

Being the best I can be

PORTMOAK

Headteacher's Newsletter – February / March 2024

P7 reporters – Portmoak LIFE – Included focus

At Portmoak Primary School, we have Portmoak LIFE and the I in LIFE stands for Included. At Portmoak PS we make sure everyone is included and we do so in many different ways. Committees such as JRSOs, Health and Sports, Eco and Digital. We get to choose which committee we'd like to be in and they come up with activities to help the rest of the school to be safe, care for the environment and be healthy.

We also pair our new P1s with P7 buddies to help them settle in. We read together and have made birdboxes and Christmas craft items together too.

Each pupil belongs to a House – Bishop, Kinneston, Leven and Lomond. There are House Captains who look after each House and a Sports Day in June which we all take part in. We have lots of sporting opportunities for everyone to take part in such as cricket and netball clubs and have had rugby and judo tasters.

Lastly, we have Pupil Council where two people from each class come together to help make decisions and make our school the best we can be!

Charlotte Thomas and Alfie Whyte, P7

Open Morning

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our open morning on 9th February – the children really enjoyed having you in to share their learning in school and the staff appreciated everyone who took time out of their morning to visit. We understand that not everyone can make it here during the working day, so please feel free to invite other relatives to attend. Mrs Cole and I popped round the classes to visit everyone who we knew didn't have a visitor coming, if you know no-one can make it along on a class visit, please do let us know and one of us will visit instead.

Coffee and Catch Up

This term's coffee and catch up we invited Sarah Brown, headteacher from Kinross High, to come along for a biscuit and a blether. Thank you to everyone who made it along that morning, on what was a lovely informal opportunity to put a face to the name for new parents and gave everyone a chance to ask questions about life at Kinross High School. The next date for coffee and catch up is Wednesday 8th May at 9am in the school library. Please add this to your diary now.

Scottish Chamber Orchestra – The Grumpy Gaboon

On Friday 9th February all of P1-3 visited Perth for the Scottish Chamber Orchestra show, The Grumpy Gaboon. This was a lovely event and we are grateful to the parent helpers and drivers who attended.



Ardroy trip for current P5s

As usual we have booked an opportunity again for the children who will then be in P6 to go to Ardroy Outdoor Education Centre, Lochgoilhead, between 16th -19th May 2025.

This is an excellent weekend with the opportunity to work on the John Muir Award in a lovely part of Scotland. The cost for the trip is £285 plus £20 for transport, so £305 in total which is payable in instalments. We like to give parents plenty of notice to pay this trip up, as we do appreciate that it is a significant sum of money.

The £50 deposit can be paid on ParentPay now – please pay this item first.

The balance can be paid in instalments on another payment item on ParentPay following the schedule set out below. This is our preferred method of payment – **please let us know if you are not planning on following the instalment plan set out below, unless you are paying the full amount at instalment date 1.** This will save office staff time in chasing up missing payments from this ParentPay item.

The suggested payment plan is as follows:

- 28 August - £50 non-refundable deposit
- 28 September - £42.50
- 28 October - £42.50
- 28 November - £42.50
- 28 February - £42.50
- 28 March - £42.50
- 28 April - £42.50

If you have any difficulty with the payments please get in touch for a discussion in confidence.

Ardroy fundraising

Ardroy has now been around for 54 years and are fundraising to modernise their facilities with a replacement accommodation block. The new building will be wheelchair accessible, enabling time to work more with families and young people from all backgrounds, so they can enjoy the magic of Ardroy. If you would like to contribute please follow click on the link to find out more: [Help us make a difference! \(ardroy-oec.co.uk\)](http://ardroy-oec.co.uk)

It's as easy as texting '**ARDROY**' to **70085** (to donate £5) - or '**ARDROY10**' to donate £10, up to max of £20. (Standard Network Rates Apply)*

Please consider sponsoring a brick (£5), a mattress (£50) or a bunk bed (£250). Any donation will make a difference.

Cluster Parent Marketplace – Thursday 14th March 2024: 6- 7pm

Thank you to everyone who attended our marketplace event. This was well attended from schools across the cluster and we are grateful to all of the partners who helped us to put on this event.

Broke Not Broken News

Hello from Broke Not Broken. It has been a busy winter period with many projects having taken place to support households with the ever-rising cost of living. We have been supporting families and individuals with Christmas Hampers, Winter Warmer packs and vouchers for Winter jackets. We would like to thank all our local school communities for their overwhelming support in the run up to Christmas. We were truly humbled by all your incredible donations.

