

## **WEEK 1 - Friday 10 September 2021**

What a fantastic first week back it has been! It has been brilliant to see the school operating in a 'pre Covid' fashion with more movement around the school, grouped tables, mixed sets and not a bubble in sight.

Our children who are new to school in FS2 have settled in really well over the week and have had so much fun playing outside, painting and learning their phonics. We have also introduced a fair few new children into other year groups and it has been a pleasure to see how our Peshurst community has embraced them and helped them to adjust to a new school.

We also have three new teachers with us this year: Miss Robinson (Nursery), Miss Wray (Year 1) and Miss Dunwell (Year 6). They have all settled in already and are really keen to meet all the parents and become involved in all of our community events.

The children have looked very smart on their return to school and I thank you all for ensuring that your children are dressed appropriately. The only areas we need to tighten up on is with bags, hair accessories and socks. Please only bring in a book bag and drawstring bag (PE) as the cloakrooms simply cannot accommodate rucksacks and bulky bags and it does become a health and safety issue in the corridors. Socks and hair accessories should only be in school colours please (black, blue, white, grey or green.)

Once again we have been thwarted by the weather and have had to postpone Sports Day - it really does seem we are destined not to do this event! However, we will try and put in another date and let you know in good time. We will endeavour to still hold the FS2 Sports Day on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> at 9:15am (weather permitting) as we are aware that they missed their very first School Sports Day due to Lockdowns.

Over the summer, the school has been an extremely busy place with a new roof fitted over the Nursery and Dining Hall, new teaching areas created in FS2 via bi-fold doors and a full top to toe decoration of the main hall and the front office. Over the next week, we are also starting our work on the KS1 playground where lots of markings, a brand new mural and new play equipment will be found. This is something we have been wanting to do for a long time and we will be very excited to show the children their new play area.

In addition to all of this, we have a brand new catering company onboard (ABM) and they have already impressed us with their healthy food. The food looks delicious and many pupils have commented on the quality and quantity of the meals.

We are now forward planning for the year to squeeze in as many trips, visits, experiences and visitors to school. These will include Young Voices, Y6 residential, Cinema Trips, Bridlington, Hornsea, The Deep, Hull Maritime, Ferensway Gallery, Swimming, Bikeability plus all the normal favourites such as P Factor, Christmas Shows, Disco's and Film Nights. In particular we will be excited to re-introduce whole school assemblies very soon so the singing can commence-we have a lot of songs to remember!

Please download the SIMS Parent app or activate the desktop version SIMS Parent if you haven't already as this will become our main tool for communication, emails and reports. Contact the office if you require assistance with this.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

## **WEEK 2 - Friday 17 September 2021**

Thank you for your continued cooperation with the 'Safer Streets' scheme on the Winthorpe Road side of school. It has certainly created a much calmer and safer environment for walkers on these roads. Please remember if you are a permit holder, to display your permit in your windscreen not leave it lying on your dashboard as the marshals can see it instantly and allow you through quickly.

This week we have been holding a number of sessions with the children and 'Relax Kids'. This organisation focuses on the mental health and well being of children and how adults can support them. This organisation believes that *"Learning about emotions and emotional skills is as important as learning core subjects as no matter what children do in life, their emotions will follow them"* – Marneta Viegas, founder of Relax Kids.

We have also had staff meetings with the organisation to help staff learn more about how we can support children effectively in school.

It has been amazing to see how well the children have slipped back into school life and every class I visit is calm and purposeful with children working really hard. The books that we purchased last year are being put to good use in Reading lessons with all children now having their own copy of the lead text. It is an absolute pleasure to walk around the school at 1pm (when we hold our 'Pledge' time) and see every child with their head in a book engrossed in their reading.

We are currently holding a review of our homework policy and will be trialling a few options over the Autumn term to ensure we make the right changes. We will be giving out spellings on Thursday on the Purple Mash site that you all have logins for. This site allows you to practice the spellings in a fun and interactive way. For those children who we know have issues with access to technology, we will provide a paper copy. Once we have introduced spellings, we will then offer Maths homework also on Purple Mash. Reading should be completed three times a week at home to ensure children become fluent. Our 'pledge' is that we will read at least 10 minutes extra, three times a week with the children to match your home reading. Fluency in reading is one of the best gifts you can give a child as everything we learn is dependent on being able to read well.

Finally, thank you for supporting our FS2 sports day. At least we have managed to get one event completed! Details of the Monster Pyjama party and Christmas events to follow in the coming weeks. Parents Evening will be virtual and will be held on 8 and 10 November booking details will be sent out to you in the coming weeks. We will aim to hold a more informal evening where you can look at books later in the year.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

### **WEEK 3 - Friday 24 September 2021**

I would like to start by saying thank you to everyone who enters school via Winthorpe Road. Due to work on the KS1 playground we have had to divert to the field to drop off and collect and it has all gone very smoothly. Fortunately the weather has been on our side this week and we have been able to use the field for lunch and playtimes, meaning we haven't missed the playground too much. I'm sure the pupils are really going to enjoy their new playground markings and equipment. In addition, thank you for your support with the Safer Streets initiative. I would like to point out that the school did not provide or have any input into the council signs and marketing which have incorrect spellings - we did point this out to them on Day 1!

I have spent most of the week checking in on the quality of teaching and learning in the classrooms and have seen some wonderful activities taking place. Year 6 has been grappling with fractions all week. On Monday a pupil told me she hated fractions, by Wednesday they weren't too bad and then on Friday fractions were actually kind of ok! This is good news as the SATs exams are full of fraction questions! Staying with Year 6, there is a meeting straight after school on **Tuesday 28 September** for parents to learn a little more about the Residential trip. If you could enter school via the school office entrance, a member of staff will escort you to the Year 6 classroom. It is worth noting that the residential is an optional trip.

The EYFS has had many national reforms which come into play from this academic year. The focus is much more on playing with the children than observing them while also ensuring the curriculum is ambitious enough to challenge those children ready for formal learning. To that end we have split the unit up into three distinct classrooms with new dividing doors to ensure that lesson time can be focused without any surrounding distractions. The children will still mix in choosing times but will remain in their own class for reading, writing and maths learning. Please make use of the online platform Tapestry to let us know about any specific interests your child has or any achievements as we will celebrate these in the class and adapt provisions to suit their interests.

The new library has had a very successful opening with lots of excited children clutching brand new shiny books. These are logged out as they would be in a public library so we can keep tabs on where the books are and make sure they return. Very occasionally a pupil make pick up a book of the wrong level (usually because the cover is exciting) and if this happens, please pop the book back and we will change it. We do encourage free readers to pick their own book. If you have any books your child has grown out of, we are always really grateful to accept them.

Lunchtimes are also very smooth now and it is a credit to the pupils that they have adapted so quickly to going to the hall for lunch and following all the procedures in place. The new catering company has been a hit with the bigger portions and a great choice of foods. We are working incredibly hard on using our manners in the dining hall, encouraging the children to say please and thank you to the servers and taking responsibility for clearing their plates and not making a mess in the hall. It is strange to think that for FS1/2, Y1 and Y2 pupils they have never accessed these communal parts of the day and I am so proud of the way they are coping with all of the changes in school this year.

While we are still maintaining a certain amount of caution regarding mass gatherings such as assemblies and events, we will begin to embark on the cycle of sports fixtures that are

slowly returning. I have to issue a word of warning to all those who will have their children on sports teams.... we don't get a great deal of notice from the schools association! Often we get given a couple of days' notice for a match or event. We will of course inform you as soon as we know but I am apologising already for any short notice!

Finally it is with sadness that we say a fond farewell to three members of staff who retire next week. Mrs Lewis, Mrs Kochar and Mrs Potter have worked at Penshurst for 105 years between them. They will be missed but we wish them all the best for a well-deserved retirement.

Plea: If you have any prams and toy babies or dress up that you no longer require, please donate them to the EYFS.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

#### **WEEK 4 - Friday 1 October 2021**

As I write this blog, I am listening to the screams of laughter echoing from the KS1 playground. The children are so excited about the new equipment and markings on the playground and are thoroughly enjoying their new environment (even in the rain!). I would also like to say thank you for the dress up clothes that have been donated as the children love becoming their favourite superhero or Disney character at lunchtime - keep them coming as we can never have too many dress up costumes!

We have had our first sporting competition this week with the football trials at Wolfreton School. It is great to see all the schools back together and the Year 6 team did really well winning the tournament and representing Penshurst brilliantly. We are also booking lots of trips and visits for the upcoming year and these kick off with the imminent trips to London for Year 5 and 6. Young Voices will require a deposit to be paid via ParentPay or PayPoint.

On Thursday 7 October, we are holding a special school lunch to celebrate Hull Fair and all things Hull! Fish fingers and doughnuts are on the menu and I'm sure this will be a popular choice. On the same day we will be hosting school photos. These will be individual photos. If your child is not in FS1 that day, they can be brought into school at 8.30am to have their photo first and then be taken home.

I just need to raise a couple of points to finish off. We have received a couple of complaints from residents regarding our parents parking across their driveways. It is really important that we respect our local community so please park carefully on the school run.

In addition to this, I have also received some complaints about use of inappropriate language by parents whilst on the school site. Again I would ask that you are respectful at all times and be mindful that there are children around.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

## **WEEK 5 - Friday 8 October 2021**

Dates to remember:

### **Monster Pyjama Party**

Monday 1 November FS2 and Year 1 – 4:30-5:30pm

Year 2, 3 and 4 – 5:45-6:45pm

Year 5 and 6 – 7pm – 8pm

### **Parents Evening**

Monday 8 November and Invitations to make virtual bookings

Wednesday 10 November will be sent out before half term

### **End of term**

Thursday 21 October (return on Monday 1 November)

It has been another busy week at Penshurst with lots of visitors touring our school to look at our new reading schemes, provide support to individual children and to provide mental health lessons to our Year 5 and 6 children. It is lovely to have people back in the building again instead of having online sessions and great to have additional support for the well being of all of our pupils.

We are also lucky that we will be able to welcome university students back properly to train with us as we are passionate about inspiring and coaching the next generation of teachers. As they begin to join us in school, we will let you know who they are and which class they are helping with so you will recognise them out on playgrounds at pick up and collection times.

A few housekeeping reminders....

We have had some comments from parents about the inappropriate length of some of the skirts worn in school. As you all know we have a strict uniform policy across the 'through' school and we have already mentioned this issue via text, blog, email and individual phone calls. Teachers will be ringing when the uniform is deemed of inappropriate length or too tight as well as when hair is dyed or shaved.

The uniform policy states:

*Hair should be of even length, no shaved patterns. Mohican styles are not permitted. Hair should be of a natural colour. Hair accessories should be of school colours (grey, white, green or black) and of an appropriate size*

Please do not shoot the messenger, so to speak, as teachers have been asked to address these issues in accordance with the school policy. As many of you with siblings in the secondary phase will know, the rigour continues when they leave our site and transfer to the high school.

If you wish to discuss any uniform issues further, please contact a member of the senior leadership team.

Please ensure your child arrives at school with a coat as the weather is really turning and we will be unable to let them outside without a coat. It is certainly Hull Fair weather now but we like to get the children wrapped up and outside as much as possible.

