



Welcome Back Information for Parents and Carers

September 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

Welcome to the new academic year. We hope you are enjoying a wonderful summer break and are looking forward to the year ahead. Please take a few moments to read the important day to day information below (pages. 1-5) to help ensure a smooth start to the autumn term. Pages 5 to 10 contain further useful information.

- Key staff
 - Safeguarding
 - Meet the teacher events
 - Timings for start and end of school day
 - Late to school
 - Children's appointments
 - Attendance
 - School office opening times
 - Daily essentials
 - Important reminder
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Key Staff 2026-27

Class Teachers

Year Group	Teacher
Reception & Nursery	Miss West / Miss Clarke
Year 1	Miss Pendleton
Year 2	Mrs Walker
Year 3	Miss Tindale
Year 4	Miss Leigh
Year 5	Mr Chipchase
Year 6	Mr Bone



Teaching Assistant Team

Miss Kennedy (Nursery)
Miss Lillie
Mrs Dalton
Mrs Morgan Darnell
Mrs Mitchell
Miss Wyatt
Mrs Duffy

School Business Manager: Mrs Lister

Caretaker: Mr Bracken

Breakfast Club Staff: Mrs Johnson and Mrs Bradford

Midday Supervisors: Mrs Johnson, Mrs Bradford, Miss Best, Mrs Mawson and Mrs Shield



Safeguarding: Keeping Children Safe

At Portobello Primary School, safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do. Nothing is more important than the safety and wellbeing of our children.

We are committed to:

- Protecting children from harm and maltreatment.
- Supporting children's health, wellbeing and development.
- Providing a safe, caring and nurturing environment.
- Helping all children achieve their full potential and prepare successfully for adulthood.

Designated Safeguarding Team

If you have any concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child, please contact one of our safeguarding leads:

- **Mrs Humphrey (Headteacher)** - Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
 - **Miss West (Deputy Headteacher)** - Deputy DSL
 - **Miss Clarke (SENCo)** - Deputy DSL
 - **Mr Chipchase (Leader of Teaching and Learning)** - Deputy DSL
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Meet the Teacher Events **4.00pm**

We warmly invite parents and carers to attend a short informal session to meet your child's teacher and learn more about the year ahead.

Wednesday 2 September

- Reception
- Year 5
- Year 6

Thursday 3 September

- Year 1
- Year 2
- Year 3
- Year 4

If you are unable to attend, presentation materials will be available from school upon request.



Start and End of the School Day

Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 - Arrival

- Gates open: **8.40am**
- Doors close: **8.50am**
- Children should enter via the Infant Yard.
- Children will go directly to class to begin morning activities.

Collection - 3.20pm

- Reception children will be collected from their outdoor area side gate.
 - Year 1 and Year 2 children will leave through their usual entrance doors.
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Years 3 to 6

Arrival

- Gates open: **8.40am**
- Gates close: **8.55am**
- Children should enter through the main gates and go straight to class.

Collection

- Years 3 and 4: **3.25pm**
 - Years 5 and 6: **3.30pm**
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Nursery Sessions

Please arrive promptly at the Nursery entrance on the infant yard. If running late, please arrive via the main office.

Session	Time
Morning Session	8.45am - 11.45am
Afternoon Session	12.15pm - 3.15pm
Full Day Session	8.45am - 3.15pm

Late Arrival Procedure

Any child arriving after **8.55am** must be accompanied to the school office by a parent or carer.

Please sign your child in using the reception iPad and provide a reason for lateness. Regular lateness can have a significant impact on learning and may be monitored by school leaders and governors.



Attendance Matters - What Parents and Carers Need to Do

- ✓ Contact school before **9.00am** on each day of absence.
- ✓ Inform school in advance of medical appointments and provide evidence where possible.
- ✓ Keep children off school for **48 hours after the last episode of sickness or diarrhoea**.
- ✓ Speak to us if you are experiencing difficulties with attendance.

What School Will Do

- ✓ Monitor attendance daily ✓ Contact families regarding attendance concerns.
 - ✓ Arrange attendance support meetings where required.
 - ✓ Conduct welfare visits if we are unable to establish the reason for absence.
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Children's Appointments

- ✓ **To maximise every child's learning time, we kindly ask that routine appointments are arranged outside of the school day whenever possible.** This includes optician appointments, dental check-ups and non-urgent GP appointments. School holiday periods and after-school appointments are always preferable.
- ✓ **If your child needs to be collected during the school day**, please contact the school office before planning wherever possible. Advance notice allows staff to prepare your child for collection and helps minimise disruption to teaching and learning for the whole class.

