

Welcome to this half term's PBA Press!

Even though we have not had all our pupils in school since Christmas, it has been a fantastically busy and one that has also flown by. (I know I always say this but I really cannot believe how fast time flies by!)

I guess if I tried to capture the essence of this term it's been about trying to launch the remote learning and in school learning in what feels like very little time. We received the news that school would not open as normal for pupils on the Monday evening in January and tried to ensure we had effective provision almost immediately. Over the course of the last few months we have used Loom for recorded lessons, Zoom for live tutor periods and Mote for feedback. This was in addition to Google classroom which we were a little more familiar with. I was no different from many others in being totally unfamiliar with Loom and Mote and was just getting used to Zoom! It feels like we are in a very different place now.

With the oncoming of much colder weather, I did reflect that the traditional snow day is very much a thing of the past, it will just be a case of launching a Loom lesson. We will be looking to enhance this provision with some live lessons for pupils. I am all too aware of the isolation children have from friends and peers and our live lessons will look to address this in some small way after the half term.



I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank all those parents who took the time to complete the school's first survey. As always these make for fascinating reading and it is reassuring to hear that the vast majority of parents are both supportive and appreciative of the challenges of educating young people today. I've included some of the responses below and I'm pleased that of the over 70% of parents took the time to respond. Perhaps the most interesting part of any survey are the written responses. As is often the case, the comments can be difficult to address equitably. Some parents would like a greater focus on academic outcomes, while others feel we are too focussed on this area. There are comments referring to a lack of communication while others are thanking the school for its effectiveness. Please be assured that each of these is considered and we have taken the time to contact those parents who expressed concerns where we were able and felt would help us better understand the issue.

One area I am keen to explore further is the nature of the parents evening. I know the five-minute meeting is not sufficient for many. We are looking into how we might better provide information to parents while maintaining a reasonable period of time. Moving to 10 minutes per pupil is something we are considering, although for most classes this would take five hours to complete meaning we will need to consider how allocate the time for this. Please be assured we are always keen to provide the best experience we can but often what improves the situation for one family has the opposite effect on another.

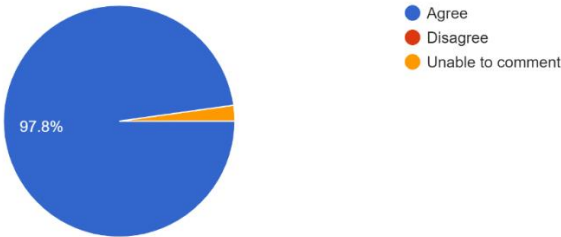
Finally, I would like to once again thank all parents for their support. It has been an awful way to start an academic year: the restrictions on activities at school; the current lockdown and all the other measures limiting normal life have been extraordinarily difficult. We look to the future with a perhaps some reticence, life is not going to be quite the same for some time, but we are approaching a time when some normality will return. I for one cannot wait. Have a lovely half term and we await the Prime Ministers announcement on the 22nd February with great anticipation.



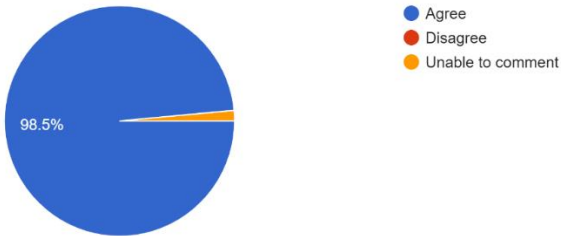
Mr Steve Adams
Principal

Parent survey results January 2021

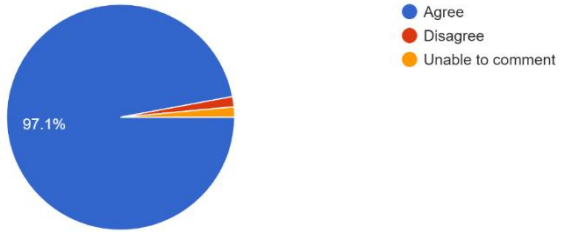
The school has a caring and supportive ethos
136 responses



