



PORTWAY JUNIOR SCHOOL

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Friday 8th January 2016

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you all had a good Christmas and I would like to wish you all a very 'Happy New Year'. We look forward to another successful year where the children enjoy their learning and make good progress. Throughout the year, as ever, if you have any questions, concerns or ideas please get in touch with me either in person, by telephone or via email.

Christmas Production – Ebenezer!

The Christmas production of 'Ebenezer' was a great success last term. I know the children enjoyed the performances and a great number of parents and grandparents commented very positively on the production. The confidence and team work the children showed was great. Well done to everyone, all the children and adults, who contributed to making it such an enjoyable show.

Year 6 Charity Event

On the 18th of December the Year 6 children held their annual charity fair. The range of stalls put on by Year 6 was amazing and they organised the whole morning brilliantly. They raised more money this year than ever before – a fantastic £812! This beats the previous year's total by £120! Thank you to all the children and parents who supported the charity fair. All the proceeds will go to the Year 6's chosen charities. This was an extremely well organised and very enjoyable event, well done, Year 6. A total of £147 was raised for Save the Children for wearing Christmas jumpers/non-uniform, too.

Team Point Winners – RUBY

Well done to all the children in team RUBY; they won the team point competition last term. Their reward will be a non-school uniform day on Friday, the 23rd of January, and they will be watching a film in the afternoon. I will be sending out a short letter next week for parents to indicate whether or not they would like their children to watch the film. Congratulations to all the children who have achieved their 60 and 90 Team Point certificates this week. You are all well on your way to achieving the highest award – 150 Team Points.

Clubs

Most clubs will start running again straight after half term, the week commencing the 22nd of February and will run for six weeks. A separate clubs letter will follow soon and children will be able to make their new choices.

Clubs Timetable – Six Weeks

CLUBS 1	CLUBS 2	CLUBS 3	CLUBS 4	NO CLUBS	CLUBS 5	CLUBS 6
WC: 22 Feb	WC: 29 Feb	WC: 7 Mar	WC: 14 Mar	WC: 21 Mar	WC: 11 Apr	WC: 18 Apr

Homework and Reading Reminder

All children should bring home a reading book from the new reading scheme every night with their reading record. It is hoped that the children will share their reading with an adult every evening and that their progress will be noted in the reading record. Other home learning activities (for example learning spellings, numeracy homework and talk homework) are set on a Thursday. Please support your child in these tasks.

Snow!

A quick reminder about procedures in snowy weather. The decision to remain open or to close is best made early in the morning and a number of factors have to be considered; the most important being the health and safety of children and adults in school. If, in extreme conditions, we have to make the difficult decision to close the school we will try to give you as much notice as possible. We will inform you of any school closure by sending out a text and by informing Radio Derby and Capital FM, who will then broadcast the information. We will also put a message on the school website in the 'Latest News' area as soon as a decision is reached.

Department for Education Tables Checking Website

The Department for Education tables checking website enables parents to view information about schools and compare schools. The website can be found at the following address:

www.education.gov.uk/schools/performance. Information about the basic characteristics of a school, pupil performance, funding, attendance rates, etc. can be found. The information on the website is updated annually. If you have any questions about the information on the site please contact me.

Timetable Changes

Your children may have told you about some changes we have made to the school day on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. We have moved assembly to the very end of the day (3:10-3:25). This has enabled us to extend the length of the spelling lessons on these days to 35 minutes. We are monitoring this change and we expect to see its impact in better spelling results in school work, half termly assessments and SATS.

A Big Push on Handwriting

Standards of presentation and handwriting in school have improved over the years and we know from our monitoring that children's books contain good quality work they can be proud of. It has become evident,

Portway Junior School, alongside Derby City Council, is committed to promoting equal opportunities, valuing diversity and tackling social exclusion in everything it does. Our aim is equality for everyone who lives, works and visits our school. Please contact the school, in the first instance, if you have any questions or concerns about school.

though, that handwriting is something that all children from Y3 to Y6 could improve further. All the teachers and TAs received training last half term on teaching handwriting. From the start of next week we are going to have 5 weeks of daily handwriting lessons where all children are taught the skills necessary for neat, joined handwriting. The work they do will be recorded in a handwriting folder and you will be able to see this at parents' evening. Get your children to tell you about what they have been taught regarding, pencil grip, posture, letter formation and joining.

The teachers will be looking carefully at how each child progresses. There will be 4 prizes of £20 Intu gift vouchers for the most improved handwriters – one in each year group. I look forward to seeing the results of this work in children's books.

Paperless Communication

From Monday 4th January the majority of letters to Parents/Carers will be by sent by email. Each email will have a link to click to respond if necessary. We do not expect parents/carers to print reply slips and return to school. Where written consent is required a paper copy will be sent via pupil post. Flyers from outside organisations such as School's Out Club etc. will be emailed too. We hope that you will all embrace this form of communication and if you have not given the office your email address please do so as soon as possible.

Christmas Tree

A big thank you to Markeaton Garden Centre for donating a Christmas tree to school last term. It really made the school hall look and feel very festive!

Midday Supervisor Vacancy

We currently have a vacancy in school for a Midday Supervisor for 5 days a week. If you, or someone you know, would be interested in applying for this position please either download an application pack from the Derby City Council online vacancies, web pages or call into school to have an informal chat and pick up the application documents from here.

School Year 2015-2016

Spring Term 2016

- Monday 4th January – Friday 12th February 2016
- Monday 22nd February – Thursday 24th March 2016

Summer Term 2016

- Monday 11th April – Friday 27th May 2016
- Monday 6th June – Tuesday 26th July 2016

Note: Wednesday 7th September 2016 – Inset Day - school closed to children – children return to school on Thursday 8th September.

N.B. Dates for the academic school years can be accessed on the school's or Derby City Council's website.

<http://www.derby.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools-and-colleges/term-and-holiday-dates>

Dates for your diary:

Spring 1st (6 Weeks)

Mon 4 Jan	Start Back
Mon 18 Jan	Boosters Start for Y6
WC 1 Feb	Test Week
Thurs 11 Feb	PTFA Film Night
Fri 12 Feb	Break Up

Spring 2nd (5 Weeks)

Mon 22 Feb	Start Back (Clubs Start for 6 Weeks)
Thu 25 Feb	Swimming Lessons restart for Year 4
WC 29 Feb	Themed Week
Thu 10 Mar	Governor visit in the afternoon
Fri 11 Mar	INSET Day 4
Thur 17 Mar	PTFA Disco
WC Mar 14	Test Week 4
Mar 22 & 23	Parents' Evenings (no clubs running this week)
Thu 24 Mar	11.00am Year 3 Easter Assembly
Thu 24 Mar	Break Up

Mr J Pass
Headteacher