



January 2024



Dear Parents and Carers

Happy New Year.

I hope that you had a safe and peaceful Christmas break. Our Festive non-uniform day before the Christmas break raised over £500 for our designated charities – this will go into the charity pots and be issued at the end of the school year – thank you for your contributions.

The Spring term is now well underway. It has started on a chilly note with a lack of heating in the main block. Work has started to repair the damaged pipe to the boiler. Heaters have been placed in all affected areas and lessons are continuing. During this cold spell, please ensure your child has a warm waterproof coat for school. Hopefully, the heating will be fully working soon.

Year 11 have returned to a revised and personalised programme of After School Subject Enhancement sessions. These are now planned on identified need and focus on key revision or gaps in understanding. The Subject Enhancement sessions are supporting pupils' preparation for their Pre-Public Examinations. These examinations start on Thursday 1 February, and run until Friday 23 February. A full copy of this timetable can be found on the school website.

Year 10 are busy preparing for their work experience placements towards the end of March. A large number have secured these in an exciting range of places from local nurseries to construction firms and legal services. Any pupils needing help can go to the Year Team for support.

Year 9 have a very busy year ahead. Option information will be coming out in February to help guide subject selection for their Key Stage Four curriculum. Now is the time to start asking teachers and upper school pupils for inside information on each subject.

Year 8 have seen a massive growth in pupil numbers since September last year. With over 150 pupils in the year, it is the largest year group in the school. This week's SMSC session has seen them developing their skills of resilience and perseverance through the Pringle Challenge.

Year 7 have had a very strong first term here at Portchester Community School. Most pupils attended a great bowling and pizza trip to Gunwharf. The cohort has very committed football and basketball teams, as well as outstanding performers in running and dance.

Headteacher: Mr R Carlyle BEd (Hons)

Portchester Community School

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Successful Learners – Confident Individuals – Responsible Citizens

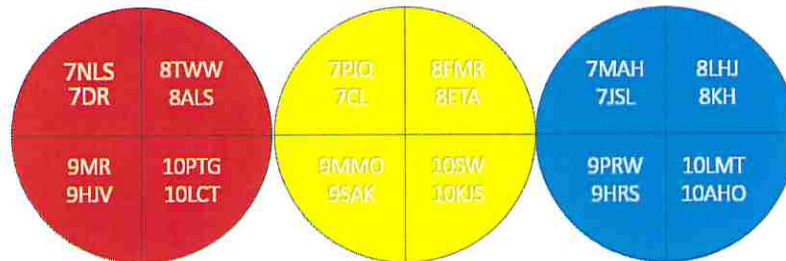




Our new House system has been launched by Mr Smith and his team this week. All pupils are in a new House – Portsdown, Castle or Solent. New logo, motto and signature tune competitions are underway to establish the identities of each House.



THE HOUSE SYSTEM 2024



Portsdown

Castle

Solent

Site and Facilities Updates

Thanks to a significant investment by our Local Authority, the North Toilets will be having a complete make-over. Beyond basic decoration and maintenance, I am sure no major work has taken place in them since they were opened in 1939! The North Toilets may be the subject of many school myths and legends, but this will all end on Monday 15 January 2024 when contractors take over the area to modernise and rebuild the whole space. The project will take up to 6 weeks to complete, ending with the opening of a new facility for all pupils to use. All facilities will be cubicled with open space hand washing areas.



Many of you will be aware that we recently changed our catering provider here in school. Our contract with Radish had run its course and a new provider was required. Caterlink won the tender process and started serving pupils a range of fresh and exciting new foods from last October. Many pupils have complimented the new range of main meals, snacks, and drinks. All meals are made freshly on site each day. To further enhance their great start with us they were inspected this week by the Food Standards Agency and were awarded a 5 for Food Hygiene – Congratulations on achieving the highest possible award!