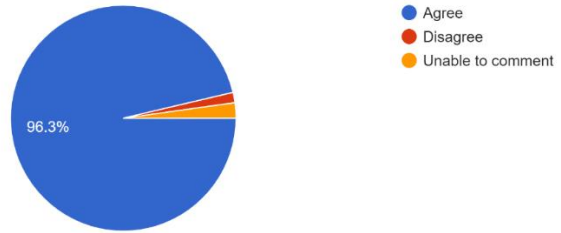
My child feels safe at the school
136 responses



The school has high expectations of its pupils
136 responses



I feel sufficiently informed about how and when to report concerns to the school
136 responses



News from Year 5 & Year 6

Life at school during lockdown

By Lana W (Year 5 - Attenborough)

Life at school is really weird but better than home schooling. At school we are also using google classroom and we are changing our plans a bit. At play time we are staying social distanced and we are sanitising before we eat and after play. All of us are missing our friends if they are not here but it is a good opportunity to make new ones. We are making new rules so that everyone is safe. Plus the playground is empty so we have lunch time clubs like dodge ball. For PE we go to the PE hall and have a choice to go on the trampoline, basketball or table tennis.

All of the kids are in bubbles. There is a year five and year six bubble. At playtime we are in separate playgrounds so we're completely safe. In the canteen year five and year six are on separate sides. Each class sits on each half of their side. There are two year five classes and one year six class right now. There are fourteen year fives in each class and fifteen year sixes in their class. All of the kids have to have their own working stuff because the teacher can't give them any of their spares. So if they lose anything it would be good if it was named or they have a spare in school. If everyone was bringing in headphones or sanitizer then it would be less work. Also make sure they have a water bottle because some people aren't bringing them in. Everyone's really happy that all of the kids are fine and are ok with the new rules.



Everyday the rules change a little bit but everyone is working with it. All of the kids have their own way of working but the teachers make sure they can do every way possible. Sometimes they get

mad but that is properly because they are missing everyone. It is loads harder with none of your friends but we will make sure that everyone has someone to play with. Sometimes on Friday the kids get their own time to do something. That depends on how much work the kids do on that Friday. In English sometimes they do it on paper and always create amazing work. Everyone is working together to do some of the work. All of the kids are interacting with each other and are laughing loads so it proves that they're happy. In the playground some people are crying or have no one to play with so people help them and other them to play. All of the adults are staying social distanced as well so that they don't get it if a child has it.

If an adult has to help someone they will get as far away as they can to help them. Everyone is having a zoom call sometimes and it is amazing everyone loves it and you can tell from their faces.

Home-Schooling

By Harrison F (Year 5 - Pankhurst)



This is Harrison Fryer from Pankhurst class with a rundown on home learning.

Firstly, I didn't get up until 9am today which was lovely because on a normal school day, I would be up at 7am. I'm starting my home learning for today and I'll be honest, I do find it hard to get motivated, it's not as easy as when we are in the classroom. Mr Williams makes me and my brother laugh with his lessons, especially when he fluffs his lines.

There are many distractions at home and I miss having a teacher around but I try my best. I do like having my Xbox more than usual but mostly I just want to have a day out or see my friends again or go on holiday.

Home Schooling Journal

By Charlotte N (year 5 - Nightingale)

Doing schooling at home is a bit hard and easy. the lessons are slightly easier than lessons in school.

I sometimes finish my school work early. The lessons are so fun, even though we are still learning we can still have some fun. I enjoy that we have one zoom lesson every other week to talk with our class mates.

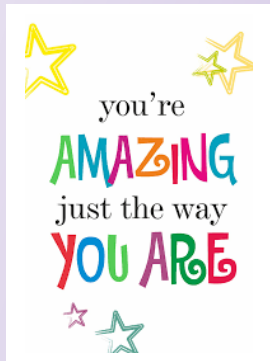


I miss going to school. I miss the delicious school dinners, seeing my friends and seeing the teachers. I would like to say a thank you to all the teachers that have posted work for us to do and for teaching children who are going to school.

