

Portishead Primary School

Parent Handbook



2023-2024



School Strategic Plan - Ambition Statement

Our pupils achieve high academic outcomes with excellent attitudes and behaviour.

We expect everyone to become the best version of themselves, thriving as individuals, and working hard towards personal ambitions.

We lead by example, delivering an ambitious and inspirational curriculum that enables everyone to flourish.

Our school is a happy, safe and inclusive environment for all.

About the School

School Organisation

There are 3 stages in the school.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

This is the name of our reception classes. Their curriculum is play based and involves a balance between child-initiated (chosen by the child) and adult initiated (led by adults) activities. It is a completely separate curriculum from the rest of the school, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each teacher is supported by an additional adult who works with the classes at all times. Every day the children use the inside and outside learning environment. We record the children's learning in e-diaries which you will be able to access on line throughout the school year.



Key Stage 1



This includes Year 1 and 2, which are the first classes that follow the National Curriculum.

In Year 1 pupils take the phonics screening check in June. This is a statutory requirement from the Department of Education. In Year 2 pupils are assessed at the end of the year and these assessments are statutory requirements from the Department of Education.

Key Stage 2

This is years 3, 4, 5 and 6.

In Year 4 children take a statutory times table check.

At the end of Year 6 children take part in assessments in Reading, Spelling and Grammar and Maths known as the SATs. This is a statutory requirement from the Department of Education.



The School Day

Mornings

The gates to the playground are open from around 8.30am. You are more than welcome to come in and wait but we would not advise getting to school earlier than 8.30am unless you are attending “The Play Station” (breakfast club). The playground is unsupervised until 8.40am.

From 8.40am KS2 children come straight in to class. They come in, put their lunchboxes on the trolleys provided and hang up their coats.

Foundation Stage and KS1 children line up outside their classrooms at 8.45am.

This helps us keep the traffic and parking disruption to a minimum and supports the morning routines of parents with children in more than one phase. It also builds independence for the KS2 children.

Once all classes have entered the building the school doors are locked. Any child arriving after this should enter the school via the school office.

Your child will be marked late in the register if they do not arrive in class by 8.55am for EYFS/KS1 and 8.50am for KS2.

Afternoons

School finishes at 3.15pm for EYFS and KS1 and at 3.20pm for KS2. The school gates are opened at approximately 3pm and parents are welcome to wait on the playground but must be mindful that some teaching activities may still be happening in the school grounds. We also ask that parents respect the privacy of the EYFS and KS1 classrooms and avoid any behaviour that may distract children and staff as they finish the school day.



Most after school clubs finish around 4.20pm but you will need to check the exact arrangements for each club that you book your child in to.

What if my child won't be in because they are ill?

You should ring the school as soon as you know before the start of the school day. The school office is open from 8am. There is an answer machine where you can leave a message. If you don't ring, the school will ring you to check the reason for your child's absence. If absence rates are high you may be asked to provide medical evidence or appointment cards. Please try to book all non-emergency medical and dental appointments outside of the school day or term time where possible. You will need to provide evidence (e.g. appointment cards) for appointments in term time.

What if you are late in the mornings?

If you know that you are going to be late please ring in advance.

If you are late (the classes have already entered the building) you should bring your child to the school office where they will be registered in the late book and you will be asked to explain the reason for lateness. A school adult will take your child to class. If you arrive at school after 9.40am for EYFS/KS1 and 9.35am for KS2 then this will be recorded in our school register as an unauthorised absence.

It really does help your child, their class and their class teacher to be in class on time. Arriving late often causes anxiety for children and disrupts learning for everyone in their class.

What if I am late to collect my child?

If you are unavoidably late, the children will be kept inside the school building. They will be brought to the school office where you should collect them.

If you know you are going to be late, please phone the school in advance. This reduces the anxiety for your children.

Please arrive promptly at the school office to collect children from clubs. If parents are regularly late at the end of clubs then children may be asked to leave the club.

What if someone else is picking up my child?

