



PORTWAY JUNIOR SCHOOL

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Tuesday 15th September 2015

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to Portway

Welcome back to school to everyone for what promises to be another full and rewarding year! It has been lovely going around school and see all the classes really settling well; the children right through school, from our new Year 3s right up to the Year 6s, have impressed me with their positive approach to school life and their learning. In assembly this week I talked to the school about our motto and what it means – ‘Aim High, Do Your Best, Never Stop Learning’. We talked about the importance of effort and doing your best – it is clear that as a school they certainly are doing that! Welcome to Mr Bly (4B) who has joined our teaching team this year and Mr. Sutton, who is our new caretaker. We wish them a happy and successful time at Portway. As in previous years (today being the exception!) I will continue with the routine of sending out newsletters on the first Friday of the month in term time. All children will be given a paper copy but there will also be an electronic copy put on the school website in the School Information area.

Home-School Partnership

To provide the best possible education for your children it is essential that there are clear and open lines of communication between school and home and that there is a mutually supportive relationship between school staff and parents. We, at school, endeavour to communicate as clearly and effectively as possible information regarding all aspects of your children’s education and well-being. We want all parents to feel welcome in school and urge parents to come into school straight away if there are any questions or concerns we can help with. Your child’s teacher, our Learning Mentor, Mrs. O’Farrell, or I should be able to see you immediately if the matter is urgent. For less urgent matters it is best to make an appointment to see your child’s teacher. At the end of the school day teachers will continue to be on duty to supervise the children’s safe exit from school and will also be available for an informal chat. The text message service, Teachers to Parents, is in place; if you have not given your contact details to the office please collect a form and we can set you up on the system. You can also contact the school using the email address above.

Portway Junior School Behaviour Booklet and Behaviour Policy

In our last Ofsted inspection the inspectors noted that the behaviour of pupils in school was on the cusp of outstanding and from our regular monitoring we know that behaviour standards have been consistently high. We are proud of the high standards of behaviour we have in school which are absolutely vital for children to be happy, safe and for them to learn and achieve to the best of their ability. Central to achieving high standards of behaviour are our behaviour policy and our Behaviour in School Booklet (both of which can be found on the website in the School Information area). The booklet clearly states the expectations for behaviour and is used in a very practical way to enable children to understand what they need to do to keep themselves and others safe and happy in school. Your children will have brought the booklet home with them last week. Please read it through with your children and sign it and return it to school; your support of the values and expectations within the booklet are very important. If you have any questions about the booklet or the behaviour policy, please contact me.

Home-School Agreement

A home-school agreement is a statutory document that every school must have. Parents with children in Years 4, 5 and 6 have already signed and returned theirs. Year 3 parents will have received theirs last week. The document sets out what school, parents and children will do together in order to achieve the best outcomes. Please sign and return the document to school. If you wish to discuss any of its contents please get in touch.

Homework and Reading

We will continue with the established homework routine. Every child has been given a homework folder. They will keep all their homework in this folder. Homework will be given on a Thursday to all children. Homework will consist of one piece of maths homework, one Talk Homework (where you are asked to discuss a topic or idea with your child in preparation for their writing activity the following day) and one spelling and / or grammar and punctuation activity. Please check bags after school on Thursdays to make sure your child has brought their homework home.

Being a fluent reader and being able to understand what you read are essential skills for education and for life. At home we recommend that children read frequently – this year we are going to ask all parents of children in years 3 and 4 to listen to them read aloud at least three times per week. After listening to your child read ask them about what they read and question them about their reading to develop comprehension skills. Please use your child’s Home-School Diary to make notes, comments and to praise their reading. Older children, in years 5 and 6, will hopefully be able to read to an adult but they will be able to read by themselves and record their reading themselves; if your child reads independently please ensure they have three sessions of reading per week. This will be explained in more detail at ‘Meet the Teacher’. We have new Home-School Diaries for this academic year. You can find other useful information there too such as term dates, policies etc. Please read through the policies and sign where appropriate. We hope you find this useful.

