

Newsletter

May 2019 - 11

Lower School

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to our Summer 1 newsletter, this has been a short but very busy half term for both schools.

There was a very definite hush across both schools last week as the children engaged with their SAT's tests in both Year 2 and Year 6. Our thanks go to Miss Fordham, Mrs Lewis and Mrs Fenton, who in Miss Harris' absence worked so hard to support the children in Jeremy Fishers over recent weeks to ensure they confidently approached their tests. Early indications are that all of the children did their very best, we could not ask for more.

In Year 6 we ran a breakfast club on each of the four mornings prior to the tests, we were delighted that this was so well attended this year. Miss Carrington could not believe how much food they could consume in such a short period of time - she had to go shopping each day! The children approached the tests confidently and also tried their very best. We do not mark their papers, they were collected daily last week for external examination, and we will be advised of their results in early July. I joined Torday class each day for their tests and I could tell that they were fully prepared and excited to show what they had learned.

Miss Coppenhall was successful in achieving a grant to spend on a new outside area for the Lower School, we hope that this new area will be implemented over the summer. We are also looking at developing the outside area at the Middle School, some of this work will begin over the summer holidays as well.

Next term is always busy for staff and pupils with Sports Day, productions, school trips, residential courses, transition days and leaving celebrations! Please pay attention to the school calendar to ensure you do not miss any of these events.

We have parents across both schools that struggle to provide their children with the correct uniform, so if your child is leaving and you would like to donate their uniform then we would love to receive it. Please hand your donations to the school office at either school, they will be gratefully received.

I hope that you enjoy the half term break, the children really deserve their rest and hopefully we will have the heatwave that we have been promised! We look forward to welcoming them back to school on Monday 3rd June.

Cathy Smart

A message from Lewis Newbury – Governor for the Potton Federation



Congratulations to all our students on yet another productive half term, especially those that have been working hard taking SATs!

My name is Lewis and I'm a new Governor at the Potton Federation. I've lived in Potton for just over a year and I became a Governor last November as I wanted to help support the local community in my spare time, and get to know the town better.

My background is in the public sector: I've worked in the civil service and now work for Cambridgeshire County Council. I bring a knowledge of Local Government as well as a keen interest in local education and a keen eye for detail after writing too many briefings!

My first few months as a Governor have been enjoyable and I have learnt a wealth of information (including how many acronyms there are!). Schools throughout the country are continuously changing and it is important for local schools to move with the changes, which we do very well. I've also been amazed at just how many individual things that have to come together for the school to function as it does and I've been impressed at the hard work and dedication of the staff in supporting the children and helping them to achieve their potential.

I look forward to continuing to work with my fellow Governors to support the school, the staff and, most importantly, the children.

A message from Charlotte Coppenhall – Acting Deputy Headteacher

Although a short half term at only 23 school days, the start to our summer term has been filled with laughter, learning and pride, with some great achievements and lots to celebrate.

The weather is finally starting to warm up and the children are starting to go onto both school fields during their play times. The warmer weather over the last couple of weeks has definitely brightened our days, and my favourite moment has been standing at the end of the field, looking out over and across both schools whilst watching and listening to team games, singing and lots of smiles. With winter finally behind us and warmer weather fast approaching, it is now a great time to sort out all of those outgrown or just unwanted school uniform items. If you have any spare items that could be reused, please send them to our school offices. Your help with this is greatly appreciated and could really benefit others.

It has been a very busy half term with all of our children working hard – I would like to give a particular mention to Year 2 and Year 6 who have worked very hard on their SAT's tests. I have enjoyed talking to the children before and after their tests, and the same can be said across both schools – lots of proud, happy smiles. I would like to thank all of our dedicated staff across both schools for preparing our pupils for these tests in the most effective and relaxed way. The time and energy that has gone into ensuring that this process is as smooth as possible for them has certainly helped all of our pupils.

We have many exciting events coming up over the course of the second half of the summer term which I hope you will be able to join us for. The theme for Proms has been decided, and some of you may have already heard some of the Motown songs we have been learning being sung and practised at home!

Planning and preparation for our end of year school trips is in full swing, and we are looking forward to welcoming back some familiar faces for our school trips – it's wonderful that past staff come back to help year after year. As always, parent help and support with these is greatly appreciated, so if you are able to help on one of our school trips please let your child's class teacher know.