Hope you enjoy my journal!



Mental Health Week



In school and at home, we have been embracing Children's Mental Health Week. It identifies the importance of children and young people's mental health and well-being. This year's theme is Express Yourself.

We at PBA, are encouraging the children and young people to express their emotions in many different ways, through dance, artwork, a story, collage or a song. The children

also had a chance to make and fill a worry bag with their worries. Once completed, they could then not think about them anymore.

We also gave them a weekend challenge including 9 different activities to try, these included play a board game, listen to their favourite song, watch a movie, read a book, tell someone a joke, **Yesterday, I was washing the car with my son. He said, "Mum, can't you just use a sponge?"** draw a picture/mindfulness colouring, go for a walk, bike ride or a run and talk to someone about your feelings. We have had some fantastic work sent into the teachers. Mrs Smyth will be awarding certificates and prizes to two children from each class.



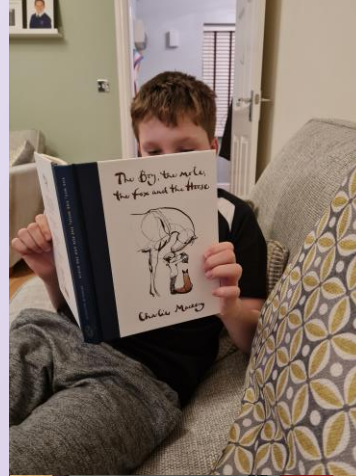
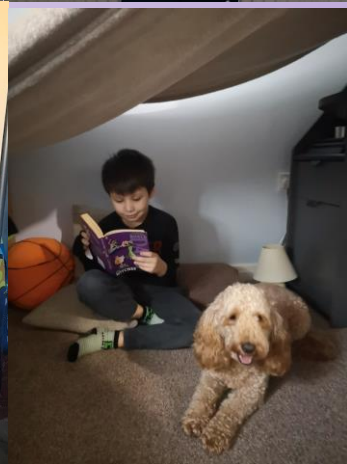
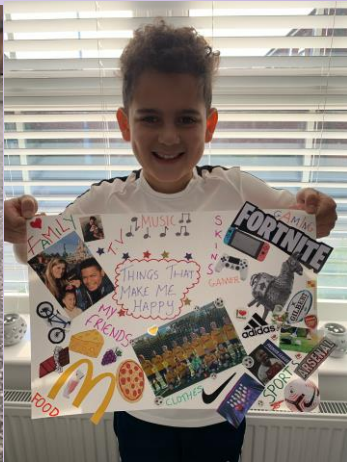
Disco Zoom Meetings


Last week the Year 5's in school and at home, had the opportunity to join in with a zoom disco hosted by Mrs Pearce. There were lots of moves being shown by children, staff and parents. Disco balls, glow sticks, inflatable microphones, maracas and tambourines were all on show. It was great to see so many of you joining in with the dancing at home and at school. Lots of bedrooms and front rooms donned with decorations. I can't wait for the next one.



Screen Free Day

Friday 29th January was Screen-free Day. Our current situation means that children are at home (or school for key workers) and completing their learning online for up to 4 hours a day. While the efforts of the children has been amazing and the standard of work very high, we felt that they needed a break from technology for the day. We could not believe how well received the idea was from both children and parents! Everyone embraced the idea and got stuck in and we have been flooded with photos and videos of all the wonderful things that were completed. There were some amazing reading dens, lots of delicious looking home-baking, secret codes, Big Garden Birdwatching, shape hunts, tally charts, newspaper reports and film reviews to name a few. With the massive success of this event we decided to hold another (Pancake themed) one on Friday 12th February...





