

Dear Families,

I am delighted not to have to start this term's newsletter with anything covid related for the first time in what feels like a very long time. Instead I am really excited to share with you nothing but the joyful and informative updates from various school teams along with some exciting developments for Pace and news from our fundraising team. I really hope that you enjoy reading it.

### **Website and branding update**

Firstly though, you may notice that this term's newsletter looks a little different to the norm, featuring our brand new logo and branding! This month, we launched our new Pace brand and website – take a look if you have not seen it yet [www.thepacecentre.org](http://www.thepacecentre.org). It is our aim to better support you and more families across the UK utilising digital platforms.

For our school parents specifically, we are pleased to introduce the '**School Hub**'. This section gives you access to term dates, trip and theme dates, school status (open/closed), policies and guidance as it would be in the parent handbook.

In addition, we now have an '**advice and support hub**', where resources and information will be added for you to access and share online over time. We will be including support and information from our educational and therapeutic teams and legal firms on things like EHCPs, family law and financial planning.

Thirdly – we have our community section. This forum allows you to connect with other parents from (we hope) all over the country. Engage in conversation, ask for advice and support and share your knowledge. We invite you to go to the [COMMUNITY](#) section and ask questions and help with answers.

Please help others find Pace by sharing the website, resources, and information on our Advice hub.

Lastly, if you have any comments or feedback, please email [Caroline.Bennett@thepacecentre.org](mailto:Caroline.Bennett@thepacecentre.org)

### **Pace School Twitter Feed**



We also now have our very own Twitter feed [@paceschoolnews](#) From September, we will be using this twitter feed to showcase and celebrate the great work that goes on at Pace!

The feed is private, so only 'followers' can see the tweets, however the feed is connected to the Pace website which is in the public domain. Only students with the correct photo permissions will feature in photos that are posted. Take a look!

### **Latest developments in our secondary curriculum assessment arrangements**

Starting this year, all Pace secondary students will have their accomplishments recognised via an externally accredited examination board. The type and level of accreditation will be personalised according to their individual learning needs. The accredited assessments will be portfolio based, with no need to sit an exam. Come along to our Secondary Parents welcome back meeting in September to hear more information about

this and what it will look like for your child. For now, please save the date to join us at The Bradbury Campus on Wendover Road on **Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> Sept 9.15 – 10.15 am.**

Lastly, I would like to make you aware that at the end of this term we are saying a very fond farewell and good luck to our Deputy Headteacher Polly Kempson. Polly has been at Pace for 10 years and in that time she has touched the lives of numerous Pace families and has played an integral role in our school development journey. Polly came to Pace in 2012 as an experienced secondary school languages teacher who loved the Pace ethos and our focus on the individual child. After several years in the classroom Polly progressed to be a team leader and later was appointed deputy headteacher.

Polly has been a driving force in successfully redefining and creating a suite of planning and assessment resources for the Pace school curriculum and has given her considerable expertise and dedication to our school throughout her time at Pace for which we are all extremely grateful.

Polly is taking the next step in her career and I am sure you will want to join me in wishing her the very best of luck as she embarks upon her next chapter!! **Thank you and good luck Polly!**

I'd like to wish you all a wonderful Summer holiday. For those of you taking part in 'Playaway' and 'Stayaway' I'm sure you will have a wonderful time!



**Claire Smart, Headteacher**

#### **A Message from our Chief Executive, Ian Sansbury:**

It has been another busy term – but that always seems to be a constant here at Pace! And thankfully it has been one in which Covid has loomed a little less large, although the team continues to stay vigilant, particularly given the latest surge over recent weeks. But I sense that a little more business as usual has enabled us to navigate a more normal term – and to complete some of the things that have been in the pipeline for a little while.

