

Being the best I can be

**PORTMOAK**

## Headteacher's Newsletter – January 2024

### Happy New Year

Thank you for all of the kind words and gifts received in the run up to Christmas. It is a very busy time for us in school and we are grateful for this. Thank you to the parent council for organizing a visit from Santa on the last morning and for organizing another successful movie event for the children on the last afternoon. This event makes a small profit, but our focus is not fundraising for this one, it is on providing a positive end of term experience for the children. I am sure you will join me in thanking the events and fundraising team for their efforts once again.

### School Attendance

Schools across the country are being asked to do what they can to increase children's attendance. This is not something we struggle with at Portmoak for the majority of our children, but there are some cases of individual low attendance and we will have been in touch with you to offer support and guidance if this is the case for your child. For all children, we would expect them to be in school every day unless they are unwell. Remember we need to know every day of an absence where you expect your child to be, please get on touch either by email or by calling the absentee line rather than the main school line which can be busy with enquiries.

Sometimes there is a rule around whether your child needs to stay off school with a certain illness. This includes:

- Vomiting and diarrhoea - Children with diarrhoea or vomiting should stay away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 2 days (48 hours).
- High temperature - If your child has a high temperature, keep them off school until it goes away.
- Chickenpox - If your child has chickenpox, keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over. This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.
- Impetigo - If your child has impetigo, they'll need treatment from a GP, often with antibiotics. Keep them off school until all the sores have crusted over and healed, or for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment.
- Scarlet Fever - If your child has scarlet fever, they'll need treatment with antibiotics from a GP. Otherwise they'll be infectious for 2 to 3 weeks. Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics.
- Covid-19 – We are no longer asking children and staff to test for Covid-19, in line with current public health guidance. Your child should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people if they have symptoms of Covid-19 with either a high temperature or they do not feel well enough to do their normal activities. If children have mild symptoms and they feel well enough, they can still go to school.

## Coats

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.



## Vaping addiction

The Scottish Government are currently undertaking a vaping addiction campaign. Although we would not expect it to affect any of our children we have sadly found disposable vapes in our playground so it is affecting your people in our area. In Scotland, it's illegal to sell vapes or e-cigarettes to anyone under 18, or to buy them for someone who's under 18.

Young people are particularly vulnerable to nicotine addiction and are more likely to take health risks and discount the future consequences of this behaviour. Nicotine addiction can impact mental health, resulting in being tired, stressed and anxious and it can affect concentration and impact the ability to learn and study. E-cigarettes contain some potentially harmful chemicals, similar to those found in cigarette smoke, although at a much lower level. While the long-term effects of vaping are still being researched, it's thought they could have negative effects on the health of the heart but there is currently insufficient evidence to assess this.

If you are concerned about vaping, you don't have to cope with the situation on your own. You can talk to your GP or call Quit Your Way Scotland on 0800 84 84 84 for advice and support. For more information visit [nhsinform.scot/vaping](https://nhsinform.scot/vaping).

## Glenshee Ski Day

A fabulous but freezing day of skiing today at Glenshee Ski Centre. Thanks to Mrs Nichol, Mr Ainsworth and our parent helpers for helping us to make this trip happen!

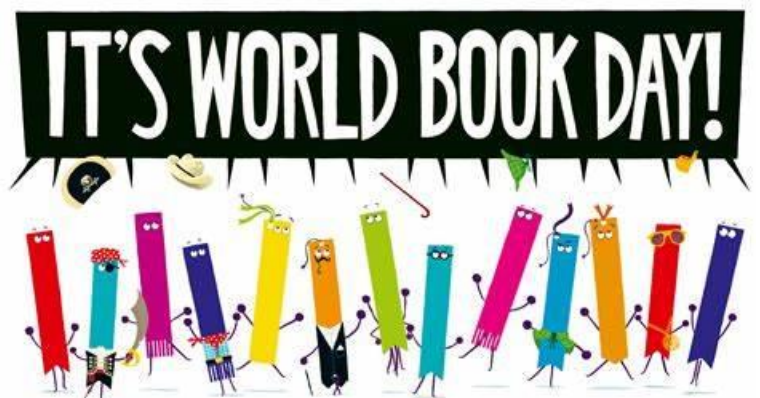


## World Book Day – dress as you feel

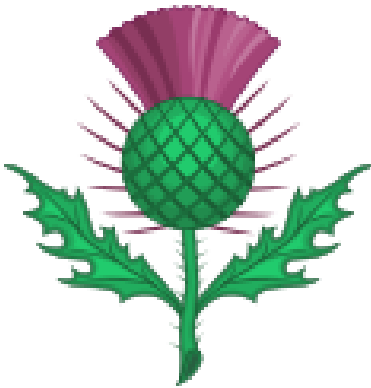
World Book Day is on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March. At Parent Council on Tuesday night we had a conversation about World Book Day.

This year we have decided to make it “dress as you feel” children can dress up as book character, come in your pyjamas to listen to a bedtime story, come in normal clothes or come in uniform.

The homework that week will have a world book day theme and there will be activities in classes. There will be no charge attached to this event.



## Scots' Poetry Competition



Once again we were astounded by the level of participation in the Scots' poetry competition held to celebrate Burns' day. There was an incredibly high standard throughout the school however Mr & Mrs. Wilson (former Portmoak Headteacher) and decided that the winners for each year group were as follows:

P1 Elias Holt-Thomas and Matthew Oliver  
P2 Tilly Cunningham  
P3 Mimi Oliver  
P4 Paige Lawson  
P5 Archie Matthews  
P6 Daniel Baijal  
P7 Alfie Whyte

Alfie Whyte won the Burns Quach for his rendition of A Red, Red Rose.