Unfortunately I have also received a fair few complaints from local residents about parents parking over their drives so they cannot get out to work. Please drive carefully and be considerate to the local residents. I understand that parking is at a premium around the school area as most streets have cars already parked down them but it is important that we are respectful of those who live in the school area.

To end on a more cheerful note, let's talk about cake! We are now receiving homemade cakes and buns for birthdays. This is a tradition in every school I have ever worked in however with the increase in dietary needs and the healthy schools agenda, we no longer allow the children to eat the treats in school and instead send them home for parents to make the decision as to when and if your child can have it. It is always helpful as well for us to have a note stating the ingredients as we have so many dietary intolerances in school now.

We would never risk giving out any food product in class to these children if we are not sure about the ingredients.

If you are braving Hull Fair, be careful and have fun!

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

## **WEEK 6 - Friday 15 October 2021**

Dates to remember:

FS1/2 Spooky Spectacular Thursday 21 October Optional Dress Up

Y5/6 boys Football final Wednesday 20 October South Hunsley 4.30-6.00

End of term Thursday 21 October (return on Monday 1 November)

Monster Pyjama Party Monday 1 November

FS2 and Year 1 - 4:30-5:30pm

Year 2, 3 and 4 - 5:45-6:45pm

Year 5 and 6 - 7pm-8pm

Parents Evening Monday 8 November and Wednesday 10 November

I will begin with a thank you to all of the parents we have spoken to regarding uniforms. The large majority of pupils are now dressed entirely appropriately and in line with our school policy. There still remain a couple of issues with leggings which need resolving (leggings are not appropriate for school) but we are really pleased with the cooperation from parents.

The main topic of conversation this week in our senior leadership meetings has been around social media. The internet is of course a marvellous tool and the many social media platforms are in the main used respectfully. However in the past few weeks we have seen a rise in inappropriate use of social media by our pupils outside school which we have been made aware of.

As a staff we follow the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance and it is our duty to follow up any misuse of social media that we are party to. The guidance states: *staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Children can also abuse their peers online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages. We do record these incidents as cyber bullying and will contact parents of both the pupils who have posted unkind comments and the parents of the 'victim'.*

We are particularly concerned with the misuse of platforms such as 'Tiktok' and 'Snapchat' where we have had some very unkind content posted among peers. These are even more dangerous as they disappear when posted or can be easily deleted. We would urge you to screen capture or video any messages that your child receives that concern you for evidence. We do talk to the children in school about these incidents and advise parents to contact the police in extreme circumstances as they are classed as malicious communication. It is very difficult for us to monitor communication outside school but inevitably this activity spills into school and has an adverse effect on friendships and behaviour.

The minimum age requirements for most social media platforms is 13 and therefore none of our pupils at Penshurst should be accessing these platforms:

13 years Instagram, Facebook, Snapshot

16 years Whatsapp

18 years YouTube

If you have made a decision to allow your children to access these sites, the NSPCC advises that you monitor their activity closely to avoid any harm coming to them or others. We have had visits from the PCSO and East Riding behaviour team in the last six months to talk to the children about this problem and will continue to work with them to help our pupils understand that their actions online have consequences.

In other news our Y5/6 girls football team played in a tournament on Monday night and did fantastically well winning one match, drawing three and losing one. Well done girls! Not bad for a first ever go! The boys final takes place on the 20 October - good luck boys!

After half term the school choir will resume on a Friday after school -this is open to Y4, 5 and 6 initially and is quite a commitment as we are often asked to sing at events such as the Hessle Light Switch on and at various establishments around Hessle. A Google form will be sent out to sign up and it will be first come, first serve. Please only fill it in if your child is truly interested in singing as we work really hard to get to a high level and dedication and exemplary behaviour is a must in this provision.

For those of you still planning on visiting the Fair - have a great time. Otherwise have a restful weekend.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

### **WEEK 7 - Friday 22 October 2021**

Dates to remember:

Monster Pyjama Party    Monday 1 November

*FS2 and Year 1 - 4:30-5:30pm*

*Year 2, 3 and 4 - 5:45-6:45pm*

*Year 5 and 6 - 7pm-8pm*

Non Uniform Day        Friday 5 November

Parents Evening        Monday 8 and Wednesday 10 November

Year 5 Swimming        Wednesdays and Thursdays from November 24

Flu immunisation        Thursday 2 December

It has been the first half term in a while when we have not had to send classes home or teach online and I must say it has been refreshing to return to near normality. Classrooms are buzzing with children sitting in groups again, discussing their work and sharing ideas. It has been a pleasure to walk around the school and see children helping each other with their learning as we all know two heads can be better than one!

We are really focusing on times tables next term in every spare minute that we have as this appears to be a real issue in most classes from Year 3 upwards. It is incredibly hard to access any new maths concept if you do not have a sound understanding of times tables. From Year 4, children are expected to know by heart all of the times tables up to 12 x12 and be able to both recite them in order and answer random questions. Therefore we really need your help to embed times tables at home either using Purple Mash, Times Table Rock Stars or by simply chanting them in order.

As you will see above in the date's section, Year 5 are due to start the swimming lessons that they missed in Year 4 due to school closures. As the local swimming pools are struggling to fit in all of the year groups, they have changed the schedule and we will be taking our pupils on a Wednesday and Thursday morning for four weeks which will replace



the PE sessions they have in school. A Google Form for your permission will be sent out during the first week back.

The non-uniform day on Friday 5 November is the day that we ask all of you to bring a piece of chocolate for the Christmas Fair prizes. Teachers will collect the chocolate in their room and Mrs Smith will make them into amazing Christmas arrangements to sell to raise funds.

We have also had contact from the immunisation team who will be coming into school to dispense flu vaccinations to pupils. All arrangements for the vaccinations are done by the immunisations team and we will send you their link following this blog for you to give permission if you wish your child to receive the vaccination. We do not keep any lists at all in school as they collate the information centrally and tell us on the day which children are to be vaccinated.

After half term, we will let you know the Christmas production dates and details of ticket sales –we begin with FS2 at the end of November in order to fit all year groups in before Christmas. The process will be the same as previously with two tickets allocated to each child and then a general sale if any additional tickets are available.

I hope you have a peaceful half term and the children are rested and ready for the very busy term to come.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

## **WEEK 8 - Friday 5 November 2021**

Dates to remember:

Parents Evening	Monday 8 and Wednesday 10 November
Year 5 Swimming	Wednesdays and Thursdays from 24 November
Choir - Hessele Lights	Friday 26 November
Christmas Fair	Wednesday 1 December
Flu immunisation	Wednesday 12 January

It has been a brilliant week in school with the first day back 'hooking' the children into their new theme. It was lovely to see so many children dressed up for this. You should now have received details of all the hook dress up days which always fall on the first day back after a holiday. Another dress up occasion went particularly well in the form of the 'Monster Pyjama party' and I hope all the children enjoyed their first school disco.

In addition to the hook day, we have also begun holding assemblies in the hall again and I cannot explain how emotional it was to see the whole school together again after two years although we had also forgotten how much of a squeeze it is to get 500 children in the hall at the same time! The children were remarkably well behaved and I am pleased to say have not

forgotten all of our songs. I was particularly proud of our Year 1 pupils who have never been to the hall for assembly before and they really did sit beautifully and joined in with everything.

Please ensure that your child has their PE kit every day –if you need to take it home during the week, please bring it back in. With the change in weather, PE often has to move around and it is important that children access the PE curriculum. Please remember that your child cannot access PE with earrings in which means they miss it for six weeks - summer holidays is an ideal time to get them booked in. Also, can we please have coats in every day as it so often rains just as lunchtime hits and we do try and at least get the children out for a run around and fresh air.

I have been out and about looking at the impact of the safer streets scheme and on the whole have found it to be positive. The council, the local MP and I have received a couple of complaints from residents on Penshurst Avenue about parents parking across their drives and blocking them from getting out. To be fair this is not a new problem and has rumbled on ever since I became Head in 2012. All I ask is that you show respect for the residents and do not block their driveways. We have always recommended that you park away from the school and walk to the Penshurst entrance to avoid the congestion.

Christmas is a heartbeat away now and we have already started rehearsing for some of our earlier performances and we are all incredibly excited to have this part of school life restored after so long. Tickets will in the first instance be two per family and will then go on general sale on ParentPay - we will send a text when they are ready to purchase.

Production dates:

FS1 13 December 2.15 14 December 10.30 - 11.00

FS2 25 November 1.30 - 2.30 26 November 10.00 - 11.00

Y1 8 December 1.30 - 2.00 9 December 9.30 -10.00

Y2/3 Wednesday 1 Dec 1.30 - 2.30 Thursday 2 Dec 1.30 - 2.30 Friday 3 December 10.00 - 11.00

Y4-6 Tuesday 14 December 1.30 - 2.15 at Hessle All Saints Church

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

## **WEEK 9 - Friday 12 November 2021**

This week we have had photographers in school taking pictures of the children in classrooms and outside playing for our school brochures and external marketing. We only took pictures of those children with permission...

### **DATES TO REMEMBER:**

Children In Need		Friday 19 November (wear odd socks)
Year 5 Swimming		Wednesdays and Thursdays from 24 November
Choir - Hessle Lights		Friday 26 November
Productions	FS1	13 December 2.15pm and 14 December 10.30-11.00am
	FS2	25 November 1.30-2.30pm and 26 November 10.00-11.00am
	Y1	8 December 1.30-2.00pm and 9 December 9.30-10.00am
	Y2/3	Wednesday 1 Dec 1.30-2.30pm, Thursday 2 Dec 1.30-2.30pm and Friday 3 December 10.00-11.00am
	Y4-6	Tuesday 14 December 1.30-2.15pm at Hessle All Saints Church
Christmas Fair		Wednesday 1 December
Flu immunisation		Wednesday 12 January

There is a new date added above for Friday 19 November where we will be supporting Children in Need by wearing odd socks and asking for optional donations. This will also celebrate anti-bullying week.

This week we have had photographers in school taking pictures of the children in classrooms and outside playing for our school brochures and external marketing. We only took pictures of those children with permission to have their photos taken, and they all had a great time being photo models for the morning.

As I type, the sound of Christmas songs are echoing down the halls as every spare minute between lessons is being used to practice their Christmas productions-it is so lovely to hear the children sing again. I and Year 6 sat together and brainstormed all the songs that we used to sing before the COVID regulations came into effect and singing was banned; we worked out that we sing ninety-six songs of which we can remember six confidently - a fair amount of work to be done here!

Carrying on with the music theme, the choir will be performing at the 'Hessle Lights Switch On' in a couple of weeks on Friday 26 November at approximately 5.30pm. They will only have had three practice sessions, but I am confident they will be as entertaining as ever. Please come and support us if you are out and about.

We are still having a problem with children not bringing in PE kit. Please ensure kit is in school on a Monday and goes home on a Friday. PE is a statutory part of the curriculum and it is so important that the children all access this entitlement every week.

