



Portobello Primary School Weekly Newsletter 11th April 2025



Achievement Assembly

Our achievement assembly celebrated children who have "asked questions" this week. Well done to the following children:

Reception: Lily **Year 1:** Theo **Year 2:** Jenson
Year 3: Bobby **Year 4:** Kieran **Year 5:** Jacob **Year 6:** Harry

Celebrating Attendance

Whole school attendance is currently at 95.3%

Well done to Year 6 for best attendance this week at 99%!

Date for Diary

- Friday 11th April - Break up for Easter - Returning Mon 28th April
- Wed 30th April - Whole school watching a production of Pinocchio
- Thur 1st May - Annual Class Photos AM
- Thur 8th May - Reception class trip to Safetyworks
- Wed 14th May - Y1 to Gibside
- Thur 22nd May - Y5 to Gibside
- **Mon 2nd June - Inset day - school closed to pupils**
- Fri 4th July - Summer School Fayre 2pm
- Thur 10th July - DT Showcase & Parent workshop (timings to follow)
- Midnight 15th June - School Uniform order deadline for free to School Delivery
- Tues 17th June - Y2 & Y4 Newcastle trip & Discovery Museum Workshops
- **Monday 7th July - Occasional Day - school closed to pupils and staff**
- Thur 10th July - DT Showcase/workshop, timings will be shared in the summer term
- **Mon 1st Sept - Inset day - school closed to pupils**

Rights Respecting

Article 14: I have the right to have my own thoughts and beliefs and to choose my religion, with the help of my parents.

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Governments should make sure no one stops children from practising their religion or beliefs. Parents should guide their children in this.

Rights Respecting Club

Our Rights Respecting Club would like to grow simple fruit and vegetables to support our community.

RRC would really appreciate any donations of seeds and small/handheld gardening equipment (trowels, hand forks). We would like to grow:

- carrots • cauliflower • courgettes • broccoli • herbs • peas
- potatoes • tomatoes • spring onions • spinach • salad leaves



Easter Egg Decorating Competition

Well done everyone, we have had some "eggcellent" entries.

Reception Class Winner: Indie	Runner up goes to: Harry S
Year 1 Class Winner: Harry F	Runner up goes to: Holly
Year 2 Class Winner: Eliza	Runner up goes to: Esme
Year 3 Class Winner: Heidi	Runner up goes to: Lila
Year 4 Class Winner: Eloise	Runner up goes to: Imogen
Year 5 Class Winner: Emily	Runner up goes to: Jessica
Year 6 Class Winner: Jack	Runner up goes to: Jake



BIG AWARD
awarded by the Education



MUSIC MARK
SCHOOL





STEM News

This week we were delighted to be visited by Pete from SMS Technology whose company recently won an award at the Northeast Automotive Alliance 2024-25 Awards Dinner. Pete kindly selected Portobello as his choice to donate the £1000 prize money which will be invested into our growing STEM activities. On top of this generous donation Pete bought Easter Eggs for our Year 6 VEXIQ team to celebrate a successful season. Thank you to all the staff at SMS Technology who have donated around £5000 over the last two years.

Summer uniform

As the warmer weather approaches (fingers crossed) we would just like to draw your attention to our uniform policy:

We request that the children wear the following uniform daily:

- red jumper or cardigan
- blue polo shirt or shirt
- grey shorts, trousers, skirt or dress
- plain black leggings
- blue summer dress
- black school shoes or plain black trainers
- hair bobble for long hair

If your child is wearing shorts, they should be plain grey.
 Please note cycling and sports shorts are not permitted.

Little Wandle Reading Books please return

We have several outstanding Little Wandle Reading books still at home. These books make up sets that are vital to the teaching of reading in school. Please can you take a look over the Easter and return to the school office ASAP.

Calling for Stainless Steel Pan Donations!

We are creating an exciting new music station in our EYFS yard and would love your help! If you have any stainless-steel pans that you no longer need, please consider donating them to our school. Stainless steel is ideal as it is durable and weather-resistant, meaning the pans will last longer outdoors, providing endless musical fun for our youngest learners. Donations can be dropped off at the school office. Thank you for your support in helping us bring the joy of music to our EYFS children!



A production of Pinocchio in school

M&M Theatrical Productions are the UK's largest and most respected provider of theatre-in-education, specialising in Classic Literature Adaptations, Cinematic Theatre in Education and Pantomime Productions for Primary and SEN Schools and family audiences, they have offered us an incredible discount to showcase Pinocchio to the whole school on Wednesday 30th April, a £2 voluntary contribution would be appreciated, payable online or via £2 to class. If you want to find out more about M&M take a look at:

<https://youtu.be/NZl2ZovaHIIs>



Design Technology Showcase - Save the Date! (Thursday, 10th July)

We are delighted to announce our Design Technology Showcase, taking place in Summer Term 2, on Thursday, 10th July.

