

Parent Consultation Meetings For all classes, except for Magpie Class, our Parent Consultation meetings this term are planned for Wednesday 18th and Thursday 19th October. **For Magpie Class *only* meetings will be on Tuesday 17th and Thursday 19th October.** At this time of the year, these meetings are to discuss about how pupils have been settling into school and their behaviour and attitudes to learning. Opportunities to review work and progress will take place at the mid-year meetings. Appointments will be available to parents from this Friday evening when you will receive an email inviting you to book in to see your child's class teacher. If your child accesses The Hive, there are no formal appointments for this but Mrs Finlay-Black will be available if you would like to pop in for a brief chat. The Hive is accessed from our Year 4 corridor. There will be **no Thursday Clubs on the 19th** due to parent consultations.

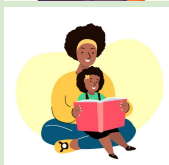
Telephones We have a temporary solution to our phone lines now and this seems to be working for us all. Absences can be reported on the absence lines as usual. We have had technicians in school this week and they hope to install a fully functioning set of phones for us before half term. Hopefully then, things will be completely back to normal. Thanks for you understanding and patience with this situation.



Weather It is feeling much more autumnal now and rainy weather is becoming more frequent. This is a good time to remind everyone of the importance of a warm and waterproof coat. We will try to be outside as much as possible, and especially for playtimes, lunchtimes and Forest School, unless the rain really is torrential.

PTA AGM Our PTA AGM meeting is tomorrow at 7pm in the junior school hall. It would be great to see as many parents as possible there. Our PTA do a marvellous job organising many events for both the infant and junior schools and these raise much needed and important funds for our schools. We hope to see you there!

Regular Bedtimes Everyone who works with children know that those who come to school tired are far less likely to be able to concentrate and, therefore, make good progress. Regular and consistent bedtime routines are vital for children and this includes clear rules on any TV/games machines, etc in bedrooms and when they can or cannot be used. This is, of course, an area that can cause conflict at times so it's not always easy but we owe it to our children to set clear routines. There is a dedicated charity and details can be found at www.thechildrenssleepcharity.org.uk but there is lots of good advice on the internet, a link to the NHS site about the importance of sleep is here - [NHS and sleep](#).



Reading at Home Many thanks to everyone who has been reading with their children at home over the summer and at the start of term. Despite all of the technology changes in our society, reading is more important than ever. When children see adults reading and writing in everyday life – reading for pleasure, sharing a story with them, using a recipe, making a shopping list, writing a birthday card, browsing the web, reading street signs or reading and writing emails – it teaches them that reading and writing are important skills. We know finding time is difficult these days, but it really does make a huge difference if you can find time to read with your son or daughter. Actually, just the fact of spending 'quality time' together when reading helps the parent/child bond and children love to know you are interested in them and want to spend time with them. The primary years slip by very quickly but those times reading with our children will stay with them forever. Please try and find the time if you possibly can.

Miss Windross

Road safety We realise that getting to and from school can be challenging and very busy, especially the closer you are to our site. In assembly this week, we remembered the road safety rules and talked about how to keep ourselves safe when we are walking, especially to and from school. Please help us to keep our children safe by driving and parking safely around the site.



Year 4 Hooke Court

Yesterday via email we sent a Google Form requesting your child's medical information and emergency contact information whilst we are away.

Please [click here](#) if you did not receive it. Please complete it as soon and as thoroughly as you can. Thank you

Thank you for all the harvest festival donations. The Foodbank were very appreciative.

HEALTH & SAFETY NOTICE: Please be aware that dogs are not allowed on school grounds (except assistance dogs). We are also a non-smoking site. Bikes and scooters are not to be ridden on site and the play equipment is for the use of Portway Junior School pupils only whilst under staff supervision. Children should not be using the play equipment before or after school.

International Day Of Peace

On Thursday 21st September representatives from Portway Junior School joined other schools from within Andover at Andover Trees, in Harmony Woods to celebrate International Peace Day. As a Jane Goodall Roots and Shoots school, we were invited to mark the day by flying a Dove, the widely recognised symbol of peace, through the forest. We were then guided to the centre of the forest where we decorated paper doves and shards of wood. The doves were then hung in the 'Oak Circle' and the shards of wood placed around a tree which was earlier planted by the Mayor of Andover.

The children were fantastic representatives for the school and as ever, wore the uniform with pride. We are Proud to be Portway and will continue to attend events such as this, as citizens of our world, and our commitment to community projects.

Thank you to Mr Pearmain for arranging the trip.



Social Media

Don't forget that you can follow us on X, formerly Twitter - @portwayjunior - and/or join our closed Facebook group (PortwayJuniorSchool).



These are for parents only and are a way to share some news snippets from school rather than a formal communication route as we do not check it often.

Please contact the school office with any queries.

Staying safe online

Online games can be a great way for children and young people to keep busy and stay in touch with friends and family but it's important that they play safely. If your child plays games online, please be aware of the age ratings of the games they play - what is suitable for an older child may not be suitable for a younger one. A number of online games also offer children the opportunity to 'meet up' with others they don't know online and this puts children at risk of grooming or online abuse. Further information about this can be found on the [NSPCC website](https://www.nspcc.org.uk) and the blue links below will give some further guidance.

