

**Poltair School**

Trevarthian Road  
St. Austell  
Cornwall  
PL25 4BZ

Headteacher: Mr Mark Everett



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13<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Dear Parents/Carers

We are now 10 days into another exciting year for Poltair, and we welcomed the largest year group to the school in recent memory with over 200 students joining us in Year 7. This is the second year running that the school has been oversubscribed, we also celebrate being one of the most successful schools in Cornwall. Once again Poltair students have achieved recording breaking results celebrating progress well above the national average.

**Sports events and Poltair+ have already begun** and it has been brilliant to see the engagement and commitment already from the children, especially those in Year 7 who have just joined us. Further details are available here: [Poltair School - Poltair +](#). **Year 11 Masterclasses have also begun** for our final year students and parents/carers of Year 11 will already have received details last week.

There is always a lot of information sent out at the beginning of each academic year and we have attempted to bring as much as possible together within this letter.

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### **Dates for the diary**

The school is holding its **Open Evening for Year 6's on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September 5.00pm – 7.30pm** and as a result the **school will be closing slightly earlier at 1.30pm on this date**. Buses and transport have been arranged and I can confirm that **Remote Learning** will be set for students to complete.

We will shortly be asking students to support at this event and would like to thank parents and carers in advance for giving your permission. It is an exciting opportunity for our community to see the school and your support is very much appreciated.

New for 2023 are our **Key Stage 3, Year 10 and Year 11 Success Evenings**. The Year 10 and 11 events replace the previous Year 10 and Year 11 GCSE Information Evenings, and all three events will be an excellent opportunity for parents/carers to talk to staff, to find out more about their child's learning journey, the provision on offer and how we can support you to support your child in maximizing their success.

- **Year 11 Success Evening – Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September 5.00pm – 7.30pm**
- **Key Stage 3 Success Evening – Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October 5.00pm – 7.30pm**
- **Year 10 Success Evening – Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> November 5.00pm – 7.30pm**

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### **New Staff**

We have been exceptionally lucky this year in the recruitment of our new staff who have made a fantastic start to the year. We welcome:

- Besnik Ajvazi-Brogden - Deputy Head of Science
- Alison Baker- Head of Year 8, Teacher of English
- Oliver Bate - Cover Supervisor
- Louise Collins – Teacher of English
- Farlie Fitzpatrick – Poltair and CELT Central Apprentice IT Technician
- Sophie Jamal -Teacher of MFL
- Kate Langton - Trust School Improvement English
- Callum Patmore - Teacher of Maths
- Jenna Pritchard – School Administrator
- Emmie Seward-Adams – Deputy Headteacher, Teacher of PE
- Jenna Smith – Deputy Head of MFL
- Neil Treadwell - Assistant Headteacher, Teacher of History
- Lee Vincent – Teacher of Maths and Computing
- Ella Wasley - Head of History

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### **From Mrs Kellow, Assistant Headteacher - Information on the Assessment process**

Assessment helps students and staff keep informed in terms of progress and achievement. It is a vital tool in helping students manage their learning and staff ensuring the most effective teaching. Assessments are structured into three distinct learning cycles.

Each cycle will consist of:

1. Sharing the Learning Cycle knowledge with students so they are clear on what they will be learning
2. Teaching high quality lessons where students learn and retain key ideas and knowledge
3. A formal assessment fortnight
4. Opportunities for students to reflect and improve their work

The cycles will give all students clarity on when their assessments are, and precisely what knowledge or skills they will be assessed on. Your child will have been issued with a folder, which contains a Home Learning exercise book and a Learning Cycle Knowledge Booklet. All students will receive a new booklet at the beginning of each learning cycle. Each booklet contains Personal Learning Checklists (PLC's) for each subject, identifying the key ideas that will be assessed, along with comprehensive knowledge organisers. Students are expected to have their folders with them every lesson every day. If they lose their booklet a copy can be downloaded from the school website (<https://www.poltairschool.co.uk/sort>) or copies can be purchased at a cost of £1.50 from our online shop via ParentPay.

The dates of the assessments are:

Years 7 – 9	27 <sup>th</sup> November – 8 <sup>th</sup> December, 11 <sup>th</sup> March – 22 <sup>nd</sup> March, 17 <sup>th</sup> June – 28 <sup>th</sup> June
Year 10	15 <sup>th</sup> January – 26 <sup>th</sup> January, 20 <sup>th</sup> May – 21 <sup>st</sup> June
Year 11	6 <sup>th</sup> November – 17 <sup>th</sup> November, 29 <sup>th</sup> January – 9 <sup>th</sup> February, 9 <sup>th</sup> May – 21 <sup>st</sup> June

## **From Mr Treadwell, Assistant Headteacher - Information on Home Learning**

### **SORT Revision Strategy**

At Poltair we celebrate a culture of effective study where students are prepared with essential learning skills enabling them to achieve success in all aspects of their educational journey. At Poltair we embrace a whole school revision strategy which supports every student to be able to recall the key ideas and knowledge they need to succeed.

