



Headteacher's Newsletter – August 2017

Welcome Back

A warm welcome to our new P1 pupils and their families and welcome back to our pupils and families from P2-7. We have had a great couple of days already this term as the children settle into school life with their new teachers. It is great to see such high standards of uniform throughout the school. Parent efforts to maintain our high standards in this area are appreciated – they all very much look and act like Portmoak pupils.

Class Newsletters

As you know, we are continually looking for ways that we can improve the learning experience for our children. As a result of feedback from parents and through last year's quality assurance visit in school, we have been developing new learning plans that can tie in with the Learner's Journey Jotters and can give parents better information about what their child will be learning in the coming months. The teachers are busy completing these at the moment for their new classes and I will email you a copy close to the start of term, just like we did with the newsletters and the children will have a copy for their books. I do hope you agree that they are an improvement and I look forward to hearing your views on this in due course!



Staffing Update



Our class teachers for this year are:

- P1/2 – Ms MacGillivray
- P2/3 – Mrs Mossom
- P4/5 – Mrs Herd
- P5/6 – Miss Kettles
- P6/7 – Mrs Woods

Mrs Woods supports the management of the school in her Principal Teacher role. Mrs Fraser will cover P6/7 for some of Tuesday and some of Wednesday to allow Mrs Woods time out for her PT remit, as well as providing a period of French for each class during the teachers' non-contact time. Mrs Milroy will continue as our Pupil Support Teacher and will be here for one day a week. Mr Ainsworth will provide PE on both a

Tuesday and Friday – a reminder to please ensure your child has appropriate outdoor and indoor PE Kit in school at all times.

Our support staff hours have not changed from last session. Mrs Clark will continue in her role as Senior Clerical in the office assisted by Mrs Davies, who will split her time between the office and the

classroom. Ms Gibbon and Mrs Williams will continue to provide support in the classroom along with Mrs Beth Cox and Mrs Jennifer Thompson our new support staff members.

Our new Quality Improvement Officer supporting the Kinross cluster is Mr Mark Neil, following Anne Dalziel's retirement at the summer break. He is visiting our school for the first time on Thursday of this week.

Coffee and a Catch Up

Please come along to the school library on Tuesday 29th August – 9am-10am for coffee and catch up. This is an informal chance to chat to me and various parents, including representatives from Friends of Portmoak, our Parent Council. The next coffee and catch up is on Wednesday 1st November at 9am drop off.



Summary of Improvement Priorities 2017-18

We have three main priorities this session. A summary is provided here, but if you would like an expanded version of these priorities then this is available on request.

Improvement Priority:	Across the school children will benefit from progressive opportunities to develop their skills for learning, life and work.	Enhanced learner's journey jotters encourage children to think of themselves as learners and enable parents to be better informed and more able to engage with and support their child's learning.	Our learners benefit from an appropriate range of opportunities to develop their digital skills across the curriculum.
This will include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing children's transferable skills. Planning for skill development in committee time. Focusing on skills when planning learning activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revisiting the class newsletters to make a learning plan that can be shared at home and ties into these jotters. Developing ways to share children's digital work too. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work of the children's digital leaders and building on iTeach iPad training. Working with cluster schools to share digital learning experiences.

Parking

A reminder at this time about safety for our pupils and consideration for our neighbours: I appreciate our car park can be a busy place at pick up and drop off times but please make sure you park thoughtfully around the school and do not use the disabled bays or bus stops. Parents should never park on the pavement.



Remember too that our buses need enough room to get around the corner, so parking right at corners can make this difficult for the bus drivers and makes the walk to school less safe for our children.

Please be aware that the red painted lines represent walk ways that must be left clear. We suggest parking on the opposite side from the park at the top of Bruce Road so that children have a clear view. Be aware too that our school area is a *twenty's plenty* zone.

PE Kit

Our uniform policy states that our preferred items (to be available daily) in gym bags are:

- Black shorts
- White T-shirt
- Black “light” gym shoes with non-marking soles– not heavy “trainer” type
- Optional - trainers and tracksuits may be worn for outside gym if desired
- For Health and Safety, no jewellery is allowed to be worn during P.E. sessions. Pupils who wear earrings will need to remove them or tape them up before taking part.
- Spare socks and a hair bobble for those with long hair should also be included.



Due to the need for clean shoes for indoors gym (when rolling on gym mats etc. it is not suitable to be dropping mud and grass onto the equipment that others are then using) and the frequency that the children are going outdoors for gym, we would ask that all children do now bring old trainers to change into for outside gym please. Our preference for indoor gym is gym shoes, but we do understand that children’s feet can sometimes outgrow the sizes available and clean trainers are also perfectly acceptable.

As it gets colder, some children may prefer to wear a tracksuit rather than just their shorts and t-shirt to go outside for gym. Tracksuits for outside gym do not have to follow the black and white colour code for indoor gym uniform. We would still ask, however, that children attending sporting events (orienteeing, cross country etc.) all wear a Portmoak sweatshirt and appropriate bottoms.



Our optional sports/PE items can be sourced from the link below:

<https://www.halbro.com/portmoak-primary-school>



Macmillan Coffee / Meet the Teacher

This will be held in the school hall on the afternoon of Wednesday 27th September. You are invited to come along to the school for 1.30pm, visit your child in class and see their work / wall displays, then come along for coffee and cake in the hall. Donations of cakes by the morning of the 27th would be very welcome. All proceeds from this event will go to Macmillan Cancer Support.

Absences

If your child is going to be absent from school you must call and let us know. We operate an absentee line on 01577 867196. Unless you need to speak to someone about your child, this is our preferred method for contacting the school about absence. This is a voicemail only line, so is available 24 hours a day, with parents being asked to leave a message for their child’s name, class and reason for absence. If you do not advise us of why your child is absent we will contact you as it is important we know where everyone is at all times.