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Enclosed with this Newsletter is the first in a series of short parent information handouts, written and designed by The National College, aimed at supporting and informing parents about the on-line world in which our pupils are engaging with. The information handouts aim to inform and guide parents about the opportunities and dangers of engaging in online activities. There seems to be very few parts of our world that do not require you to connect and communicate online. Our plan is to ensure that this engagement is as safe and useful as possible. I will include a new handout with each of the Newsletters this year. Other handouts include information on:

- Age-appropriate content.
- Supporting children dealing with upsetting content.
- What parents and carers need to know about Influences/X (Twitter)/Fake news/Sadfishing/Reddit/Telegram/Echo Chambers.
- Online Fair Play – Do's and Don'ts.

If you would like advanced copies of these handouts, please email the school office.

Also enclosed with this Newsletter is a copy of our **Uniform Policy**. A small number of pupils have returned from the Christmas break having forgotten the rules regarding artificial nails and false eyelashes. These should not be worn to school. Persistent defiance of this rule will result in the behaviour sanctions being applied. It will include pupils being sent home from school for persistent defiance. Other sanctions may include – Internal Inclusion and/or removal of privileges. Thankfully, this is only a small number of pupils as the vast majority have returned to school prepared to learn and with a positive attitude. Thank you in advance for your support in this matter.

Back-to-school illness advice offered to parents – via the BBC

Parents are being urged to take five simple steps to keep their children healthy as the new school term begins. Advice from health officials ranges from teaching good hygiene habits to stopping the spread of bugs and knowing when to keep your child at home.

Winter often sees a rise in common viruses like chickenpox, norovirus and flu which can keep children off school. UK health officials say that, by following the advice, parents can protect them as well as the wider community.

The advice is to:

1. **Teach good hygiene habits**, such as regular handwashing.
2. **Stop the spread of stomach bugs**. Sickness bugs, such as norovirus and E. coli are on the up, and that means more children could have diarrhoea and vomiting. If affected, using bleach-based products to clean surfaces will help prevent bugs from spreading (along with washing hands with soap).

The UKHSA says not to prepare food for others if you have symptoms, or for 48 hours after they stop, and it advises people to avoid visiting vulnerable relatives in care homes and hospitals to avoid passing anything on to them, and not to return to work, school or nursery until two days after symptoms end.

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3. **Know when to keep your child at home.** Children should stay at home from school if they have a high temperature (fever) and are unwell and wait until it has passed before going back.

A child with diarrhoea and/or vomiting should also wait for 48 hours before going back, to stop the spread of stomach bugs, however, if they have a runny nose, sore throat, or slight cough - without a high temperature - children are encouraged to go to school.

4. **Get vaccinated.** There is a 'quick and painless' nasal spray for children which offers the best protection against flu, UKHSA says.
5. **Take online advice from NHS resources.**

Thank you for your sustained support. As you can see from the information contained in this Newsletter – it is a very busy time here at school. More updates will be posted on the school website, on the school X (Twitter) feeds and sent out via email and text.

Yours sincerely

Mr R Carlyle
Headteacher

Key dates for January 2024

Monday 15 – North toilet closed/**Hospitality and Catering exam Year 11.**

Tuesday 16 – Full Governing Body meeting.

Wednesday 17 – DEAR Period 1/Year 7 Parents' Evening 4-7 pm. Bookings on-line. Main Hall.

Monday 22 – GCSE Drama performance for parents/PTA Meeting 6 pm in the Conference Room.

Tuesday 23 – Year 11 Science Live trip to Brighton.

Wednesday 24 – GCSE Drama examination all day.

Friday 26 – Inset Day 4 – Fareham and Gosport Curriculum Day. School closed to pupils.

Tuesday 30 – Dance Live at Portsmouth Guildhall.

Thursday 1 February – Year 11 Pre-Public Examinations start.

