

Being the best I can be

**PORTMOAK**

## Headteacher's Newsletter – September 2024

### Staffing Update

As you will be aware from the recent headteacher update letter, we will be welcoming Mrs Anna Nesbitt as our new headteacher on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November. Staffing will remain the same until this date and will then change to the arrangements below.

- P1/2 – Ms Christina MacGillivray
- P2/3 – Mrs Louise Mossom (Mon/Tue) / Mrs Sarah Herd (Wed-Fri)
- P4 – Mrs Caroline Cole (Mon/Tue) / Mrs Kay Baird (Wed-Fri)
- P5/6 – Ms Clare Leitch (Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri) / Mr John Muir (Wed)
- P6/7 – Miss Lindsay Kettles

I would like to thank you all for your support during my time as acting headteacher and I look forward to working closely with Mrs Nesbitt to ensure a strong commitment to ensuring high quality learning and teaching continues at Portmoak.

### MacMillan Coffee and Open Morning

Our MacMillan coffee morning was a huge success. Thanks to all the staff, children and parents who got stuck in and made this happen. Great team effort everyone! Our total, at present, stands at a fantastic £733.87 for a very worthwhile cause.



### Learning Journals

We have been busy getting our new online profiling platform, Learning Journals, up and running. You should have received an email from Learning Journals with instructions about how to log in. You can log in using this link [www.parentzone.yourlearningjournals.co.uk](http://www.parentzone.yourlearningjournals.co.uk) or by downloading the Learning Journals Parents App. We have been undertaking some training in how to use this new online profiling tool and hope to properly get started with it next term. Class teachers will use this platform to send out any reminders or information. This will be instead of the weekly emails you have been receiving from the class teachers through the Portmoak email account. Please make sure you have set up your username, password and pin by following the instructions in the email from Learning Journals so that you don't miss out on any important information from the teachers.

## Absences and a request for chickenpox and contagious diseases

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 or leave a voicemail on the absentee line before 9am. 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 support in the office from then heading into classes to work with children.

I would also like to remind you that we have a child who is immunocompromised in our school, who would be at risk of becoming very ill if they were to catch chickenpox or any other contagious diseases. Please can you make sure the school is informed if your child catches any contagious childhood diseases, so we are able to let their parents know. I would also like to remind you that children with chickenpox should not attend school for 5 days, and even after that until all their blisters have burst and crusted over, to reduce the risk of infecting others. Your support in this would be appreciated.

Other illnesses when your child needs to stay off school include:

- Vomiting and diarrhoea - Children with diarrhoea or vomiting must 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.
- 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

## Please label all children's belongings

We would like to remind parents to label **ALL** your child's belongings: -clothes, water bottles and especially plastic tubs. We end up with a lot of lost property which we would more than happily return – we can only do this if you label these. We are always surprised at the shoes, jackets and tupperware tubs that end up at lost property that are never claimed.

## Parent Contact Appointments

Parent contact meetings will take place on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 3.30-5.30pm and Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> November 5.30-7.30pm when you can make a 10-minute appointment with the class teacher to discuss your child's learning. We will send out an email after the October holidays to give you instructions on how to book these.

## School Photographer

We are in the process of booking the photographer, Ian Mitchell, who we used last year to take individual and family photographs. Ian has a mobile studio which he sets up in the school playground. Families with younger preschool siblings, who wish to have a family photo taken are invited to come along at the start of the school day and we then work through school siblings then individuals. I will let you know once we have a date for this sorted.

## Coffee and Catch Up

Our next Coffee and Catch-Up session will be on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> October 9-9.30am. Our special guest for this one will be Mrs Norma Smith from Kinnesswood in Bloom. Come along and find out about the fantastic work Kinnesswood in Bloom do with the school.

## Pantomime

We have booked for the whole school to go and see Sleeping Beauty at the Adam Smith Theatre in Kirkcaldy on the morning of Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December. We would like to say a huge thank you to our parent council, Friends of Portmoak School, for covering the cost of the pantomime tickets. We have three buses booked and would really appreciate a donation towards the cost of these. We will be sending an email out in due course to ask you to give permission for your child(ren) to attend the pantomime and to give a donation, if you can.

## Halloween Discos

A reminder about the Halloween discos – we have two discos, one for the younger children and one for the older ones with a small tuck shop open on the night.

Date: Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October

Times: P1-4: 5:30-6:30 and P5-7: 6:45-7:45

Suggested donation for tickets: £2 at the door

We know not all children want to dress up, and this is ok, they are welcome to come as they are. Please also be mindful of costumes being suitable for a school disco – we have had some younger ones scared of particularly gory / scary masks in the past.



You are welcome to 'drop and go' at this event. Miss Kettles and I, as well as a number of the teachers will be in attendance, along with quite a few parent helpers. Children will need to be signed in at the desk outside my office and signed out again by an adult, so do bring them into the building on arrival and come inside to collect at the end.

Please note that it will be dark when the discos finish, and we recommend that children are collected by an adult. If you want your older child to walk home alone, please let us know in writing before that Thursday. A reply by email will be fine. If you have a nervous younger one and want to come into the hall until they settle, or indeed stay for the whole time, this is also fine.

## Assemblies

Class assemblies have been added to the diary dates below. Each assembly, except for the Leavers Assembly, are expected to last approx 30mins and start at 9.15am. The harvest assembly and Easter assembly are open to all parents to come along to. The harvest assembly on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> October will take place in the church and be led by P4. This will start at a slightly later time of 9.30am to allow us to walk along to the church. I would like to thank everyone who has agreed to help with walking the children along.

