

Being the best I can be

PORTMOAK

Headteacher's Newsletter – December 2023

End of term

We have now entered the final week of what has been a busy but enjoyable term. We would like to remind you that we finish for Christmas on Friday 22nd December at 12:00 noon. School returns on Monday 8th January.

As we head towards the Christmas break the staff and I would like to wish you and your family a very merry Christmas and a happy and healthy new year.

Nativity

This year's nativity was "The Innkeeper's Breakfast" which was thoroughly enjoyed by audiences at our evening performance on Tuesday 19th December evening and our morning performance on Wednesday 20th December. Many thanks to Mr Baillie and the guitarists who played in our visitors with some wonderful Christmas music.



Luxury Food Hamper Raffle

As with previous years we held a raffle for a luxury food hamper at each Nativity performance. This fundraiser in aid of Broke Not Broken has only been made possible by the generosity of our wonderful Portmoak families this year we made £281.20 – thank you! We are also grateful to the Parent Council volunteers for organising the hampers. Well done to Sasha Zacheshigriva and Lisa Gordon for winning those this year!

Christmas Parties

Children enjoyed their parties which this year were split into P1 and P2, P3 and P4 and then P5 – P7. Here are a selection of photos for you to enjoy.



Pirates of the Curry Bean

It has been Panto year – oh yes it has!! A huge well done to all in P5-7 for a fantastic performance in our biggest show yet. Special thanks to Miss Kettles and the wider school staff for supporting this venture from prop making to ticket allocation, everyone has been involved somewhere.



Portmoak Christmas Countdown

Well done to Isla in P7, winner of the design for the Portmoak Christmas countdown.

Thanks to the digital committee for creating this thinglink advent calendar for us with songs and activities for everybody to enjoy this festive season.



Winter Playground

All year groups have access to our extensive playground areas, although when P5-7 are playing football the pitch is used for this. The top grass area, trim trail and slide are in daily use. The basketball court cannot hold all of our pupils, and indeed can become too slippery for use in icy weather. This means that in winter time we must ask that children come to school suitably attired for playing on grass, which may be damp or muddy. A change of shoes (and socks) is a good idea for changing into during break and lunch time, or a pair of wellies/snow boots. You may also wish to provide a pair of tracksuit bottoms or waterproof trousers to wear over school clothes to stop them getting muddy.

School staff will remind pupils about getting changed for breaks, however I would ask that parents speak to their children about getting changed if appropriate. Please also ask your child to let their teacher or a member of support staff know if they have fallen and got very wet or muddy, so that this can be dealt with. Please rest assured that if your child is significantly wet and needs to have a complete change of clothes we will contact you.

In snow and ice, daily decisions will be made in school on whether children can play outside on safety grounds, following risk assessment. Areas suitable for play will also be considered. In heavy or persistent rain certain areas of the playground may be temporarily removed from use (e.g. the bottom pitch) or children may be kept in for break. Again, this will be a decision made on the day, depending on the conditions.

When we have snow in the playground, we usually operate a split break, and allow children to choose to stay indoors, as we know not all of them enjoy these conditions. Equally, in the rare times we have snow these days, we do try to give those who want to play the chance to enjoy it. If your child doesn't have wellies or boots, and you want them to play in the snow, perhaps you could provide separate shoes and socks that you are happy for them to get wet (and let me know if this is the case please, or else they would be automatically stopped from going out in shoes).

Swimming P6

A reminder that P6 children are all being offered a block of swimming lessons, starting first Tuesday back. They might find it easier to come 'swim ready' in the morning. The first week they should bring £1 for their locker to give to their teacher and this will be kept safe for the duration and returned after the last lesson. The children will be leaving school each week on a Council approved coach at 9.15am sharp. Mrs Miller and Mrs Lawson will be accompanying them. Please do make sure you arrive in time for 9am registration as the bus as will not wait for latecomers.

Glenshee Ski Day

Our P4s to 7s who have signed up to our Glenshee ski trip can look forward to that with Mr Ainsworth, Mrs Nichol and I on 19th January. This will be a day with a very early start and a very late finish so there will be no school transport for them on that day. This trip is already fully subscribed however if you would like put on the waiting list please get in touch. Obviously, this trip will be weather dependant so let's cross our fingers for snow in Glenshee. Reminder that the second instalment is due on the 22nd December and the final instalment is due on 12th January for those who have not yet paid in full.

Absence from school – Actions for parents

As you will be aware, you need to let the school know when your child is absent and provide the reason for this absence. Please ensure you email portmoak@pkc.gov.uk or leave a voicemail on the absentee line before 9am each day your child is off – the number is 01577 867196. This information is required daily, unless you have told us at the outset your child is going to be off for a set period of time (e.g., for a holiday or when the 48 hour rule means they won't be able to return from sickness until a given day). We need to chase up all absences where children aren't accounted for in the morning. I am sure you will appreciate this is an important factor in our ability to keep children safe. This requires staff time in making phone calls to your child's contacts, sometimes several of them, and this then delays staff who help in the office from then heading into classes to work with children so we would appreciate your support in reporting your child's absence promptly in line with school policy.