This new and special school event will highlight the fantastic learning our children have done this year in design technology. From exploring the art of cooking and nutrition to constructing sturdy structures and creating innovative mechanisms, our young designers have tackled a wide range of hands-on projects that we cannot wait to share!



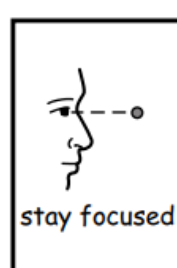
Check out Kids Pass for savings over the Easter holidays

<https://www.kidspass.co.uk/thingstodo/the-north-east>



Power of a growth mindset

We believe in the power of a growth mindset and that all our children have the ability to achieve what they want to achieve. Staff encourage children to develop their abilities and think of challenges as opportunities to grow. This week we launched our new Learning Powers in school. These will be used throughout the school day to ensure the children succeed.



Comic Relief

Thanks for your support!

We're pleased to share that 2025 saw another successful partnership between ParentPay Group and Comic Relief, with schools already raising over £384,000 for Red Nose Day making payments online via the school portal link.

The Donations Page will be closing today, so you can still donate if you wish today.

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about SEARCH ENGINES

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Search engines are an integral part of everyday life – with Google alone processing around 100,000 searches every second. Search engines use algorithms to predict which results will be useful to us, though this can expose children to inappropriate content, misinformation and even scams. This guide explains the risks associated with search engines and offers practical advice to help safeguard young users online.

MANIPULATED SEARCH RESULTS

Although search engines take site reputation into account, trustworthiness isn't the main factor. Instead, they use algorithms that can be gamed via tactics like search engine optimisation (SEO), which is big business. As a result, users may encounter misleading content and low-quality commercial products that appear more credible than they actually are.

MISINFORMATION AND DISINFORMATION

Search engines index billions of web pages – and not all of them are factual or safe. Children might stumble across false information or even deliberate disinformation, especially when searching for trending topics or controversial issues.

ENGINES BEYOND GOOGLE

Even if Google's SafeSearch is enabled, children may use lesser-known search engines that don't have similar protections. Some of these alternatives are less effective at blocking unsavoury content – sometimes by design – making it easier for children to encounter harmful or explicit material. Parental controls may also struggle to detect and block these sites.

FUNNY JOKES

ILLEGAL CONTENT CAN SURFACE

Search engines are designed to retrieve content based on keywords – not to judge whether that content is lawful. As a result, even illegal or harmful material can appear in search results. Children might assume that anything found through search engines must be safe, just because they're so widely used. This misunderstanding can lead to accidental exposure to seriously inappropriate content.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT EXPOSURE

Although parental controls like Google's SafeSearch exist, they aren't foolproof, and search engines may bypass them. Young users may still see inappropriate images or content, especially in image searches, even though they may not be able to click on the results. Some niche search engines lack even basic filtering, posing further risks.

UNRELIABLE AI SUMMARIES

Some search engines now offer AI-generated answers at the top of results. While these can be helpful as webpage summaries, they're not always accurate. There have been instances where AI summaries have presented false or even dangerous information, reinforcing the need for critical thinking.

Advice for Parents & Educators

ACTIVATE PARENTAL CONTROLS

While no parental controls tool is perfect, this software can help reduce the likelihood of inappropriate content appearing in search results. Use tools like Google Family Link to set search restrictions and monitor your child's browsing activity.

IDENTIFY AND AVOID ADVERTS

One of the ways search engines generate revenue is by showing adverts to their users. Sponsored search results are labelled, but they're not always easy to spot and can sometimes be malicious. Show your child how to distinguish between paid ads and organic search results – explain why some ads might be misleading or unsafe.

QUESTION AI-GENERATED CONTENT

While AI content is generated quickly and often appears legitimate, teach children that, just because an AI summary is well presented, it doesn't mean it's accurate. Encourage them to review the sources behind AI summaries and check the information with reputable sites or fact-checkers.

PROMOTE DIGITAL LITERACY

Encourage children to question the motivation behind online content and develop critical thinking, as not all sites can be trusted. Some deliberately misinform users in order to sell products or promote misinformation. Developing a critical mindset is one of the best defences against these tactics.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard, The Guardian and The New Statesman.



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