

Being the best I can be

PORTMOAK

Newsletter – February 2025

It has been another busy month here at Portmoak! What a pleasure it has been to get to know the children and families a little better and to observe some of the fantastic learning opportunities on offer to the children. We have had two 'Sharing Learning' assemblies so far this term and I'm sure those of you who attended these will have enjoyed hearing from the children firsthand about the activities they have been taking part in. We have lots of exciting things happening in March so please have a look at the diary dates section at the end of this Newsletter and don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any queries.

Reading Workshop

A reminder that our Primary 1 – 4 class teachers will be leading a short information session on Monday 3rd March at 5.00pm, which will focus on how we teach reading at Portmoak.

The session will be based around the work on teaching approaches in literacy that staff members have engaged in this school year. It will also provide some insight into the new PM reading scheme, including how children are assessed in the P1-4 classes.

Thanks to those of you who have already signed up. If you have not yet done this and would like to attend then please complete the form below.

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=oyzTzM4Wj0KVQTctawUZKYas_Aa-RSJNleLh2EAPxDIUQU9LR1E4TEhFVldSTjBCOFIGVzZMSjdNQy4u

World Book Day – Dress Your Way

World Book Day is on Thursday 6th March and the theme is 'Read Your Way'.

In keeping with this, children will be able 'dress their way' and can come to school in comfy clothes for reading, pyjamas to listen to a bedtime story, as a character from a book, casual clothes or 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.



Egg Competition

During the last week of term, we will be holding a decorated egg competition, with a prize of an Easter egg per year group for each of the 7 stages. Thank you to the Parent Council for kindly donating our prizes!

Decorated eggs should be in school for 9am on Monday 31st March and the judging will take place on Tuesday 1st April. Our winners will be announced at the spring assembly on Wednesday 2nd April.

Eggs can be real (hard boiled) or polystyrene if you would prefer. We are very excited to see all of the children's creative ideas!

Easter Assembly – change of date – now 2nd April

Please note that the date of the Easter Assembly has been moved to Wednesday 2nd April.

The whole school will be walking to Portmoak Church on the morning of the assembly which will be led by P5/6. We will also enjoy some musical performances by children who, due to a school trip, are unable to take part in 'Perform in Perth' this year. All families are very welcome to join us.

We have asked for people to walk with us to the church, so if you are free and able to do this, please let us know. 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.

Portmoak Gala

Portmoak Gala will take place on Saturday 31st May this year. We are looking for a King and Queen from Primary 6 or 7, along with 4 attendants (2 boys and 2 girls) from Primary 2. Children can register their interest by completing a form which will be issued in the next few weeks and the names of the royal party will be drawn during the Easter Assembly.

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 if you are able to come along.

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 15th -18th May 2026.

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 £373 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 - £ 53
- 28 October- £54
- 28 November - £ 54
- 28 February - £54
- 28 March - £ 54
- 28 April - £54

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

There will be parent information session at 6pm on Tuesday 18th March.

Cluster Parent Marketplace – Thursday 20th March 2025: 6- 7pm

Following last year's successful 'Meeting Learners' Needs' marketplace event at Loch Leven Community Campus, the Kinross Cluster will be running the event again this year. It will take place on Thursday 20th March from 6pm – 7pm.

This will be a drop-in session where parents and carers will be able to visit stalls of your choosing to find out more about the ways that children and young people are supported in their learning, both in school and through other groups and organisations. There will be information for parents of children who have additional support needs, but the session is not just for this group of parents, there will be a range of information for you to dip into on the night. The venue is 'the street' at Loch Leven Community Campus.

If you would like to attend this event, please complete the form below to register your interest.

<https://forms.office.com/e/9uu3mGLGXa>

National Standardised Assessments for Scotland (NSA)

What are the National Standardised Assessments for Scotland (NSA)?