PBA Pancake Challenge

When is Pancake Day? Tuesday 16th February

Basic Pancake Recipe & Method

You will need (to make 6 pancakes):
100g Plain Flour
2 Large Eggs
300ml Milk
2 Tablespoons of Oil
Caster Sugar (to sprinkle)


To serve you could add the following:
Lemon (to squeeze)
Caster Sugar (to sprinkle)

Healthier Option: Serve fresh fruit to your cooked pancakes, e.g. Strawberries

Method:
Step 1: Add Flour, Eggs, Milk and 1 Tablespoon of Oil into a bowl and mix with a whisk into a smooth batter.
Step 2: Use the remaining 1 Tablespoon of Oil and add to a Frying Pan, ensuring the pan is covered in the oil.
Step 3: Heat the Frying Pan and Oil.
Step 4: When hot, turn the heat to a medium heat and add a quarter of your batter into the pan.
Step 5: Cook on each side for a minute until golden brown, use a spatula to ensure the mix doesn't stick to the pan.
Step 6: Time to flip those pancakes and enjoy eating them all.

Mr Fletcher's Top Tip:
Ensure the batter mix is smooth.
The Frying Pan must be hot before you add the mix.
Check the pancake isn't sticking to the pan.

How many times can you flip a pancake?
Why not share your results on Google Classroom?



Life at Home

By Bella K (Year 6 - Morpurgo)

Hopefully we can return to school soon and ...err... be normal again. I cannot wait to get back to school, when it is safe to do so.

Life at home has been challenging at times, especially not being able to go out and see friends or family, but I do enjoy doing my school work remotely and submitting my work online. I do my work independently each day, and enjoy doing what Pix Brook sets me. I find my work easy to access online and find it helpful that my questions about work always get answered. Overall the Pix Brook work is enjoyable and challenging and I have fun sitting at my desk and completing it every day. The best part is that doing work online does mean you can work at your own pace and stop and start at your leisure.



The one thing I miss is seeing my friends and having lessons with all my classmates where they are doing the same work. At home it's just me and I have no one my age to do work with. Out of everything Pix Brook has to offer the social aspect is the thing I'm missing; nevertheless I know that we are all in this together and that most people will be facing the same problems. I do hope that soon we will be able to return to school even though right now I know it is a necessity to close them. I look forward to that day where there are no measures in place and I can go to Pix Brook again.

Life at school during lockdown

By Maisy D (Year 6 - Zephaniah)

My favourite lesson at school during lockdown was a science one. We were able to classify Dolly Mixtures and Liquorice All sorts. We were really looking forward to eating the sweets after. We created a classification key to help sort the sweets and then we used this skill to help us answer questions about organisms and different animal groups. The funny part was that the liquorice all sorts looked delicious but they were actually disgusting!!! The classroom smelled of liquorice for three days after 😊.

To be honest all of the lessons at school have been amazing but this science one stood out for me.



Pass on The Positive Peeps!

By Lacey M (Year 6 - Blyton)



Hello Everyone! For me lockdown is really tough and I am sure no one is really enjoying it. I have been making a lockdown/ home schooling time table to keep me on track of what I should be doing, and when I should be doing it. We all must keep a smile on our faces, a spring in our step and just keep positive in general though. At home I have been trying to find time to take a break and do things to make me happy, relaxed and keep my mind

off stinking lockdown. I have found a few things that help me relax and wind down like going for a walk or to the park, dancing, reading, watching a movie or listening to some music.

It is hard, but there are positives to everything. For example, since home schooling started I have improved my computing skills. Definitely how fast I can type is one of the ones that has shone out to me recently. Also I can stay in bed a little bit longer because I do not need to travel to school. But we all know that there is cons to it too. I, personally, have missed interaction with school staff and seeing my friends. Also I have missed the school environment, the playground, the school resources and school dinners.



The Great Big Garden Birdwatch 2021



On Thursday we all took part in a live BBC Winter watch lesson. The children put the classification skills that they had been learning in

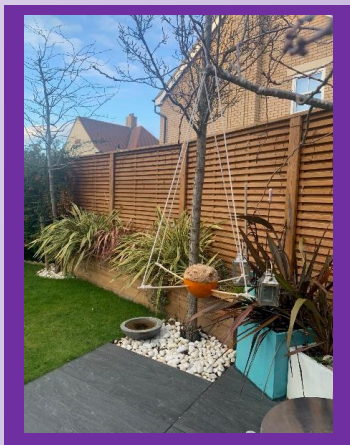
science into action, and they were able to classify some of the birds that they may encounter during their Big Garden Birdwatch.