Thank you for your support in helping us make the most of every learning opportunity for our children.

School Office Opening Hours

Monday to Thursday: 8.30am - 3.45pm/ **Friday:** 8.30am - 3.30pm

Reporting an Absence: Please provide a clear reason for absence when making contact.

☎ 0191 410 4571 (Press 1 for school absence)

✉ or email: portobelloprimaryschool@gateshead.gov.uk

Important Reminders - Daily Essentials

- Water bottles every day.

- Waterproof coat (*please ensure all belongings are clearly named*)

Jewellery and Appearance

- Earrings are not permitted, including clear retainers.
- False nails are not permitted.

Food Safety ! We are a strictly NUT AND EGG FREE school.

- NO nuts or nut products (including any Nutella products).
- Cakes and biscuits containing nuts.
- Soft-boiled eggs and egg-based products that may pose a risk.

See pages 6 to 10 for further information

FURTHER INFORMATION

Everything you need to know for a successful school year!

 COMMUNICATION APPS We use two free apps to keep you connected and informed. • eSchools – whole school messages, news, home learning and parents' evening bookings. • MarvellousMe – class messages and rewards. Login details will be provided within 5 school days of your child starting school.	 SCHOOL UNIFORM Full details of our uniform requirements can be found on our website.  Please ensure all items are clearly labelled with your child's name.	 SCHOOL MEALS ✓ Hot meals, deli options and jacket potatoes available daily. ✓ Meals cost £3.10 per day and should be paid for online via SchoolComms. ✓ Free school meals available for eligible children. ✓ See website for menus and allergy/special diet information. No need to pre-book – children choose their meal each morning.	 BREAKFAST CLUB ✓ Opens at 7.45am ✓ Last drop-off for breakfast 8.25am ✓ £3.00 per child, per day ✓ Book online via SchoolComms (at least 24 hours in advance) ✓ Free for children on benefit-related free school meals More information available on our website.
 TERM DATES Term dates, training days and holidays can be found on our website.  Please check regularly for updates.	 HEALTHY SNACKS ✓ Reception to Year 2: children receive a free piece of fruit or vegetable each day. ✓ Year 3 to Year 6: children may bring a healthy snack such as fruit, vegetables or a healthy cereal bar. Please no sweets, chocolate or crisps.	 PARENT PAYMENTS We use SchoolComms (ParentPay) for payments such as: • Trips and visits • School meals • Breakfast Club • Donations and events See newsletter or website for help with setting up your account.	 USEFUL LINKS All the information you need can be found on our website: • Nursery Information • Uniform Information • School Meals Information • Breakfast Club Information • Term Dates



THANK YOU FOR WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH US TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION AND WELLBEING.

Together, we can make this a happy, successful and exciting year for all!





Communication Apps

New Parents and Carers

Please note that login details for our online communication and payment systems will be provided within **five school days** of your child starting school. You will not be able to create an account until you have received these details from the school office.

eSchools

eSchools is our main communication platform and can be downloaded free of charge to your mobile device.

Through eSchools you can:

- ✓ Receive school emails and text messages
- ✓ Keep up to date with events, diary updates and important notices
- ✓ Access home learning activities (Years 1-6)
- ✓ Book Parents' Evening appointments
- ✓ View information shared by your child's class teacher

MarvellousMe

MarvellousMe is a free app used by teachers to share positive messages and celebrate achievements.

Through MarvellousMe you can:

- ✓ Receive class messages from teachers
- ✓ View reward points and badges earned by your child
- ✓ Celebrate learning successes and positive behaviour

School Uniform

Full uniform information can be found on our website:

Nursery Information <https://www.portobelloprimaryschool.co.uk/nursery>

Reception to Year 6 Uniform

Information https://www.portobelloprimaryschool.co.uk/how_to_order_school_uniform

Please ensure all clothing, footwear, lunch boxes and water bottles are clearly labelled with your child's name.



School Meals

Children may either bring a healthy packed lunch from home or choose a school meal.