Have a lovely weekend.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

## **WEEK 10 - Friday 19 November**

### **Dates to remember:**

Year 5 Swimming	Wednesdays and Thursdays from 24 November
Choir-Hessle Lights	Friday 26 November
Christmas Fair	Wednesday 1 December
Productions FS1	13 December 2.15pm and 14 December 10.30-11.00am
FS2	25 November 1.30-2.00pm and 26 November 10.00-11.00am
Y1	8 December 2.00-2.45pm and 9 December 9.30-10.00am
Y2/3	Wednesday 1 Dec 1.15-2.00pm, Thursday 2 Dec 2.00-3.00pm and Friday 3 December 10.00-11.00am
Y4-6	Tuesday 14 December 1.30-2.15pm at Hessle All Saints Church
Flu immunisation	Wednesday 15 December (changed date by provider)

At Penshurst our curriculum is built upon a love of reading and we have been working really hard this week to ensure that the children understand the importance of reading. As a senior leadership team we have been watching reading lessons, enjoying the 10 minute pledge where teachers read the lead text to the class and talking to the children about their home reading books. On Monday and Friday the children access their lead text for the half term and on Tuesday to Thursday they access our own school scheme with a different text every day. When watching the Tuesday Reading lessons across the school, it was brilliant to see the varied texts that children are exposed to from a biography of Diego Maradona (Y6) to Jessie J song lyrics (Y4) to a beautifully illustrated picture book in Year 3.

In EYFS to year 2 we follow the 'Read Write Inc' scheme which teaches children how to read using their phonic ability. In EYFS and year 1, the books they bring home are matched to their phonic ability and the sounds they are learning in school but we would also like to send home books for you to enjoy reading with them as well. On that subject, if you have a stack of picture books that your child has outgrown we would be very grateful for them. I have reluctantly parted with close to 50 picture books as my children are now in their teens and I feel I no longer have an excuse to keep them!

We are trying to think of new ways to encourage children to read more at home as well and have invested heavily in new shiny books for the library which is certainly enticing the year 6 pupils. We are currently having discussions about whether or not to bring back reading records so we can see what the children are reading at home and reward them for their hard work but we are happy to take on any suggestions about home reading that you might have. The 10 minute pledge was introduced pre COVID and was intended to be a promise between parents and staff to increase the reading we do with the children-the idea being that we read every day for 10 minutes with them and you do the same at home. We hold our part of the 10 minute pledge every day after lunch which is above and beyond the Reading lesson; it is my most favourite part of the day as the entire school just reads for pure enjoyment. Please make sure you bring books back on a Friday to allow them to be changed and to ensure books are returned for others to enjoy. The message of the week is....keep reading!

A final uniform reminder: headbands/hair accessories must be of school colours and have no writing/logos/branding please. The trend for 'football' style headbands has definitely arrived at Penshurst and while I have no problem with boys using them to keep long hair off their faces, they must follow the school uniform guidance.

As a couple of outside providers have changed dates and times for their events, we have had to slightly change some of the Christmas production times by 15 minutes either way so please double check the time of your show below. Have a lovely weekend.

Mrs J Spencer

## Head of School

### WEEK 11 - Friday 26 November 2021

Dates to remember:

Year 5 Swimming	Wednesdays and Thursdays from 24 November
Christmas Fair	Wednesday 1 December
Staff Training Day	Friday 10 December
Productions FS2	25 November 1.30-2.30pm and 26 November 10.00-11.00am
Y1	8 December 1.30-2.00pm and 9 December 9.30-10.00am
Y2/3	Wednesday 1 Dec 1.30-2.30pm, Thursday 2 Dec 1.30-2.30pm and
Friday 3 December	10.00-11.00am
Y4-6	Tuesday 14 December 1.30-2.15pm at Hessle All Saints Church
Flu immunisation	Wednesday 15 December
Christmas Lunch	Wednesday 15 December
Last day of term	Friday 17 Dec 1.30 finish

Over the next couple of months, we will be seeking your opinions on a number of school activities and provision via Google forms and we have begun this by sending questionnaires to parents of children with additional needs. We are looking to improve communication with parents and check that we are doing everything possible in school to provide the right care for individuals. It has been impossible to have parents into school over the past two years and so we are really starting to focus on rebuilding face to face communication and making sure you are best informed about your child.

Every school is entitled to extra money to help children whose parents access the following criteria:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

It is really important that we know if you access any of the above as we can then receive extra money in school to help your child. This could be in the form of extra staffing or maybe resources. It can also help to fund clubs, trips, the Nurture room and breakfast clubs ensuring we can continue with these provisions.

Please fill in the form we are sending home as soon as you can as it may just be that you do qualify and we can access additional support for your child in school. It is really important that you fill this in even if your child receives universal free school meals as it will still bring extra money into school to use in the classroom. We need your help to access this extra money.

Have a lovely weekend.

Mrs Spencer

Head of School

## **WEEK 12 - Friday 3 December 2021**

Dates to remember:

Year 5 Swimming      Wednesdays and Thursdays from 24 November

Staff Training Day      Friday 10 December (school closed to pupils)

Productions    Y1      Wednesday 8 December 1.30-2.00pm & Thursday 9 December 9.30-10.00am

   Y4-6      Tuesday 14 December 1.30-2.15pm at Hessle All Saints Church

Flu immunisation      Wednesday 15 December

Christmas Lunch      Wednesday 15 December

Last day of term      Friday 17 Dec 1.30 finish

I am writing this fresh from watching the Y2/3 Christmas production and I am certainly beginning to feel the Christmas spirit. I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to staff who have worked tirelessly to ensure all children get a chance to perform this Christmas. It is a tricky balance to keep all of the work going while rehearsing as well and I applaud the children for being so brilliant!

We are hopeful that with the risk assessments we have done that we will be able to complete our production schedule but I do fear for the Y4, 5, 6 production purely due to the numbers involved, which take us into the realms of Christmas Fayre numbers, in an enclosed space. Whatever happens we will still go ahead with a performance in school that may be able to be recorded for parents to view. I will let you know as soon as we make that decision. Please bear with us as the situation changes daily and most local schools have cancelled all festive activities now.

We recently sent out a survey regarding support for children with additional needs and this has been invaluable in helping us adjust some of our communication strategies already. It does seem that online forms are the way forward for us to collect information and so we will continue to use this method to collect parent voice as it is quick and efficient and does not take too much of your time to complete. Thank you again for participating in such high numbers.

Unfortunately we do have a few cases of nits in some of our year groups so please be vigilant and I would suggest long hair is tied back.

With an escalation of COVID cases in local schools it would be prudent to take a LFD if your child is unwell and, if showing covid symptoms, book a PCR test. The cases are manageable at the moment but other schools are not faring well and have had to make a return to remote learning. We will continue to send children home who present with symptoms in school so you can take them for a PCR test but please be vigilant at home as well.

Have a lovely (snowy?) weekend.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

### **WEEK 13 - Friday 10 December 2021**

Dates to remember:

Year 5 Swimming      Wednesdays and Thursdays until 16 December

Productions              Y4-6 Tuesday 14 December 1.30-2.30pm at All Saints Church, Hessele

Flu immunisation      Wednesday 15 December

Christmas Lunch      Wednesday 15 December

Last day of term      Christmas Jumper Day

Friday 17 December 1.30pm close

I would firstly like to thank you for the messages of support we have received regarding cancelling the school fair and maintaining the productions. It is always difficult to manage these situations especially when all around are cancelling. Any perishable goods that have been donated (such as chocolate) have been put into the year group hampers, raffles or sweet drives. We also donated advent calendars and other goods to the Bridgewater Factory appeal therefore ensuring our local community benefits from your donations.

We are nearly at the end of term and there are still a number of events still to take place in what will be a busy week.

Firstly, on Tuesday, we will be holding our Open Event in the nursery. This has been well promoted in the area but, if you have not seen the information that has been sent out, it can be found [here](#). Please also pass on the message to anyone in your family or community who you think this may be appropriate for.

We then have just two Christmas productions left to do. FS1's nativity will go ahead as planned as we have very low numbers attending as it is a small year group. We feel completely safe with the extra measures such as reduced numbers and wearing of masks that we have in school.

As it stands, we are still planning to go ahead with the Year 4/5/6 production on Tuesday afternoon at the Church as it is a big space which is well ventilated (one might even say freezing cold!). However, after doing the pre visit with the children, it became apparent that we must put further measures in place to safeguard everyone particularly as there is a social distancing measure currently in place at the Church which would not accommodate the normal numbers. Below is a list of the additional measures we are putting in place to ensure the production goes ahead:

- One adult only per child to attend who will be signed in on the door to reduce numbers
- Masks to be worn at all times
- Parents to sit in Year group sections to encourage distancing
- Children to be walked back to school by staff after the performance to avoid the mixing that normally takes place at the end of the show. Children will not be allowed to leave with their parent.

I am sure many of you will be disappointed that we are reducing numbers but please be aware this is essential in meeting the East Riding criteria to put on a production in COVID times. We are hoping that with these additional measures we are safe to continue and will only cancel if the situation in school changes where we find ourselves with escalating cases or staff absence.

This leads me nicely onto Christmas parties.... These will still go ahead in year groups on the last Friday in the morning and as it is before lunchtime this year, we will only be having a few snacks. We will provide drinks, fruit and some supplementary bits and bobs. We would kindly ask that you send in packaged biscuits, buns, crisps and fruit so we can ensure all children have a snack to enjoy while partying the morning away! If your child has an allergy we will



ensure there are some food bits however you may feel that you wish to plate them up some bits to eat as pre-packaged items very often state that the product may include nuts.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

### **WEEK 14 - Friday 17 December 2021**

Dates to remember:

Start of term	Wednesday 5 January 2022
Young Voices Trip	Thursday 6 January 2022
Flu immunisation (Catch up)	Wednesday 12 January 2022
SmART Club Trip	Friday 28 January 2022
Y3 Yorvik Trip	Monday 31 January 2022

Merry Christmas!

We have all made it to the end of term intact with productions completed, parties held, Christmas dinners eaten and a full curriculum taught! Although absolutely exhausting for parents, staff and pupils, it is with a great sense of achievement that we break up for the festive holidays; this is the first term in a long while with no disruptions to learning, no isolations and no remote working and it feels brilliant to be back doing what we do best...teaching, learning and having fun.

On a less festive note.....we are having quite a lot of cases of nits in the school so please check your child's hair carefully and treat accordingly. I would suggest that you tie long hair back to avoid further cases. None of us want these unwanted visitors at the Christmas table!

After Christmas you will receive your child's progress report. This is the first bout of formal testing that the children have completed fully in a while so please do not be alarmed if they are 'working towards' rather than 'working at' and or 'working above'. Working towards covers a broad range of levels so if you wish to discuss this further, please contact your class teacher although this will of course be discussed at the next Parents Evening. In future reports, we will be adding a new column to indicate if your child is working further below the 'working towards' statement. This will be an indication that your child needs intervention in this subject. Again, this will be discussed in teacher/parent evenings.

Of course, school is about much more than a simple set of test results and I am very proud of all of our children this term as they have adjusted to being back in school full time, meeting the challenge of filling any gaps in their knowledge and performing in the end of term productions. They have managed all of this with good grace, humour and a smile.

I hope that you all manage to have a fantastic Christmas and recharge the batteries for the long winter months ahead. I wish you and yours a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

### **WEEK 15 - Friday 7 January 2022**

Welcome back and Happy New Year

It has been great to see the children running into school this week and this eagerness can also be seen in their learning in the classroom. Hook Day was superb fun with many children dressing up for the occasion to celebrate their new theme.

