



Portobello Primary School
Weekly Newsletter
13th October 2023



Achievement Assembly

Our achievement assembly this week celebrated children who have "had a go" this week. Well done to the following children:

Reception: Heidi **Year 1:** Luna **Year 2:** Raza **Year 3:** Leighton
Year 4: Jack **Year 5:** Rhys **Year 6:** George

Celebrating Attendance

Well done to Year 2 for best attendance this week at 97%!

Whole school attendance is currently at 95.5%

Attendance raffle

Our termly attendance raffle has restarted once again for this academic year, so all children with 100% will be entered back into the draw. **Remember, they need to be in to win!**

Dates for Diary

- Parent/Carer Online Safety Workshop event - 3pm to 3.30pm Tues 17th October
- Harvest Sing a long - Parents/Carers Welcome Wed 18th October at 2.45pm Year 3 - Year 6
- Harvest Sing a long - Parents/Carers Welcome Thur 19th October at 2.30pm Reception, Year 1&2
- Y5 visit LLOBA for performance of SHREK - 23rd October
- October Half term 30th Oct to 3rd Nov
- Y6 to Saltwell Park to commemorate Remembrance Day - 7th November
- Y2 to Kirkley Hall - 8th Nov
- Children in Need - Fri 17th Nov (non-uniform, wear something yellow or spotty)
- Y2 - A Christmas Journey at Birtley Methodist Mon 4th December
- Y5 trip to Parliament - Monday 4th Dec
- Flu vaccination - Tuesday 5th Dec - whole school
- Reception Panto Trip - Thursday 7th December
- School Fayre - Fri 8th December details to follow.
- Y1 to Y6 Panto Trip - Thursday 21st December
- Break up for Xmas Friday 22nd December!
- Inset day Monday 8th January - pupils return Tuesday 9th January 24

Harvest Sing-alongs

Wednesday 18th October at 2.45pm Year 3 - Year 6

Thursday 19th October at 2.30pm Reception, Year 1 and Year 2



There will be raffle at the door so please bring your purse!

Children who have an adult at school will be dismissed earlier, although from their usual exit at the end of their performance. The remaining pupils will stay with their teacher until the end of the school day.

We look forward to larger shared performances at Christmas and hope to see you then.

Breakfast Club reminder

Children attending breakfast club must be seated by 8.25am for breakfast to be prepared and then eaten in a timely manner before class starts.





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MacBooks - PPS STEM & ROBOTICS

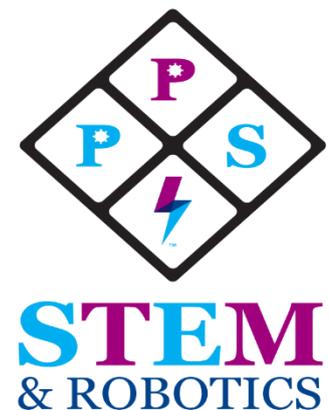
This week we are delighted to have received our brand-new set of MacBooks donated by our partners at CMYK Digital and Opencast. Craig and David visited school to deliver the products and even had a go at using our robots. We look forward to working with both companies in the coming months as our STEM offer continues to develop.



International Day of the Girl Child VEX GO Celebration Event @ Portobello

Today, Portobello hosted a celebration for UN International Day of the Girl. Four primary schools joined together, all with female teams, to compete for today's trophy. Points were awarded for coding and driving Vex Go hero bots. We were delighted that Portobello took home the trophy by 6 points!

Thank you to all of our sponsors, event partners and participants for making today so special: Wardley Primary School, Bill Quay Primary School, Whickham Fellside Primary School, CYMK Business Technology, SMS Technology, Meet and Code, Komatsu, Opencast, Northeast Learning Enterprise Partnership, Lord Lawson Beamish Academy, Park View and Liz Twist. We look forward to our collaborating with future STEM projects.



World Mental Health Day on 10th October

Children shared their home learning about talking to people about their worries and concerns. Their friends and adults helped them to look for solutions and build resilience. We also took part in Stormbreak activities to help build our resilience and improve our mental wellbeing.

Team Portobello sport news

Our Year 5/6 girls football team stormed all their games in the league this week, winning 4 games out of 4! What a fantastic week and we looking forward to the last league games next week?

Our Year 5/6 boys football team did extremely well in the first round of the Cestria cup last night, where they drew 1 game and won 3. They are now through to the cup finals next Thursday!

Amazing work this week everyone! #TeamPortobello





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Harvest Festival

For Harvest we will be collecting donations for the Gateshead Foodbank.

Donations will be welcome in school on Monday 16th October and Tuesday 17th October. This means items will be on display in the hall in time for our KS1 and KS2 Harvest assemblies. Items will then be collected by the warehouse team and distributed accordingly.



Get involved and join The Big Recycling Hunt Family Challenge

<https://schools.recyclenow.com/families/>

Halloween Disco Year 1 to Year 6

Thursday 26th October: 4pm to 5pm

Each pupil has been given a ticket, once you have paid online via ParentPay or paid cash to the school office please complete the right-hand slip with your child's Name and Class filled in, tear this off and return it to school by Wed 25th October 3.30pm. This will form the basis of a register at the disco. Your child will then hand the larger ticket in at the door.



Right of the Week - Article 1

Article 1 - A child is any person under the age of 18.



Fundraise & Recycle

Don't forget about our recycling bin near the main gates - keep topping it up with clean unwanted clothing, bags, shoes, bedding, or curtains. Please bag it before putting it in.

We have collectively recycled 1000kg so far and we will be receiving a buddy bench from the recycling team for our efforts. We now need to hit 5000kg to receive a 2nd one. Keep topping up the bin.