The biggest development that you will have seen in the last few weeks, and of which you'll see more evidence in September, is the launch of our new website and our new Pace brand as mentioned by Claire above. The website is the latest element of our Pace Digital strategy and is a distinct change from what we've ever had online before. The new site (which is still at the same URL [www.thepacecentre.org](http://www.thepacecentre.org)) is designed to create a community for families to be part of, whether they live in Aylesbury or Aberdeen, and it will provide a rich library of practical online resources. It also includes a parent forum, which we hope will become a go-to place for families looking for peer support and advice. Do have a look around and let Caroline Bennett ([caroline.bennett@thepacecentre.org](mailto:caroline.bennett@thepacecentre.org)) know your feedback – particularly if you see anything that doesn't look quite right. And we'd love to have your support in making the parent forum (<https://thepacecentre.org/community>) a really thriving source of peer support.

The other thing you'll notice over the coming weeks, is the rollout of our new Pace brand. We're in the process of deploying that digitally – and we'll be changing our signage across both campuses over the summer holidays. The new brand will better reflect all that Pace seeks to do, give us a better online presence and a more consistent 'tone of voice'. In short, it will help us to reach more children and families, and secure more support for the children and families we already support. We really hope you like it!

All that remains is for me to wish you all a wonderfully joyful and restful summer holiday – and we'll look forward to seeing you again in September!

**Ian Sansbury, CEO**



### Welcomes and Farewells

We would like to welcome the following new members of staff to the Pace team who started during the term and are already part of the Pace community, making a real difference to our children and families in their respective roles:



Louise Walker – Direct Marketing Manager

Leanne Barber – Speech & Language Therapist

Maisie Page – Business Administrator and Facilities Apprentice

Jola Lecko – Specialist teacher (temporary appointment)

### During the term we said, or will soon be saying, a fond farewell to:

Polly Kempson, Deputy Headteacher  
Raheisha Jack, Learning Support Assistant  
Ellen Watts, Learning Support Assistant  
Delphin Fordham, Learning Support Assistant  
Shashirekha Prakash, Occupational Therapy Assistant  
Sophie Cato – Communication Assistant



### News from across the School

#### Speech and Language Therapy – Fin O'Driscoll (Lead SLT)

I would like to introduce you to Leanne Barber, the newest recruit to the SLT team at Pace. Leanne is currently shadowing the SLT team in the school and has taken on a number of projects to support the students with their communication skills, oral hygiene etc. She will be taking on a direct caseload from September 2022. I will let her introduce herself!

*"Hello everyone! My name is Leanne and I have recently joined the Speech & Language Therapy Team at Pace. I will be working within the school department with some of the fantastic pupils. A little about me; I have been working in both mainstream schools and specialist education provisions in different roles for the last 10 years. Most recently, I worked at Chiltern Wood School as a Speech and Language Therapist, where I provided a variety of therapeutic supports for parents and pupils, including; implementation and use of AAC, support for Eating, Drinking, and Swallowing difficulties, building pupil's understanding and expression of language, developing social interaction skills, and Bucket Time sessions. Outside of work, I love to read, I enjoy doing arts and crafts activities, and I love*

*dogs! Please do feel free to come up and say hello; I'm looking forward to getting to know you all through the fun activities and learning opportunities at Pace."*

Claire Donner will be moving to Child & Family full time in September 2022. She is currently doing some shadowing with the child and family team to familiarise herself with her new role but is still part of the school team each week, until the end of term. We will all miss her very much in the school team but we're glad she is still part of the Pace family.

At this time of year, we are very mindful of transition and all the changes it can bring- your child might be changing class, meeting new staff members or even leaving school! Communication is a key factor in making sure these changes are managed smoothly and that our young people feel that they are part of the process and that their hopes and desires are central to any upcoming changes. One of the ways we can help is through creating Communication Passports.

A Communication Passport is a pocket guide to your child; to their likes and dislikes, the support they need and how they show their independence in all aspects of life. We want to work closely with you to make sure this booklet represents your child as well as possible. Therefore, we will be emailing you a form to complete so we can get an up to date idea of what your child likes to do outside of school and any other information you think it is important to share. We can also send you a paper copy, if you would prefer to share information that way – just let your child's class team know and we will make sure you get a copy.