You should tell the class teacher in the mornings if someone else other than a parent/carers is collecting your child. Otherwise, please ring the school during the school day to inform them.

What if we need time off school?

We expect all children to have at least 95% attendance and holidays should be taken in the 13 weeks of the year outside of term time.

Our school will only authorise absence from school in exceptional circumstances following nationally agreed guidelines. For details of what qualifies as "exceptional" please see our attendance policy which can be found on the [Policies & Key Documents](#) page in the LSP Policies link.

A leave of absence form should be completed for any planned absence which will be reviewed by the headteacher.

Absence – every day really does count!



School Uniform

Hairstyles – must be neat and tidy. Use of hair dye to achieve unnatural coloured looks or styles are not permitted.

Hair accessories – must be plain/minimal and black or in the school colours. Hair bands and bows should not be oversized or feature other shapes e.g. cat ears, unicorns etc.

Jewellery – Should be avoided where possible. One pair of sleeper ear studs are allowed. Children will be asked to remove earrings for PE or cover them in tape. No other jewellery should be worn to school.

Makeup – Children should not wear makeup to school. This includes false nails and nail varnish.

Please note, children who repeatedly do not follow these rules will not be selected for leadership roles or to represent the school.

Tops	Light blue or navy polo shirt or light blue shirt
Jumpers	Plain navy sweatshirt, jumper or cardigan
Bottoms	Grey trousers, shorts, skirts or culottes
Socks/Leggings/Tights	Plain navy blue, black or grey
Dresses (optional)	Grey pinafore or blue and white checked summer dress
Coats	A warm coat or fleece of any colour to increase visibility on the journey to and from school and when crossing the road. Non-uniform sweatshirts should not be worn instead of a coat or fleece.
Shoes	Plain black shoes that can be polished. Running, football or canvas shoes are not permitted. In extreme weather conditions this rule is relaxed to ensure feet are kept warm and dry. Children are not permitted to change in to training shoes at playtimes and lunchtimes.

Uniform with the school logo is available from The Sports Shop on the High Street if you wish to purchase it.

PE Kit

Navy shorts, jogging bottoms, navy or black leggings, plain navy or school T-shirt, warm plain navy sweatshirt or school hoodie, trainers. Daps for outdoor PE are not very robust to protect feet on the hard surfaces and in cold weather. **Football kits and branded kit in non-school colours are not permitted.**

Children wear PE kit to school on their PE days and it is important that the correct clothing for the weather is selected.

Non-Uniform

Opportunities for children to show their individuality by wearing home clothes are offered on fund raising non-uniform days.



How can I find out what my child is learning?

Meet the teacher

At the beginning of each school year there is a meet the teacher meeting for each class, where you can find out about the year group's planned learning and the aims and expectations of that particular year. This is a good chance to get to know the teacher and ask any initial questions.

The Curriculum

Our curriculum reflects the national curriculum from Year 1 to Year 6 but is personalised to our school. Children follow programmes of study which follow a clear progression of knowledge and skills, often themed around topics.

At the beginning of each term each year group will send home a newsletter and topic planner which outlines curriculum coverage.



Curriculum outcomes are often shared with parents e.g. an art exhibition or museum in the school hall.

We always end the year with an excellence week and exhibition of work across the school.

Please see the Learning tab of the website for the overview of our school curriculum, and detailed information by subject. These pages and the documents that you can access will show you what you child will be learning.

Trips and Visitors



These are a really big part of bringing learning alive and making it relevant and meaningful. There should be trips, local visits and also a range of visitors arranged throughout the year.

Parents are needed to facilitate the additional supervision that trips require. It is a good way of contributing to the life of the school.

Year 6 attend a week-long residential trip and Year 4 attend an overnight trip.

Forest School

Each class will take part in at least five Forest School sessions during this academic year. This builds on our existing commitment to outdoor education which saw the introduction of a Year 4 residential as well as the Year 6 outdoor and adventurous week.