As we look forward to the Easter Holidays, we are starting to arrange Tuesday Trips. These are community excursions that allow families to visit different locations and build connections within the community. If you are interested in attending these trips and believe that they would be beneficial then please ask your schools headteacher to put your name forward to attend.

As always Broke Not Broken has an open-door policy and we want to make sure that everyone is maximising their income as much as possible. If you ever need any support or advice, you can approach your headteacher in complete confidence and they can do a referral to ourselves or you can contact us at admin@brokenotbroken.org

P3/4 Sharing their Learning Assembly – change of date – now 26th April

Please note that due to teacher commitments the date of the P3/4 Sharing their Learning Assembly has been moved to Friday 26th April.

Book Fair

Thank you to Mrs Sellars and Mrs Beedham for coordinating this year's book fair. We raised over £500 in book credit for the school to spend to supplement our school library, so we are very grateful to everyone who supported this event.

Rotary Quiz

On Thursday 21st March our P7 rotary team were crowned Kinross-shire champions. This is the third consecutive year the shield has come to Portmoak, so very well done to them in what was a stiff competition.

They now go on to the area finals at Auchmuty High school on 17th April, at 6pm. I am sure you will join me in wishing them luck with their next event.

Easter Service

The whole school will be walking to Portmoak Church on the morning of Thursday 28th March. The service will be led by P5/6, but all families are invited to join us.

We will be asking for people to walk with us to the church, so if you are free and able to walk with us please do so. It is important we maintain ratios of adults to children for the classes to be able to walk down safely, so parents' help really is vital for this.

Please let us know if you are able to walk with us.



Egg Competition

We will be having a decorated egg competition as we used to do in previous years, with a prize per years group for each of the 7 stages. Thank you to the Parent Council for providing us with chocolate easter egg prizes.

Eggs should be in school for 9am on Wednesday 27th March. Judging will be on the Wednesday, with winning eggs announced at the church service on Thursday 28th. Eggs can be real or polystyrene if real eggs are hard to come by.

Bird Box Day

On Monday 12th February, in collaboration with Men's Shed Kinross and Portmoak Community Woodland Group, the whole school were invited to make bird boxes with wood cut by the Men's Shed to place in Kilmagad Wood.

Thank you to the parent helpers who supported this trip.



SNSAs - Assessment information for Parents

Each year children in P1, 4 and 7 will be completing their Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSAs). Below are the answers to some frequently asked questions about these assessments.

What are the Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSA)?

School children in P1, 4 and 7 complete online standardised assessments in literacy and numeracy. The assessments help to identify children's progress, providing diagnostic information to support teachers' professional judgement.

Children and young people do not have to revise or prepare for these assessments. The assessments are as inclusive as possible to accommodate the needs of children and young people who require additional support. There is no pass or fail.

How is the information used?

Teachers will use this information, alongside a wide range of other assessment information, to track how your child is progressing with their learning, as part of the normal reporting process. Teachers will then plan next steps in learning, using all available assessment information.

What does this mean for pupils at Portmoak?

There are three assessments in P4 and P7– Numeracy, Reading, and Writing; and a member of staff will take pupils to the studio in small groups to complete their assessments. P1 children will have two assessments only, and Ms MacGillivray or a member of support staff will take P1 pupils individually to complete theirs.

Usually we assess P7 during term 2, P4 in term 3 and P1 in term 4.

I would seek to reassure parents who might be concerned about primary assessments that:

- Children already complete paper-based check-up assessments and are informally assessed on their learning, as part of good learning and teaching, on a regular basis - this won't change.
- The online assessments will be completed as a 'low-key activity', without making a big issue of them being tests or assessments, as we don't want children to feel anxious about these. I would encourage you to do the same.
- P4 and P7 pupils will complete these assessments on laptops, and P1 pupils on an iPad.
- This will of course be carefully managed by a member of staff.

There is much more information on the SNSA website should you require it:

<https://standardisedassessment.gov.scot/parents-and-carers/>

Portmoak Gala

As you will already be aware, Portmoak Gala is on Saturday 1st June. At the Easter Assembly we will draw the royal party. There will be 4 attendants (2 boys and 2 girls) from Primary 2 and a King and Queen from Primary 6 or Primary 7 – please ensure all forms are returned by Wednesday 27th March.

