Being the best I can be

PORTMOAK

Headteacher's Newsletter – August 2025

What a great first two weeks we have had at Portmoak! Our Primary 1s are settling into the routine of school and our new Primary 7s are taking on their leadership responsibilities showing lots of initiative. Across the school, children are building relationships with their new teachers and classmates and getting back into school life and learning.
I look forward to seeing those of you who can attend our MacMillan Coffee and Open morning on 25th September. This is a wonderful opportunity to visit the classes, meet staff and contribute to a very worthy cause.
A huge thank you to Kinnesswood in Bloom who have kept the school grounds looking absolutely wonderful over the summer. It was a lovely treat to come back to such beautiful, colourful flowers and the children all loved visiting the polytunnel this week and sampling some of the grapes that have grown.

MacMillan Coffee and Open Morning to Meet the Teacher

On Thursday 25th September we will be having our annual MacMillan coffee fundraiser, all of our Primary 6 and 7 pupils will be involved in planning and organising the event. This year it will be taking place in the morning. You will be able to meet your child(ren)'s teacher(s), see the children in their classes, chat informally to staff in the room and then go along to the hall for tea, coffee and home baking.

The classes will all be baking in the run up to the event, but we would also welcome donations of home baking at morning drop off on 25th September, or at 3pm pick up on the 24th if easier.

Times for the open morning are:

- 9.15-10.00am – time in classes
- 10.00am – classroom closed to visitors (we will ring a bell to signal this)
- 9.45-10.30am – visitors welcome in the hall for coffee and cakes (this is free, but we will be taking donations for MacMillan on the day via a QR code or cash)
- 10.30am hall closed
- 3.00pm sale of any leftover goodies just outside the front door (in £1 lucky bags)

Please note that younger siblings are welcome to join us in the hall for cakes etc, but we do not have space for the school-aged children to join this session.

Please label all children's belongings

As we start the new term we would like to remind parents to label **ALL** your child's belongings: clothing, water bottles and plastic tubs. We end up with a lot of lost property which we would more than happily return – however, we can only do this if all items are labelled.

Playground Supervision before the School Day

We would ask that children do not arrive in our school grounds before 8.30am. There is no supervision in the playground at this time but there will be a member of staff in the school office from 8.30am onwards. Children normally remain outside until 9am, but if it is very wet staff may bring them into the school hall.

For those children who are transported to school by the local authority, primary schools are required to provide a level of supervision from the time the bus/taxi arrives at the school until the children board the transport at the end of the school day. In our school this means that the children are met as they disembark from the bus and they are then escorted into the school grounds by staff to join their classmates. At this point the member of staff will work in the office, but bus children are made aware that the staff member will be available to support if required.

Staffing

We have welcomed two new members of staff to the Portmoak team this term. Mr Sean Dowling has joined us as our new Principal Teacher, Mr Dowling will be teaching across the classes to allow him to work with all children. Miss Eva More has joined the staff as our Primary 4/5 Class Teacher. We have also appointed a new member of staff for the school office following Mrs Sellars leaving at the start of the term. Mrs Wendy Hunter will be in the office on Mondays and Tuesdays and will hopefully be joining us in the next few weeks.

The full class breakdown is as follows:

- P1/2 – Ms MacGillivray
- P2/3 – Mrs Baird/Mr Dowling (Mon)
- P4/5- Miss More/Mr Dowling (Fri)
- P5/6 – Mrs Herd/Mr Dowling (Wed)
- P6/7 – Miss Kettles

Mr Ainsworth will be in on a Tuesday and Friday to teach PE and Mrs Gibson, our Pupil Support Teacher, will be in school every Tuesday.

We also have two Area Support Teachers in the Kinross cluster providing some additional teaching capacity, who will be in school on a part time basis across each term, Miss Pyne and Mr Muir.

Support staff working in the school office are:
- Mrs Natalie Davies (office)
- Mrs Wendy Hunter (joining us in due course)

School support staff working in classrooms, playground and dinner hall:
- Mrs Cox
- Mrs Paterson
- Mrs Nichol
- Mrs Williams
- Mrs Lawson

Tayside Contracts staff in the dinner hall:
- Mrs Widley
- Miss Nicol

Learning Journals

Mrs Davies has sent out information to new parents and those who do not yet have access to Learning Journals. Please sign up if you have not yet done this.

Coffee and Catch Up

Every term we give you an opportunity to come into school to meet with the headteacher for a coffee from 9-9.30am. We also try to invite a special guest each time to be able to informally talk to you about a specific topic. Previously, we have had the pupil support teacher, as well as some staff from Kinross High School to talk about transition. The next Coffee and Catch Up session is on Tuesday 16th September.

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.

Clothing Grants/Free School Meals/Support

You can claim free school meals and a school clothing grant for your child(ren) if you are receiving:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- any income-related element of Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit, but not Working Tax Credit, with an income of less than £19,995
- both Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit with an income of up to £9,552
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Universal Credit with a monthly earned income of not more than £79

For more information on Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit visit the Inland Revenue website.

Applications for Clothing Grants can be made here: clothing grant

We also work closely with Broke not Broken who can provide support. Please contact Mrs Nesbitt directly if this is something we can help with, any discussion would be completely confidential.

Nut free school reminder

Please note that this is a nut free school and children should not come with any snacks or packed lunch items that contain nuts, including chocolate spreads such as Nutella, as we have pupils and a member of staff with severe nut allergies.

Music lessons

Please note that for our new session Cello and Chanter will be on a Tuesday, with Woodwind on a Thursday. Please ensure your child practises between lessons and that they bring their instruments with them on the day when their teacher attends. We try to keep parents informed if there are changes to lessons but often these are last minute.

