



# PORTWAY JUNIOR SCHOOL

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Friday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2015

## Dear Parents and Carers,

Where did the first half term go? 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 – 30 Team Points? Subsequent certificates are also awarded at 60 (Silver), 90 (Gold) and 120 (Platinum) Team Points. We have new style certificates this year, we hope the children will enjoy working towards these and receiving the new awards.

### New Assessment Procedures

You will have received a booklet last night giving information on the new assessment procedures we are adopting in school now that the DFE have abolished levels. The booklet is also available on the school's website. Please have a look in the Latest News section. Please ask at Parents' Evening next week if you have any questions about the new procedures.

### 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. All the new reading scheme books have lists of questions, either at the front or back, which are particularly useful.

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.

### Fantastic Efforts from the Cross Country and Football Teams

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 came third in their league, the Year 3/4 Girls came second in their league. The Year 5/6 Boys came third in their league and the Year 5/6 Girls came first! Superb results from all the teams considering schools from all over the city are taking part.

In football, our Year 5/6 boys' team took part in the 7-a-side mini soccer tournament at Mackworth College. They played three group games and made it through to the quarter-finals, where they lost on penalties. Mr Proud reported that all of the players put in 100% and were unlucky to lose at this stage as the opposition teams displayed some outstanding goalkeeping. Well done to all who took part.

### 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 22 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.

### Clubs

Please note there will be no clubs run by teachers in the week commencing 19 October (next week), as there are Parents' Evenings that week. Derby County's Football Club on Wednesday after school has been cancelled. Quest Club (run by Mr Butcher on Monday afternoon), Dance Club (run by Laura Jacobs on Mondays after school), Recorders (run by Mrs Englefield on Fridays) and Mrs Taplin's Craft Club 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. One of the first things we do each year is to accept the new School Improvement Plan. This year's will especially focus on continuing to raise the standards of teaching & learning in school and embedding the new assessment procedures now that National Attainment Levels are no more. Among the many things we are busy working on, we have also set up a working party to prepare for a potential OFSTED inspection due next term at the earliest. There are 2 vacancies for parent governors being advertised and we hope to fill these posts this term.

***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 20 and 21 October

Parents' Evening will be held next Tuesday and Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> 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 but if you prefer them to wait outside please get them to read their reading book / play on a tablet, etc. whilst they are waiting. 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. I hope the assessment booklet, which was sent home yesterday, is useful for parents. The booklet covers all the main changes we have made to our assessment procedures since the government abolished levels last academic year. Governors will be available at parents evening to help with questions you may have.

## 'Jungle Book' Theatrical Production

The Imagine Theatre Company were in school on 30 September and performed 'Jungle Book' to the school. It was a lively play that involved a lot of audience participation and was thoroughly enjoyed by all the children I have talked to.

## Lunchboxes

As a school with healthy school status we want to encourage children to develop healthy lifestyles and healthy eating habits. It has been a concern of mine and the midday staff for a while that children are throwing away a lot of their lunches causing a lot of waste and also leading parents to believe their children are eating more than they actually are. To remedy this we ask all children to take home all their rubbish and anything they do not eat. Hopefully this will cut down on waste and give parents a much clearer understanding of what is actually being eaten.

## Macmillan Cake Sale

Thank you to all the PTFA members, parents and children who helped to make the Macmillan Cake sale a great success. The buns were selling like hotcakes and it was very clear that they were being enjoyed by children and staff alike. In total the cake sale raised over £300.

## 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. Can I please also ask all parents to park considerately before and after school on the roads around school – particularly on Woodlands Road, which has started to become very congested at school drop-off and pick-up times. Please do not park on the pavements around school, as this makes it very difficult for pedestrians to use the paths and also makes crossing the roads far more dangerous for the children. Our neighbours will appreciate your consideration, too. Please see the attached letter regarding setting up a walking bus. Return the slip to me if this is something you would be interested in getting involved with.

## Dinner Money

Dinner money for next half term is £70.95 (33 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

Our online payment system is now up and running, and a number of parents have commented on how easy they have found it to use. 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.

## Dates for Your Diary

### Autumn 1<sup>st</sup> Half Term

Fri 9 Oct	INSET Day 2
WC 12 Oct	Test Week 1
Tue 20 and Wed 21 Oct	Parents Eve – up to 10 min slots
Wed 21 Oct	Last swimming lesson for Year 4 until February
Thu 22 Oct	11.00am Y4 Harvest Assembly
Fri 23 Oct	Break Up

### Autumn 2<sup>nd</sup> Half Term (7 Weeks)

Mon 2 Nov	Start Back
WC 9 Nov	Themed Week
Tue 10 Nov	Governor Visit Day
Thu 19 Nov	2.30pm Y2 Parents Introduction to Portway
Mon 23 Nov	INSET Day 3
WC 7 Dec	Test Week 2
Dec 9 and 10	2.00pm Afternoon and 6.30pm Evening Christmas Productions
W.C. 14 Dec	Party Week
Tues 15 Dec	Christmas Dinner
Thu 17 Dec	11.00am Carol Service at Woodlands Church
Fri 18 Dec	Year 6 Charity Fair
Fri 18 Dec	Break Up

## J Pass

### Headteacher

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