



PORTWAY JUNIOR SCHOOL

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Thursday 6th October 2016

Dear Parents and Carers, Strike Action

I would like to thank all parents for their support over the recent Unison industrial action. It is a very difficult time for all those involved, and I will endeavor to keep the school open unless the safety of the children is put at risk. As soon as I know about any possible closures I will let you know.

School Rewards

We want all the children in school to aim high and do their best and be rewarded for their efforts. Team points can be awarded for effort, good work, improvements in learning, positive attitudes, good manners and many other positive behaviours and actions. Find out from your child how many team points they have earned so far this year. How close are they to the first target – Bronze Award – 50 Team Points? Subsequent certificates are also awarded at 100 (Silver), 150 (Gold) and 200 (Platinum) Team Points. Then a letter home for 250 team points! The points have gone up as all children now start the week with 3 team points. A team point is removed for any orange or red cards received.

A Reminder about Reading Books

When a child has finished a book in lower school (Years 3 and 4) teachers and teaching assistants will be looking to see that they have read the book with an adult at home and that the child's reading record has been signed by an adult to confirm it has been read and that the child has shown a good understanding of their reading. We know from the assessments we conduct in school that many children can read fluently but that their comprehension skills, their understanding of what they read, can be less well developed. To address this we ask all parents to not only listen to children read but also ask them questions about their reading.

Children in upper school (Years 5 and 6) will change their books independently and we will encourage them to complete their own reading records, where appropriate. I would strongly urge all parents to continue to read with their children and discuss their reading with them. One to one reading time is invaluable in improving children's ability to read fluently and with expression. Time spent discussing the text improves children's ability to enjoy and understand their reading. Sound reading skills and good reading comprehension lay the foundations for future learning in all subjects.

Over the course of a week we ask children to read for a minimum of 3 times. Hopefully, as mentioned above, this will be with an adult but we do recognise that children in upper school, Years 5 and 6, may want to read independently and record their reading themselves.

Sporting Success!

Our cross country teams have been competing in a city-wide cross country league over the last few weeks. There have been some fantastic individual performances and all the teams are doing very well. The Year 3/4 Boys team are currently third in their league, the Year 3/4 Girls are second in their league. The Year 5/6 Boys are seventh and the Year 5/6 Girls are currently first! We will keep you posted on their progress.

In football, our Year 5/6 boys' team took part in the 7-a-side mini soccer tournament, where they came second, so will represent Derby City in November at the County competition. Well done to all who took part in both competitions.

We have also just been awarded for the second year running the Sainsbury's Schools Games Silver Award. We will be going for Gold next year!

Year 4 Harvest Assembly

I would like to invite all Year 4 parents to join the school for the Year 4 Harvest Assembly on Thursday 20th October in Woodlands Church. The assembly will start at 11:00am, so arrive a few minutes earlier to get your seat. We are very sorry but due to lack of space we are unable to open this up to other parents.

Padley Centre

Once again we will be collecting non-perishable food items (these can be drinks, dried and/or canned food) or personal hygiene items like toothpaste and toothbrushes for the Padley Centre in Derby. The Padley Centre is run by a volunteer support group for less fortunate people. During Harvest time, we feel that it is very important to share with others. This is one of the key messages in our assembly. Please send in your items before Wednesday 19th October. We will be collecting them in classes and the class with the most items will receive extra team points!

Clubs

Please note there will be no clubs run by teachers in the week commencing 17 October, as there are Parents' Evenings that week. All other clubs will run as normal. Can I please remind all parents and children that it is imperative you let school know if your child will not be attending an after school club. A note would be ideal, but at the very least please 'phone school or get your child to tell the club leader that they will not be attending the after school club that day. Thanks for your help with this.

A Message from the Governors at Portway Junior School

The school governing body is made up of elected staff and parent members plus co-opted members from the wider community. Our legal role is to act as a critical friend to the school's leadership team - holding the school to account on pupil progress and attainment, whilst supporting the school in its progress. There is currently a vacancy for parent governors with an interest in finance. If you are interested in this post please pick up an application form from the school office.

Midday Supervisor Vacancy.

The school has a vacancy for a Midday Supervisor. Details can be found on Derby City Council website or the school website.

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.