Halloween Discos

Our Halloween discos will take place again this year in the school hall. We have two discos, with a small tuck shop open on the night (please bring change for this where possible). There is a suggested donation at the door for attending the disco, but please do not feel any pressure to pay this.

Date: Thursday 30th October
Times: P1-4: 5:30-6:30 and P5-7: 6:45-7:45 (whilst this is the split of year groups- P4 pupils can attend either disco)
Suggested donation for tickets: £2 at the door (please bring change for this where possible)

Harvest Assembly

Rather than one class leading our Harvest Assembly, each class is going to contribute a small part. All parents are invited to join us for this at the church on Thursday 9th October from 9.30am.

Absentee Policy

If your child is going to be absent please call the absentee line on 01577 867196 or send an email to portmoak@pkc.gov.uk before 9am letting us know your child's name, class and reason for absence. The absentee line calls an answering machine service which operates 24 hours a day – please call it any time before school starts each day your child will be off. It is our duty to ascertain the absence of any child and to log it as quickly as possible to ensure that all our pupils are safe – it would help us greatly if all parents adhered to the absentee policy.

Parent Events

We run lots of events across the year where parents are invited to come in and see some of the learning that has been happening in school. These are;

- Class assemblies- parents who have children in the class leading these assemblies can join us to watch these and hear all about a specific topic or more generally about learning in class.
- Open afternoons/mornings- these provide an opportunity to visit your child's class and spend time looking at the learning they have completed as well as seeing displays and gaining an insight into how their day at school looks.
- Specific events such as Macmillan and Sports Day- information about these will be shared as the year progresses.
- Parent Contact- a chance to speak to your child's teacher one to one to discuss progress and next steps in learning.

We also have an open door policy so please get in touch if you have a query or would like to speak to a member of staff outwith these times and we can arrange a time for this.

Portmoak Primary Dates for the Diary

		August 2025
18th	Staff	In-Service Day
19th	Whole School	Term starts 9am
		September 2025
10th & 11th	Whole School	Individual and sibling photos
16th	Whole School	Coffee & Catch Up 9.00-9.30am
25th (AM)	Whole School	Open Morning & MacMillan Coffee Morning
25th (PM)	Whole School	Flu vaccinations
		October 2025
9th	Whole School	Harvest Assembly- Whole School – 9.30am – Portmoak Church – all parents welcome
10th	Whole School	Last day of term – 3pm finish
27th	Whole School	Term 2 starts 9am
		November 2025
4th	Whole School	Coffee & Catch Up 9.00 – 9.30am
7th	P1/2	Bonfire Night Assembly- 9.15am- P1/2 parents welcome
10th	Whole School	Parent Contact 5.30-7.30pm – info to book appts to follow
12th	Whole School	Parent Contact 3.30-5.30pm – info to book appts to follow
13th & 14th	Whole school	In-Service days
28th	P5/6	Advent Assembly – 9.15am- P5/6 parents welcome
		December 2025
5th	P4/5	Sharing Learning Assembly- 9.15am – P4/5 parents welcome
10th	Whole School	Panto- evening performance
11th	Whole School	Panto- evening performance
16th	Whole School	Nativity- evening performance
17th	Whole School	Nativity- morning performance
18th	Whole School	Christmas Dinner
23rd	Whole School	Term 2 ends – 12 noon
		January 2026
7th	Whole School	Term 3 starts – 9am
12th	New P1s	P1 enrolment week for August 2026
27th	Whole School	Coffee & Catch Up – 9.00 – 9.30am
		February 2026
2nd	Whole School	Open afternoon – all parents welcome 2.15-2.45pm
11th	Whole School	In-Service Day
12th & 13th	Whole School	Holiday
		March 2026
6th	P4/5	World Book Day Assembly – 9.15am P4/5 parents welcome
16th – 20th	Whole School	Book Fair
20th	P6/7	Sharing Learning Assembly – 9.15am P6/7 parents welcome
		April 2026
1st	Whole School	Spring Assembly by P2/3 – 9.30am- all parents welcome
1st	Whole School	Reports issued
2nd	Whole School	Term 3 ends – 3pm
20th	Whole School	Term 4 starts – 9am
22nd	P6	Swimming - 9.30am
29th	P6	Swimming – 9.30am
		May 2026
1st	P1/2	Sharing Learning Assembly- P1/2 parents welcome
4th	Whole School	May Day holiday
5th	Whole School	Coffee & Catch Up – 9-9.30am
6th	P6	Swimming – 9.30am
13th	P6	Swimming – 9.30am
15th	P2/3	Sharing Learning Assembly- P2/3 parents welcome
15th – 19th	P6	Ardroy
20th	P6	Swimming – 9.30am
25th	Whole School	Parent Contact - 3.30-5.30pm – info to book appts to follow

27th	Whole School	Parent Contact – 5.30-7.30pm – info to book appts to follow
27th	P6	Swimming – 9.30am
29th	Whole School	In-Service Day
		June 2026
1st-5th	Whole School	Celebration of Wellbeing Week
1st	Whole School	Sports Day - PM
3rd	P6	Swimming – 9.30am
5th	P5/6	Sharing Learning Assembly – 9.15am – P5/6 parents welcome
10th	P6	Swimming – 9.30am
11th & 12th	P7	Induction days at KHS
17th	P6	Swimming – 9.30am
19th	P6	John Muir Assembly – 9.15am- P6 parents welcome
24th	P6	Swimming
		July 2026
1st	P7	Leavers' Assembly – 9.30am- P7 and performers' parents welcome
2nd	Whole School	Term 4 ends – 12 noon

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

and the absentee line & answer phone on 01577 867196.