There are four stages to the SORT revision strategy:

<b>Summarise</b>	<b>Organise</b>	<b>Recall</b>	<b>Test</b>
Summarise and condense any class notes, revision guides and revision.	Organise your revision materials by topic/subtopic. Traffic light your PLC sheets to identify areas of weakness or gaps (Red/Amber) that need to be prioritised.	Use active recall and spaced repetition to memorise your knowledge organisers until you can recall the information eg. Look, cover, write or self-testing	Use low stakes online tests/quizzes and answer high stakes past paper/sample questions to check and apply knowledge and understanding
<b>Strategies</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cornell Notes</li><li>• Flash cards</li><li>• Mind mapping</li><li>• Revision clocks</li><li>• Dual coding</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How to use your PLC</li><li>• How to schedule your home learning and stick to it!</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Look cover &amp; test</li><li>• Leitner system</li><li>• Blurt it</li><li>• Transform it</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Low stakes</li><li>• Self-quizzing</li><li>• Quiz each other</li><li>• Online quizzes</li><li>• High stakes</li><li>• Exam style questions</li></ul>

Students are taught how to use each SORT strategy, discovering which strategy works best for their learning style. There are resources for each strategy on the student shared area of our website for students and parents to access at any time.

### **Home Learning**

Students are set Home Learning activities weekly using the ClassCharts platform. Home Learning activities include a SORT activity and an online quiz. Students will be expected to use their Home Learning exercise books to record their written responses and teachers may ask to see their workings in lessons. There is a suggested timetable in their Learning Cycle Knowledge Booklet for them to follow to ensure all Home Learning is completed on time.

### **How can parents/carers support?**

- Help provide your child with a suitable place for them to complete their Home Learning
- Support your child in creating and following a Home Learning and SORT revision timetable so all work set is completed to the best of their ability
- Support your child with their Home Learning activities, especially help quiz them on the recall of key ideas and knowledge
- Encourage your child to complete independent revision by using the PLCs (Personal Learning Checklists) to identify priority topics and SORT to summarise, recall and test their understanding
- KS3 parents/carers, listen to your child read and ensure reading logs are signed
- Communicate with your child's tutor if you have any questions or concerns

### **From Mrs Spurgeon, Assistant Headteacher – Information on School Attendance**

At Poltair School, we understand the importance of student attendance and we want to ensure that, as parents and carers, you fully understand the importance also. Good school attendance is classed as 96% and above.

Did you know that if a child has 90% attendance during their school career, this is equivalent to them missing over a full year of school? Also, a child with attendance of 90% or below, is twice as likely to drop one grade in GCSE examinations in Year 11 compared to a child with above 96%? These two facts should be the main incentive for any child to attend school daily but, in addition to this, we will reward students with good and improved attendance each term.

I would also like to take the opportunity to highlight how you should report school absence and the protocol regarding punctuality.

- If your child is going to be absent for any reason, please ensure that you make the school aware before 8.00am on each day of absence. This can either be done via telephone by leaving a message on the dedicated student absence mailbox (option 1 on the telephone system) or email the Attendance and Engagement Officer via [attendance@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk). Please ensure you give clear information including your child's name, tutor group and the reason for the absence. If we are not provided with a reason, the absence will be recorded on their attendance record as unauthorised. Additionally, please be aware that you may be asked, at any time, to provide medical evidence regarding absences due to illness.
- If your child arrives at school less than 15 minutes late, their attendance will be recorded as 'L' on our records. This coding will not have a negative impact on their overall attendance figure; however, a sanction will be issued in line with our Behaviour Policy.
- If your child arrives more than 15 minutes late, this will be coded as 'U.' This coding will have a negative effect on their attendance and again a sanction will be issued in line with our policy. Further information regarding our expectations for student attendance can also be found in our Attendance Policy which is available on our website.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions and if you need any additional support or there are barriers with your child attending school, please contact the Attendance and Engagement Officer or our Pastoral team. The Pastoral team for each year group is detailed below:

Year Group	Pastoral Manager	Head of Year
Year 7	Mrs Stevens <a href="mailto:rstevens@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk">rstevens@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk</a>	Mr Adams <a href="mailto:ladams@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk">ladams@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk</a>
Year 8	Ms Williams <a href="mailto:jwilliams@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk">jwilliams@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk</a>	Mrs Baker <a href="mailto:abaker@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk">abaker@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk</a>
Year 9	Mrs Best <a href="mailto:sbest@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk">sbest@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk</a>	Mr McNally <a href="mailto:smcnally@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk">smcnally@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk</a>
Year 10	Mrs Harvey <a href="mailto:charvey@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk">charvey@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk</a>	Mrs Pengelly <a href="mailto:jpengelly@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk">jpengelly@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk</a>
Year 11	Mrs Heale <a href="mailto:Rheale@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk">Rheale@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk</a>	Miss Dingwall <a href="mailto:cdingwall@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk">cdingwall@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk</a>

We look forward to supporting your child throughout this academic year to achieve a minimum of 96% attendance and thank you for your ongoing support.