Please accept your invitation to Google Classroom again if you have not done so as this is where work is set for children. Teachers will be going through passwords in class with the children but the office does hold copies if you require a password for any of the online sites we use. I genuinely hoped not to have to mention COVID this year but it seems that it may be an issue for a while longer. We do have some absence due to COVID positive cases and so please be vigilant if your child presents with symptoms and continue doing lateral flow tests where possible.

At the moment, the planned trips are still going ahead however, this may be subject to change and if they are cancelled we will update you as soon as possible and postpone them to a future date. You will have now received notification of after school clubs being cancelled and I must say it has been done with a heavy heart as we recognise how important these are to the pupils and parents. However, we must take every step necessary to ensure the safe running of the school over the next few weeks.

This term is generally where we see children fly in their learning as they begin to consolidate the autumn terms learning and build upon it. Parents' Evenings will discuss progress in core subjects and will be held remotely. Please bear in mind that these only last five minutes and if you require a longer conversation about a particular issue, then you will need to arrange a further meeting. For those children who receive additional intervention in school and are on the SEND register, there will be an optional pop in day to book an appointment to discuss your child's individual learning plan. Appointments will be able to be booked online but we will aim to conduct these meetings face to face where possible. We will send more information about these appointments with the booking forms.

On a final note, can we please ensure that all medication is taken to the school office where a form must be filled in to allow the medicine to be stored and administered. Please do not give medication to other school staff to keep or allow children to have it with them. We only administer medicine that is required 4x a day as any other doses can be given at home.

Have a lovely weekend.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

Dates to remember:

Flu vaccination catch up	Tuesday 12 January
SEND Pop in day (optional)	Thursday 27 Friday 28 January
SmART trip	Friday 28 January
Jorvik Y3 trip	Monday 31 January
Parents Evening	Monday 21 Wednesday 23 March

### **WEEK 16 - Friday 14 January 2022**

This week we have been talking in school about homework and how best to ensure that it meets the needs of our children. It is such a controversial topic at Primary School as parents really are split 50/50 in any survey we send out about the use/amount/type of homework that is given to children. I have yet to meet a sample of parents who all agree on this topic! We seem to fall in line with most of the local schools in focusing on Reading, times tables and spellings as these underpin everything else we need to cover in school.

We have come to the general consensus that little and often is the way forward concentrating on the basics. We currently ask that the children read for 10 minutes every day as part of the School Pledge and after talking to the children we have decided to send out Reading records again to record three of these sessions. Children have told us that they enjoyed being 'Reader of the Week' and getting penguins for reading. This will be in place after half term.

Children in EYFS, Year1 and some of Year 2 bring home books matched to their phonic ability and these match the scheme we use in school: Read Write Inc. These books are incredibly expensive though so please ensure your child is returning the book each week. In KS2, children bring home books that match their reading level and choose their own book from our library.

Alongside the reading homework, we set the online Times Table Rockstars to help the children master this area of maths. In Year 4, pupils are required to take a national multiplication test and this online homework will really help them to achieve good results in this test. All children from Years 2 - 6 now have a Times Tables Rockstars login. Research shows that five minutes of practice every day on the website or app increases their recall speed of times tables and having the ability to recall their times tables from memory improves Maths knowledge. By the end of Year 2, pupils are expected to know their 2s, 5s and 10 times tables. By the end of Year 3, pupils are expected to know their 3s, 4s and 8s, and by the end of Year 4, pupils are expected to know all times tables up to 12 x 12. Challenges have been set by your child's teacher so please log on and practise as and when you can!

Finally, there are spellings to do! We have slightly altered the spellings as we will now be sending out the 'Penshurst 30' spelling list. These must be achieved in order to move back onto the more difficult spelling sets on Purple Mash. The reasoning behind this is that these words are the most incorrectly spelt throughout every year group and it is so important that we fix this issue. Year 1 will continue to have spellings that match their phonic learning.

I know what many of you will be thinking... How on earth do people fit this all in? As a busy working mum of two I completely understand the juggling act. Remember most children from Year 3 up can manage this on their own so it is mainly our youngest learners who need the support the most. I certainly don't have all the answers but I used to use car trips to their dance and sporting clubs to go through spellings or listen to them read while I cooked dinner. I suppose it is about finding that 5-10 minutes where you can and sometimes multi-tasking has to be the answer.

Our main priority is that whatever the pupils are set for homework makes a difference to their learning in school. If you are having any difficulties with completing or accessing the homework, please talk to your class teacher or any of our subject leaders in school.

Have a lovely weekend.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

Dates to remember:

SEND Pop in day (optional) Thursday 27 Friday 28 January

Jorvik Y3 trip Monday 31 January

Parents Evening Monday 21 Wednesday 23 March

### **WEEK 17 - Friday 21 January 2022**

I would like to start this week's blog with a huge 'well done' to all the pupils in school, with Covid causing many ongoing issues with staffing this week, the pupils have been taught by a mixture of school staff and supply teachers. This can be particularly tricky for our younger learners who thrive on consistency and familiarity, however all classes affected have been brilliant and carried on with their learning while maintaining a positive attitude and behaving fantastically.

Many of the supply teachers have been quick to tell me how lovely our school and its pupils are, and I couldn't agree more. I would also include staff for a round of applause as current absence is challenging and creates a lot of extra workload for those who are still in school. We have taken the step to return to class bubbles in Year 5 for a week due to a rising number of cases and will review this next Friday. Unfortunately we have had to close Year 1 for a day as well for a deep clean following a sharp incline in both pupil and staff cases in this year group. Please continue to test your child regularly.



this note a big 'thank you' to some of our nursery parents who helped by keeping their children off school on Thursday when staffing was a concern - this really did help.

This leads me nicely onto the Safer Streets initiative. The scheme is council led and during the first term we supported them by having staff out on the streets to inform parents and residents of the new rules and the signage that has been put up. We have had to drastically scale down staff visits to this area due to ongoing absence however it was never the intention that school staff continue to man these streets and we have started to pull back our visits since Christmas anyway to this area; my priority is that staff are in school educating the children. The council always advised us to support the scheme heavily at the outset and then scale back to spot checks which we will still accommodate.

I will just remind everyone that the council has put this scheme in place to keep children safe around our school so please abide by the rules. It is sad to hear that some members of our community are taking advantage of the streets not being staffed every day to park and drive down the streets; I thank the vast majority of parents who continue to follow the rules and make the streets safer for those walking to school.

We have had an issue reported to us about the behaviour of children queuing at the Penshurst Avenue entrance resulting in a couple of younger children being hit by footballs etc. Please can I ask that children queue sensibly while waiting for the gates to open and are respectful of younger pupils and parents. Remember registration is not until 8.50am so there is 10 minutes to stagger yourself into school and no need to be queuing at 8.40am although I appreciate those heading off to work may want to be in quickly.

This week a couple of parents have asked me my thoughts on whether I support the teaching of phonics in school as there is a big splash in the press at the moment about phonics not being the best way to teach reading. I can honestly say that we have found phonics teaching to be a very successful way of introducing children to reading and our outcomes in Reading at every stage are well above national. We follow the Read Write Inc scheme which children generally complete by Year 2 at which point they begin whole class text comprehension. The Pledge that we complete every day introduces children to comprehension from FS2 upwards so this compliments the phonics scheme that we follow.

What I would add is that, like in any subject, not all children learn the same way and some pupils will learn to read via recognising whole words rather than breaking them down. My own two children were very different in their approach to reading with one learning phonetically and the other learning via sight words and both of them became secure and fluent readers. We do appreciate different learning styles and ensure that teaching of reading (although following a synthetic phonics scheme) does allow for other pathways for these children if required. I would also say that whichever scheme you follow, it is the quality of the teacher that counts and in that I am very lucky to have extremely skilled teachers who are passionate about teaching children to read.

This week we have held our first sports fixture of the year as our Year 6 boys have taken on Hymers at football! \*\*\*Hot off the press...4-0 to Penshurst\*\*\* Well done boys! The only change we are making to these sports fixtures is to have them in single year group teams instead of the usual mix we would have. We are also hopeful that the trip to York with Year 3 will go ahead on Monday and I know they will have an amazing time there.

For those of you heading to the food festival in Hessle this weekend, stay safe and enjoy

Have a great weekend.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

Dates to remember:

Flu vaccination catch up	Tuesday 12 January
Jorvik Y3 trip	Monday 31 January
Parents Evening	Monday 21 Wednesday 23 March

### **WEEK 19 - Friday 4 February 2022**

This week has seen the virtual book fair take place for the first time and I would like to say thank you to those who have purchased books as this equals books for school as well. Sticking with the book theme, we have just received hundreds of brand new phonics books that we will be sending home with children, in FS2 and Year 1 in particular, to match their reading in class. They have been lovingly stickered by staff and we just make a plea that you return them every week in order to receive the next book. More news will follow in next week's blog about World Book Day, which falls on 4 March this year. We will definitely be handing out book tokens so every child will come home with a book.

This week Year 3 managed to complete our first school trip of the year and all children enjoyed the visit. Despite a couple of travel sickness incidents, it all ran really smoothly and the children were a credit to the school. More events to follow this term include Red Nose Day where we invite everyone to wear red and make a donation if you wish. Additionally, we are planning to hold the Friendship Disco after half term if Covid cases in school continue to decline.

After half term we will open clubs again and these will be the same as before Christmas so your child can just re-join their original sessions. At Easter we are going to have a revamp of clubs and we will send out new booking forms for the summer term just before the Easter holiday. This will allow different clubs to take place giving children and staff a change and hopefully allowing those who did not get a place in the autumn term to participate.

I have just sent a letter to the Year 5 children stating that school will be adding on an extra hour at the end of each day - this is for their persuasive writing lesson so please don't be alarmed (or thrilled) if your child mentions this. We would appreciate it if you would play along for a while, or plead ignorance, so we can really start some good debates in class. When the teachers shared the news about this happening in Wales the children were horrified so it will be interesting to read their persuasive letters they send back to me!

Final reminder, can children please bring in water bottles and book bags as we are struggling to send books etc. home and with water fountains limited due to Covid risk assessments, we really need children to have access to their own water bottle all day. This is a particular problem in Year 1.

Have a lovely weekend

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

Dates to remember:

World Book Day	Thursday 3 March
Red Nose Day (wear red)	Friday 11 March
Parents Evening	Monday 21 and Wednesday 23

March

### **WEEK 20 - Friday 11 February 2022**

This week I would like to focus on the healthy schools agenda. We are incredibly proud that we have the healthy schools accreditation which looks closely at how we map our curriculum to encourage both healthy minds and bodies. All of the work that Mrs Smith does with bike ability and road safety also contribute to maintaining a healthy school. We have taken steps to ensure that we are sending any birthday sweets/cakes that are bought in to you to make a decision around your own child's diet and whenever we have food tasting in school, we aim to have healthy alternatives where possible and appropriate. We also provide fruit every day for children in EYFS and KS1 to help towards the 'five a day' agenda.

In the last few weeks however we have become concerned over the packed lunches and we have a duty as a school to address this. I must remind you that carbonated drinks, sweets and whole family bars of chocolate are not allowed in school (this includes items such as Winders which have as much sugar as a Mars bar and are classed as sweets). A healthy lunch really does help children learn better in the afternoon.