The form is a grid of colored boxes with icons and text prompts. The top row includes 'All about me' (with a plus sign icon), 'Things I like' (with a heart icon), 'Things I don't like' (with a heart and slash icon), and 'If I am upset' (with a sad face icon). The second row has 'Add picture here' (with a plus sign icon), a 'Name' field, 'My favourite activities are...', 'Things I find annoying are...', and 'If I am upset you can help me by...'. The third row contains 'I am years old', 'My favourite foods are...', 'Some things I find upsetting are...', and 'Food I don't like are...'. The bottom section is divided into 'Things I need help with', 'My important people', 'How I communicate', and 'Important things to know'. It also includes a section for 'I need help with...' and 'You could include any speech and language difficulties here, including any use of AAC'. There are also icons for 'Help' and 'Information'.

A Communication Passport can be shared with whoever you and your child want to see it. You can bring it to respite, to hospital appointments, even to family gatherings. It can be useful as a conversation starter or to provide medical information to people who are not familiar with your child. How and where you use it is up to you.

We look forward to hearing from you!  
Fin, Anj, Leanne & Claire

### Physiotherapy – Hannah Shelton (Lead PT)

Exciting news! This term we started to offer Kinesio-Taping in the physiotherapy department. Kinesio Taping is a treatment modality used by physiotherapists to help to provide additional support for children and to improve carry over of benefits of exercise after their session.

The tape uses elasticity to provide sensory input and increases the awareness of a muscle or a muscle group working in a muscle chain. This helps the child to recruit and strengthen that muscle/muscle group more easily. Depending on where it is applied, it can assist with body alignment in a way that it either encourages the muscles to contract and work in a better pattern, or inhibits over activity of a muscle and helps it to relax. This has added benefits for some children in relieving pain that is caused by asymmetrical posture or the atypical pull of a muscle on a joint.



The tape is latex free and has an acrylic adhesive which is safe to use on all types of skin but care is always taken with anyone with particularly sensitive skin and a patch test can be completed before taping to make certain of no adverse reactions. Traditionally tape has been used more for athletes with injuries but it's effects on children with sensory motor disorders is being more widely researched with good results.

We have already seen some lovely benefits of the tape to a few students at Pace. The physiotherapy team will contact you if they feel your child might benefit from using this tool so please do watch out for any consent forms that might be sent home with a description of what we are wanting to do and why.

### **Conductive Education – Shleena Lee (Lead Conductor)**

As always it has been a busy summer term at Pace and in the groups. Here is some news from some of the groups:

#### **Maple Group**

The children in Maple Class have been working really to develop their self-care skills such as cleaning themselves in the bathroom by practising reaching around to their bottom during their floor programmes. They are also pushing themselves beyond their comfort zone and taking risks in the Stunt Stars programme such as doing forward rolls and pushing themselves up a sloped bench before sliding back down again. The children have also been working really hard to increase their independence within transfers by being more involved in the planning of transfer, taking responsibility for their own safety within the task and taking that all important leap of faith.

#### **Elder Group**

This term we have thinking about Places and the Past. We started our topic in the past, with a visit from 'Dave the Dinosaur', who could move and roar! We excavated dinosaurs and made footprints in the sand; we explored their environment of mud, grass and leaves and went on a dinosaur hunt around the school garden.



Next, we moved on to 'Places' linked to our book, 'The magic train ride'; where we visited and explored many different places along the way.

The children have been learning to use both their hands together to play and explore; as well as using their other senses to experience, the sounds and the sights of The jungle, Space, Under the sea, The magic forest, and finally arriving at the Seaside.

#### **Ash Group**



Ash Class have been busy this term working on hand skills to use switches and explore their environment.