Wishing you all a wonderful half-term break,
Miss Charlotte Coppenhall

News from the Key Stages

Reception – Miss Coppenhall

I am so proud of every child in Reception this half term. They have tackled every challenge with enthusiasm, and most importantly, a smile! The progress that the Reception children have made has been simply incredible, and they have become such independent learners. It is just wonderful to watch how they use their learning during their own free choice time, and it is such a joy to listen to their mature interactions.

Although this is one of the shortest half terms of the year, we have still ensured that it has been jam-packed! We loved our visit from Liz Price (Mrs Wiltshire), who used to work at Potton Lower School, and we thought her new book was wonderful. We enjoyed the book and activities so much that we continued to use the book all week. I will be taking examples of this work with me to her half-term book launch on Thursday 30th May, 1pm – 4pm at St Mary's Church Hall, Potton. Please pop along if you would like to take a look.



This week has been one of our favourites as we got to go in our jeeps and with our binoculars on safari. We have loved this topic, and listening to the children recall and find out their own factual information has been an absolute joy. They have been so enthused with their learning, and I want to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support at home with their optional homework tasks. I have been blown away by the responses and I know that this would not have been possible without your support.



We are looking forward to our last topic of the year, 'Are we there yet?' which will focus on transport, destinations and holidays in preparation for our fast approaching summer holidays.

I hope you all have a lovely, sunny half-term break. Well done everyone!

Key Stage 1 – Miss Fordham

Wow, this term has really whizzed by and I cannot believe the children in Key Stage 1 have achieved so much in such a short amount of time.

Year 1 have continued to work hard on their phonics skills. They have been developing their segmenting and blending skills to support their reading and have also had fun deciding which words are 'alien' words and which are real. I know they will continue to impress all of us in the coming weeks. Keep up the hard work!

Year 2 have been focussed on preparing and undergoing the Key Stage 1 SATs. The children have blown me away with their attitude, maturity and just how well they have approached these assessments. We are all very proud of them and all of their hard work.

Have a great half term and I'm looking forward to my favourite term of all at PLS.

Lower Key Stage 2 – Mr Adams



Through the sport funding grants available to schools, we have been able to purchase new gym equipment for the school playground. The specialist installation for children under 11 has proved a massive hit since it was installed and has been used non-stop during break and lunch times.

Physical activity and exercise is a key objective of the national curriculum and as such children are required to take part in at least 30 minutes physical activity every day. As the equipment is extremely popular, we have introduced a rota to give as many children an opportunity to use it as possible. May I remind you that the equipment is solely for school pupils and it should not be used outside the school hours (9am-3pm) in order to ensure the equipment is well maintained.

With the popularity of the gym equipment we are now looking into exciting future projects across the Potton Federation to improve the opportunities for children to enjoy physical activities.

Upper Key Stage 2 – Mr Brooks

KS2 SATs - "That's All Folks!"

...and breathe!

At the tender age of 10 and 11 years old, the children were put through their paces and tested rigorously on a widespread knowledge of English and Maths. Having sat a number of tests that challenged pupils' understanding of various mathematical skills, grammatical practices and their ability to infer and deduce from

fiction and non-fiction texts, we really couldn't have been prouder of the efforts of our Year 6 cohort. Resilience, grit, courage, determination and gallantry are just some of the characteristics demonstrated by the children during SATs week; they worked diligently and composed themselves with the upmost maturity. I could babble on for hours listing a hundred other superlatives to praise the children, but I will draw the curtains on the 2019 KS2 SATs by reminding children of the incredible progress they have made. Each child should stand back at where they started and allow themselves to feel so proud about how far they have come.

While the children have worked tirelessly this year, I'd also like to take this opportunity to offer my sincere thanks to Mr Bick, Mr Griffiths and Miss Carrington for their unrivalled dedication and commitment. They have been at the very heart of improving the standards of reading, writing and maths across the year group and gave each and every child the best opportunity to succeed and reach beyond their own expectations. Equally, I'd like to thank the parents for their support over the year. The time and dedication spent on weekly homework tasks and revision exercises has not gone unnoticed.

I sincerely hope the children came home after Friday's 'Fun-day' with a big smile having celebrated their wonderful achievements. While I look forward to reporting each child's results in July, for now, I am more than happy to declare the acronym 'SATs' officially banned from conversation for the next couple of months!

On behalf of the Year 6 team, we wish you and the children a restful and peaceful half-term break.