Severe Weather

Luckily we have not yet had severe weather this term which has required us to close the school. When school closure occurs, our first communication to you is by text message, so please do ensure we always have up to date contact information for you. If a parent mobile is out of service for any reason please do let us know an alternative for the text message system.

P1 Enrolment week for 2024

It will soon be time for us to enroll our newest recruits to Portmoak for Primary 1. Enrolment for Primary 1 opens on 8th January – in order to complete this process you will require your child's birth certificate, your council tax bill and a utility bill dated within the last 3 months. To formally enroll your child you will need to apply on the Perth and Kinross Council website [School enrolment - Perth & Kinross Council \(pkc.gov.uk\)](https://www.pkc.gov.uk/school-enrolment). If you, or a friend, has a child who is due to start Primary 1 with us soon please let them know we are making appointments now for families to visit with their children. Appointments for a tour are available on Monday 22nd, Wednesday 24th and Friday 26th January. Please ring the office and make an appointment to come in. If these dates do not suit you, please just get in touch with the office to arrange a suitable alternative.

If you are outwith the Portmoak area and would like to make a placing request for your child in our school then you are welcome to make an appointment to come in and discuss this. Placing Requests are also made online at the link above and are decided by Perth and Kinross Council and parents need to apply to the Council directly for these, decisions are usually back to parents shortly after the Easter break.

P1 transition visits will be after the Easter break and will be communicated by letter closer to the time. Ms MacGillivray and I will be visiting nurseries before summer as well.

Big Big Art Project

We are pleased to announce that this year we have 5 pieces of art selected for the Big, BIG, ART project in Perth, which will be shown from 16th December until early January.

P2/3, P3/4 & P5/6 did collaborative pictures and the winning two pictures from P6/7 were Eva/Emma and Alfie/Julian/Robert F/Isla/Murray. You can see more info in the sway below:



<https://sway.office.com/GLez813k3qPTY8Up?ref=email>

Portmoak Primary Dates for the Diary

January 2024		
8 th	Whole School	Term 3 begins
9 th	P6	Swimming – bring £1 and come 'swim ready'
15 th	New P1s	P1 Enrolment week
16 th	P6	Swimming
19 th	P4-7	Glenshee Ski Trip
23 rd	P6	Swimming
30 th	P6	Swimming
31 st	Whole School	Coffee and Catch Up 9.00-9.30am
February 2024		
2 nd	P3/4	P3/4 Assembly – Digital – 9.15am
13 th	P6	Swimming
14 th	Whole School	In-Service Day
15 th & 16 th	Whole School	School Holidays
20 th	P6	Swimming
22 nd	Whole School	Lord Baden Powell's Birthday – Scouting and Guiding uniforms can be worn to school.
28 th	P6	Ardroy – instalment due
March 2024		
1 st	P2/3	P2/3 Assembly – World Wildlife Day – 9.15am
4 th	Whole School	Parent Contact meetings 3.30-5.30 pm
6 th	Whole School	Parent Contact meetings 5.30-7.30 pm
11 th	P2/3	Falkland Palace Trip
12 th	P3/4	Falkland Palace Trip
15 th	P6/7	P6/7 -Sharing their learning Assembly - 9.15am
18 th – 22 nd	Whole School	Book fair this week
21 st	P5/6 & P6/7	Deep Sea World Trip
28 th	P6	Ardroy – instalment due
28 th	P5/6 & Whole School	Easter Service – presented by P5/6 at Portmoak Parish Church – 9.30am
28 th	Whole School	End of term (3pm finish)
April 2024		
15 th	Whole School	In-Service Day
16 th	Whole School	Term 4 begins
28 th	P6	Ardroy – instalment due (final)
May 2024		
3 rd	P3/4	P3/4 - Sharing their learning Assembly – 9.15am
6 th	Whole School	May day holiday
17 th	P5/6	P5/6 - Sharing their learning Assembly – 9.15am
24 th – 27 th	P6	Residential weekend
31 st	P1/2	P1/2 - Sharing their learning Assembly – 9.15am
June 2024		
3 rd – 7 th	Whole School	Celebration of Wellbeing Week
6 th & 7 th	P7	P7 induction days
12 th & 13 th	P7	P7 Activity Days – Nae Limits and Willowgate
14 th	P6	P6 John Muir Award Assembly – 9.15am
26 th	P7	Leavers' Assembly – 9.30am
27 th	Whole School	End of term (12 noon finish)
28 th	Whole School	Summer holidays until 14 th August

Don't forget to save both school numbers 01577 867290 (school office)

and the absentee line & answer phone on 01577 867196.