Parents' Evenings on 18th and 19th of October

If you bring your children into school for parents' evening please keep them with you. They are welcome to sit in on the consultation with their teacher. There will be a book fair in the hall on both nights from 3:45pm-6.00pm as well as the opportunity to meet our uniform provider, Children's Choice Governors will be available at parents evening to help with questions you may have. You should already have received your letter.

'Wind in the Willows' Theatrical Production

The Image Theatre Company was meant to be in school on 26 September but due to illness they had to cancel at the last minute. The children will now see the production on Tuesday October 18th.

Macmillan Cake Sale

Thank you to all the PTFA members, parents and children who helped to make the Macmillan Cake sale a great success. In total the cake sale raised over £400.

Safety Before and After School

In the interests of safety we do not allow parking in the school car park before school or at hometime; please do not use the school car park to drop off or collect children before or after school. Also can I remind parents not to send their children to school before 8.45am (unless they are participating in a before school intervention) as there is no supervision on the playground before then. May I also ask for your support, in ensuring your children to not climb on or pull at the trees in the school grounds, particularly after school as it is not safe and the trees are getting damaged. Thank you for your support with these safeguarding issues.

Dinner Money

Dinner money for next half term is £73.10 (34 days). The school meals menu will be changing after half term, and we will send the new menu home as soon as we have it. We would really like to encourage more parents to pay online for meals – you do not need to pay in one lump sum, you are very welcome to pay in regular instalments, just as you would if you were paying with cash or cheques. Please note if you pay weekly, dinner money must be received in advance on a Monday. Please note that if we do not receive dinner money for two consecutive weeks, we cannot continue to provide your child with a meal.

Making Payments to School

We'd really like to encourage as many people as possible to pay online for dinner money, trips, PTFA events – if this is something you would like to do, but don't know how to get started, please contact the school office and we will be happy to assist you. Any payments by cheque need to be made payable to Derby City Council, unless stated otherwise. Cash payments must be in a securely sealed envelope, clearly marked with your child's name. Where possible we would like children to hand in any cash/cheque payments to their teacher at the start of the day, but if for some reason you prefer not to do this, please post your envelopes in the red postbox next to the Reception window.

Starlight Textile Collection

A reminder that the school has organised another textile collection with Beaumont's Recycling to raise funds for Eco projects in school and for Starlight. You should already have received your bag, if you need any more bags, these are available in reception. Starlight brightens the lives of seriously and terminally ill children by **wish granting** and also by providing fun, entertainment, laughter and distraction for children in every children's hospital ward and hospice throughout the United Kingdom. All Starlight's activities are aimed at distracting children from the pain, fear and isolation they can often feel as a result of their illnesses. By getting involved in our clothes recycling collection, you have an opportunity to sort through your cupboards and wardrobes and donate unwanted textiles – this can include adults' and children's clothes, shoes (tied together please), hats, belts, bags, soft toys, curtains and bedding (not duvets or pillows). We will receive **£400 per tonne or £0.50/kg** which will be a great boost for our fundraising. Starlight will also receive a donation for £100. In addition it will also raise awareness amongst the children of the benefits of recycling and reuse. Please bring your bag (or bags!) to the School Reception by **Tuesday 11th October at 9.00am** and help us have a really good collection.

Dates for Your Diary

Autumn 1st Half Term

Fri 7 Oct	INSET Day 2
WC 10 Oct	Test Week 1
Tue 18 Oct	Image Theatre "Wind in the Willows"
Tue 18 and Wed 19 Oct	Parents Eve – up to 10 min slots
Thu 20 Oct	11.00am Y4 Harvest Assembly
Fri 21 Oct	Break Up

Autumn 2nd Half Term (7 Weeks)

Mon 31 Oct	Start Back
Tue 8 Nov	Governor Visit Day - Focus Maths
Fri 11 Nov	Writing Assessment 2
Thu 17 Nov	2.30pm Y2 Parents Introduction to Portway
Mon 21 Nov	INSET Day 3
WC 28 Nov	Test Week 2
Fri 2 Dec	Christmas Fair 3.45pm
Dec 7 and 8	2.00pm Afternoon and 6.30pm Evening Christmas Productions
Fri Dec 9	Writing Assessment 3
W.C. 12 Dec	Party Week
Tues 14 Dec	Christmas Dinner
Thu 15 Dec	11.00am Carol Service at Woodlands Church
Tues 20 Dec	Year 6 Charity Fair
Tues 20 Dec	Break Up

Fiona Marks

Acting Headteacher

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