Armed with the information about the birds we might spot, a trusty clipboard and pen the children in school ventured outside on Friday. We waited, and we waited but sadly, very few birds descended onto the Pix Brook grounds. Many passed in the air above, but as they had to land on the ground they could not be counted. I hope in a year or so once the trees are more established we will have much better results.

The children at home did much better and lots of data came my direction. Lots of you spotted robins and sparrows in your gardens— many I am sure were enticed by the amazing bird feeders that were created. Quite a few children spotted magpies and blackbirds too and more than one pigeon was spotted.



Tarini took part at home and wrote:



As some of you may know, last week was The Big Garden Bird Watch. A lot of people took part by staying in their gardens and looking out for birds. In my garden I saw a few different birds including Blue Tits, Robins, Jack Sparrows and Black Tits!

Near where I live there is a little stream and if you stand really still and be very quiet, sometimes you can see a

Kingfisher. It's just a flash and then it's gone! It was really fun looking out for birds and identifying them. I'll definitely be keeping an eye out for different ones when I go on walks or am out in my garden

Creations by Brody

Below are some of Brody's creations which have been keeping him busy during lockdown. Over the last week, he has created a drone, bear and spitfire using cardboard and a glue gun. What a talent!



Safer Internet Day

On 9th February, we as a school took part in UK Safer Internet Day. Our amazing children learned all about how to stay safe on the internet and what the internet is used for. One of the set tasks was to design a poster, in order to make people aware of the dangers and wonder of our world wide web. As you can see, we received some amazing posters, that we will display around the school. A massive well done to all in both year groups for an awesome and valuable lesson.



Safeguarding

We would like to share some useful resources that have been created to mark this year's Safer Internet Day.

The first resource <https://www.safen3t.co.uk/> is about a series of short films that have been entirely scripted, filmed and produced by young aspiring film makers. The films are about some of the issues young people face whilst online and using the Internet.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxWlueSohlp8x1vRuNj2rEW>

The second resource provides parents/carers with straightforward information, guidance and further sources of information on protecting young people from harmful online hate, extremism and fake news.

The issues raised in both sets of resources are unfortunately becoming more and prevalent in the online world. For this reason, anything that provides parents/carers with useful information is only going to be useful and worthwhile.

Please feel free to contact any member of the safeguarding team at PBA if you wish to discuss any issues related to safeguarding and child protection.

A straightforward guide to protecting your children from online hate, extremism, and fake news



The pandemic has meant that children are spending more time than ever before learning and socialising online. Parents are juggling new technology alongside working and navigating the risks children face online. This interactive guide focuses on the risks that online hate, extremism, and fake news pose and how parents and carers can minimize those risks.

"A lie can travel halfway around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes."



This guide has information, links and resources to help you:

- Understand the risks and issues.
- Know where to get help.
- Find resources.
- Develop practical strategies.
- Start conversations.
- Build your child's digital resilience.

Risks and Tactics

Extremists use the internet and social media to spread their ideology, hate, fake news, and conspiracy theories. They actively **target, exploit and groom** children and young people.

They know young people are using the internet much more, quite often by themselves, and so utilise these opportunities to exploit and recruit.

They frequently do this by exploiting our emotions, deeply held beliefs, and values and are increasingly using the social isolation, anxiety, and fear that many children are experiencing because of the pandemic.

A common approach they use is to spread misinformation to **generate anger and outrage**. Teaching our children not to **fall for this trick** is one of the most important things we can do to protect them from grooming by extremists.



Frequently used tactics includes memes, making alterations to photos, videos, and documents and using them out of context.



They make up quotes and social media posts for popular public figures. Especially ones that children and young people look up to and follow online. Their aim is to draw children into conversations and encourage them to share misinformation and hate.



Extremists often pick a genuine local issue or concern and use it to spread lies, fear and hate about the group they're targeting.

Where to start?