The school's 'Food in the Academy' policy states the following regarding lunch boxes from home:

*the school request that parents do not include the following items in packed lunches:*

- sweets, chocolate etc.
- fizzy/sugary drinks
- sweet cakes e.g. sugary cakes, doughnuts
- Sweet nut bars
- Foods containing salted nuts
- Packets of salted nuts

As we continue to evaluate our curriculum, we are reviewing all of the elements required in our relationships, sex education and health lessons. In July 2020, I sent you a brief parent overview of the changes being made to the content and delivery of this subject. In all



honesty, it has not really changed what we teach in schools as we were already covering all of the topics. I am just re-sending you the government document again to remind you of our obligations. Please click [here](#) for the RSE Guide for Parents.

In primary school, as part of Relationships Education, all pupils will have been taught content on:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

In addition, under Health education, they will have knowledge of:

- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harms
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid
- Changing adolescent body

As a parent you cannot withdraw your child from Relationships Education, however you can remove them from Sex Education. To do so, you would need to fill in a removal form, clearly stating the reasons why, for the Head of School to authorise. At Penshurst, we collaborate with the school nurse to hold sessions in Year 6 around puberty and where babies come from. We have never had any issues from these sessions and to my knowledge we have never had anyone not take part. If you wish to talk further about RSE, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Preston who is in charge of all things curriculum.

Another item that falls under the healthy school agenda is e safety. We have had a number of issues on social media outside school in the last few weeks involving mainly Year 5 and 6 children. This continues to be a real problem and I ask that you check your children's phones and reiterate to them the importance of being kind. We have had the PCSO and the Anti-Social Behaviour Lead into school again this week to reinforce how dangerous cyber bullying is and the impact it can have on individuals and families. The children involved in these sessions were a credit to the school and I hope are beginning to have a better understanding of their responsibility when on social media forums.

I do have a big ask..... in the Early Years Foundation stage we would really like to invite as many visitors in as possible to talk to the children about their jobs. The children are excited when we have visiting adults and we would really like to have one person per week to explain what they do. This could be any job. If you have a spare hour some time during the school day, we would love to hear from you!

Finally, on Red Nose Day we are inviting the children to wear red and we have a link for a Just Giving page for you to donate to the Comic Relief Charity. Otherwise you can drop some change in one of the buckets at the gates at either end of the day.

Enjoy your weekend.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

Dates to remember:

World Book Day	Thursday 3 March
Red Nose Day (wear red)	Friday 11 March
Parents Evening	Monday 21 Wednesday 23 March

### **WEEK 20 - Friday 11 February 2022**

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Enjoy your weekend.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

Dates to remember:

World Book Day	Thursday 3 March
Red Nose Day (wear red)	Friday 11 March
Parents Evening	Monday 21 Wednesday 23 March

### **WEEK 21 - Friday 18 February 2022**

This term we have been looking very closely at the provision in school for children with additional needs be they emotional, behavioural or academic. It has been a turbulent term with so much child and staff absence due to COVID isolations and so this has been even harder than normal to accommodate every child's need. I sincerely hope that next half term brings us less disruption.

We recently sent parents of children with additional needs a questionnaire regarding provision in school and parents were absolute in their belief in the teaching and support their child receives. An area of development for us was to ensure that the learning support plans are now regularly shared with parents so they can contribute as parents quite rightly stated that they have not had the opportunity in COVID times to come in and talk about these. We will be holding remote meetings on the dates above to allow parents to discuss their child's plan and to have a better understanding of where their child sits in the SEN process and the interventions and adaptations that take place in school. This will also be reinforced in our Parents Evenings that take place in late March.

We have made the decision to continue with remote meetings for the time being but will be hosting opportunities for parents to pop into school to look at their child's work after Easter.

We have tried to make World Book Day as cost effective as possible by allowing children to come dressed as a word. This could be pyjamas for 'sleepy', attaching balloons for 'celebration' or wearing red for 'angry'. The choice is yours. We hope this will encourage all kinds of vocabulary discussion on the day. If you can, we would also appreciate it if you could provide your child with a large potato for a craft activity we are doing in the afternoon with the whole school - we will have plenty extra in school should anyone forget. The day will be filled with reading activities to further inspire that love of reading. Remember that after half term, we will be returning to sending home reading records for children to log their 3 x weekly reading.

Continuing the Reading theme, we would very much like to encourage any parents who have a love of reading to help us on a Friday afternoon. We would like to reintroduce 'Reading buddies'. Staff will host the afternoons and we would like parents to come into the hall and read with children who need a little extra encouragement. The children adore having new visitors in and would really benefit from extra opportunities to read to adults. If you have a couple of hours to spare, please contact the office. I will provide biscuits (or fruit as a healthy alternative!)

Thank you to those parents who have begun to offer their time to speak to our EYFS about their jobs. We are collating a list and will get back to you all individually about suitable timings. The more the merrier please so keep sending those emails in.

Have a lovely half term.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

Dates to remember:

World Book Day (bring a large baking potato)	Thursday 3 March
SEN parents meetings	Thursday 3 March and Thursday 10 March
Red Nose Day (wear red)	Friday 18 March
Parents Evening	Monday 21 and Wednesday 23 March

**Young Voices**

**Thursday 28 April**

### **WEEK 22 - Friday 4 March 2022**

Some good news! You will have received a flyer via email regarding the postponed school disco run by the Parent Friends Association. They have now managed to secure a slot and the disco will be in school next Tuesday night. Entrance will be via the school office however both sets of external gates will be open.

Times are as follows:

*FS2/Y1-4.30-5.30*

*Y2/3/4 -5.45-6.45*

*Y5/6 -7.00-8.00*

It is great to see clubs and events back on and long may this last. We will be looking at new clubs for the summer term when we get out and about a little more. We are also looking at moving some of the clubs to a lunchtime session to give children a variety of activities during this period. Club lists will be sent out during the penultimate week of term.

This week in school has been really brilliant as we have seen the return of singing assemblies, clubs and of course World Book Day. It was such a lot of fun guessing the children's words that they had come dressed as. Some ideas were so simple yet effective (and more importantly cost nothing!) There were children dressed in navy blue to represent 'midnight'; some in pyjamas to represent 'dozy' or 'sleepy'; some with fancy party clothes and handbags representing 'stylish' and an excellent but scary representation of the word

'contagious'. The classrooms were a celebration of books and I particularly enjoyed seeing the 'book and a nook' activities where children found weird and wonderful places to read a book.

Thank you to those parents who have offered some time on a Friday afternoon to help with reading. We will be sending out another google form to sign up any other willing volunteers and then phone you to arrange the details.

Sporting events are now back in swing so watch out for details of upcoming matches of which I will share results as they come in. We have some incredibly talented footballers in our midst and it will be great to see them do what they do best. On a sporting note, can I please remind you all that PE is statutory and cannot be opted out of. It is imperative that children bring *PE kits in on a Monday and leave them here all week* in case sessions have to be shifted around due to weather conditions etc. Not only do pupils need to be in PE weekly for their own physical wellbeing but we simply cannot accommodate all the children who forget kits into the other classroom.

Next week, look out for 'a week in the life of FS2 on Twitter'. There will be some fantastic pictures of what happens on a daily basis in our youngest years so sign up to follow us if you have not done so already. We use Twitter a lot to show off events and work in school as well as to inform parents of events so please check regularly.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

## **WEEK 22 - Friday 4 March 2022**

Some good news! You will have received a flyer via email regarding the postponed school disco run by the Parent Friends Association. They have now managed to secure a slot and the disco will be in school next Tuesday night. Entrance will be via the school office however both sets of external gates will be open.

Times are as follows:

*FS2/Y1-4.30-5.30*

*Y2/3/4 -5.45-6.45*

*Y5/6 -7.00-8.00*

It is great to see clubs and events back on and long may this last. We will be looking at new clubs for the summer term when we get out and about a little more. We are also looking at moving some of the clubs to a lunchtime session to give children a variety of activities during this period. Club lists will be sent out during the penultimate week of term.

This week in school has been really brilliant as we have seen the return of singing assemblies, clubs and of course World Book Day. It was such a lot of fun guessing the children's words that they had come dressed as. Some ideas were so simple yet effective (and more importantly cost nothing!) There were children dressed in navy blue to represent 'midnight'; some in pyjamas to represent 'dozy' or 'sleepy'; some with fancy party clothes and handbags representing 'stylish' and an excellent but scary representation of the word

'contagious'. The classrooms were a celebration of books and I particularly enjoyed seeing the 'book and a nook' activities where children found weird and wonderful places to read a book.

Thank you to those parents who have offered some time on a Friday afternoon to help with reading. We will be sending out another google form to sign up any other willing volunteers and then phone you to arrange the details.

Sporting events are now back in swing so watch out for details of upcoming matches of which I will share results as they come in. We have some incredibly talented footballers in our midst and it will be great to see them do what they do best. On a sporting note, can I please remind you all that PE is statutory and cannot be opted out of. It is imperative that children bring *PE kits in on a Monday and leave them here all week* in case sessions have to be shifted around due to weather conditions etc. Not only do pupils need to be in PE weekly for their own physical wellbeing but we simply cannot accommodate all the children who forget kits into the other classroom.

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Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

### **WEEK 23 - Friday 11 March 2022**

First of all ... football! In a closely fought match, the Y6 girls did brilliantly to work together as a team, in their first ever match with only three training sessions. Mr Hutchinson was so proud of the girls who narrowly lost 2-1 to St Vincent's school. Teachers reported that the girls worked really well and had real potential and I must say from talking to them post match they are all determined to get better and win. True Penshurst spirit!

This week saw the return of school singing and it appears we have not forgotten everything! The only problem was the ringing in my ears as they were so enthusiastic to sing that the whole room appeared to shake. We are now working on refining our singing voice as opposed to shouting but I am sure you are thrilled to hear the well-known songs entering your house again. I was so impressed with the older children's role modelling to our younger children and helping them with actions and words.

The House Captains in particular were amazing at modelling assembly behaviour and I can already spot some potential high school head students as they demonstrate great leadership skills already at such a young age.

The PFA disco was extremely well attended and I'm not sure who enjoyed dancing more, the pupils or staff. Although the disco is not a school run event, many staff give up their time to attend and spend time with their year group. I thank both the staff for this and also the PFA for arranging events for our children. In the future I would ask that all pupils be accompanied by adults to walk to the event and queue as I have had a couple of issues reported to me

about behaviour of unaccompanied pupils outside of school. We are dealing with this where appropriate and I must say that behaviour inside the school was exemplary.

On Tuesday 6 April, we will be holding our annual P Factor at Penshurst. We have been holding off to ensure that the COVID situation had calmed down and that pupil and staff absence was not an issue. The event is for Year 4, 5, 6 pupils and will be Mrs Brownell's swan song before she goes on maternity leave. There will be two performances at 3.30pm and 6pm to accommodate parents. Tickets will go on sale next week and be limited to two tickets per family initially. The office will text when tickets go on direct sale and again when we open it up to general sale.

Have a lovely weekend.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

Dates to remember:

Red Nose Day (wear red)      Friday 18 March

Parents Evening                      Monday 21 and Wednesday 23 March

P Factor                                  Tuesday 5 April

Young Voices, Sheffield          Thursday 28 April

### **WEEK 24 - Friday 18 March 2022**

6:1 to Penshurst... the score following the Year 5 and 6 match against Christopher Pickering. It appears that our boys football teams are going from strength to strength so a big thank you to Mr Hutchinson for organising training, dates of matches and escorting them everywhere.