‘The Jungle Book’ – Wednesday 30th of September

The Image Musical Theatre Company are coming into school to perform ‘The Jungle Book’. In previous years plays from this theatre company have been very good and much enjoyed by the children and we expect this year will be no different. There will be no charge for this event as all costs will be paid out of private school fund.

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.

Music Lessons

We are fortunate to be able to offer pupils the opportunity to learn a wide range of musical instruments in school. Our peripatetic teachers may have spaces available for new pupils to have lessons this year. For further details please enquire at the office or speak to Mrs. Hindmarch. A little financial help is available for those on free school meals – please ask in complete confidence.

Meet the Teacher Night

All parents are invited into school on Monday the 21st September for 'Meet the Teacher Night'. This is a night when parents get a chance to meet their children's new teacher and the teachers explain to parents what goes on in their classrooms and how you can help with your child's learning. The teachers will also tell you about the subjects and topics that will be taught so you will be able to find out what your child will be learning throughout the year. They will also explain the new assessment procedures in school. A copy of the curriculum plans will also be put on the school website. The times for Meet the Teacher Night are shown below.

Year 3 and Year 4 – 4:45pm-5:15pm Year 5 and Year 6 - 5:30pm-6:00pm

Please use the main entrance and go to your child's class for the session. If you have children in Years 3 **and** 4 or Years 5 **and** 6 please contact their teachers to make alternative arrangements.

There will also be Parents' Evenings on Tuesday 20th October and Wednesday 21st October (Up to 10 minute appointments) for all parents and again in February (10 minute appointments).

I will be available at Meet the Teacher and at Parents' Evening should you wish to speak to me.

Fruit Tuck Shop Starting on Monday 15th September

Can I please encourage everyone to send children to school with a healthy snack. The school Fruit Tuck Shop will be starting up again on Monday and for just 20p the children can buy a piece of fruit with either a biscuit or a portion of raisins – cheap at half the price!

Park and Stride

The owners of the Woodlands Pub kindly allow parents to park in their car park, leaving just a short stride to the school. Please use the Park and Stride to keep the roads around school safe. Thank you for your help and cooperation with this.

TheGivingMachine

Thank you to all of you who have registered with TheGivingMachine to do their online shopping. Since joining the scheme last year we have raised **£492.03**. The way it works is you register online with www.TheGivingMachine.co.uk and nominate Portway Junior School. Then, every time you shop online with your usual retailers such as Amazon, Ebay, the big supermarkets, Next, Boots, in fact over 360 of the UK's leading retailers, Portway gets a free donation from the retailer. It doesn't cost you anymore and you don't have to buy anything you wouldn't normally buy. Just keep shopping online as you do already, via www.TheGivingMachine.co.uk, and at the same time you're raising money for our school. It really is that easy! In addition, once you have joined, you will receive emails with exclusive special offers and discounts from the top retailers.

Lost Property

Can I please ask all parents and carers to name all clothing, bags, lunchboxes, etc. Every year we have **masses** (I don't use bold font flippantly!) of lost property. Using a ball point pen on labels inside clothing, bags, trainers, etc. is a quick and effective way of ensuring you won't have to spend money on replacements.

A Plea for Helpers in School

Helping in school can be a very rewarding and enjoyable experience and we very much welcome parents' involvement in the education of children at our school. If you could help listening to children read, if you have a particular interest or skill you could share, if you could help with displays and backing children's work it would be very much appreciated. We also require a list of people who would be willing to help on school trips. For both helping in school and on trips you would need to have a Disclosure and Barring check (DBS check) previously known as a CRB. This will be done at no cost to yourself and school will arrange this for you. If you can help in school please fill in the form at the bottom of the newsletter and return it to Mrs Gordon.

Dates for your Diary

Please find below a list of the main dates for the whole school year. We hope you find this useful to have them in advance. If, due to unforeseen circumstances, any of the dates change we will endeavour to give you as much notice as possible.

J. Pass

Headteacher

HELPERS IN SCHOOL

Name:.....

Child's Name and Class:.....

Days/Times I would be available to help:

	Before Lunch (9:00am – 12:00pm)	After Lunch (1:10pm – 3:30pm)	School Trips
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			

Can you please return this form to **Mrs Gordon**. Thank you.

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