The most important thing parents and carers can do is talk to the children and young people in their lives about what they enjoy doing online. Talk about what they think isn't so good about being online and how to make it better. Keep talking as your child grows up and becomes more independent online.

Find out what their plan for when things go wrong or get them down. Consider having a **no blame rule**, so that they'll talk to you when things do go wrong. If they're worried about being told off or having devices confiscated they may decide to keep things to themselves and small issues could become big ones.



The more a stranger knows about your child, the easier it is to groom them and gain trust. Only share with trusted friends and family.



Support, ideas and resources

Click on the topics below to learn more about how to keep your child safe and support their wellbeing online. Learn how to identify misinformation, talk to children about hate speech and spot the signs they could be being groomed by extremists or other online predators.

Educate Against Hate

Messages of hate can take many forms. Extremist groups use them to recruit young people. Parents can find answers to common questions and resources to help protect their child from being groomed by extremists as well as ideas about how to talk to children about hate and extremism and where to seek help.



Fact

Know how to fact check and have a link to a reliable fact checking site on your devices.

How to know what to trust

This guide from the News Literacy Project is great place to start.

Conspiracy Theories

Conspiracy theories have grown significantly in the past year they have been fuelled by the confusing and unsettling nature of the pandemic and have resulted in people being drawn into extremist groups, committing violent and criminal acts. They can also be deeply disturbing and unsettling for children and young people who come across them accidentally online. The video in this link explains why they are dangerous.

Common Sense Media

This website has the latest research, tips, and tools on what really keeps children safe online. Which privacy settings should you use? What are the ins and outs of parental controls? Get tips on everything from the basics, such as smart usernames, to the big stuff, such as appropriate sharing. Plus lots of resources and strategies to look after your child's wellbeing online. What are the pro's and con's of Roblox, TikTok, Instagram or how to talk to teens about online predators.

Digital Resilience

Online Radicalisation

Fake News

The Fake News Quiz

Is someone you know becoming a stranger?



Act early

Created by Prevent Education Officers Kate & Melvyn
Part of the Prevent Education Officers Network

School Council

PBA held its first Student Council meeting this week. It was a very successful meeting where pupils showed great enthusiasm and interest in their new roles.

We discussed various things including what our mission statement should be, the code of conduct for a member of the Student Council and ideas for possible future 'wow' days. The pupils shared some imaginative and thoughtful ideas as to what they would like to do and see happen at Pix Brook Academy.

All the pupils from the Student Council are looking forward to representing the thoughts and views of their peers and we, as staff, look forward to working with them to improve their experiences at Pix Brook Academy.

PE

I want to start with a huge well done to all those students who have completed the PE challenges every day! I have loved seeing all your pictures and hearing about all the other challenges you have set yourselves. It is so important to keep ourselves active. Not only for our physical health but also for our minds too. We can continue to do our challenges indoors, and I hope you will get out and get some fresh air.

Going for a daily walk is great way to take a break if that maths problem is a bit tricky, spend time with someone in your family, or track how far you go and see if you can go a bit further every day. Maybe you could be the inspiration in your family in getting someone to do a bit more running or cycling!

We also had a few live dance lessons from a local dance company, I know those that took part really enjoyed them.



After half term we will do some live PE lessons, so I hope to see as many of you as possible join in with us!

Finally, I wanted to give a special mention to some students who have really used this lockdown to challenge themselves physically.

My star PE award goes to Evan Landucci, who has run over 100K in January. He won't mind me saying that before this, running wasn't really his thing, and he has really embraced the challenge and achieved so much more than the distance he has run. He has inspired many of his peers to want to do something for themselves.



So whatever it may be set yourself a challenge to beat next half term.

There will be a challenge during half term as well that will be on your google classroom to have a go at!

Other Teaching and Learning News

Welcome Mr Fleckney



Dear Students and Parents,

My name is Mr Fleckney and I am delighted to have joined PBA at the start of January as a Learning Supervisor. It is a shame that I haven't been able to meet all the students due to the current lockdown, however I very much look forward to meeting you all once you return to school.