Forest schools give children the opportunity to explore nature, build their outdoor skills, increase self-esteem and take part in team building activities.

Children wear old clothes suitable for the weather on the day of their Forest School sessions. The timetable is shared with parents in advance.

Parents' evenings and school reports

These are held twice a year. Appointments are booked online and sessions are run remotely. We send a mid-year school report home in January and a final written report in June. Parents can come in to school in term 6 to discuss the school report with the class teacher by appointment.

Additional Meetings

If you are unable to make parents' evening or you have a particular concern that you would like to share, please don't wait and make an appointment with the teacher either in person or through the school office. These will usually be at the end of the school day. Each year group has an email address where the teachers can be contacted directly. This is checked regularly and a member of the year team will respond within two school days.

Homework

The school has a clear homework policy that is published on the school website. Homework goes home weekly.

Learning Workshops and Information Evenings

These are opportunities for parents to come in to school and find out how your children are being taught. Recently these have included assessment, information for parents who speak an additional language at home and e-safety. If there is an area on which you would like more information please let the senior leaders know on the gate or indicate this through the annual parent survey.

Reading

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum. Parental support with reading is essential for your children. From the start of the year, all children will have a reading book which is changed weekly in school. Your child will be given a reading record. These are notebooks provided by the school to write down the different books your child is reading. We would like all parents to listen to their children read daily and to write a comment at least 3 times a week. **Children who are not listened to by an adult at home are at a significant disadvantage and are at risk of not meeting age related expectations across the curriculum.**

Themed Weeks

Children take part in themed weeks throughout the school year. There are some that we always hold e.g. Anti-Bullying Week and Healthy Schools Week (including Sports days), whilst others are rotated throughout the curriculum. Often children work across year groups and classes are mixed up to develop relationships.



Physical Education

All children in the school have approximately 2 hours of PE a week. Children come to school on their PE days in their PE kit. Across the school children learn a range of sports and sporting skills including dance, gymnastics, games and athletics. Children are taught about links with health in PE.

Swimming is taught at Parish Wharf to children one term a year from Years 3 to 5. Parents are informed through the curriculum newsletters.

School teams take part extensively in local organised cluster tournaments facilitated by Gordano School and the North Somerset PE Association.

We hold sports days for EYFS, KS1 and KS2.

What happens if my child is struggling?

If you or your child's teacher feels that your child is finding it difficult to learn or behave then good communication is the key to moving things forward. It is always worth sharing any changes in circumstances or issues at home that may affect your child in school e.g. moving house, illness in the family etc. You may also want to share information about friendship groups or learning. Staff will always speak to you first if they feel there is an issue.

If your child is struggling with learning issues, in the first instance raise this with the class teacher who, if they agree, will raise the issue with our Inclusion Leader. Your child may require additional support so that they can make progress with their learning.

We don't speak English at home – how can I help my child?

An increasing number of our children and families speak more than one language at home. Bilingualism has many real benefits for children's learning and does not hold them back.

The most important thing is that they are fluent and comfortable in their home language, as this is how their understanding of the world develops. Children have amazing linguistic ability but they do need the solid base of a good understanding of a home language before they learn a new language unless they are learning 2 languages from birth. So:

Do value your home language

Do talk to children in your home language

Do read stories to your child in your home language

Do encourage them to speak to you in their home language

If you have any concerns around language support for your child, please speak to your class teacher.

There is an expanding range of dual language books in the main languages we speak in the class reading corners. Our website can also be translated into almost any language.

How does the school communicate with parents?

Schoolcomms

This is an electronic information service that sends out emails and text messages to parents. In order to get the best out of this service it is important that the school has up to date contact details for all parents. A notices and reminders information email is sent out to parents every fortnight. Email is our main form of communication and is how we keep you updated with school events and key information.

School Calendar

You can link this from our website to your mobile devices. This has key dates in and is updated regularly.