Key Stage 3

Year 8 – Music – Mr James

This term, our Year 8 pupils have been focussing on developing their performance skills. The perennial favourite, Pachelbel's Canon, has been performed on a variety of different instruments and it has been wonderful to hear everyone performing together as a class orchestra once more. Next half term, we'll look at film music, culminating in a class performance of James Bond.

Year 7 – Music – Mr James

Learning to play 'The Blues' on the keyboard is always a popular activity and our Year 7 pupils have made a great start with their focus on the twelve-bar blues. We will continue to develop our understanding of this format next half term, and will learn how to improvise and create our own riffs, to be performed with the twelve-bar blues accompaniment.

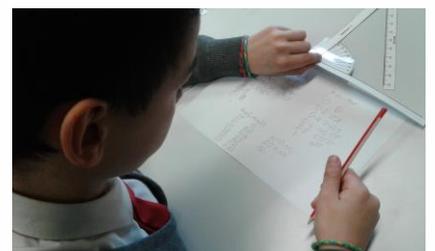
Maths – Mr Griffiths

The pupils in KS3 have been working very hard on their maths this term. We have covered many different topics which pupils have enjoyed.

Lots of pupils find algebra difficult but hopefully when following the rules they get the right answers. We have done a unit of work on fractions and percentages; might be useful if you need help with your tax returns!!

We have also worked on shapes and angles.

Have a good break and be ready for that final learning before the summer.



English – Mr Bick

I have been so impressed with the work produced by Years 7 and 8 in their English lessons over the past few weeks.

In Year 7, children have been working on persuasive writing and rhetorical devices with Mrs Walker and Mr Ballard, producing a range of very effective letters and adverts.

In Year 8, we have been reading Benjamin Zephaniah's novel *Refugee Boy*, and have produced some thoughtful and evocative pieces of writing inspired by the text. Across both year groups, I've been struck by the mature and thoughtful approach that so many children have been taking to their work. Enjoy the half term break!

Humanities – Mrs Walker

Some excellent work has been completed in Key Stage 3 Humanities lessons during this half term.

Our Geography homework projects about China were outstanding. The level of independent learning has continued to improve and this is such an important skill to master.

In History the pupils have been learning about nineteenth century living conditions and have produced some very believable accounts of the conditions in their letters to a relative!

Our Religious Education (R.E.) unit about Buddhism has really grasped the pupils' imagination and we look forward to learning more about mindfulness and practising some techniques during our lessons.



Art, DT and ICT – Mrs Toppie

The Year 8's have been rushed off their feet this term as we have attempted to squeeze a whole half term of work into just five weeks. In computing I have been very impressed with the HTML webpage content and the CSS designs for their webpages. All the children are enjoying being programmers and designers, if you need a web page designing ask a Year 8!

The Year 7's have been learning about how the computer stores data and how it processes and stores image data and the difference between Lossy and Lossless Compression in images. This has tied in with their art lessons on taking photographs and using photos in art.

Year 8's are looking at the different types of cubism and have been working hard on their own creative pieces.



In D&T this half term the Year 7's have been building a wooden vehicle that moves with a motor and the use of a switch. They have had to think about how switches work and how to make the vehicles go forwards and back. For some this was trial and error and put their problem solving abilities to the test.

The Year 8's have continued to impress with their cooking ability and have everyone's tummies rumbling with the delicious smells and tasty dishes. After half term they will be creating a cake for the Potton Bake Off which we are all looking forward to.

Science – Mrs Bingham

This term Year 7 have been studying Forces and the chemistry of acids and alkalis. The children have been developing their investigative skills exploring which surfaces create the most friction, investigating how springs behave when stretched and how the pressure we exert changes if we stand on our hands and not our feet. Students also calculated their running speed and compared it to Usain Bolt!

Year 7 are now studying acid and alkalis. They should all know how to use an indicator to classify common household liquids.

Year 8 have been studying about unicellular organisms. We safely grew some rather horrible looking bacteria collected from inside the classroom and outdoors. I was informed the most bacteria was found on my laptop keyboard! We then went from looking at the microscopic to massive things in our topic on Earth and space. So far students have been learning about magnetic fields, why we experience seasons and the rock cycle.