## New Reading Scheme

We were very excited to receive our new reading scheme a couple of weeks ago. The staff have had some training already in using these books and we look forward to properly using them with the children.

## A Message from our Parent Council

We were delighted to see new and familiar faces at our AGM this month, and particularly delighted to meet our new Headteacher Anna Nesbitt. We'd like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs Cole and Miss Kettles for their guidance and support during the interim period. Thank you also for all the donations supporting the recent pre-loved uniform sale: this raised an incredible £105 which contributes towards providing a commemorative 'leavers' hoodie for all our P7s. You will hopefully have seen that we're also supporting the school to raise funds via an initiative between ParentKind and ASDA this Autumn – a reminder that you can help simply by signing up and encouraging family and friends to do so too. If you need more information about this please drop us a note at: [friendsofportmoakschool@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofportmoakschool@gmail.com). We're also grateful to the parents volunteering to organise the annual Halloween discos. If you feel you could help with this (on the night, or with a donation of pre-loved decorations, or sponsorship for tuck items) please do get in touch ASAP: [friendsofportmoakschool@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofportmoakschool@gmail.com). Our next meeting will be in early October – date to be confirmed. Please email the above address with any feedback or would like to know how to get involved.

## Portmoak Primary Dates for the Diary

September 2024		
30 <sup>th</sup>	P1-3	After school Karate taster 3pm-4pm
30 <sup>th</sup>	P1	Height and Weight check
October 2024		
2 <sup>nd</sup>	P6	Swimming
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Whole School	Harvest Assembly in the church led by P4 – 9.30am
4 <sup>th</sup>	Whole school	Last day of term 3pm finish
7 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup>	Whole school	October holidays
21 <sup>st</sup>	Whole school	Term 2 begins
23 <sup>rd</sup>	P6	Swimming
24 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Halloween Discos P1-4 5.30-6.30/ P5-7 6.45-7.45
25 <sup>th</sup>	P6/7	Halloween Assembly 9.15am
28 <sup>th</sup>	P6	Ardroy instalment 2 due
30 <sup>th</sup>	P6	Swimming
30 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Coffee & Catch Up – Mrs Norma Smith – Kinnesswood in Bloom
November 2024		
1 <sup>st</sup>	P2/3	Bonfire Assembly 9.15am
6 <sup>th</sup>	P6	Swimming
11 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Parent Contact 5.30pm – 7.30pm
13 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Parent Contact 3.30pm – 5.30pm
15 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Inservice day
28 <sup>th</sup>	P6	Ardroy – instalment 3 due
29 <sup>th</sup>	P5/6	St Andrew's Day Assembly – 9.15am
December 2024		
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Whole School	Flu immunisations - PM
11 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Sleeping Beauty pantomime at Adam Smith Theatre
12 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Christmas Lunch
16 <sup>th</sup>	P1 & P2	Christmas party – PM
17 <sup>th</sup>	P1-3	Nativity – evening performance 5.30pm
18 <sup>th</sup>	P1-3	Nativity – morning performance 9.30am
18 <sup>th</sup>	P4	Christmas party – PM
19 <sup>th</sup>	P5-7	Christmas party – PM
20 <sup>th</sup>	Whole school	Last day of term 12pm finish
January 2025		
6 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Term 3 begins
13 <sup>th</sup>	New P1s for Aug 25	P1 enrolment week
29 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Coffee & Catch Up
February 2025		
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Whole School	Open Afternoon 2.15 – 2.45pm

7 <sup>th</sup>	P4	RSPB Bird Watch Assembly 9.15am
12 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Inservice day
13 <sup>th</sup> & 14 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Holiday
21 <sup>st</sup>	P1/2	Sharing Learning Assembly – 9.15am
28 <sup>th</sup>	P6	Ardroy – instalment 4 due
<b>March 2025</b>		
14 <sup>th</sup>	P2/3	Sharing Learning Assembly – 9.15am
17 <sup>th</sup> – 21 <sup>st</sup>	Whole School	Scholastic Book Fair week
28 <sup>th</sup>	P6/7	Sharing Learning Assembly – 9.15am
28 <sup>th</sup>	P6	Ardroy – instalment 5 due today
<b>April 2025</b>		
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Whole School	Easter Service – led by P5/6 - venue TBC 9.30am
4 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Term ends 3pm
7-18 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Easter Holiday
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Whole School	Inservice day
23 <sup>rd</sup>	Whole School	Term 4 starts
28 <sup>th</sup>	P6	Ardroy – final instalment due
<b>May 2025</b>		
2 <sup>nd</sup>	P4	Sharing Learning Assembly – 9.15am
5 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	May Day Holiday
7 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Coffee & Catch Up
9 <sup>th</sup>	P5/6	Sharing Learning Assembly 9.15am
16 <sup>th</sup> – 19 <sup>th</sup>	P6	Ardroy
30 <sup>th</sup>	P1/2	Road Safety Assembly
<b>June 2025</b>		
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Whole School	Sports Day
2 <sup>nd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	Celebration of Wellbeing Week
13 <sup>th</sup>	Whole School	New classes issued
13 <sup>th</sup>	P6	John Muir Assembly
20 <sup>th</sup>	P7	Prom
25 <sup>th</sup>	P7	P7 Leavers' Assembly
26 <sup>th</sup>	Whole school	Term ends 12pm

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

and the absentee line & answer phone on 01577 867196.