School Meal Charges

- £3.10 per day
- Payments should be made online via SchoolComms
- Accounts should be kept in credit and cleared weekly

Free School Meals

There is no charge for:

- Children entitled to benefit-related free school meals
- Children entitled to extended free school meals
- All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 through the Universal Infant Free School Meals scheme

Daily Lunch Options

Children can choose each morning from:

- Hot school meal
- Deli sandwich with pasta or salad
- Jacket potato with one topping of cheese, beans or tuna

Lunches do not need to be pre-booked and can be selected during morning registration.

Late Arrival Reminder: If your child is arriving late and requires a school meal, please notify the school office before **9.30am**. Otherwise, a packed lunch should be provided.

Food Allergies and Special Diets

If your child has a food allergy or requires a special diet, please visit the school website for further information.

Additional documentation will need to be completed and approved by the Gateshead Council Catering Team before alternative menu arrangements can be made.

More information: https://www.portobelloprimaryschool.co.uk/school_meals



Breakfast Club

Breakfast Club is available daily and provides a safe, welcoming start to the school day.

Key Information

-  Opens: **7.45am**
-  Last breakfast service/drop-off: **8.25am**
-  Cost: **£3.00 per child, per day**

Bookings should be made online via SchoolComms at least 24 hours in advance. However, we understand emergencies arise and same-day bookings can be accommodated where necessary.

From September 2026, Breakfast Club can also be paid for using approved Childcare Tax-Free Childcare payments/vouchers.

Further information: https://www.portobelloprimaryschool.co.uk/breakfast_club

Free Breakfast Club Eligibility

-  Children receiving **benefit-related free school meals** qualify for free Breakfast Club.

Please contact the school office if you would like your child to attend.

 Children receiving the **new extended free school meals** from September 2026 do not qualify for free Breakfast Club and normal charges will apply.

Term Dates

Term dates, training days and holiday information can be found on our website:

https://www.portobelloprimaryschool.co.uk/term_dates



Healthy Morning Snacks

Reception to Year 2: Children will be provided with a free piece of fruit or vegetable each day through the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme.

Year 3 to Year 6:

Children may bring a healthy snack for morning break, such as:

- Fresh fruit
- Fresh vegetables
- A healthy cereal bar

Please do not send sweets, chocolate or crisps for morning break.

Parent Payments (SchoolComms)

SchoolComms is used for payments relating to:

- Educational visits and trips
- School meals
- Breakfast Club
- Donations and fundraising activities
- Special events and activities

Creating an Account

1. Visit: <https://www.parentpay.com/schoolcomms/>
2. If using the website, select **"New User"**.
3. Enter the email address and mobile number registered with school.
4. A text message containing a PIN will be sent to you.
5. Enter the PIN to activate your account.
6. Once logged in, your home screen will be displayed.



Existing Users

1. Select **Existing User**.
2. Enter your registered email address and PIN.
3. Access your account as normal.

Forgotten Your PIN?

1. Select **Forgotten PIN** on the login screen.
2. Enter your registered email address and mobile number.
3. A replacement PIN will be sent by text message.
4. Enter the PIN to log in.

Need Help?

Account Access Support [https://parent-support.parentpaygroup.com/hc/en-gb/sections/4407691522449-](https://parent-support.parentpaygroup.com/hc/en-gb/sections/4407691522449-Account-Access)

[Account-Access](https://parent-support.parentpaygroup.com/hc/en-gb/sections/4407691522449-Account-Access) or **Parent Support Centre** [https://parent-support.parentpaygroup.com/hc/en-gb](https://parent-support.parentpaygroup.com/hc/en-gb/sections/4407691522449-Account-Access)

Quick Reminders for September

- ✓ Download **eSchools** and **MarvellousMe**
- ✓ Check uniform requirements before September
- ✓ Ensure SchoolComms is set up and ready to use
- ✓ Review school meal and Breakfast Club arrangements
- ✓ Check term dates on the school website
- ✓ Provide healthy snacks for children in Years 3-6 where required
- ✓ Please aim for all non-emergency appointments to be after school hours or during school holidays such as; general optician appointments, dental check-ups, non-emergency GP appointments.

NB: New parents/carers – wait for log in details and instructions before downloading online APPs