## P1 Enrolment 2024

If you have a child due to start P1 in the summer, by now you should have filled in their enrolment paperwork on the PKC website. Please get in touch with me if you have not done so, or wish to discuss any aspect of your child starting P1 or possible deferral.

We invite all families, whether new to the school or not, to make an appointment for a school visit and tour. This can be a good opportunity for little brothers and sisters to see round 'their' school, even if the adults and siblings know us well already. Please ring the office and make an appointment to come in if you have not already done so.

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.

## Safety on the Roads

We have had several incidents of near misses near the school at drop off and pick up lately. Some of the concerns have been around speed of drivers close to school, children crossing at the staff car park entrance without looking, children crossing behind parked cars, parents parking on corners or across the crossing strip on Bruce Rd. We have also had people mis-using the disabled bay.

You can help by:

- Reverse parking where possible into bays, so you can have a clearer view when leaving.
- Cutting your speed in the area
- Speaking to your child about safety when crossing the road and exiting from your car and walking to pavement.

## Scottish Chamber Orchestra – The Grumpy Gaboon

We have all of P1-3 travelling to Perth on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February for an afternoon of music. They will have an early school lunch before they go, so no need to worry about packed lunches.

## Parent Helpers still needed for Bird Box day on Monday 12th February

We have been very fortunate to have been asked to collaborate with Men's Shed Kinross and Portmoak Community Woodland Group to make bird boxes with wood cut by the Men's Shed to place in Kilmagad Wood. We are having a Bird Box day on Monday 12th February where the children will receive a talk at Portmoak Hall and will build the bird boxes and then will walk to Kilmagad Wood to have them placed and are looking for some parent helpers to join us. The children will be going down in 3 groups :- the first group will be going down at 9am, the second will be going down at 11 and the last set will be going down at 1pm. If you are only able to help with one group please let us know which group that is, however if you can help for the full day then even better!

We are short of helpers on this day – please get in touch if you can help.

## Portmoak Primary Dates for the Diary

January 2024		
8 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Term 3 begins
9 <sup>th</sup>	P6	Swimming – bring £1 and come 'swim ready'
15 <sup>th</sup>	New P1s	P1 Enrolment week
16 <sup>th</sup>	P6	Swimming
19 <sup>th</sup>	P4-7	Glenshee Ski Trip
23 <sup>rd</sup>	P6	Swimming
30 <sup>th</sup>	P6	Swimming
31 <sup>st</sup>	Whole School	Coffee and Catch Up 9.00-9.30am
February 2024		
2 <sup>nd</sup>	P3/4	P3/4 Assembly – Digital – 9.15am
9 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Open Morning 9.15 – 9.45
9 <sup>th</sup>	P1-3	Scottish chamber orchestra afternoon in Perth
12 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Bird Box building at Kilmagad Wood (wellies/waterproof shoes and coats required)
13 <sup>th</sup>	P6	Swimming
14 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	In-Service Day
15 <sup>th</sup> & 16 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	School Holidays
20 <sup>th</sup>	P6	Swimming
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Whole School	Lord Baden Powell's Birthday – Scouting and Guiding uniforms can be worn to school.
28 <sup>th</sup>	P6	Ardroy – instalment due
March 2024		
1 <sup>st</sup>	P2/3	P2/3 Assembly – World Wildlife Day – 9.15am
4 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Parent Contact meetings 3.30-5.30 pm
6 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Parent Contact meetings 5.30-7.30 pm
11 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Parent Council Meeting 6pm
11 <sup>th</sup>	P2/3	Falkland Palace Trip
12 <sup>th</sup>	P3/4	Falkland Palace Trip
15 <sup>th</sup>	P6/7	P6/7 -Sharing their learning Assembly - 9.15am
18 <sup>th</sup> – 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Whole School	Book Fair this week
21 <sup>st</sup>	P5/6 & P6/7	Deep Sea World Trip
28 <sup>th</sup>	P6	Ardroy – instalment due
28 <sup>th</sup>	P5/6 & Whole School	Easter Service – presented by P5/6 at Portmoak Parish Church – 9.30am
28 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	End of term (3pm finish)
April 2024		
15 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	In-Service Day
16 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Term 4 begins
24 <sup>th</sup>	P1 and P7	Dental checks for P1 and P7 children
28 <sup>th</sup>	P6	Ardroy – instalment due (final)

May 2024		
3 <sup>rd</sup>	P3/4	P3/4 - Sharing their learning Assembly – 9.15am
6 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	May day holiday
14 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Parent Council Meeting 6pm
17 <sup>th</sup>	P5/6	P5/6 - Sharing their learning Assembly – 9.15am
24 <sup>th</sup> – 27 <sup>th</sup>	P6	Residential weekend at Ardroy
31 <sup>st</sup>	P1/2	P1/2 - Sharing their learning Assembly – 9.15am
June 2024		
3 <sup>rd</sup> – 7 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Celebration of Wellbeing Week
6 <sup>th</sup> & 7 <sup>th</sup>	P7	P7 induction days
12 <sup>th</sup> & 13 <sup>th</sup>	P7	P7 Activity Days – Nae Limits and Willowgate
14 <sup>th</sup>	P6	P6 John Muir Award Assembly – 9.15am
26 <sup>th</sup>	P7	Leavers' Assembly – 9.30am
27 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	End of term (12 noon finish)
28 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Summer holidays until 14 <sup>th</sup> August

Please make sure you also speak to any grandparents, other family members etc if they also pick up and drop off by car.

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

