

Attendance The Spring term is when children really begin to flourish, working hard and applying themselves well to their work so as to be proud of their achievements. Certainly I have seen a number of children over these last few weeks with a variety of learning they are rightly very proud of. I look forward to seeing more of this great work as we continue to work hard this term. We also ask for your support in this, ensuring children attend school, practise times tables and to read regularly with your child.

As you probably know, we consider that an overall 95% attendance is the minimum expected of all pupils. If attendance falls below this then we may make contact with you, and we also look back at previous years to see if there is an ongoing issue. Many studies have shown us that pupils with good attendance are far more likely to do well, both in primary and secondary school. A quick reminder that we are also not allowed to authorise holidays in term time, unless there are very exceptional circumstances. Please put as much information as possible on the request form to help us with this. If a request is turned down, and is 5 days or more, then we have to inform the Local Authority. This is part of the procedures that all Hampshire County Council schools must abide by.

Clubs Most of our clubs for this half term, run during lunchtime. This makes logistics a little easier and clubs start this week and finish the week of 24 March.

Head Lice Alert! There have been some recent sightings of these little creatures. We would very much appreciate it if everyone could do a quick check of your child's hair to evict any that might be found there! Thank you. 😊 Further advice can be found at www.nhs.uk/conditions/Head-lice

Squid Game There has been an incident in school relating to this Netflix series which is rated 15 due to its scenes of brutal violence. I have included some information about this overleaf in order to support all parents to be vigilant what children can access and watch at home.

Attendance Ladder



Miss Windross

The Super Stone Age



Last week a history expert came to Portway Junior to tell Year 3 about the Stone Age. We had an assembly where we learnt about layers of earth. We had different colours to represent each layer and we learnt that this is how the Stone Age things got covered up over time and how people had to excavate them. Sometimes archaeologists discovered bones and these could be of animals and even mammoths! A mammoth was big like an elephant was hunted by Stone Age people for food. We learning about Stone Age burials and actually acted out a burial in the classroom! We learnt that Stone Age people were buried with things that were important to them. These were things like amber necklaces, bone necklaces and the people were wrapped in woven blankets made from animal fur and skin. We learn that some clothing, like a t-shirt, was made out of nettles - they soaked the nettles in water. They also made bags for carrying food and stuff and these were made from animal skins and torches from cloth and beeswax that were then set alight! We even found out that the Stone Age people cut stomachs out of animals and used these to carry water! We are very glad we are modern people with water bottles!

Oliver B & Freya S, Bat Class



Lunchbox and Snack reminders

We strongly encourage a healthy lifestyle and, as part of this, request that packed lunches and snacks are healthy - such as fruit and vegetable pieces. (Chocolate and sweets are not allowed) We are also a nut-free school and request that all food pupils bring to school is always free from any kinds of nut.

Internet Safety for all!

Safe use of the internet is important for all of our children but, when we think of all the devices, websites, apps, games and social media platforms there are, knowing where to start with monitoring these as parents can feel overwhelming. The website www.internetsafetymatters.org has some great information including some links to set up children's devices with safety at the centre. Like the link here: [Set Up Kids' Tech Devices](#).



Key Dates

Thur 30 Jan 3:30pm	Info eve for Y5 parents for Avon Tyrrell '25
Wed 29 - Fri 31 Jan	Hooke Court residential for Y4 pupils
Thur 13 Feb	Info eve for Y6 parents for end of KS2 tests
Mon 17-Fri 21 Feb	Spring half term holiday
Fri 28 Feb	Inset day school closed for training
Mon 7 - Mon 21 April	Easter holidays (pupils return to school Tues 22 April)
Mon 12-Thurs 15 May	SATS Week for Year 6
Week of 26 May	Summer half term holiday
Mon 2 June	Inset day school closed for training (pupils return to school Tues 3rd June)
Tue 22 July	Last day of term for the summer holidays

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Office Hours: 8:30-4:30 (4:00 on Fridays)

Messages can be left on the answerphone outside of these times (or at any time during the day)

Squid Game Alert: Key Info for Parents & Carers

What is Squid Game?