Top tips are:

Check the games content - the age rating is provided by PEGI and will give you an idea of who a game is suitable for

Change settings - all games consoles have settings that prevent children from accessing inappropriate games. You can also set limits for how long children play for.

Talk to your child - find out what games they enjoy and see if you can play together. Agree which ones are appropriate

Make a family agreement - this would establish some rules involving screen time and/or game playing time.



Key Dates

18th & 19th Oct
23rd - 27th Oct
Mon 13th Nov
Tues 14th Nov
22nd - 24th Nov
Fri 15th Dec
Tuesday 2nd Jan
Wed 3rd Jan

Parent Consultation Meetings
Autumn half term holiday
Individual pupil photographs
Pupil flu immunisations
Y4 Hooke Court residential trip
School finishes for Christmas holidays
School closed to pupils for staff training
Spring term starts for all pupils

DATES TO REMEMBER

Inset dates for 2023/2024

Friday 1st September Monday 6th November
Tuesday 2nd January Friday 23rd February
Monday 3rd June

Positivity

Resilience

Integrity

Dedication

Encouragement

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about GROUP CHATS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

BULLYING

Unkind comments or images which are purposely aimed at an individual can be shared freely in a group chat – allowing and often encouraging others to join in the bullying behaviour. If this content is shared in a group of their peers (especially a larger group), it serves to amplify the hurt, embarrassment, anxiety and isolation that the victim feels.

EXCLUSION AND ISOLATION

This common issue with group chats can happen in several ways: starting a new group, for instance, but deliberately excluding a certain child. Likewise, the chat may take place on an app which one child doesn't have access to, meaning they can't be involved. A child can also feel isolated when a group chat is used to discuss or share images from an event that everyone else but them attended.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some discussions in group chats may include inappropriate words, swearing and unsuitable images or videos. These could be viewed by your child if they are part of that group, whether they actively engage in it or not. Some chat apps have a disappearing message function, so your child may be unable to report something they've seen because it can only be viewed once or for a short time.

SHARING GROUP CONTENT

It's important to remember that – while the content of the chat is private between those in the group – individual users can easily share a message, photo or video with others outside of the group or screenshot what's been posted. The risk of something your child intended as private becoming public (and potentially going viral) is higher if there are people they don't know well in the group.

UNKNOWN MEMBERS

Within larger group chats, it's more likely your child will be communicating with people they don't really know. These strangers may be friends of the host, but not necessarily friendly toward your child. It's wise for young people not to share personal details and stay aware that they have no control over the messages and images they share after they've put them online.

NOTIFICATIONS AND FOMO

A drawback of large group chats is the sheer number of notifications. Every time someone in the group messages, your child's device will be 'pinged' with an alert: potentially, this could mean hundreds of notifications a day. Not only is this highly distracting, but young people's fear of missing out on the latest conversation results in increased screen time as they try to keep up with the chat.

Advice for Parents & Carers

CONSIDER OTHERS' FEELINGS

Group chats are often an arena for young people to gain social status. This could cause them to do or say things on impulse, which could upset others in the group. Encourage your child to consider how other people might feel if they engaged in this behaviour. If your child does upset a member of their group chat, support them to reach out, show empathy and apologise for their mistake.

PRACTISE SAFE SHARING

In any online communication, it's vital for young people to be aware of what they're sharing and who might potentially see it. Discuss the importance of not revealing identifiable details like their address, their school or photos that they wouldn't like to be seen widely. Remind them that once something is shared in a group, they lose control of where it may end up and how it might be used.

GIVE SUPPORT, NOT JUDGEMENT

Remind your child that they can confide in you if they feel bullied or excluded in a group chat, instead of responding to the person who's upset them. Validate their hurt feelings and help to put them back in control by discussing how they'd like to handle the situation. On a related note, you could also empower your child to speak up if they're in a chat where others are being picked on.

AVOID INVITING STRANGERS

Sadly, many individuals online hide their true identity to gain a child's trust – for example, to gather information on them, to exchange inappropriate content or to coax them into doing things they aren't comfortable with. Ensure your child understands why they shouldn't add people they don't know to a group chat – and, especially, to never accept a group chat invitation from a stranger.

BLOCK, REPORT AND LEAVE

If your child is in a chat where inappropriate content is being shared, advise them to block the users sending the material, report them to the host app or platform and exit the group. If any of this content could be putting a minor at risk, contact the police. Emphasise to your child that it's OK for them to simply leave any group chat that they don't feel comfortable being a part of.

SILENCE NOTIFICATIONS

Having a phone or tablet bombarded with notifications from a group chat can be a massive irritation and distraction – especially if it's happening late in the evening. Explain to your child that they can still be part of the group chat, but that it would be healthier for them to turn off or mute the notifications and catch up with the conversation at a time which better suits them.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



NOS National Online Safety®
#WakeUpWednesday