't been an exciting part of their own school experience:

It develops **Language Skills**: Reading regularly helps children build a rich vocabulary and improve their understanding of language.

It enhances **Concentration**: Engaging with a book requires focus, which can help improve attention spans.

It stimulates **Imagination**: Stories transport children to different worlds, sparking creativity and curiosity.

Reading encourages **Empathy**: Reading about diverse characters and situations helps children understand and share the feelings of others.

How You Can Help at Home

- **Set a Reading Routine**: Dedicate a specific time each day for reading together. It could be a bedtime story, or a quiet afternoon read.
- **Create a Reading Space**: Designate a cosy corner at home with books and comfortable seating to encourage reading.
- **Visit the Library**: Regular trips to the library can introduce your child to a variety of books and authors.
- **Be a Role Model**: Let your child see you enjoying a book. Your enthusiasm can inspire them to pick up a book too.



BUSY BEES

Busy Bees learning this week was all about feelings; how to identify them and how to express them. Our activities were based around "The Colour Monster" books by Anna Lenas. The children created their own Colour Monsters for our interactive feelings display. In Maths we attempted mental addition and the children learned the plus and equals signs. During our art sessions we learned all about the life of Jackson Pollock and created action paintings in his style.

Homework: Practice sounds using the sound mats and reading

LADYBIRDS

Ladybirds have had a brilliant week. For the first time this year, we got out all the PE apparatus. We were very excited by this, but behaved beautifully and had lots of fun. In Maths we have been doing lots of re capping what we have learnt this half term, to make sure those skills are embedded. In History, we completed our topic on Ruby Bridges and created a fact file all about her life. We also completed a computing lesson, which we all really enjoyed.

Homework: Reading



DRAGONFLIES

Dragonflies have had a very busy last week of half term. We went on an amazing science based trip on Wednesday, where we learnt all about farming/seasons/food. The children were just amazing with all their questions, enthusiasm and behaviours. On returning to school we decided to take some of the apples from our trip and try growing our own. The children harvested the seeds from the apples and planted them to grow on the window sill in the classroom—hopefully we will get our own St Peters apples in the future. Our English followed this, with a written recount of our trip. On Thursday we led a Collective Worship on Florence Nightingale and how she followed the path of God. The children spoke with such confidence and enthusiasm. In PE we used the gym equipment in the hall to practise jumping, climbing, balancing and moving.

Homework: Lots of holiday reading



CHURCH NEWS



Our services this Sunday:

11am All Age Worship
6.30pm Evening Prayer

Heavenly Father,
help me to rely on your grace and to walk confidently in the plans you have for my life.
"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord,
"plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." – Jeremiah 29:11



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO...

Ellie (age 6), Emily (age 5),
George (age 7), Imogen (age 5),
and Seren (age 7)



HOUSE TEAM POINTS



I hope you have a truly amazing weekend and/or half term with your fantastic children.

Remember, Monday 4 November is an INSET day so we look forward to seeing the children back in school on **TUESDAY 5 NOVEMBER**.

Don't forget the clocks fall back this weekend too, so you get an extra hour in bed – Hopefully!

God Bless, *Lenia Greenaway*

**REMEMBER
THE CLOCKS
GO BACK
SUNDAY MORNING**



Emergency information regarding the school will be announced on HEART RADIO 102.7FM

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO BUILD EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE

With increasing societal pressures, many children struggle with managing emotions, facing challenges and processing failure in a healthy way. This is why building emotional resilience in young people is vital for their mental health and personal success. This guide provides practical strategies for parents and educators to help children develop resilience and foster confidence, adaptability and a positive mindset.

1 ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Regularly engaging children in open dialogue fosters trust and emotional expression. Encourage them to share their thoughts and feelings freely without judgment. Set aside time daily, perhaps during dinner, to ask open-ended questions such as, "What's made you happy today?". This encourages children to express themselves openly.

2 MODEL POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Children often learn how to manage emotions by observing adults. By modelling calm and positive responses to challenges, you can teach them valuable emotional management skills. If you've had a difficult day, verbalise how you're feeling and explain how you plan to handle it, such as "I'm a bit worked-up, so I'm going for a walk to clear my mind."

3 TEACH PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS

Helping children break down challenges into manageable steps encourages a proactive mindset. Explain that every problem has a solution, even if it's not immediately obvious. For example, if a child is stuck on homework, support them in breaking the task into smaller steps, saying things like "Let's focus on just this first question for now."

4 FOSTER A GROWTH MINDSET

Encourage young people to view mistakes as learning opportunities. A growth mindset helps them see setbacks as part of the process, rather than something to be upset about. After a child loses a game or performs poorly on a test, for example, ask them what they've learned from the experience. This reinforces the idea that effort – and even failure – leads to improvement.

5 PROMOTE SELF-CARE PRACTICES

Teaching children about self-care helps them understand the importance of balancing work with relaxation to maintain emotional wellbeing. Parents and carers could start a screen-free hour before bedtime where the family engages in relaxing activities like reading, setting an example to the child for how to unwind.

6 BUILD HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Strong relationships with peers and adults provide a support system that enhances resilience. Encourage positive, respectful interactions to develop social skills. Playdates or group activities can be instrumental in teaching children how to resolve conflicts with friends by modelling and practicing calm communication.

7 SUPPORT EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

Helping children to identify and name their emotions allows them to manage those feelings more effectively. When a child's upset, encourage them to talk to you about what they're feeling in an empathetic and supportive manner, and ask them why they might be experiencing these emotions.

8 ENCOURAGE INDEPENDENCE

Giving children opportunities to make their own decisions boosts confidence and problem-solving skills. A good example of this would be letting children choose and pack their own lunches for school, guiding them with options but allowing them to assume responsibility for the task to help them take ownership.

9 DEVELOP COPING STRATEGIES

Teaching children techniques like mindfulness, deep breathing or journaling can help them to manage stress. Show them how to perform breathing exercises when they're feeling anxious, and practise this regularly. Reinforcing this behaviour in young people will make it easier for them to use these techniques of their own accord during stressful moments.

10 CELEBRATE SMALL WINS

Recognising effort, no matter how small, reinforces perseverance and encourages children to keep trying. After a child completes a difficult task, makes progress on a project or reaches another type of personal goal, praise their efforts. Emphasise the hard work they've put in and be sure to let them know how proud you are!

Meet Our Expert

Adam Gillett is Associate Vice Principal for Personal Development at Penistone Grammar School and works on secondment one day a week for Minds Ahead, which works with schools on improving their mental health provisions.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

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