It has been a pleasure to watch nearly every class in their learning this week and I have really been struck with the resilience that pupils are demonstrating. Not only are they settling back into full time learning but they are simultaneously filling any gaps brought about by the disruption to education over the past two years while tackling new and tricky concepts. There is a real buzz in the classrooms as children celebrate getting answers correct. I have seen fantastic Maths lessons where children have grappled with converting fractions into decimals and exchanging in column subtraction; inspiring Reading lessons with songs, poems, stories and biographies all being explored and enjoyed through to fascinating Science lessons where children can confidently place scientists on a timeline and evaluate how impactful their inventions were.

We have been concentrating really hard in our thematic afternoons in ensuring that children can link previous knowledge to new learning and I have seen some really good examples of this happening around the building for example with Year 5 able to compare Newton to other



scientists and compare scientific theories. The knowledge organisers that we use in class are on the website so maybe challenge the children to tell you some facts from their previous themes to see what they have remembered. It is so important that children learn to link ideas and build their knowledge base. Year 2 are getting really good at comparing authors and discussing similarities and differences in their writing.

Community has been the topic of staff meetings in school recently as it is only these last two weeks where we have been able to mix again in school as a staff body and we have really missed face to face staff meetings and being able to collaborate with each other on a daily basis. This has obviously also been a barrier to our pupils mixing and to us being able to invite parents into school for challenge days, stay and play sessions, plays, assemblies and so forth. We are, I'm afraid, seeing an increase in Covid cases again which was to be expected with the relaxation of rules across the country. This means that we will continue to limit visitors into school until at least Easter and work with Public Health to do what we can to minimise the risks of transmission. Hopefully, we will then be in a position to put back on all of our lovely events that we invite you into school for. We are dipping our toes in the water slightly to put on P Factor but will again limit numbers in the hall, implement a one way system and encourage hand sanitisation on entrance to school.

The sun has just appeared as I finish writing so I am hopeful for a sunny, bright weekend - enjoy.

Have a lovely weekend.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

Dates to remember:

Parents Evening	Monday 21 Wednesday 23 March
P Factor	Tuesday 5 April 3.30/5.30
P Factor	Wednesday 6 April 9.15
Young Voices, Sheffield	Thursday 28 Ap

### **WEEK 25 - Friday 25 March 2022**

Communication between school and home is always an area we are looking to improve on especially as we all live such busy lives and tend to live in a digital world now instead of one where letters are sent out. Texts, emails, Twitter and the Headteachers blog are currently our main forms of communication within our school community and we would like this to remain the case to promote consistency of where to go to find out information about what is happening in school. We are also in the process of updating the website to showcase all that we do in school and our intention for teaching and learning in school.

We are really ramping up our use of our Twitter site in school to showcase events in school and celebrate day to day life at Penshurst. Please take the time to follow us - by App or PC -

in order to see all the brilliant learning taking place; It's also a great place to check dates and event details as we put our regular reminders. [@Penshurstschool](#)

Another week, another football match. Well done to the Year 6 boys who played a cracking match against Anlaby Primary School on Tuesday night resulting in a 1:1 draw. The boys narrowly missed out on several more goals and really did show what a good team they are. We have many more matches coming up including our Girls football team so I will keep you updated with their achievements.

As we resume normal service at school, following what has been an incredibly different couple of years in education, it is time to take stock and evaluate where we are as a school. We recently conducted a pupil survey with all children and their response was overwhelmingly positive:

- 99% feel safe in school
- 98% feel they have someone to talk to
- 97% enjoy school
- 95% believe they are challenged in their learning.
- 97% believe that any bullying or unkindness is rare and is dealt with quickly by staff

This is really positive and we are busy chasing up any worries individuals have around feeling safe or enjoying school. While I am thrilled that the pupils feel so positively about school, I would also like to take the opportunity to gauge parent views so we can address any issues that you may have. The questionnaire can be found [here](#). We aim to do this questionnaire twice a year. If you disagree with any statements could you please offer a little more information to explain why you have ticked this box so we can address any concerns.

I think we have all struggled with not having visitors to school and having to do everything remotely (although many of you have commented that you prefer remote parent evenings as it fits in with your busy lives). I have added an extra question to the standard questionnaire asking your view on parents evening so we can make decisions on how we run these events in the future. In May, we are going to host a short event after school where we will bring tables out to the playground in KS2 and outside KS1/EYFS classrooms and lay out the childrens books for you to have a look at. All staff will be present to look through books with you and answer any questions - this may fill the gap that the remote meetings don't fill and give you an even better insight into the progress your child is making. Thank you to all those who attended the Parents Evening. We will chase up those of you who did not make appointments to ensure there are no concerns or issues moving forwards.

I continue to advocate reading every night with your child to ensure they accelerate the learning that happens in school. It is lovely to see that the majority of children are bringing in their reading records to celebrate home reading. In Year 4, please work with your children on their times tables as they will sit the national multiplication test in June. They need to know all of their times tables up to 12 x 12 and be able to recall them at speed (within six seconds). Please encourage your child to work on TTRockstars as often as they can and challenge themselves to get better and better.

On a final e safety note, we have had some concerns reported to us around a TiK Tok character called Huggy Wuggy that our very youngest children seem to know about. Huggy Wuggy sounds like a cuddly teddy bear. But the monster is actually an evil villain in the 2021 horror PC game Poppy Playtime by MOB Games. The blue stuffed bear is no Care Bear. When he opens his mouth, he has rows of sharp teeth. And that's just the tip of the iceberg. He hunts people down and says things like, "I could hug you forever until you breathe your



prospective parents to watch and gain a better understanding of what the EYFS daily timetable looks like. The children adore filming, it is the adults that struggle more!

More football matches next week with Year 6 boys on Monday and Year 5 /6 girls on Thursday. Both matches are at Penshurst. We have unfortunately had some unsportsmanship behaviour from some team members and, as in the real world of football, this has resulted in some match bans for some. We expect the highest standards from our pupils when they are in public representing our school and for the first time ever we have fallen short of expectations on two occasions. We will monitor this closely and continue to educate our young sports people on the importance of professional conduct; however, I would ask that if you are a parent on the sidelines, you also support us by ensuring a sportsmanlike attitude as well. Please be careful of your language while on any of the school site and remember it is supposed to be fun - I keep reminding the year 6 boys of this as at times I am sure they think they have lost the World Cup.

I hope you all have a lovely weekend and enjoy whatever weather is thrown our way next!

Have a lovely weekend.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

Key Dates:

P Factor      Tuesday 5 April 3.30/6.00 Wednesday 6 April 9.15

Class Photos/EYFS School Video    Thursday 7 April

Young Voices, Sheffield      Thursday 28 April

## **WEEK 27 - Friday 8 April 2022**

A week of wellness and fun at Penshurst....

It has been the busiest week of the year so far at school as events return in full force. We have welcomed a football coach to Year 6 for the Summer term every Monday to work on skills and sportsmanship and now we are able to get on the field we will begin to look at our summer term sports programme of house tournaments. We also have the 'Dickinsons' cup to look forward to, which is a KS2 tournament. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Carrisons whose business has sponsored a new kit for the girls football team which they are very excited to wear. Just a reminder that we often have to cancel Mr Hutchinson's after school sports club when there is a match on as he needs to supervise the event.

Our healthy school agenda has continued with children participating in Bikeability workshops. The council led project has been running for many years and the children have

benefitted massively from taking part and becoming safer cyclists on the road. The leaders who came to school to deliver the sessions were extremely complimentary about the pupil's attitude and manners which is always lovely to hear as well. We also hosted the first 'Bikers breakfast' which I am sure will be an annual event now.

We have teamed up with the charity 'Men in Sheds' to work on some woodwork projects to enhance the outside areas in school. Children will be involved in designing these areas and working together to improve our environment. We have been lucky to get some materials and support from Ashcourt as well to help with the project.

The return of P Factor was a pleasure to watch. I am always in awe of youngsters who take to the stage and show such bravery in performing before their peers and adults. It is a daunting feeling when the lights dim, the music begins and all eyes are on you and every child handled this exceptionally well showing great maturity and again a sense of teamwork as they all chanted for each other and helped those who found it difficult.

The School Council have been busy creating fun competitions for you all to take part in over the Easter holidays and we look forward to seeing your creations. Have fun!

On Monday 23 May we will be holding a parent 'pop in' session for Y1-6 where you will have the opportunity to look at your child's work which remote parents evenings have not allowed. If the weather permits, Y3-6 will hold this on the KS2 playground and Y1-Y2 will be held outside their classrooms. This will take place from 3.15-4.15.

Finally, I thank you all for your well wishes this week and it is with mixed emotions that I take a step away from Penshurst in September. What I can assure you is that it is business as normal for the rest of the year and full steam ahead for the summer term.

Have a lovely weekend.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

*Dates to remember:*

*Young Voices, Sheffield*

*Thursday 28 April*

*Bank holiday -school closure*

*Monday 2 May*

*Parent Pop in*

*Monday 23 May*

## **WEEK 28 - Friday 29 April 2022**

Well who doesn't love a fire alarm early in the morning as we are all arriving at school? Thank you for your cooperation in keeping your children with you if they had not already been dropped off in classrooms this morning. If this were to happen again, please make your way to the field away from the building where we will stay until the site is deemed safe. The children in the building were brilliant as always and very calmly followed their teacher out onto the field with very little fuss.

This week has been very busy with trips and visits. The Young Voices choir made their way to Sheffield arena to be a popstar for the night, KS2 pupils attended a 'glow in the dark' PE event and a selection of pupils took part in the local swimming gala. Music and sport are really important to Penshurst and it is such a pleasure to have these events back in the calendar. I look forward to Sports Days, Summer Fair and the Summer picnic in the last half term of the Summer.

On Friday 10 June, we will be celebrating the Queen's Jubilee in school; the morning will consist of a myriad of different activities learning about the Queen and monarchy in the wider sense and the afternoon will be a picnic on the field for the whole school with traditional games, music and sports. We invite the pupils on this day to wear red, white and blue and to bring snacks /plated food for the afternoon picnic. We will send further details nearer the time and the normal text reminders.

Year 6 are coming ever closer to their SATs exams for which they are busy revising for. To help boost the brain cells, we will be holding a SAT's breakfast every morning from 8am in the main hall. We will provide a free breakfast for every Year 6 child who wishes to attend and this is a really lovely, informal way to start the day in preparation for tests. Previous years have included dodgeball competitions, guess the food activities and the ever popular dance off!

A reminder that on Monday 23 May we will be holding a parent 'pop in' session for Y1-6 where you will have the opportunity to look at your child's work which remote parents evenings have not allowed. If the weather permits, Y3-6 will hold this on the KS2 playground and Y1-Y2 will be held outside their classrooms. This will take place from 3.15 - 4.15pm.

One last plea, if you need your children to be picked up by someone other than yourself, can you please let the office know as soon as possible on the day. We are receiving a number of such requests right at the end of the school day which makes it incredibly difficult for the office to get messages to all staff who are already on their way out of the door with the class. We cannot let children leave with adults who are not on the list, even if we know the other adult, so please remember to inform us of play dates, parties and events where you may have said another parent can take your child home.