We have had lots of fun using switches to move around the classroom and explore different materials and food for our creative sessions. We've experienced flour and water, melted chocolate and even onions.

We had the opportunity to touch, smell, squeeze, stir and even taste some of these things and let our helpers know if we liked them or not!



Some of our class have also been working hard on their sitting balance, using their hands to support themselves and to play bean bag and skittle games.

Our weekly visits into the local community have been a lot of fun and have really supported us to take our learning beyond our school environment and apply it in other places! We particularly enjoy visiting the community garden and visiting town.

## Rowan Group

Rowan class have had a great summer term. The students have really enjoyed music lessons, showing some amazing independent skills. Playing the drums has been very popular, the students have been practicing the skills they've learnt in physical programmes.

They have shown a range of different skills such as independent sitting, bilateral hand function as well as some fantastic rhythm all inspired and motivated by music and playing the drums.

We have been getting outside a bit more in walkers and to practice our wheelchair skills.

## Learning Support Assistants – Tracy Baker (Lead LSA)



At the end of May we celebrated the queens Platinum Jubilee across both sites. Coventon Road had a visit from the Queen herself along with Prince Charles, the students enjoyed meeting the four Corgis and using their maths skills,

followed by a disco. Wendover Road students enjoyed writing their own lyrics to the song "we will rock you" and playing the drums. The students decorated bunting in red, white and blue and became the royal family by donning face masks, it was a joyful celebration for all.



## Occupational therapy – Jo Elliott (Lead Occupational therapist)

This term we have been pleased to welcome Becca Fortescue as our new Occupational Therapist who specialises in the upper limb and functional hand use. Becca has been busy getting to know all our students and reviewing their upper limbs and the impact on school life, as well as upskilling staff on functional hand use, and why hand splints are helpful. Becca looks forward to spending more time in class next term focusing on functional hand use.

Work on self-identity and emotional wellbeing continues with our secondary students. This term we are trialling ways to support the vital carry over of functional skills into different environments, especially at home and hope to roll out successful approaches next year. The summer term has also brought opportunities for many classes to get out and about in the community.



Ash class have been exploring their sensory preferences, with some clear favourites:

A big thank you to the OT team, we are really benefiting from the new provision of OT assistants within each class. We are very impressed with how quickly the OTA's have got to work championing all the things our students want to do.

We would like to wish Karen Walder all the best for her upcoming sabbatical year, which she is taking to care for Max, we know they will stay closely in touch as part of our Pace family.

Finally, a huge well done to Aoife one of our outreach OT's who completed the three peaks challenge for Pace!

### Teachers – Polly Kempson (Lead Teacher)

This term our focus in the primary phase has been on Places and the Past; we have explored a range of stories, experiences and role-play to find out more about this fascinating topic. We have travelled through time, from the age of the dinosaurs to the Stone Age, Romans, Stuarts and Victorians.

During the summer term Elder class have enjoyed learning about dinosaurs, different places linked to The Magic Train Ride story, and beach holidays. Our lessons focused on multisensory experiences with plenty of opportunity to develop our exploratory skills, and for working on individual communication. The pupils were highly engaged with the experience of touching/feeling different types of toy dinosaurs, listening to sounds they made, or using them for mark making activities (footprints).

The Magic Train from the story 'took' us to the jungle, space, underwater, magic wood and fairyland. We loved our learning journey with 'so much to do and so much to see!'. We had lots of opportunities for exploring the key objects and materials from different places (using our visual, auditory or fine-motor skills). We particularly enjoyed listening to jungle animals, touching/feeling space rocks and stars, playing with underwater creatures and splashing with hands! We also enjoyed the challenge of creating magic wood sensory trays, 'walking' through fairyland and learning what to pack for a beach holiday.



