



SPOTLIGHT



Parents' Information Newsletter

Issue 5
Spring Term 2012

Dear Parent/Carer

CHECKING THE HEALTH OF THE SCHOOL

As part of the school's commitment to improving the standards of teaching, learning, care and pupil progress we regularly conduct internal reviews or Departmental Health Checks. These take place on a two year cycle.

During a review, normally based around a department in the school, a team of senior and middle leaders will watch many lessons, observing in pairs, before giving feedback to the teacher concerned afterwards. When they are in the lesson the observers will also speak to the pupils and look at the work in their books. We also look carefully at our assessment data to see how much progress pupils are making. Pupils are asked to complete on-line questionnaires and a selection of parents are asked to return a questionnaire too! A wide cross-section of exercise books and pupils' work is also looked at during the work scrutiny.

By doing this we can get a clear picture of how much the school or department is improving in terms of teaching and learning. We want all lessons to be of the very highest quality, where the learning is challenging but appropriate, enjoyable and fun. We want pupils to make progress in terms of acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding and for them to be able to talk about this and know how to get better. We want to see high quality purposeful interactions between 'pupils and pupils' and 'pupils and staff', with clever questions and even cleverer answers.

This year, we have already conducted three Health Checks. These have been in English, Science and Humanities. The results have been really impressive. All three faculties have been able to demonstrate very high standards in terms of the quality of their teaching and in their expectations of pupils in their learning. Pupils have also spoken warmly about their experiences. For each of the faculties, we have been able to write a well-deserved and positive report with some clear "www's" (what went well) and some "ebi's" (even better if) in order to help them plan for even further improvements.

Of course, these impressive achievements and improvements are the result of committed and hard work on behalf of many staff and I would like to congratulate and commend them on this. Most important of all, it is Poltair pupils that are benefitting from all of this. Every one of their 900 days in a secondary school are important and count and we are making them count.

I wish all pupils and staff a restful and relaxing half term and look forward to us returning refreshed on Monday 20 February.

Stephen Tong

Stephen Tong
Headteacher

DATES FOR DIARY

Monday 13 to Friday 17 February Half Term

Tuesday 21 February

Year 8 Curriculum Evening (6.30 pm prompt start)
Main Hall

School Website

Please note that the weekly Spotlight and any archived Spotlights, together with news items, are available to view or download from the school website.
www.poltairschool.co.uk

The Year 8 Options Booklet is now available on the VLE and on the school website by following students-options.

Year 8 students have been given a hard copy, if your child was absent on Tuesday 7 February he/she can collect one from Mrs Holmes.

Options forms must be handed in to tutors by Wednesday 29 February.



HOUSE STARS



TEWINGTON

Harriett Turner
8LS

Excellent behaviour and attendance. Always works hard in lessons and is mature and friendly.

JOINT
Katie Walker &
Kacey Boutcher
9SAH

Both have no behaviour points and always follow the 5 Ps

TREVERBYN

Rhys Dedman-Harris
9KW

For excellent attendance and punctuality and for being proud.

Sarah Eastwood
11JHK

For 100% attendance and for being helpful and hard working.

TRENANCE

Tyler Ferkin
8KP

Always pleasant and friendly.

Harry Eade
11GO

For no behaviour points and a generally positive attitude.

TREGREHAN

Jodie Gallacher
9JAX

For good progress in ICT.

Sarah Walsh
10KR

For being positive and working hard.

HOUSE QUIZ NIGHT

Led by Humanities Department

Register a House Team of up to
5 pupils and 1 adult
(See Miss Venn)
Range of categories, vivos and other prizes
available plus a raffle!

Wednesday
29th February
3.15-4.15pm
Main Hall

All pupils who enter
earn vivos for
attending - every vivo
counts!

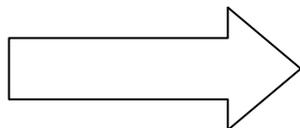
Ten Tors Training W4

'On Sunday 5th February, we all strode out onto a snowy Dartmoor. For some of us it was one walk of many and for others it was their first time out on the hill. At the beginning of the day, two of our main leaders joined the 45 mile team and left the 35 team to lead themselves for the day. This gave us all a boost of confidence when navigating! We all got back to the car park at a good time of 3:59 pm. beating the fast time of the other teams. After waiting in the kisu shelter for the 45 mile team, and welcoming them in after their long day on the hill we all deserved a long sleep on the way home! Overall the day went well, we all enjoyed socialising with our new team members and facing the new challenge of snow'. Report by Ruby Waterfield 35 mile team.

David Winter joined the 45 mile team for a hard day's training, 'There were patches of snow in places more than 3ft deep definitely a wonderful experience - can't wait for the next walk!'



Miss Blackburn
(Ten Tors Team Manager)



Heritage and Leisure Working Together...

Pots U Paint



Pottery Painting Workshops

Tuesday 14th February
&
Thursday 16th February

Join the fun anytime between
11.00am & 3.00pm



Come and paint your own!
Prices from £5.00 per item

Explore the museum, enjoy the woods and visit pit view. A fun day out in the school holiday!



01726 850362 www.wheal-martyn.com

Important Ten Tors dates:

Monday 20th February

Perranporth sand dune training

Saturday 25th - Sunday 26th February

Walks 5 & 6 Dartmoor

Spotlight on Science



National Science and Engineering Week (NSEW) is a ten day programme of science, engineering and technology events and activities across the UK aimed at people of all ages.

There will be a range of activities running during break times along with a tutor quiz and workshops run by outside agencies.

Poltair School's National Science and Engineering Week 2012 will be from **12 – 16 March**. So look out for more information after half term!

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) clubs allow children to explore, investigate and discover STEM subjects in a stimulating learning environment, away from the constraints of the school timetable or a prescribed curriculum. They allow pupils and their club leaders to work together and explore many different ideas and activities.

The Poltair STEM Club has two exciting projects running at present:

1. Building a formula 24 car that will be raced in the Cornwall heat of the Greenpower Challenge at RAF St Mawgan on 21st June 2012.
2. School pond project - working with a group of scientists from Cornwall College Newquay to re-design and improve the pond so that it becomes a desirable habitat for a range of wildlife.

There will also be a range of other challenges and trips throughout the year that will give our STEM Club the chance to compete against other schools.

Kieran Powell - "I enjoy STEM Club because it is a place where we can learn whilst having fun, we also have a challenge to build the car."

Alfie Chambers - "I enjoy STEM Club as it is a place where friends can hang out and also learn something new and we also build a car."

Jessie Lucas - "STEM Club is a really good place to hang around with friends but also to do exciting experiments and we are offered many great opportunities to participate in which benefit us without us even realising!"

Top Ten Mike Gapper



- 1) **What exactly do you do at Poltair?** I hope that I Inspire young people to follow their dreams.
- 2) **What is your favourite meal?** Anything fishy, the fishier the better!
- 3) **If you didn't work in a school what would you be?** A Microbrewer.
- 4) **Who are your heroes?** My friends.
- 5) **Who is your favourite singer/band?** Zola Jesus.
- 6) **What is your favourite book?** Zen and the art of motorcycle maintenance by Robert Pirsig.
- 7) **Name one thing that perhaps people don't know about you?** Nothing - I am an open book!
- 8) **What do you enjoy most about Poltair?** My tutor group (obviously).
- 9) **What do you treasure most?** The unknown.
- 10) **What one thing would you change in the world today?** There are too many people, the world is over-populated!