Have a lovely weekend.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

Dates for the diary:

Bank holiday - school closed	Monday 2 May
SAT's Y6	w/c Monday 9 May
Springtime Burger Day Meal	Thursday 19 May
Parent Pop in	Monday 23 May
Celebratory Street Party Meal	Friday 27 May
Jubilee Celebration	Friday 10 June

## **WEEK 29 - Friday 6 May 2022**

As I write this blog, the sun has appeared, Y1 are playing on the field, EYFS are conducting a bug hunt, there is a poetry lesson in Evie's garden and there is a football tournament about to commence. School is so much more than Reading, Writing and Maths and we work just as hard at planning enrichment activities as we do at planning core learning.

We also ensure our morning circles and assemblies focus on enrichment and personal development with children learning about British Values, religions, cultures and world views. We hope this better prepares pupils for the world we live in and allow them to become rounded citizens. It is also about celebrating differences and the unique characters of all pupils.

This morning the whole school has been learning about Eid and it was fantastic to hear the questions being asked in classes and the respect being shown towards different religions and beliefs. We live in a multicultural country and it is imperative that pupils recognise and celebrate this. We have a number of different religions in our school and it has been really nice to see pupils informing others of their beliefs and how they live their lives.

Next week Year 6 sit their SAT's which have not taken place for two years due to the pandemic; they are all understandably nervous however we really try to make the week as stress free as possible surrounding the tests with fun activities which culminates in a dress down day for the year group on the Friday. For those of you who have yet to experience SAT's with your child, there really is no need to panic! It is a set of five tests which the children have sat mock tests for ever since Year 5. It is no different to the end of term tests that we do as standard in school.

What they do help with is ensuring pupils are placed appropriately at high school however they will also have cognitive tests during transition week at Hessle and in addition teacher assessments and judgements are put forward. This raft of other evidence ensures that if a pupil has an 'off day' during SAT's it is not by any means the end of the world!

We have already started work on transition to Year 7 with parent information evenings for the parents of pupils with SEN, visits from Mrs Pinkney, Transition Coordinator at Hessle High) and the secondary ready curriculum in full swing. Year 5 also start high school preparation by taking part in a series of secondary online lessons.

We are looking at staffing for all year groups next year and will begin to advertise our new starters meetings for EYFS children and our 'transition to Year 1' meeting. Official transition for all year groups will take place in the last week of term when all pupils will 'move up' a year group and meet their new teacher for three days before spending the last two days of term back in their current year group. 'Meet the teacher' sessions will take place on these mornings before school to allow you to ask any questions or pass any information to new teachers.

We are also planning Sports days, Jubilee celebrations, whole school football tournaments, school trips and visits and the Summer Fair - a busy busy term ahead!

I hope the sunshine now remains with us-have a lovely weekend

Have a lovely weekend.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

Dates to remember:

SAT's Y6	w/c Monday 9 May
Y6 Residential	w/c Monday 16 May
Springtime Burger Day	Thursday 19 May lunchtime
Parent Pop in	Monday 23 May
Jubilee Celebration	Friday 10 June
FS2 new starters meetings	Wednesday 15 June
Transition to Year 1 meetings	Thursday 16 June

### **WEEK 30 - Friday 13 May 2022**

Firstly, a big thank you to everyone who emailed us wishing the Year 6 pupils and team well in the SATs week. We have had a number of visitors checking that we are administering the exams as they should be and all ran very smoothly-a particular thanks to Governors who attended to check procedures. The Year 6 pupils really were incredibly well disciplined. It gives us pleasure to see even those who really struggle give it their best shot. This leads us nicely into next week where the residential takes place allowing them to blow off some steam and face challenges in a different way - I'm sure they will really show off their competitive natures.

We now have Year 2 SATs to administer, which again we will keep very low key for the pupils and after half term we have the Year 1 phonics and the Year 4 multiplication checks followed by the EYFS GLD data entry to the local authority. It has been a couple of years without all of the testing and I know there have been questions surrounding the reason for testing and whether we are any better off for doing these exams. What I would say is that pupils will have a lifetime of exams to prepare for and so it really does get them used to life beyond primary; it also allows pupils to show off what they know and get the recognition for this hard work.

We try really hard to keep the exam stress to a minimum and the children are completely used to sitting formal tests on a half term/termly basis anyway.

Do I think children would learn without testing? Yes.

Do I think testing does children any harm? No.



Having administered tests for many years, the positives are definitely that sense of achievement a child feels on completion of the tests. In all areas of life there are tests and challenges we have to overcome and it is just important to keep perspective and remember that testing is not the be all and end all. There are two nuggets of wisdom from this years Y6 pupils talking about SATs preparation that I love;

- Don't get stressed, just do your best. Remember you've been blessed with skills SATs can't test.
- Be happy, like a unicorn eating doughnuts on a rainbow!

Very wise!

Have a lovely weekend

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

Y6 Residential	wb Monday 16 May
FS1 Stay and Play	Tuesday 17 May
	Wednesday 18 May
Springtime Burger Day Meal	Thursday 19 May
Parent Pop in	Monday 23 May
Jubilee Celebration	Friday 10 June
FS2 new starters meetings	Wednesday 15 June
Transition to Year 1 meeting	Thursday 16 June

### **WEEK 31 - Friday 20 May 2022**

A big thank you to everyone involved in ensuring the Year 6 residential trip was a roaring success. It is easy to forget how significant this is for some of our youngsters who have never stayed away without their family - the sense of achievement on completion of the three days is huge. From all accounts, the camp was great, activities exciting (especially those in water) and leaders of said activities were experienced and fun. They returned to school happy but weary and Thursday in class was definitely a test of the pupils and staff's resilience. I am always so grateful to Penshurst staff who take time away from their own families to ensure our pupils get to enjoy such an experience.

On Monday, weather permitting, we will be putting the children's books outside classrooms (KS1) and on the playground (KS2) for you all to have a look at if you wish. Teachers will be available to chat with if you have any questions. This was a missed opportunity due to Parents Evenings being online the last few years so hopefully you will enjoy seeing how well your child is progressing in their work.

We have had a couple of safeguarding concerns brought to our attention again this week regarding a craze called 'The Backrooms.' The Backrooms is an urban legend that tells the tale of an endless maze of randomly generated office rooms. It is characterised by the smell of wet carpet, walls with a monochromatic tone of yellow, and buzzing fluorescent lights. These Backrooms have been made into mini horror films on youtube and they appear to have been derived on forum *4chan*. Please be extra vigilant if you hear this term being used by the children as it is not an appropriate site for primary aged pupils.

Have a lovely weekend.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

*Dates to remember:*

<i>Parent Pop in</i>	<i>Monday 23 May</i>
<i>Jubilee Celebration</i>	<i>Friday 10 June</i>
<i>FS2 new starters meetings</i>	<i>Wednesday 15 June</i>
<i>Transition to Year 1 meeting</i>	<i>Thursday 16 June</i>

### **WEEK 32 - Friday 27 May 2022**

You will be able to see from the Key Dates below that the list of activities and events in school is becoming longer by the week. Summer term 2 is always incredibly busy and I am hoping that the weather becomes a little kinder to us as we have a number of outdoor events planned for the children. On the Jubilee day, we invite the children to wear red, white and blue and we will be holding activities and picnics on the field in the afternoon for all pupils in school. This day is also FS1 hook day so these children can either attend in jubilee fashion or their hook day costumes.

In the second week after our return from half term, we will be holding a personal development and wellness week for the whole school. There will be a range of activities such as yoga, sport, forest, mindfulness, art, baking and many more activities. We are seeking to enhance our provision for wellbeing across all year groups and give them enrichment activities that they are not always able to readily access.

Just a few housekeeping reminders:

Please ensure children bring coats to school as the weather remains changeable

- Reading records should be filed in three times a week and returned to class teachers

- Do not bring dogs on site when collecting or dropping off children. We have a strict no dogs on site policy

A big thank you to Men in Sheds who have begun to bring in some of the amazing wooden equipment they are making for our FS2 outdoor provision. We will post some pictures on our Twitter site. On the topic of Twitter....please follow us to see the amazing activities that are taking place daily at @Penshurstschool.

Have a lovely half term and I look forward to seeing you all soon for all of the Summer events and activities.

Have a lovely weekend.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

Key Dates:

School closes for half term	Friday 27 May
School re opens	Monday 6 June
Jubilee Celebration	Friday 10 June
Father's Day Shop	Tuesday 14 June
FS2 new starters meetings	Wednesday 15 June
Transition to Year 1 meeting	Thursday 16 June 3.30pm
KS1 Sports Day	Tuesday 21 June 1.15pm
KS2 Sports Day	Tuesday 21 June 9.30am
FS1 Sports Day	Tuesday 21 June 3.30pm
FS2 Sports Day	Wednesday 22 June 9.30am
Summer Fair	Wednesday 20 July 3.30pm
End of term picnic	Friday 22 July 12.00noon

## **WEEK 33 - Friday 10 June 2022**

This term is always a busy one with sports days, trips, Jubilee celebrations, reports, transition events etc. so please keep an eye on the dates below. If there are any last minute changes due to weather conditions, we will of course send out texts. In my experience it is usually the wettest week in the year when we hold Sports Days!

In the event of poor weather we try to utilise classrooms and halls where we can. The picnic finishes at 1.30pm and school officially closes at 2pm - you are of course free to take your child home with you after the picnic should you choose to do so and staff will sign you out.

For those of you who have not attended a Summer picnic before, we ask families to bring picnics onto the KS2 field and the children are sat in classes waiting to be picked up by yourselves to have your family picnic. If any child does not have a parent attending, they stay with the class staff to enjoy the picnic together.

It is incredible to think about what staff and pupils managed to squeeze into the last five week half term! The main priority was ensuring Year 6 SATs were completed and that all pupils were happy and comfortable with the experience. We have always strived to ensure that the week is as fun as possible with arts and sporting activities galore surrounding the exams culminating in a 'chillout' day on the Friday.

We were fortunate to have visitors from the Governing Board, other schools and the Trust to help invigilate some of the tests checking that the process was rigorous and all procedures were followed to the letter. There was a lot of talk about the reading test nationally and how difficult the exam was. As a staff body, we felt it was a fair test and the pupils appeared to be answering the questions well so hopefully we will see the high results we have predicted. The Maths papers were tough but again pupils seemed fairly confident that they had done as well as they could and we did not have any tears this year.

We have also completed Year 2 SATs in this half term which we keep as low key as we can - these will be optional from 2023. Although we still have a moderation process to complete, early results place us in line with national 2019 results which would be an amazing effort from this year group in what has been another turbulent year of COVID absence for both pupils and staff.

We now just have the multiplication and Y1 phonics tests to conduct in the final half term alongside our normal internal assessment schedule Transition will take place on the penultimate week of term on the Mon/Tues/Wed. At this point the Year 6 pupils will go to Hessle High and the rest of the pupils will 'move up' to their new class and teacher for three days. There will be more news to follow on this in a couple of weeks.