School Website

The school has a website that hosts a wide range of information about the school that is useful to parents and the community. If you are looking for a policy or a newsletter or would like some other useful information e.g. website links to support learning, safeguarding information etc. then this is a good place to start. It also includes regular news updates linked to class and whole school events, as well as parent information workshops.

We also share news stories on our school Facebook Page which you may find useful to follow.

Facebook

Our school page is run by us and is used to celebrate what is going on in the school, as well as staff and pupil achievements. We also use this to pass on important messages alongside school comms e.g. school closures, weather alerts etc.

<https://www.facebook.com/Portishead-Primary-School-769975739847007>

Class Facebook Pages

These are set up and run by parents who update them and do not form part of the official school comms but can be very helpful to parents!

ClassDojo

Log in to see awards and house points your children have been given.

Times Tables Rock Stars

Home learning accounts your children will have access to.

ParentPay

Log in to make payments to school for trips, The Playstation (wraparound care) etc.

Annual Questionnaire

An annual questionnaire for parents and children is carried out in the summer term to gather opinions on different aspects of the school. It is really helpful if you can take the time and trouble to complete this as we use your responses to improve the school and the service we offer.

What are our Reward Systems?

It is an essential part of the school vision that effort and achievement are celebrated in all aspects of school life and the curriculum. Each class teacher is able to reward children within the framework of the behaviour policy but it is also essential that there is consistency of approach across the school. Our school systems

include:

Celebration Assembly

Held on a Friday, one child from each class is awarded an achievement certificate that is presented in front of the school. These children are chosen by class teachers and certificates are taken home.



Class Reward Systems

As well as earning house points each class has their own class reward system where great learning and behaviour is recognised and collated. Classes work towards an agreed goal and will earn a termly privilege chosen in partnership with the class teacher.



Headteacher Certificates and Stickers

Children can be sent to the Headteacher to share work or experiences they are particularly proud of. They are always welcome. They will often be rewarded with a certificate or Headteacher sticker.

All of these awards are logged on **Class Dojo**.

What happens at break time?

All children have the opportunity to play during their lunchtime and are supervised by members of staff who wear pink high-visibility vests so that they can be clearly located.

Foundation Stage

Children in the Reception classes have access to their own outdoor space throughout the school day. They use this place to learn through play and to take part in adult led learning.

Key Stage 1

Years 1 and 2 have morning play between 10.30 and 10.45 and can be given an additional afternoon play at the class teacher's discretion.

Key Stage 2

Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 have one playtime between 10.30 and 10.45 but may be taken to learn outside at the teacher's discretion.

Children in EYFS will be provided with milk until they are 5.

Children in EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2 will be provided with free fruit.

Children from Years 3-6 should bring a healthy snack. We recommend fruit or vegetables but any healthy snack is acceptable.



What happens at lunchtime?



When is lunchtime?

For Reception and Years 1 and 2 lunchtime is between 11.45am and 12.45pm.

For Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 lunchtime is between 12.10pm and 1.10pm.

Where do the children eat?

Children will eat packed lunches and school dinners in the school hall. They are taken in by year group on a rota. During warm dry weather children who have packed lunches can choose to eat outside under the supervision of our lunchtime team.

What can they eat and how much does it cost?

Children should bring a healthy packed lunch (no sweets or fizzy drinks). The lunch should be balanced and include some carbohydrate, protein and fruit or salad or vegetables e.g. carrot/pepper, cucumber sticks.

We encourage all parents to refrain from giving nuts to children to eat in school due to the number of children with severe allergic reactions.

Our catering company have introduced an online payment and ordering system called 'SELECT' which allows you to order your child's meals in advance, pay for school lunches or just pre-book meals for your child if they are entitled to free school meals or Universal Infant Free School Meals. The menu for school dinners is sent out via Schoolcomms and is available to view on the Aspens SELECT website. There is always a vegetarian option.

Please inform the school office if your child is vegetarian, has any specific dietary requirements or has any food allergies. School dinners cost £2.45 per day and are paid for in advance. All KS1 children get a school dinner that is provided free of charge.