I have worked in education for many years, with most of this time at Harlington Upper School teaching Food and Product Design to Key Stage 3, 4 and 5. After I left the role at Harlington I moved on to Barnfield College where I worked in safeguarding at the New Bedford Road Campus.

After a brief period away from working in education I am really excited to have returned, especially at a fantastic school such as PBA. During my first half-term in the new role it is evident PBA is a great community to work in, and I am excited for the next phase as the students move into Year 7.

I hope to add to the school community along with the amazing staff that already work at PBA.

I very much look forward to meeting you all very soon.

World Book Day (Thursday 4th March)



This year, World Book Day tokens will be in digital format and can be downloaded here: [World Book Day E-Tokens](#)

Further information can be found here: <https://www.worldbookday.com/digital-book-token/>

We will also be inviting pupils to wear book character costumes to school and at home on this day.

Amazon Wish List

In conjunction with World Book Day, we are focusing on the expansion of our wonderful new school library. As our budget is limited at this time, we are asking parents if they would like to help contribute to the purchase of new books. For every book donated by parents, Pix Brook Academy will match with the purchase of the same number. The link below will take you to our Amazon wish list.

[PBA Amazon Wish List](#)

We thank you in advance for your generosity.

Pix Brook's Got Talent!

As we have such a talented bunch of children and we're all in need of some light entertainment, we will be holding a 'Pix Brook's Got Talent' talent contest!

This is being planned for Monday 1st March and there will be a Year 5 winner, a Year 6 winner PLUS a most talented member of staff winner so EVERYONE is welcome to join in.

The judges will be:

Mr Adams
Mrs Smyth
Mrs White

The host will be:

Mrs Gregory

The children need to submit their 'talent' to their class teacher by Tuesday 23rd February. Each teacher will then hold a poll and the 3 children with the most votes will represent their class in the contest. Each child will have 1 minute to display their talent in a Zoom meeting that the whole school will be invited to attend. The judges will decide who the winners are.



Community News



Hattie's Rainbow of Hope Appeal

Hitchin Belles Players and Coaches (including PBA's very own Miss Jack!) will be running (and walking) to raise much needed funds for Hattie's Rainbow of Hope Appeal.

From January 18th and for 4 weeks, we will be running between every host city of Euro 2021 (12) racking up 9,540 miles in the process, moving through 27 countries. We will eventually end up back in our very own Hitchin, home of Hitchin Belles FC, and Hattie herself!

Hattie's Rainbow of Hope Appeal, was set up by Hattie and her family. Hattie is fighting her own personal battle with cancer and this is a way for her and her family to give back for the fantastic care and treatment she has received. All money raised will go directly to fund research into kinder and more effective treatments for the type of cancer Hattie has – rhabdomyosarcoma

We have received several videos from celebrities wishing us and Hattie luck including Joe Wicks (The Body Coach), Shane Ritchie, Coleen Nolan, Giovanna Fletcher, Vernon Kay and many more.

www.justgiving.com/fundraising/hitchinbelles



Diary & Term Dates

February	Monday 15 th – Friday 19 th	- Half Term
March	Monday 1 st Thursday 4 th Wednesday 10 th Friday 19 th Monday 29 th – Friday 9 th Apr	- Pix Brook's Got Talent - World Book Day / Dress-Up Day - UK Parliament Virtual Workshop - Comic Relief - Easter Holidays
April	Monday 12 th Tuesday 13th Thursday 15 th Friday 16 th	- Staff Training Day (no school) - Start of Spring Term - Year 6 Science Virtual Workshops - Year 5 Science Virtual Workshops
May	Monday 3 rd May Friday 28 th Monday 31 st – Friday 4 th Jun	- Bank Holiday - Non-Uniform Day - Half Term
June	Monday 7th Friday 25 th	- Start of Summer Term - Sports Afternoon
July	Friday 2 nd TBC Date TBC Date TBC Wednesday 21 st Thursday 22 nd July	- Step Up Day - End of Year Trip (all years) - End of Year Activity Day - End of Year Celebrations Afternoon - Last Day of Term (NO after school clubs)