Netflix's Squid Game is one of the streaming service's most successful show of all time, with huge numbers of viewers taking to social media to discuss each new episode. The South Korean thriller features some scenes of fairly brutal violence and is rated 15 by the BBFC. It follows a group of adults who compete to win innocent-looking playground games, but who are killed if they do not succeed at the tasks.

An unexpected success in terms of viewing figures, Squid Game's popularity is beginning to spread across various online platforms. There has been a slew of content created – ranging from memes to apps – that convey the violence of the show, so it is important for parents, carers and educators to understand the basis of Squid Game and the potential risks to young people who might be exposed to it.

What are the hazards for children?

Squid Game's 15 rating has not prevented clips and images from the show being uploaded onto social media sites such as [TikTok](#), with the #SquidGame hashtag being viewed more than 22.8 billion times. There have been reports of children who have accounts on these platforms inadvertently viewing gory, explicit scenes from the programme, and parents and carers should be mindful of the prevalence of these uploads.

The popularity of the programme has also led to online challenges based on various scenes, which see people taking part in seemingly innocent children's games. On the show, however, characters are executed if they fail in the game – and videos of people pretending to kill each other after competing in Squid Game-style contests are going viral on social media, where they are easily accessible to children.

What is the Squid Game Challenge App?

Squid Game Challenge (also known as K-Game Challenge) is an app for smartphones and tablets that has been released for Android and iOS, and the two systems differ significantly on their age ratings for the game. The iTunes Store rates the app as 12+ (advising of "mild/infrequent horror/fear themes"), while the PEGI rating for Android is just 3+, which means that very young children might be able to download and play the game even with parental controls activated on their device or through Google Play.

The gameplay is frequently interrupted by pop-ups and ads (sometimes appearing while the user is rapidly tapping their screen while attempting to complete the challenge). This could easily lead to unwanted purchases or accidental visits to inappropriate sites beyond the app.

What can trusted adults do?

As a parent or carer, keep a watchful eye on the content that your children are viewing. Speak to them openly and chat about how they have been spending time on their devices; let them ask questions, too. Ensure that the [parental controls are activated](#) on your child's device and that age-restricted child profiles are properly set up any on-demand services available through the family TV (such as [Netflix](#), in this case) to prevent inappropriate content being streamed.

If you see your child replicating the challenges from the show or hear them talking about scenes and characters from Squid Game, it would be a timely opportunity to discuss with them that the programme is not intended for children, that much of the content would be inappropriate for their age, and that the violence in the series is very realistic and often upsetting. For more information, [download our guide here](#).

Spring 2025

PORTWAY POP IN

Date	What's On?	Comments
6 Jan	Just Pop-In	For any questions, queries or just a cuppa!
13 Jan	How to get the best out of family life Find out more about the Nurturing Programme	Speak to Gemma about the course, how to join the next group or work through the content 1:1
20 Jan	Supporting Samaritans 'Brew Day'	Join us for a drink, bring a friend along too and take a cuppa to a loved one on us
27 Jan	Just Pop-In	For any questions, queries or just a cuppa!
3 Feb	School Nurse Clinic	Speak to the School nurses about what they do, the support they can offer and advice the give on a number of health related issues.
10 Feb	Keeping Children Safe Online – Safer Internet Day is 11 February 2025	Support and advice around managing screen time and keeping children safe in the digital world
HALF TERM		
24 Feb	Just Pop-In	For any questions, queries or just a cuppa!
3 Mar	Battling Bedtimes?	Support and advice around bedtime routines and the importance of sleep.
10 Mar	Just Pop-In	For any questions, queries or just a cuppa!
17 Mar	Just Pop-In	For any questions, queries or just a cuppa!
24 Mar	Coffee & Craft - Mother's Day	Take some time for you and make a little something for a special Mum
31 Mar	Coffee & Craft – Easter Special	Pick up some ideas for the Easter holidays and stay to try easy to make Easter themed craft

Open to all Parents & Carers. There's no obligation to take part if you'd rather just stop in for a drink. Toddlers welcome too.

Positivity

Resilience

Integrity

Dedication

Encouragement