### **From Miss Waters, Assistant Headteacher – Inclusion and SEND**

We are delighted to be working with you and your child at Poltair School and we would like to take this opportunity to welcome parents and carers to the Inclusion Team. This section outlines how we support students with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND). At Poltair, we aspire for every student, regardless of academic or physical ability or challenge to leave the school empowered with a good set of qualifications and a strong sense of self so they have the skills to be successful in life.

First and foremost, we believe in Quality First Teaching and Quality First Pastoral Care. The term 'quality first' is taken from the SEND Code of Practice and means delivering the highest standards of teaching and pastoral care for all students, particularly those with identified SEND needs. It is vital that students receive high-quality teaching in the classroom, together with appropriate support for identified students. It is also vital that the pastoral team provide high-quality support for students with identified SEND needs. These teams all work together to support the overall progress of students.

The Inclusion team at Poltair School identifies students' SEND needs and communicates this to staff, so that they can make learning accessible for all. The Inclusion team directly supports students with significant and persistent SEND needs, through additional specialist intervention, as appropriate. This is planned and reviewed regularly by our team, comprised of specialist members of staff.

Students with identified Special Educational Needs & Disabilities will:

- Be set suitable learning challenges with access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- Be supported appropriately to manage behaviour and effort
- Be supported by all staff, who will respond to students' diverse needs and help students overcome potential barriers to learning and behaviour
- Be given help and guidance to prepare for adulthood, including independence and life skills

If you need any further information please visit the SEN section of the website <https://www.poltairschool.co.uk/sen> where full details can be found as well as our contact details.

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### **From Mr Adams – Assistant Headteacher – Pupil Premium Lead**

We're delighted to have the following Pupil Premium Link staff working with the following year groups:

Year Group	Pupil Premium Lead
Year 7	Miss Mounce cmounce@poltaire.cornwall.sch.uk
Year 8	Miss Allday eallday@poltaire.cornwall.sch.uk
Year 9	Mr Pyle opyle@poltaire.cornwall.sch.uk
Year 10	Miss Freestone efreestone@poltaire.cornwall.sch.uk
Year 11	Mr Thompson jthompson@poltaire.cornwall.sch.uk  Miss Rodgers rrodgers@poltaire.cornwall.sch.uk

It is important that students are prepared for school on a daily basis and ready to learn to maximise the learning time. For this reason we would like to remind all parents of the student essential equipment list: -

- Knowledge Organiser
- Pen
- Multi-Coloured Pen for Year 7 Only
- Pencil
- Rubber
- Ruler
- Scientific Calculator

These items are checked daily by the tutor to ensure students are ready to learn. If you are looking to purchase a Scientific Calculator this can be done via our ParentPay shop [Poltair School Shop \(parentpay.com\)](https://parentpay.com)

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### **From Miss Owen, Assistant Headteacher – Information on the School Library**

#### **Welcome to Poltair School Library!**

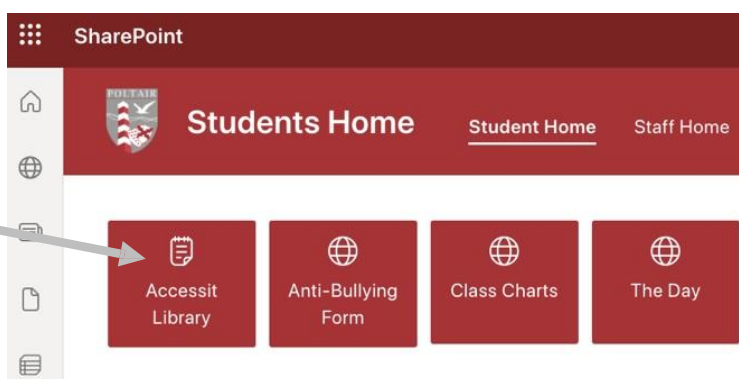
From J.K Rowling to George Orwell, the recently refurbished school library is stocked with over 8,000 books for students and staff to borrow. A recent investment of £11,000 on new books alone, means that there is now more choice than ever! Students can take their pick from fact, fiction, graphic novels, poetry or quick reads for those who want a shorter text.