Best wishes for the remaining half term

School Calendar

23 rd May	School Leavers and Class photos
24 th May	Wear it Blue day
27th-31st May	HALF TERM
4 th June	French Trip information evening
13 th June	Sports Day – PLS and PMS
17 th June	Year 2 Trip
18 th June	Year 3 Trip
19 th June	Reception Trip
21 st June	Year 3 – Bikeability
24 th June	Year 1 Trip
25 th June	Year 4 Trip
26 th June	New Reception intake parents meeting
26 th June	Year 6 Transition to SUS
27 th June	Year 8 Transition to SUS

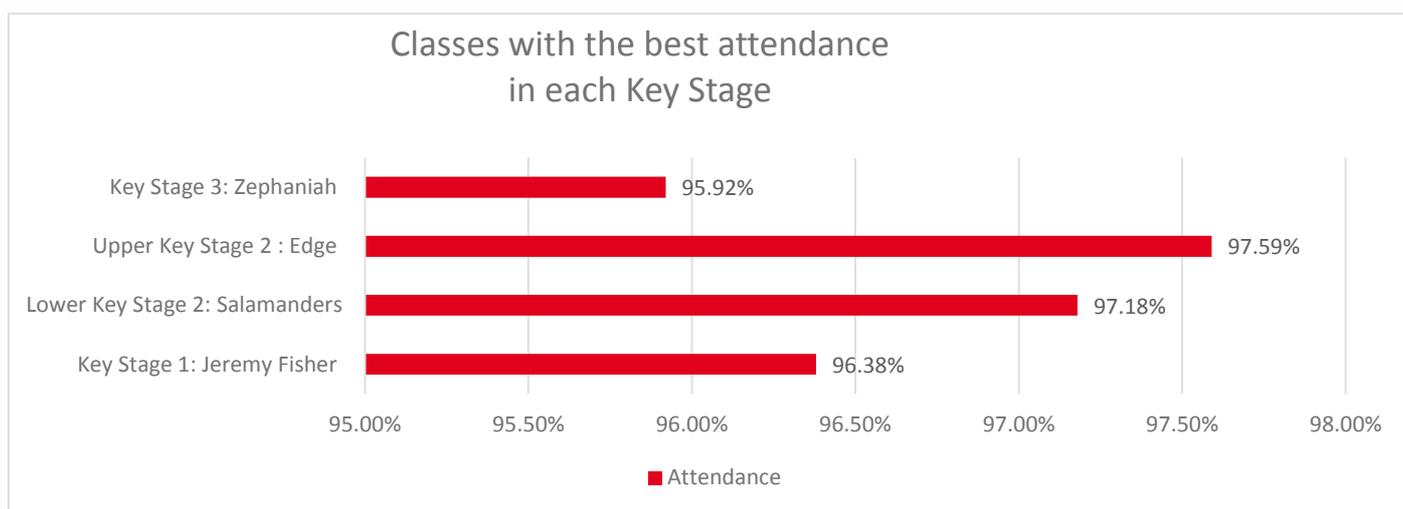
27 th June	PLS Transition Day ** Date change***
27 th & 28 th June	Transition Days (Year 4 to PMS)
28 th June	New Reception intake (Sept 19) meet the teacher day
1 st July	Key Stage 1 Performance – afternoon and evening
2 nd July	Key Stage 1 Performance – afternoon only
1 st -5 th July	Year 5 trips Week
1 st – 5 th July	Year 6 – Condoover Hall
8 th -12 th July	KS3 Residential Trip to France
10 th July	Year 3 Faith Tour Trip
11 th July	PROMS
16 th July	Year 8 Water fight
17 th July	Year 8 Leavers Trip to Thorpe Park
17 th July	Year 4 Leavers Assembly to parents
18 th July	Year 4 Water fight
18 th July	PMS has Talent
18 th July	Year 8 Leavers BBQ
19 th July	PLS – Family picnic
19 th July	PMS – Fun Activity Day (in-school)
19 th	END OF TERM

All dates for the academic year 2019/20 have also been added to the website. Please visit: <https://pottonfederation.co.uk/events/list/>

Attendance

Well done to all of the children on their attendance this half term. The Local Authority set our attendance targets, the Federations target is 97%. This half term has seen the winter vomiting bug have a huge impact on our attendance causing our figures to be lower than our target.

A special congratulations to the following classes who have had the highest attendance across their Key Stage so far this half term!