This year the children will be making class banners and there will be an invitation for all Portmoak children to walk behind the royal party as they make their way to open the Gala. Please do add this date to your diary now.

Portmoak Festival Artwork



Each class is working with a volunteer from the Portmoak Festival to create some artwork which will be displayed in the Portmoak Hall during Festival week. Early indications are that this will be one of our most successful art displays yet! The pictures above are from P6/7 and the rest are looking just as lovely.

A Fond Farewell from the 'heidie'

As you will be aware from recent communications, I am leaving Portmoak Primary School at the Easter holidays, with my last day being Thursday 28th March. I will hopefully see many of you at the Easter service, but I wanted to say a goodbye to you all and to thank you for all of your support and friendship over the years. I go with fond memories of the people I have met in my time here and of the relationships that I have built up with you all.

I am sure you will appreciate how hard this is going to be for me personally, as Portmoak is like my third child and I love our special wee community, but this is the right thing for my family at this time. As you will be aware, I am moving to Burntisland Primary, where I will be able to walk to work and will have the same holidays as my two boys.



The recruitment process for a new permanent headteacher for the school has now begun and the national advert is live with a closing date of Tuesday 26th March. Interviews are planned during the month of May. Perth and Kinross Council will communicate the progress of this with parents when there is information to share. Our Parent Council will be involved in the process of recruiting a new headteacher and I am sure they will be a great support in ensuring the right person gets the job.

I am absolutely delighted to be able to share with you that Mrs Cole, our principal teacher, will be returning to the school as acting headteacher after the Easter break, and I know she is very much looking forward to taking this next step in her leadership journey. Mrs Cole was interviewed for this position earlier in the week, and the staff team and I are relieved that she was the chosen candidate and are very grateful she has agreed to take on the acting headteacher role to ensure consistency for the children and staff. As you know, Mrs Cole regularly takes charge of the school when I am away on inspection or undertaking other duties within the local authority, so I am confident that she is more than ready for this role. We are both, of course, working hard to ensure an effective handover and smooth transition as Mrs Cole assumes her new role in the school.

I will always hold a special place in my heart for the Portmoak community and the last 13+ years as headteacher here has been the highlight of my career and my time spent here has brought me much joy.

I look forward to hearing what happens with the next stage in the recruitment process, and I am sure that the next permanent headteacher at Portmoak Primary School will enjoy as much support from families and the local community as I have, and I look forward to seeing the school going on from strength to strength.

Portmoak Primary Dates for the Diary

March 2024		
27 th	Whole School	Easter Egg Competition
27 th	P2, P6 & P7	Royal Attendant, Queen and King applications due
28 th	P6	Ardroy – instalment due
28 th	P5/6 & Whole School	Easter Service – presented by P5/6 at Portmoak Parish Church – 9.30am – all parents invited to attend
28 th	Whole School	End of term (3pm finish)
31 st	P7	P7 Activity Day – instalment 3 due
April 2024		
15 th	Whole School	In-Service Day – school closed to pupils
16 th	Whole School	Term 4 begins for pupils
17 th	Rotary team	Rotary Area Heat – Auchmuty High 6pm
24 th	P1 and P7	Dental checks for P1 and P7 children
25 th	P1/2 and P6/7	Kilmagad Wood walk
26 th	P3/4	P3/4 - Sharing their learning Assembly – 9.15am – new date
28 th	P6	Ardroy – instalment due (final)
30 th	P7	P7 Activity Day – final instalment due
May 2024		
6 th	Whole School	May day holiday
8 th	Whole School	Coffee and Catch up – 9am library
14 th	Whole School	Parent Council Meeting 6pm
15 th	New P1	Pre-school picnic 12pm
17 th	P5/6	P5/6 - Sharing their learning Assembly – 9.15am
23 rd	New P1	Pre-school picnic 12pm
24 th – 27 th	P6	Residential weekend at Ardroy
29 th	New P1	P1 induction lunch
31 st	P1/2	P1/2 - Sharing their learning Assembly – 9.15am
June 2024		
3 rd – 7 th	Whole School	Celebration of Wellbeing Week
3 rd	Whole School	Sports Day 1pm start
6 th & 7 th	P7	P7 induction days
6 th & 7 th	New P1	P1 stay & play 1.30pm
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.