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Enrichment Clubs

SPRING TERM 1



Day	Break	Lunch	After School (3.15 - 4.15pm)
Monday	Year 7 Computers (for homework) - Mrs Norton in the LRC.	Social and Games Club - Mrs Kingston and Mrs Davis, Year 7 in IT2. Forces Club - Mrs Sharp, Mrs Richards and Miss Jones (Week 2) in E5. Senior Student Leaders Meeting - Mrs Grew in H6. Quiet Study and Reading - Mrs Norton in the LRC.	Further Maths - Mr Castle, Year 10 and 11 in M1. Green Power Engineers - Mr Lumb, Mr Lakin and Mr Walton in T5. Dance Live - Mrs Budd and Mr Webb in the Studio. Homework Club - LSA's in the LRC.
Tuesday	Year 8 Computers (for homework) - Mrs Norton in the LRC. LGBTQ+ - Mrs Ford (Week 1) in PE1.	Board Games Club - Mrs Fuller, Mrs Cope and Mr Ateni in the LRC. Lego Club - Science Team in S2.	'Wanna Talk' - Mrs Mudge in Year 11 Hub. Homework Club - LSA's in the LRC. Art Club - Mr Grant, Years 9 and 10 in T5.
Wednesday	Wellbeing Wednesdays (colouring, puzzles, craft & chess) - Mrs Norton in the LRC.	Quiet Study and Reading - Mrs Norton in the LRC.	Homework Club - LSA's in the LRC.
Thursday	'Books and Biscuits' - Mrs Norton in the LRC.	Newspaper Club - Mrs Richards (Week 2) in E5. Year 9 & 10 Computers (for homework) - Mrs Norton in the LRC. French Quizlet KS4 - Mrs Lanham in IT1. Quiet Study and Reading - Mrs Norton in the LRC.	Homework Club - LSA's in the LRC.
Friday	Fun Fridays (board games & computer games) Mrs Norton in the LRC. Congregational Prayer - Mr Ahmed (Week 1) in M7.	Origami Club - Mrs Touray in M4. Booklet Spanish - Mrs Sharp in M11. Quiet Study and Reading - Mrs Norton in the LRC.	Triple Science Club - Mrs Hodgson in S5. Dance Live - Mrs Budd and Mr Webb in the Studio. Homework Club - LSA's in the LRC.

NEW SPORTS HALL LIGHTING



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Top Tips for... MANAGING SCREEN TIME

According to the latest stats, people aged between 8 and 17 spend four hours on digital devices during an average day. Obviously, a new year is ideal for fresh starts and renewed efforts – so lots of families are trying to cut down their combined screen time right now, creating more moments to connect with each other and relying less on gadgets to have fun. Our top tips on reducing screen time are for everyone, so you can get your whole family involved in turning over a new leaf this year!

BUY MILK

GET OUT AND ABOUT

If the weather's decent, spend some time in the garden or go for a walk. Even a stroll to the local shop would do: the main thing is getting some fresh air and a break from your screen.

TRY A TIMED TRIAL

When you're taking a screen break to do a different activity or a chore, turn it into a game by setting yourself a timer. Can you complete your task before the alarm goes off?

GO DIGITAL DETOX

Challenge yourself and your family to take time off from screens, finding other things to do. You could start off with half a day, then build up to a full day or even an entire weekend.

LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Let your family see you successfully managing your own screen time. You'll be showing them the way, and it might stop some of those grumbles when you do want to go online.

AGREE TECH-FREE ZONES

Nominate some spots at home where devices aren't allowed. Anywhere your family gathers together, like at the table or in the living room, could become a 'no phone zone'.

HOLD A SCREEN TIME AMNESTY

As a family, agree specific windows when it's OK to use devices. This should help everyone to balance time on phones or gaming with enjoying quality moments together.

BE MINDFUL OF TIME

Stay aware of how long you've been on your device for. Controlling how much time you spend in potentially stressful areas of the internet – like social media platforms – can also boost your wellbeing.