Have a lovely weekend.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

## Key Dates:

Father's Day Shop	Tuesday 14 June
FS2 new starters meetings	Wednesday 15 June
Transition to Year 1 meeting	Thursday 16 June 3.30
KS1 Sports Day	Tuesday 21 June 1.15
KS2 Sports Day	Tuesday 21 June 9.30
FS1 Sports Day	Tuesday 21 June 3.30
FS2 Sports Day	Wednesday 22 June 9.30
Summer Fair	Wednesday 20 July 3.30
End of term picnic	Friday 22 July 12.00-1.30
School closes	Friday 22 July 2.00

## **WEEK 34 - Friday 17 June 2022**

As we head full throttle into the summer term, it is worth noting the events that will be happening in the upcoming weeks. Next week the weather is looking great so hopefully Sports Days will go without a hitch - please remember to provide sun cream, sun hat and water. We also have the Summer Fair and the end of term picnic to look forward to and we cannot wait as it feels like it has been a long time since these events last took place.

Thank you to those of you who attended transition events for EYFS /Y1 as it is always helpful to get any questions answered early. Transition for the rest of the school will take place on 11, 12 and 13 of July and the children will be informed of their new class teacher on the Friday before these dates. We recognise that transition is often a nervous time for the children, particularly those heading up to secondary school and we ensure we include lots of 'getting to know you' activities to settle the children with new classmates and teachers.

Please remember that every year we do change classes slightly as they may move from 2-3 classes in a year group or vice versa depending on the needs within the year groups. We do our best to ensure that children have at least one of their circle of friends in a class with them.

This term, as has been alluded to before in previous blogs, is extremely busy with assessments and we have had local authority moderations as well in which the school has

performed extremely well. I am very proud of the writing our children produced for these moderations and I would like to say thank you to staff who have worked tirelessly to ensure writing at Penshurst is the very best it can be following the long school absences over the past two years.

As we move into the final five weeks, Mrs Preston will begin to take the reins a little more in school and so it may be that you see a little less of me and a lot more of Mrs Preston to ensure a smooth transition for you all. I could not be more happy to hand the school over to such a safe pair of hands and I will be working with Mrs Preston closely over the final weeks to ensure the changeover is as smooth as possible.

I hope the weather does not turn for the worse this weekend but at least next week is looking fabulous-enjoy your weekend.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

Key Dates:

KS1 Sports Day	Tuesday 21 June 1.15
KS2 Sports Day	Tuesday 21 June 9.30
FS1 Sports Day	Tuesday 21 June 3.30
FS2 Sports Day	Wednesday 22 June 9.30
Summer Fair	Wednesday 20 July 3.30
End of term picnic	Friday 22 July 12.00-1.30
School closes	Friday 22 July 2.00

### **WEEK 35 - Friday 24 June 2022**

What a lovely week it has been! I cannot believe the fantastic weather we have had for Sports Days and I would like to thank you all for turning out in your droves to support the children. I've got to admit that the Nursery (FS1) event is possibly the highlight of the year for me - unbelievably cute! A special shout out to our House Captains needs to be made as they did a sterling job of running events and supporting the younger children; I could not be more proud of these Year 6 pupils and the high school are so lucky to have them from September. Many of you have emailed in to say how brilliant the older pupils were in encouraging and helping the younger ones and I have passed your comments on to the Year 6 teachers to let them know.

I am sorry but I do need to have a little bit of a rant this week.....

Over the past week, we have seen a huge increase in unkind behaviours outside of school on social media. The majority of the incidents have taken place in Years 4/5/6 and mostly on Whatsapp. Can I remind you that the age of consent for this app is now 16+ and therefore none of our pupils should be using this platform. Unfortunately we are finding that most of our pupils are in groups on this app and while I appreciate it is your parental decision to allow this, we are spending hours and hours in the school week dealing with fallings out, unkind comments and at times borderline bullying that are all happening outside school hours on this media platform.

Whilst I appreciate that we have to get involved with these incidents, I feel that I need to ask for your support. If you intend for your child to have access to these groups despite the age rating, please could you frequently check your child's messages and the groups they are part of. Inevitably, incidents outside school affect behaviours in school and the impact in school is time spent out of class dealing with these behaviours for both staff and pupils.

We will of course continue to investigate incidents brought to our attention and actions can be: circles, parental meetings, sanctions given, repeated online safety education or reports made to police. We speak to our children about online safety and cyberbullying on a weekly basis through assemblies, IT lessons, morning circles and dedicated online learning circles. All I ask is that you continue to support us by checking your child's phone, reporting any unkind behaviours and talking to your child about what they post on a forum. Rant over!

Over the next four weeks, the pace does not slacken in school as having completed assessments, we now begin to fill in any gaps that these tests have highlighted.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

#### Key Dates:

Summer Fair	Wednesday 20 July 3.30pm
Y6 Big Fun trip	Thursday 21 July (in school time)
Y6 Barbeque	Thursday 21 July 4-6pm
Y6 Leavers Assembly	Friday 22 July 9.00
End of term picnic	Friday 22 July 12.00-1.30
School closes	Friday 22 July 2.00

## WEEK 36 - Friday 1 July 2022

This week has been Wellbeing Week (not that this is normally absent from school!) and we have thoroughly enjoyed exploring our personal development curriculum in more detail than we get to do in a normal formal week of learning.

It has been a pleasure to see all pupils from Nursery to Year 6 being taught by different teachers and using the outside area to its full potential. Nursery yoga was a highlight! There have been a number of different activities throughout the week which the children have accessed on a rotation to ensure they participate in all events.

The Forest activities and baking appear to have been particularly well received by all and I must say that I enjoyed the gifts of rocky road on a daily basis - thanks Miss Loveridge. There has also been arts and crafts, mindfulness activities, sporting events, team building, allotment work and challenging negative thoughts workshops. All of the activities planned are linked to areas of our PSHE/RSE curriculum and are differentiated for each year group.

Teachers have really enjoyed teaching other year groups during the week and have reported that behaviour has been exceptional. We concluded the week with a whole school celebration of music, film and play in a Golden Time extravaganza. We will definitely keep this 'wellbeing' week on the agenda for next year and we are already looking at ways we can invite guests in to widen the experiences we can offer.

Just a reminder that Reception and Year 6 have their height and weight check next week - you were previously sent a link to the company to opt out if you wanted to. Please contact the office if you have any concerns. Tonight is the final of the Year 5/6 girls football and we wish them all the luck in the world - we are so proud of how well they have done already.

Enjoy your weekend.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

Key Dates: Summer Fair	Wednesday 20 July 3.30
Y6 Big Fun trip	Thursday 21 July in school time)
Y6 BBQ	Thursday 21 July 4.00-6.00pm
Y6 Leavers	Friday 22 July 9.00am
End of term picnic	Friday 22 July 12.00-1.30pm
School closes	Friday 22 July 2.00 pm



## **WEEK 37 - Friday 8 July 2022**

This week, we have very much been focusing on preparing for transition week; the children are all super excited to know who their new teacher will be and we hope they will really enjoy getting to know them over the three days next week.

As always there is movement between classes, with some year groups moving from two classes to three and others moving from three classes to two. In addition, some classes just needed a reset and to be mixed up a little bit.

When moving children into different year group classes we try to make it as fair as possible to make sure classes are equally mixed. Pupils are always asked to give us five friends that they most enjoy being with in class - we then ensure that at least one of these choices is in their new class. We keep these lists when preparing class sets and the Leadership team double checks to make sure every child is with at least one close friend. Obviously, all children play together at break and lunchtime and so can catch up with friends in the other class at this time.

In your transition letter informing you of your child's new teacher, you will have been told about changes in procedures. As a reminder:

Pupils should be taken to their normal classroom on Monday morning, but for the remainder of the week be taken and collected from new classrooms.

- If you collect via Winthorpe Road, the children will be brought out to you as normal; if you collect via Penshurst Avenue then Reception, Year 1 and 2 children should be collected from their classrooms and Year 3 to Year 6 from the playground.

Hopefully by the end of the three days the pupils and parents will be absolutely confident about where and when to drop off and pick up. Please ask their current Year group staff on Monday morning if you are unsure about where to pick them up.

It is always an exciting time of year as we introduce new staff to our school for September. This year we are welcoming Mr Harrison (Y2), Mrs Jacobsz (Y3), Mr Vine (Y4), Miss Bunn (Y5) and Miss Daniels (Y5). They are all delighted to join such a happy and successful school and I am sure you will get to know them all soon. All staff will of course be out on playgrounds during transition week or on the door of their classroom so please do not hesitate to introduce yourself to them. We will be holding 'Meet the teacher' sessions during the first week of the Autumn term.

The meetings are very informal and are simply an opportunity for a chat! Sessions are as follows::

8.00am - 8.30am

Wednesday 7 September - Reception, Year 1 and 2

Thursday 8 September - Year 3 and 4

Friday 9 September - Year 5 and 6

In the Hall for Years 1-6 and in the Reception classroom for Nursery and Reception years

It looks like the weather is about to improve so enjoy your weekend.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

Key Dates:

Summer Fair	Wednesday 20 July 3.30
Y6 Big Fun trip	Thursday 21 July (in school time)
Y6 BBQ	Thursday 21 July 4-6pm
Y6 Leavers	Friday 22 July 9.00
End of term picnic	Friday 22 July 12.00-1.30
School closes	Friday 22 July 2pm

### **WEEK 38 - Friday 15 July 2022**

A quick reminder of details regarding the Summer end of term picnic:

As you are aware, on our last day of school (Friday 22 July) we finish at 2pm. The school picnic is 12noon until 1.30pm. Please collect your child for the picnic from the normal end of day collection point so staff can sign the children out and you can then take them to the field. Both gates will be open from 12noon to allow entry onto the school site but the Penshurst Avenue gate will be closed at 12.15pm to safeguard all the pupils and exit will be via the Winthorpe Road gate only.

We ask that if you are taking your child home after the picnic, then you let the teacher know when you collect them. For those of you who would still like a school lunch, we will provide these in boxes so the pupils can eat outside with their classmates. Please could you indicate whether you will be sending a pack up/picnic or require a school meal; this will allow us to prepare the kitchen for numbers on the final day.

We are really looking forward to all of the fun activities that take place over the next week and it looks like we will have great weather as well. It is always a mix of emotions at this time of year as we lose our Year 6 pupils to the land of secondary but we wish them well and know they are ready for the next stage of their education. Reports flooding back are that they have had a great time at Hessle High School. Transition week across the primary phase has

been successful although due to staff sickness we have had a couple of classes who have not had their new teacher - we hope to allow some time in the final week for this to happen.

This year is doubly emotional for me as I leave my Peshurst family after 12 years. I can honestly say that Peshurst is the finest school I have ever worked in and I will miss the children, staff and parents greatly. I leave knowing that the school is in safe hands, with Mrs Preston taking the helm, which makes it slightly easier but no less emotional. I would like to thank all of you who have supported me in making Peshurst the fabulous school that it is and I am sure I will still chat to many of you when I see you around and about Hessle. So with all that said, this will be my last blog as I hand over to Mrs Preston to write the final blog of the year with any information you may need for September and the new term.

Thank you again for everything and I hope to say goodbye in person to many of you at the school picnic.

Mrs J Spencer

Head of School

#### Key Dates:

Summer Fair	Wednesday 20 July 3.30
Y6 Big Fun trip	Thursday 21 July (in school time)
Y6 BBQ	Thursday 21 July 4-6pm
Y6 Leavers	Friday 22 July 9.00
End of term picnic	Friday 22 July 12.00-1.30
School closes	Friday 22 July 2.00