

September 2023 Newsletter



Dear Parents / Carers,

Welcome back to Portsdown for the 2023-24 academic year! Although a long, distant memory now, I hope that you were able to make the most of the summer holiday. We extend a warm welcome to new families who have joined our school community, we look forward to working with all of you. It has been wonderful to see our children back in school looking so smart and ready for their new year group!

At this point, it is always important to welcome the new staff to Portsdown. On the teaching team, we are delighted to formally welcome Mrs Warren (Year 5) who joins us as our new Maths leader. Mrs Baker joins us in Nursery as one of our room leaders. Miss Shires joins our dinner staff, Mrs Rogers join our cleaning staff and Miss O'Brien is moving into a SCITT student role. We also have some name changes – Ms King is now Mrs Kellett, Miss Dewing is now Mrs Saunders, Ms Metherell is now Ms Davies and Ms Brown is now Mrs Paddon.

Attendance Ladder

How close are you to reaching the top?



As always, we are promoting the importance of **ATTENDANCE**. It is hugely important that your child is in school, on time, every day. Please ensure you only keep your child off school or nursery if it is absolutely necessary. This avoids your child missing important learning and fun experiences we have in school!

IMPORTANT: ALL ABSENCES NEED A REASON

If your child has 10 sessions (10 half days) of unexplained or unauthorised absence in any term, a fixed penalty notice (fine) will be issued. Unauthorised absence includes things like holidays in term time and time off for birthdays. If you require any time off during school time, please come and fill out a request form available from the front office.

Sending you a fine is the last thing anyone want to do so please ensure you send your child to school as much as possible.

How we communicate with you: Most of our school letters will be sent out to you via the [Studybugs app](#) for the main school. Please make sure that you have downloaded app and that you have the notifications turned on. We will alert you to any important information that has been sent out via our website and via our Facebook pages. You will be able to use the Studybugs app to send us quick messages about attendance. Keep an eye on our Facebook pages as well as we will be posting updates and celebrations.



OUR SCHOOL VALUES

Be Kind – Be Respectful - Be Inclusive - Be Safe – Be your Best

2021 - 2022 INSET days

Our 4 Inset days of the year will be on:

Friday 17th November 2023

Tuesday 2nd January 2024

Thursday 28th March 2024

Friday 28th June 2024

School and Nursery will be closed for children on these days.

Safeguarding

Unfortunately, we live in a world where things go wrong. If we have a safeguarding concern about your child, we **will** speak to you. Please do not be offended by this. The safety of your child is extremely important to all of us here at Portsdown.

Farlington Wrap Around Service

We are delighted to continue our offer of after school care. It is for 3 to 11 year olds from after school to 6pm. (3 year old Nursery children to Year 6) and is run by Farlington Wrap Around Service. For more information visit their website: <http://www.farlingtonwraparound.co.uk/> or email contact@farlingtonwraparound.co.uk For existing members, note there is a new booking system in place.

Water bottles

We have provided water bottles for all of our new children in Year R. For everyone else, please provide your own labelled bottle. No Prime bottles please. Many thanks!

Medication

We ask parents to administer as much medicine as they can at home. If you wish us to administer medicine to your child, please complete a medication form which is available from the front office. Just ask a staff member for a copy of the form.

School Meals

School dinners cost £2.50 per day for those who need to pay. Children in Reception and year 1 and 2 get free school meals.

All dinners must be paid for on the day or in advance via the online SCOpay system. If you don't have a SCOpay account, please let the front office know and they will help you.

If you are on certain benefit you may be entitled to free school meals. To apply, use the link below or use an internet search to search for, 'Portsmouth Free School meals apply'.

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/services/schools-learning-and-childcare/schools/school-meals/>

It's important that all parents apply for this as the school will receive additional funding for every child who is entitled. This money can then be spent on your child and their education.

Playtime snacks

We encourage children to have healthy snacks at playtime. We will provide fruit or veg for KS1 children every day.

For KS2, you can bring in your own fruit, veg, plain biscuits or plain rice cakes. No crisps, chocolate or cereal bars for playtime snack.

Year Group Newsletters and your views about homework

Keep an eye out on our website and our Facebook pages for our Year group letters. They will tell you about what the children will be learning this term and introduce you to some staff.

Next week a Google form questionnaire will be going out to parents (link will be sent to you via Studybugs) asking you to give us your views on homework.

No dogs or other pets on site please (even if carried) unless assistant dogs. Thank you!

Conduct on School Site

Thank you to our fabulous community, who uphold the school's community ethos and values whilst on the school site as well as offsite when the children are in school uniform. We have so many wonderfully supportive parents and carers in our community. **Our values of Be Kind, be Respectful, be Inclusive, Be Safe and Be Your Best** should be modelled by us all at all times to ensure that we show the children how they should behave towards you, us and each other.

Your feedback

Your feedback (positive and negative) is very much valued so please do come and speak to us. You can find a member of leadership on one of the drives before and after school on most days.