'PARK' PHONES OVERNIGHT

Set up an overnight charging station for everyone's devices – preferably away from bedrooms. That means less temptation for late-night scrolling.

SWITCH ON DND

Research shows that micro-distractions like message alerts and push notifications can chip away at our concentration levels. Put devices on 'do not disturb' until you're less busy.

TAKE A FAMILY TECH BREAK

Set aside certain times when the whole family puts their gadgets away and enjoys an activity together: playing a board game, going for a walk or just having a chat.

SOCIALISE WITHOUT SCREENS

When you're with friends, try not to automatically involve phones, TVs or other tech. Having company can be loads more fun if your attention isn't being split.

WIND DOWN PROPERLY

Try staying off phones, consoles, tablets and so on just before you go to sleep. Reading or just getting comfy in bed for a while can give you a much more restful night.

Meet Our Expert

Minds Ahead design and deliver the UK's only specialist postgraduate mental health qualifications. They also provide training and support to education organisations and local authorities – empowering school leaders and staff with the knowledge and tools to shape their settings into inclusive communities where the mental health of pupils and personnel is prioritised.



DEVICE BOX

The National College



National Online Safety

#WakeUpWednesday



Portchester Community School – SCHOOL UNIFORM from September 2023/2024

School uniform is available from Skoolkit in Fareham.

The present uniform regulations have the full support of the Governing Body. On this basis, all students are expected to wear full uniform in strict accordance with the stated regulations.

Listed below are items of uniform which are allowed:

- Navy blazer with school logo
- Plain tailored mid-grey knee length skirt or plain tailored mid-grey trousers
- Plain white shirt/blouse with collar
- School tie worn appropriately – showing the school logo
- Plain navy blue V-neck sweater
- Plain black socks, neutral or black tights
- Black leather-look ‘school type’ shoes or ankle boots – no trainers or logos
- Heels must not exceed 4 cm
- Trainers are only to be worn during PE lessons
- Plain waterproof outdoor coats
- The only logo allowed on school uniform is the school logo

Jewellery and Make-Up

- One plain ring
- Earrings must be plain studs or small sleepers
- A wristwatch
- One small necklace, tucked in and discreetly worn
- Years 10 and 11 students **ONLY** may wear **discreet** make-up

Uniform Regulations

It is not possible to list all the items which are not allowed. It is important to wear the uniform smartly and with pride. These are examples of items that are **not** allowed:

- ‘Hoodies’, sweatshirts, or cardigans
- Denim, leather, or leather-look jackets
- Logos, large lettering on outdoor coats
- Tight-fitting trousers, jeans, cords, or lycra skirts
- Slits up the side of trousers and skirts and wide flared trousers
- Canvas shoes, trainers or any footwear considered dangerous
- Extremes of hair colour and styles, e.g., high contrast (short/long/multi-coloured), including tramlines and unnatural colours
- Hair must not be shorter than a Grade 2
- Body and facial piercing, tattoos, tongue studs and dermal piercing
- Nail varnish/artificial nails/false eyelashes



Physical Education Kit (Boys and Girls)

- Navy/Sky shorts/skort or plain navy blue shorts/skort
- Navy/Sky unisex polo shirt
- Navy blue reversible football/rugby shirt with sky band (optional for outdoor PE)
- Navy/Sky zip sweatshirt (optional for outdoor PE)
- Navy/Sky turnover top football socks or plain navy blue football socks
- Plain navy blue tracksuit bottoms/performance trousers
- Portchester printed leggings/plain navy blue leggings
- Shin pads – MUST be worn for football
- Mouthguards must be worn for rugby
- Optional base layer under Navy/Sky unisex polo shirt

Appropriate footwear MUST be worn during every Physical Education lesson. Information regarding footwear for the 4G Astro pitch will be provided by the PE Department on the school website – please check before buying new boots.

Jewellery must not be worn in Physical Education lessons. This includes ear studs.