Attendance

We are a school that sets ourselves high expectations in all areas and attendance is no exception. Attending school is extremely important for children’s social, emotional and educational development and children who miss a lot of time at school can suffer in the long term from significant gaps in their learning.

Potton Lower School

Class	Attendance Present	%
Cottontails		90.67
Puddle Ducks		94.39
Squirrel Nutkins		95.42
Tiggy-Winkles		95.65
Jerry Fisher		96.12
Tom Kittens		96.38
Dragons		96.98
Phoenix		96.91
Salamanders		97.18
Hippogriffs		96.87

Potton Middle School

Class	Attendance Present	%
Elphinstone		97.58
Riddell		95.49
Stevens		95.82
Edge		97.59
Evans		95.32
Torday		97.39
Almond		95.64
Rundell		92.59
Pullman		93.83
Zephaniah		96.68

Attendance Policy

The Federation’s Attendance Policy sets out our systems and procedures for ensuring regular school attendance. The policy can be found on our website <http://pottonlower.co.uk/parents/attendance/>. If you have any queries relating to the Attendance Policy please contact the school offices on: plsoffice@pottonfedrtaion.co.uk and pmsoffice@pottonfederation.co.uk

Reminders for parents

Medicines in School:

A reminder that we **CANNOT** administer medication that is not prescribed to your child and/or is only prescribed for three times a day. This includes Calpol and Nurofen. Parents can come into school themselves if their child needs a dose of medicine although we do advise parents to keep their children at home if they are poorly.

Reading:

We would really like to encourage all parents with children in Reception and Key Stages 1 & 2 to read daily with their child. Children in Key Stage 3 should be reading independently each day too!

Water Bottles:

Please can all parents ensure that their child brings a named and filled water bottle into school with them each day, and that they **only contain water**. It is important for the children to drink regularly throughout the day. Children may of course bring juice to drink with their packed lunch, and juice and water are also available for children having a school dinner at lunchtime.

Hand hygiene:

There are soap dispensers available in all of the school toilets with notices that remind children to wash their hands before they leave. We have antibacterial hand gel available in areas around school also and children are always encouraged to wash their hands.

In order to help minimise the spread of any infections/germs within school – if parents and carers would like to send their child/children in to school with a named bottle of antibacterial gel, this will be kept on their school desk for them to be able to use throughout the day if required.

Parking:

Please can we remind **ALL** parents that Mill Lane carpark is open from 8:15am every morning. Please support the school in trying to keep our children safe whilst they arrive and depart school.

Child Absences:

Please remember to phone into school if your child is absent for any reason. If your child has a medical appointment during school hours please provide evidence of the appointment to the office. If you do not notify the school on the first day of the absence your child will be given an unauthorised absence mark. Please be aware that 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 12 week period may result in a fixed penalty notice.

Pre-Loved uniform:

Has your child outgrown their school uniform? Is your child moving to another school? Why not donate any preloved and now unwanted items of school uniform to the school to benefit other children in the school community?

Don't throw it away, donate it! Ties/ school jumpers/ PE kit/ trousers/ skirts/ shorts

Donations can be left in the donation bins at both school offices.

Thank you!



2 x Teaching Assistants

Permanent

To provide 1:1 support

1 x Potton Lower School

1 x Potton Middle School

September 2019 Start



NJC pay scale

Potton Lower School and Potton Middle School are part of the Potton Federation, formed in September 2015, to provide seamless, outstanding education for pupils from 4 through to 13 years.

At the Potton Federation we strive to ensure all of our children achieve their full social, moral and academic potential. We endeavour to create a wonderful environment that is innovative, stimulating and inspiring for children and staff alike.

We are currently looking to recruit Teaching Assistants for Potton Lower School and Potton Middle School to work various hours including lunchtime cover.

If working as part of a deeply committed team in a great school sounds appealing, come and join us in teaching these fabulous children.

The successful candidate will have:

- Ideally have previous experience of working in a school environment or providing support to a child with additional needs
- the ability to build good relationships with children, teachers and parents
- strong organisational, planning and have a flexible approach to work
- the ability to manage children and cope with challenging behaviour
- creativity to design materials and activities based on individual child needs

Visits to the schools are warmly welcomed and encouraged.

Closing date for applications:

Interview Date:

Interviews will be organised with candidates individually

For further details and an application pack, please visit the school website at www.pottonfederation.co.uk or contact the school office on **01767 260239**.

Applications only to: ahutchison@pottonfederation.co.uk