What if my child doesn't eat anything?

Eating is monitored by the lunch staff and senior leader on duty. Children are encouraged to eat a balanced lunch and try a range of foods. If the school has any concerns the school/class teacher will talk to you at the end of the school day. On the rare occasion that children won't eat anything parents will be contacted during lunchtime.

What if my child is a slow eater?

Children can eat at their own pace and are always given time to finish their food.

Who looks after the children at lunchtime and what can they do?

We have a team of lunchtime supervisors called SMSAs. As well as this the Headteacher and the senior leadership team of the school are all on a rota and support effective and enjoyable lunchtimes.

The playground is zoned with a range of activities for the children to enjoy. These include the climbing wall, trim trail, tyre park, sports court, stage area, dressing up area, school boat, field (when dry), large chess, skipping zone and an indoor area where children can complete quiet activities.

We also run forest school and Lego Club sessions at lunchtimes to allow children a quiet space when they need it.

What about Free School Meals?

Your child may be able to get free school meals if you are in receipt of any of the following:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

If you think you may meet the criteria for Free School Meals, even if your child is in KS1 and automatically gets free school meals you can check your child's eligibility by visiting the following link:-

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

Part of our school budget is calculated according to the number of children entitled to free school meals. This money makes a huge difference to the number of staff we can employ and the resources we can provide. Without your application we could be missing out on valuable funding.

Snacks and Drinks

Children can bring in a healthy snack to have at playtimes. They **should** also bring in a water bottle to keep in the classroom. Children are free to drink when they need to.

Children in Reception classes are provided a carton of milk until the week of their fifth birthday. After this they can bring a named flask of milk if they want to. Children in EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2 will be provided with free fruit.

There are water fountains around the school that children have access to at lunchtimes.

Health and Wellbeing

What if my child needs to take medicine?

Should your child need to take medicine during school time please speak to the school office to make arrangements.

Asthma inhalers and epi-pens can be kept in school. If your child needs these or has any allergies or medical conditions please let the school know. A form is available from the school office.

Hot and Cold Weather

Parents are asked to send children to school dressed adequately for the weather. It is important to select suitable shoes for wet/snowy weather and remember school coats even if you come to school in a warm dry car!

If it is sunny or likely to be please provide your child with a sun hat and apply sun screen before coming to school. Your child may bring sunscreen to school with them but will have to know how to apply it themselves as this can't be done by staff.

Illness and accidents

We will ring you if your child becomes ill during the school day and is unable to remain in school. Children who have accidents will receive first aid from a trained first aider and for more serious injuries, parents will be notified either by phone and/or a note will be sent home. For minor head bumps parents will receive a text message. Please always make sure that the school has 2 full sets of up to date emergency contact details.

Child Protection and Safeguarding

If you are worried that a child is in danger, being neglected or abused you should share your concerns with a member of the school safeguarding team or the Headteacher who is the designated child protection officer. Out of school hours you can contact the social care duty team on 01454 615615 or the police on 111.

If there were any concerns about your child's safety or wellbeing, you will be closely involved in the process, unless it is deemed unsafe to do so. This may involve outside agencies such as North Somerset's social care team.

The school will only make a referral to social care without your permission if it is felt that to not do so would be placing the child in danger.

Wraparound Childcare

This is childcare that is available at the beginning and end of the school day.

The PlayStation – what we call our breakfast and after school club.

The school runs our own wrap around care. Morning sessions cost £5 and include a breakfast of cereals and toast with fruit juice or milk. After school sessions cost £10 per session and include a tea of sandwiches and fruit with water.

The Play Station is open from 7.30am before school and runs until 6pm after school. It is located in the school hall and has its own entrance.

After-School Clubs

There are a range of clubs offered by school staff and outside providers throughout the school term. Letters are sent out by staff or via Schoolcomms and different year groups are targeted. The school also runs a weekly homework club.

Clubs are listed on the school website. Children must commit to attending each session. They normally run until 4.20pm but may vary. Children are picked up from the main entrance by the school office.