Office Procedures

Please note that the office operates a ‘no answer’ policy between 11-12 to allow for some of the more time consuming tasks to be completed without interruption. It would be appreciated if, wherever possible, you could avoid popping in during those times.

All visitors should report to the office on arrival. Parents are not expected to take children up to class; this will be done by staff members. If you would like to speak to your child’s teacher, please contact

the school office to make an appointment. I am happy to see parents at or before 9am, so feel free to catch me at the morning lines, but teachers are not free at this time as they are busy preparing for the day's learning. If your enquiry is something quick, teachers are usually around at 3pm when the children are being escorted to the front door.

Please note our text system doesn't alert us to new messages, so we would prefer you email or phone for incoming messages unless we ask for a text reply.

School Dinners / ParentPay

School dinners for P1-3 are still free of charge. P4-7 pupils are £2.10 per day. School Meals should be paid for in advance on a Monday for the following week where possible. Our preferred method of payment is through Parent Pay. Contact the office if you aren't sure how to set this up. Our target is to have 100% of families set up with this service by October, so we will be in touch with you shortly if you haven't yet got involved.



Parents can see menu choices online here:
<http://www.pkc.gov.uk/schoolmeals>

The daily sandwich option is also available to download from this site. Please note that the sandwich option also includes pudding, salad and a drink.

Sickness bug – 48 hours

The medical advice is that children who have a sickness or sickness and diarrhoea bug should be kept off school for 48 hours after the last episode. Please help us to limit the spread of winter bugs by following this rule.



Administration of Medicines



There is a form in the school office to be completed before we are allowed to give your child any medicines which are prescribed by a doctor and need to be taken during school hours.

If your child needs calpol, or similar medication, please note that staff can supervise a child taking this type of medication, but are now only to actually administer prescribed medications. If you want your child to take calpol at a set time, please fill in the form described above and provide the correct number of 2.5ml sachets so that your child can take them independently (under supervision of course).

Children are encouraged to self-administer inhalers where possible. If your child needs an inhaler, please make sure there is a spare one for school.

Playground Supervision before the School Day

For all children, we would ask that they do not arrive in our school grounds before 8.30am. There is no supervision in the playground at this time but there will be a member of staff in the school office from 8.30am onwards. Children normally remain outside until 9am, but if it is very wet staff may bring them into the school hall.

For those children who are transported to school by the local authority, primary schools are required to provide a level of supervision from the time the bus/taxi arrives at the school until the children board the transport at the end of the school day. In our school this means that the children are met as they disembark from the bus and they are then escorted into the school grounds by staff to join their classmates. At this point the member of staff will work in the office, but bus children are made aware that the staff member will be available to support the children if required.



Coats

As the weather gets colder it is more important than ever that children bring a suitable coat to school every day. Please ensure your child comes to school with a coat every day, preferably with a hood. Children will be reminded to wear their coats on cold and/or damp days.

Parent Helpers

We would very much like some new parent helpers to help in classrooms and with admin tasks, photocopying etc. for teachers. If you would like to help please get in touch with me.

Parent Council

The AGM of the Parent Council, Friends of Portmoak is on Monday 4th September at 6pm. There is an open invitation to all parents to come along and see if they would like to join for the coming year. The commitment is 5 evenings across the year, 6-8pm, and it would be super to get some new faces and try to have representation from every class in the school. Our parent council is a supportive group who help to make decisions that affect all of our children and often act as a sounding board for me when making decisions. Do come along and give your views if you can.

Dates for Your Diary:

- Wednesday 23rd August – Primary 1 pupils and parents lunch
- Tuesday 29th August – 9am Parent Coffee and Catch Up.
- Monday 4th September – 6pm Parent Council AGM, all welcome.
- Tuesday 26th September – TEMPEST school photographs
- Friday 6th October – 3pm End of Term
- Monday 23rd October - Term starts 9am
- Thursday 26th October – Halloween Discos
- Friday 27th October – Bags 2 School – collection 9 am
- Wednesday 1st November – Parent Coffee and Catch Up.
- Wednesday 1st November – M&M Pantomime in school.
- Thursday 16th +& Friday 17th November – In-Service Days
- Monday 4th December – Flu Vaccinations
- Friday 22nd December – End of Term 12pm



Don't forget to save both school numbers
01577 867290 (school office)
and the absentee line on
01577 867196





School term and holiday dates

Autumn Term 2017

- Staff Return: Monday 14 August 2017
- Term Starts: Tuesday 15 August 2017
- Term Ends: Friday 6 October 2017 (3pm)
- Autumn Holiday: Monday 9 October 2017 - Friday 20 October 2017

Winter Term 2017

- Term Starts: Monday 23 October 2017
- In-Service Days: Thursday 16 November 2017 and Friday 17 November 2017
- Term Ends: Friday 22 December 2017 (12.00 noon)
- Christmas Holiday: Monday 25 December 2017 - Friday 5 January 2018

Spring Term 2018

- Staff Return: Monday 8 January 2018
- Term Starts: Monday 8 January 2018
- In Service and Occasional Holidays: Wednesday 14 February - Friday 16 February 2018
- Term Ends: Thursday 29 March 2018 (3pm)
- Spring Holiday: Friday 30 March 2018 - Friday 13 April 2018

Summer Term 2018

- Staff Return: Monday 16 April 2018
- Term Starts: Tuesday 17 April 2018
- May Day Holiday: Monday 7 May 2018
- Term Ends: Thursday 28 June 2018 (12.00 noon)

Notes:

- Easter Sunday - 1 April 2018
- School Session 2018/19 will commence on Monday 13 August 2018 for Staff and Tuesday 14 August 2018 for Pupils