



PALACE WOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

End of term 1!

Wow! What a term it has been. After having such a time away from 'normal' school, this term has felt very long (8 weeks is long even in 'normal' times!) but I am so proud of the community for pulling together so strongly to support the children returning to school.

I know it has only been one term, but I couldn't let it pass without saying some huge thank yous.

Firstly, thank you to you all for supporting the arrangements we have had to put in place to allow the children to return safely. I know it can sometimes seem that I am asking you to do things that may seem a bit restrictive, but by doing them, we have been able to keep the whole school open for the term and focus on teaching the children as well as we possibly can.

Secondly, I wanted to thank all of the children. They really do make the school what it is. It felt very eerie from March through to July, but having them back and hearing their voices and laughter and seeing them enthusiastic about their learning has breathed life back into the school and kept us going throughout the term. You should all be very proud of what your children have achieved this half term.

Finally, and I am sure it is something you will join me in, I would like to say a huge thank you to all of the staff. They have continued to show an unwavering commitment to the school both in terms of adapting their classrooms and their practice to fit in with the restrictions, but also in the way that they have gone over and above in the way that they have approached the teaching of the children, working harder than ever to ensure that they learn well.

I know how much we all want things to go back to normal, but we need to be prepared that this will continue to run at least into the Spring and so we need to remain extremely vigilant in protecting the community. I know that you will continue to support me and the school in any of the decisions we have to make to this end.

One of the many positives that has come out of the challenges we have faced is that we have all had to learn new ways of working and communicating. Although clearly not yet pros, we are improving our use of online platforms and hope that you have found these useful.

We continue to use our Twitter page - @palace_wood – to share information and also some of the children's learning. If you don't follow us yet, make sure you give us a follow so you don't miss out on the wonderful things we do at school.

Parent Consultation Evenings

We will be holding Parent Consultation Evenings after half term (dates to follow). These will, unfortunately, have to be virtual in order to maintain the integrity of bubbles and protect each other. We will be sending more information about these after half term, so please watch out for these when they come through.

Book Amnesty

When we went into lockdown in March, we sent children home with a school reading book (or 2!). As part of the review of our curriculum, we are reorganising our books for the different year groups and we are a few missing! If you still have any school books at home, please could you bring them back in after half term. You can drop them in the drop boxes that are outside both Oaks and Acorns office. Thank you.

Helping your child to learn – session 2

This week I held the second of two sessions on helping your child to learn. This session was focused on how to retrieve memories – a really important tool and one that strengthens the memories that we have. It is an incredibly important learning tool and one that we have embraced in school. It is also something that can be easily used at home to support the strengthening of memories. If you weren't able to attend the session, I have recorded one which you can access here: <https://youtu.be/07r27sosjuE>

If you missed the first one, or want to catch up on it again, you can find it here: <https://youtu.be/K1yVKBxEnAY>

The eagle eyed amongst you may notice that, completely unintentionally, the videos are the same length to the second!

Parking – again!

Please can I ask that you park and behave courteously and conscientiously around the school. As the weather turns, we know that more of you will begin driving to school. Please do not park on the chevrons in front of the school and please conduct yourselves appropriately when speaking with each other, especially when children are around.

And finally

I have said on many occasions how proud I was of the whole school community throughout the first lockdown in March. It was certainly clear that everyone pulled together and we showed our true colours as the centre of the community, supporting each other through the most challenging of times.

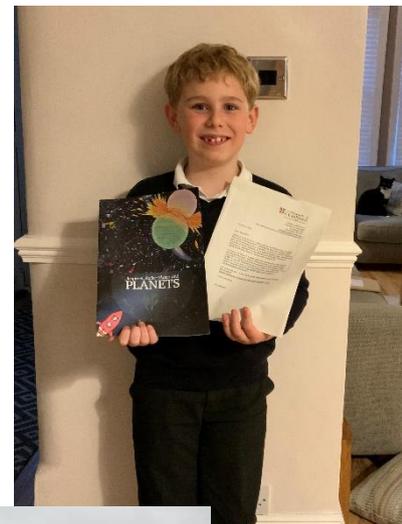
I am delighted to tell you then, that the school have been awarded the Compassionate Teacher/School Award in the inaugural Maidstone Borough Council and Heart of Kent Hospice Compassionate Community Awards.

I was fortunate enough to be invited to collect the award on behalf of the school and was so proud to be able to reiterate how amazing everyone was in pulling together. You can read the full article here: <https://www.kentonline.co.uk/maidstone/news/selfless-heroes-crowned-in-compassionate-awards-235974/> or buy a copy of this week's Kent Messenger.

We have an INSET day tomorrow, and then a week off for half term. Please make sure you take some time together to refresh and rest ready for term two where we will continue to face the challenges together!

Dates for your Diary:

3 remaining INSET days: 23/10, 4/1, 7/6
Flu immunisation – whole school – 20/11



Superstar Corner

Izi (Monkeys) graduated from Rainbows this week achieving the Silver award at her "Pot of Gold" ceremony. She has been working towards this for over 2 years, gaining many badges along the way. Ben in Pandas received man of the match at his football game on Saturday. During lockdown Zach in Panthers took part in a project with Cambridge University to write a book about space and his drawings were included in the finished book!