Just for Parents

Friends of the School (FOS)

The school has an active parents association called the Friends of School who are a registered charity. This is made up of parent volunteers who organise a wide range of school events that raise money and develop a sense of community for parents and children. Funds raised have been used to develop the outdoor space for children and purchase additional play equipment. Events organised include a Quiz Night, Christmas and Summer Fairs and school discos for children.



The FOS meets informally on approximately a monthly basis. They are extremely friendly and welcoming and are always looking for new ideas and additional volunteers.

How is the School Led and Managed?

Portishead Primary School is a large primary School within the Lighthouse Schools Partnership, a local multi-academy trust. As such our standards are overseen by both the governing body and the trustees of the LSP. The Headteacher is accountable to the CEO of the LSP, Mr Gary Lewis and Chair of Governors.

Senior Leadership Team

This includes the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Business Manager, Early Years and Key Stage 1 Leader, Key Stage 2 Leader and the SENDCo.

Governing Body

The local governing body acts as the critical friend and is part of the LSP trust. It is involved in strategic planning, developing policies and reviewing progress. The main job is to make sure that high standards are maintained and to ensure that the school meets the needs of the parents and wider community.

The day to day leadership of the school is delegated to the Headteacher who is accountable to the governing body and CEO.

The governing body is made up of governors from the Local Authority, community, staff and parents. Parent governor vacancies are advertised through Schoolcomms and on our website.

Most of the work of the governing body is done by its committees:

Finance: covers staffing, finance, health and safety and premises.

LGB: covers learning and safeguarding and oversees all aspects of the school.

We also have much smaller Health and Safety and Admissions and Safeguarding Committees.

The School Council

The school council is made up of representatives from each class and meet regularly. They meet with the Headteacher and contribute ideas to the running of the school and are in regular dialogue with their classes and the senior leadership team. They have contributed to the design of the school playgrounds and recently reviewed our school dinner provision. They are a sounding board for lots of ideas. There is a noticeboard in the entrance to the school.

What should I do if I am not happy with something in the school?

Class teachers

If there is a problem, the class teacher is always the first port of call. The best time to catch them is at the end of the day although staff meetings are on Wednesdays or Thursdays on alternate terms. These start at 3.40pm. Members of the senior leadership team also meet at 3.40pm on a Monday.

Each year group has an email address which is monitored that you can use to share non-urgent issues. These are checked regularly.

earlyyears@portisheadprimary.co.uk

yeargroup1@portisheadprimary.co.uk

yeargroup2@portisheadprimary.co.uk

yeargroup3@portisheadprimary.co.uk

yeargroup4@portisheadprimary.co.uk

yeargroup5@portisheadprimary.co.uk

yeargroup6@portisheadprimary.co.uk

If you need more time or privacy please make an appointment with a class teacher as they are always happy to work in partnership with you.

SENDCo

If your concern is related to any special educational needs or outside support for your child then please book an appointment with the SENDCo.



Headteacher

Mrs Sargent is always pleased to listen to any parent concerns that can't be dealt with by class teachers or the deputy head. This is to allow issues to be dealt with at the lowest and most appropriate level in school before escalating to the Headteacher. Our Headteacher can be found at the main gate most mornings or appointments can be booked through the school office. Mrs Sargent is always happy to have feedback from parents on an informal basis. We like to hear about your positive experiences as well as when you have an issue we can help with or learn from.

The School Governors

Their names and photos are on display in the main entrance of the school. They can be contacted via the school office and parent governors can be contacted informally in the school grounds. You can also contact the chair of governors through the website where you can also find out who is on the governing body.

<https://www.portisheadprimary.co.uk/page/?title=Governors&pid=85>

Complaints Procedure

If you have tried to resolve your problem informally with school staff then parents are entitled to make a complaint using the complaints policy. This is available on the school website and copies are available from the school office. You are also entitled to complain to the LSP, although we hope it doesn't come to this!