The National Standardised Assessments for Scotland (NSA) cover aspects of reading, writing and numeracy, providing teachers with indicative, diagnostic information on learners' progress in these curricular areas.

School children in P1, 4 and 7 and S3 complete online standardised assessments in literacy and numeracy. 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.
- 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 NSA website should you require it:

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

School Attendance

Schools across the country are being asked to do what they can to increase children's attendance. We have noticed some cases of individual low attendance. In Perth and Kinross, we have a target of 96% attendance for all children in primary schools.

We will be sending home an attendance summary for all children before the end of this term, please note this is only for your information.

We would expect all children to be in school every day unless they are unwell. To report absence please get on touch either by email or by calling the absentee line on 01577 867196 rather than the main school line which can be busy with enquiries, this should be done for each day of absence.

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 full days (48 hours).
- High temperature - If your child has a high temperature, keep them off school until their temperature returns to normal.
- 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 and should be off school until all sores have crusted over and healed, or for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment.
- Scarlet Fever - If your child has scarlet fever, they will require treatment with antibiotics from a GP. Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics.

Portmoak Primary Dates for the Diary

March 2025		
3 rd	Parents/Carers	Reading Information Session 5.00pm
4 th	P6 & P7	Cross Country at LLCC
6 th	Whole School	World Book Day – dress as you please
7 th	P4	Sharing Learning Assembly 9.15am (rescheduled from 7 th Feb)
10 th	Parents/Carers	Parent Contact 3.30pm – 5.30pm
10 th	All Classes	Pond Dipping Day
12 th	P1-4	Dirlebane Theatre Performance of 'Bounce' – in school
12 th	Parents/Carers	Parent Contact 5.30pm – 7.30pm
14 th	P2/3	Sharing Learning Assembly – 9.15am
17 th – 21 st	Whole School	Scholastic Book Fair week
20 th	P5/6 & P6/7	Visit to New Lanark
20 th	Parents/Carers	Kinross Cluster Marketplace at LLCC 6-7pm
24 th – 28 th	Whole School	Biodiversity week
25 th	Selected P6 & P7s	Cross Country Championships, Perth Racecourse – require volunteer drivers
27 th	Whole School	Walk to Portmoak Moss - AM
28 th	P6/7	Sharing Learning Assembly – 2pm
28 th	P6	Ardroy – instalment 5 due today
31 st -4 th Apr	Whole School	Energy/Climate Change Week
April 2025		
1 st	P5/6/7	Community Police visit to discuss online safety
2 nd	Whole School	Easter Service – led by P5/6 - venue Portmoak Church 9.30am
4 th	Whole School	Term ends 3pm
7 th -21 st	Whole School	Easter Holiday
22 nd	Whole School	Inservice day
23 rd	Whole School	Term 4 starts – children back to school
28 th	P6	Ardroy – final instalment due
May 2025		
2 nd	P4	Sharing Learning Assembly – 9.15am
5 th	Whole School	May Day Holiday
7 th	Whole School	Coffee & Catch Up
8 th	P1 and P7	Dental Nurse visit
9 th	P5/6	Sharing Learning Assembly 9.15am
13 th	P1/2	Pond dipping at Vane Farm
16 th – 19 th	P6	Ardroy
20 th	P4	Trip - TBC
20 th	P6	John Muir Award
27 th	Cricket teams	Cluster Cricket Festival, Loch Leven Larder
30 th	P1/2	Road Safety Assembly
June 2025		
2 nd	Whole School	Sports Day
2 nd – 6 th	Whole School	Celebration of Wellbeing Week
11 th	Qualifying cricket teams	Cricket Cup, North Inch
12 th	P7	Activity days at Nae Limits and Willowgate
13 th	P7	Activity days at Nae Limits and Willowgate
13 th	Whole School	New classes issued
13 th	P6	John Muir Assembly
20 th	P7	Prom
25 th	P7	P7 Leavers' Assembly – 9.30am
26 th	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.