Some highlights for Willow have been writing our own poems in literacy – the pupils worked so hard using their individual communication methods to develop their understanding of rhyming words and incorporate them into their creative writing. Willow also enjoyed exploring Medicine in the Middle Ages where they had to use fine motor skills to sort through a wide range of objects to find the Medieval cures – they found slimy leeches and sticky honey!!



In Maple group we have been looking at patterns in our Maths lessons. We have all had lots of fun playing pattern games together. In the lessons we have been using our communication skills to describe the patterns to our partners to see if they can match their pattern with our own. It has been lots of fun to try to think of other clues we can give to our partner when they don't always choose correctly the first time.

In creative this term, Rowan have been developing their skills in making instruments, playing instruments and writing music. A highlight for staff and students was the enthusiastic class performance of a special Jubilee version of 'We Will Rock You'.

In Ash we have been active participants within our local community. We have borrowed books from the library, bought food for our creative session in Sainsbury's all using technology and AAC to ask for help and working on our intensive interaction. We are also building a sensory garden by planting flowers, plants and food that look nice, taste nice, smell nice and feel nice. We have explored food that we like and made lots of different yummy creations with the food that we have bought. We have explored who we are and exploring our differences and what it means to be nice and to respect each other



## Fundraising News!

Huge congratulations to our amazing supporters who took on The National 3 Peaks Challenge in 24 hours on 19<sup>th</sup> June. The team consisted of Pace Chief Executive Ian, Pace Occupational Therapist Aoife, Pace parent Lee and loyal supporters Mike, Paul and Neil.

They have all more than smashed their individual fundraising targets and as a team have so far raised over £22,800 for Pace and the donations are still coming in!

They are an inspiration, and we are so proud of them. If anyone would like to show their support, you can sponsor them here <https://thepacecentre.enthuse.com/cf/the-national-3-peaks---24hr-challenge-e18d3>



From next year, we will review the format, frequency and content of this newsletter which is currently sent at the end of each term. To do this we really value your feedback!

Please take a moment to complete this very brief online form to share your thoughts in relation to the newsletter and how we can retain the best bits and improve anything that needs review.

Click [here](#) to complete the survey and give us your feedback, thank you!

Handwritten signature of Claire Smart in black ink.

**Claire Smart**  
Headteacher

## Hot Weather

Taking sensible precautions in the warmer weather. For most of us, the sunshine, dry weather and warmer temperatures are very welcome, but Buckinghamshire Council's Public Health team is putting out a few reminders about some of the health risks during periods of hotter weather. Buckinghamshire is due to experience a period of hot weather this week and next, with temperatures expected to exceed 30C.



Please bear in mind the following advice and information:

- Dehydration means your body loses more fluids than you take in. If it isn't treated it can get worse and become a serious problem. Babies, children and the elderly are more at risk of dehydration. Further information and advice for the public on dehydration can be found on nhs.uk <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/dehydration/>
- Information and advice for the public on sun safety can be found on nhs.uk <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/sunscreen-and-sun-safety/>
- Sun safety information specifically for babies is also on nhs.uk <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/safety/safety-in-the-sun/>
- Open water swimming is growing in popularity but can increase the risk of gastrointestinal infections (diarrhoea and/or vomiting) as well as respiratory, skin, ear and eye infections. Advice can be found here – <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-guidance-on-reducing-the-risk-of-illness-when-open-water-swimming>

Buckinghamshire Council's Deputy Cabinet Member for Public Health, Zahir Mohammed said: "We know residents are alert to the obvious dangers of warm weather, from the risks of sun exposure to not leaving pets in hot cars. But it is worth us all keeping in mind the impact of the heat on health. Please don't spend too long in the sun, avoid drinking too much alcohol in the heat and remember that young children and the elderly are most at risk of health complications caused by hot weather – it might be worth checking in with an elderly or vulnerable neighbour for example. Drink plenty of water, pace yourself and enjoy this spell of sunshine."

General advice on the impact of heat on health is on the NHS website at <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/heatwave-how-to-cope-in-hot-weather/>