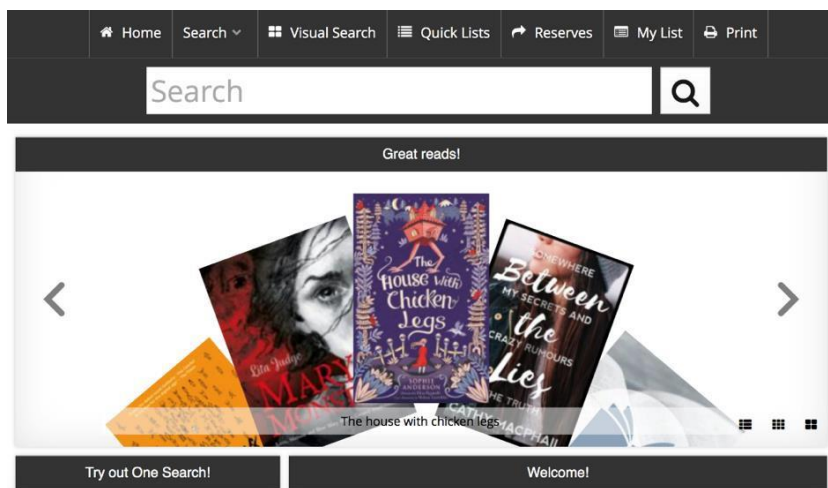
In addition to being able to visit the library during break and lunchtimes and after school, students can use our easy online booking system to both browse our 'virtual' shelves as well as borrow the books they would like to read.

#### **How can my child borrow books?**

**Accessit Library** is our online platform that enable students to access and search our catalogue of books. Students can log into Accessit Library from school or home, anywhere they have access to a computer, tablet, or phone.

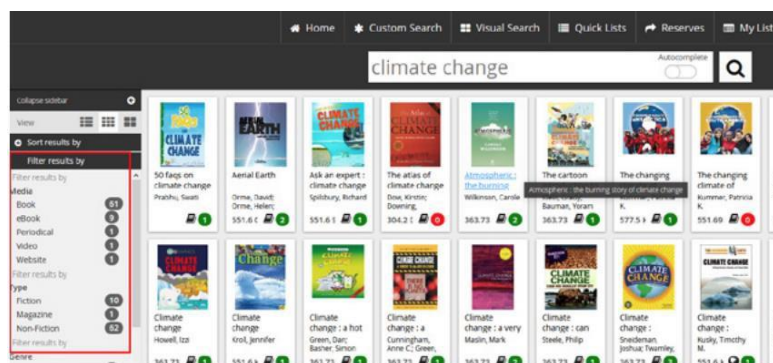
Logging in is simple: the details are the same ones that students use to log in to the school system. They can also access the platform from the student home page on the school network, using the icon opposite.





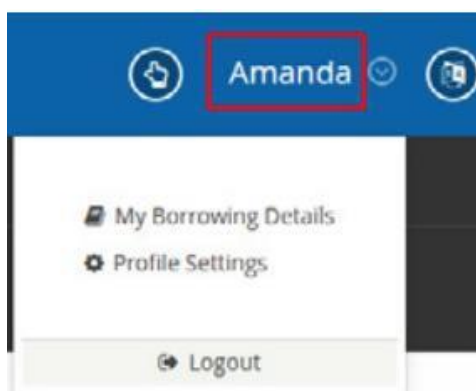
This will take students to their own personal page, (shown opposite) where they can search, catalogue, reserve, book and renew books:

A green circle on any book will indicate how many copies are available, and a red circle indicates that it's not currently available for loan. However, it can be reserved and then students are notified when the book is available for lending:



### How long can students borrow books for?

Students can borrow books for up to two weeks at a time, they can also extend their lend, either in person or again via the ACCESSIT platform. Students need to click on their name and the tab underneath it that says 'My Borrowing Details'.



They will see what books they have taken out already, which ones they have on their reserve list and details of when the books are due back.

As with any other lending library, there is no cost for students to borrow and read books from the library. However, students are responsible for keeping track of and returning borrowed books. If the book ends up damaged or lost, students will be responsible for either replacing or paying for the book.

### How can I encourage my child to read at home?

Please encourage your child to take out a book and read for both pleasure and progress. Talk to them about what they are reading or log in to the platform with them and look for books together.

Reading is possibly the single-most important activity your child can do to improve achievement in school.



Research has shown that reading helps cognitive development; students who read at home do 'significantly better' across the curriculum (including 9.9% better in maths) than students who don't read. Linked to this is the fact that reading is the best way to improve vocabulary, essential for success in every subject. Reading also has social and emotional benefits. It increases self-esteem and studies show that students who read are more empathetic. Growing up is tough -- reading can help young people explore complex problems from the safe fictional world of a book. Our pledge as a school, is to ensure that we put reading at the heart of what we do – your support with this is hugely appreciated!

I hope that you have found the information provided by the staff useful and if you have any queries or concerns please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Once again thank you for your ongoing support.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Everett', with a large, stylized initial 'M' and 'E'.

Mark Everett  
Headteacher