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Help needed to reopen Birtley Pool

Gateshead Council closed Birtley Swimming Centre on Friday 21st July. A project team comprising local community volunteers alongside members of Birtley and Gateshead and Wickham swimming clubs, plans to reopen Birtley Swimming Centre in April 2024 as a Community Asset which will be run by a new not for profit charitable organisation. The activities they are planning will support the physical health and mental well-being of the local community. See below to support:

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/help-us-reopen-birtley-swimming-centre>

School gateway/ParentPay APP notifications re meals/trips/clubs

Thank you to everyone who has created an account so far - we still need 40 more pupils' parents/carers to do so. Amazing number of you using the app, well done so good to see.

If you are struggling with any aspects of ParentPay, please check out the link below:

<https://parent-support.parentpaygroup.com/hc/en-gb/sections/4407691522449-Account-Access>

For any other enquiries or generic parent support link below:

<https://parent-support.parentpaygroup.com/hc/en-gb>



If your child has been unsettled by recent events in Israel, our guide has some insightful tips for helping young ones deal with worrying news content they may have seen online.

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many apps which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO DEAL WITH UPSETTING CONTENT

A Guide for Parents and Carers

Raising children in the digital age seems to be getting tougher, with the world currently experiencing so many uncertainties. From the continuing impact of COVID-19 to the war in Ukraine, right now children across the globe can scarcely go online without being exposed to unsettling stories, images and ideas. Reassuring a concerned child can be difficult, especially when bad news feels omnipresent. We've put together some advice to help you in discussing upsetting events with young ones.

- ### FIND OUT WHAT YOUR CHILD KNOWS

There are many ways that children are exposed to upsetting content in the media, both online and offline. Before swamping your child with information, find out what they know already. Show them you're interested in what they have to say, practice active listening and try to gauge how much your child has been impacted by what they have seen.
- ### RIGHT TIME, RIGHT PLACE

Starting a conversation about upsetting content probably isn't the best idea when your child is studying for an exam or about to go to bed. Choose a time when they're relaxed and open to talking, to make sure you have their full attention. Remember, these conversations can become emotional, so choose somewhere your child feels safe and comfortable.
- ### KEEP IT AGE APPROPRIATE

With younger children, try and keep the conversation more general and avoid leading questions and complex detail. You can go slightly deeper into the specifics with young teenagers but keep monitoring their emotional response. With older teens, you can be more open about the realities and consequences of what is happening - but again, do stay aware of their emotional state.
- ### EMPHASISE HOPE

Upsetting content can make us feel angry, scared, upset, sad or overwhelmed. Try to find stories of hope, generosity and strength related to the content you're discussing. Children often feel reassured when they know they can do something to help, so encourage your child's sense of control through activities which make them feel they're positively impacting the events they're concerned about.
- ### MONITOR REACTIONS

All children react differently, of course, and young people might not directly say that they're scared, angry, anxious, confused or uncomfortable. Emotional reactions are natural when discussing upsetting topics, so take note of your child's body language and reactions. Allow them to express their feelings in a non-judgmental space and try to stay mindful of how they might be feeling.
- ### CONSIDER YOUR EMOTIONS

It's not only young people who find upsetting news difficult to process: adults also have to deal with strong emotions in moments of stress. Children develop coping strategies by mirroring those around them, so staying on top of how you appear to be regulating your emotion on the outside is important for supporting your child through worrying times.
- ### SET LIMITS

Managing screentime and content can be difficult at the best of times, but especially in unusual or stressful periods (at the start of the pandemic, for example). It's virtually impossible to keep children away from upsetting content completely, but it's important to try and at least limit exposure by using parental controls, talking about the dangers of harmful content and enforcing screentime limits.
- ### TAKE THINGS SLOWLY

Try not to overwhelm your child with information all at once: instead, take the discussion one step at a time. You could make the first conversation a simple introduction to a potentially upsetting subject and then wait until your child is ready to talk again. Opening the door to the conversation and demonstrating that your child can talk to you about this type of issue is a vital first step.
- ### ENCOURAGE QUESTIONS

Online, troubling images, posts, videos and stories are shared across multiple platforms, many of which your child might access. Even if the content is actually inappropriate, encourage your child to discuss what they saw instead of being angry at them for seeing it. Children are still learning that not everything online is accurate - you want to be their ultimate source of information, not their device.
- ### FIND A BALANCE

There's often a tremendous compulsion to stay right up to date with events. Our phones frequently send us push notifications urging us to read the latest article or view the most recent video on social media. It's essential to remind your child that it's healthy to take regular breaks, and to focus on positive events instead of 'doomscrolling' and risking becoming overwhelmed by bad news.
- ### BUILD RESILIENCE

News has never been more accessible. While our instinct may be to shield children from upsetting stories, it's important that they're equipped with the tools to manage this content when they are exposed to it. Talk about upsetting content more generally with your child and emphasise that they can always tell you or a trusted adult if something they see makes them feel uneasy.
- ### IDENTIFY HELP

It's hugely important that children know where to find support if they encounter upsetting content online. Encourage them to open up to an adult that they trust, and make sure they're aware of who their trusted adults are. It's essential that children understand that they're not alone, and that help is available if and when they need it.

Meet Our Expert
Coyley Jorgensen is the director of FaceUp South Africa, which is a reporting system that is currently being used by schools and companies to fight bullying around the world. FaceUp helps give a voice to bystanders by encouraging them to speak up and get the help they not only want but need.

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Source: <https://www.nos.org.uk/news/2023/10/13/supporting-your-child-with-upsetting-content/> | <https://www.nos.org.uk/news/2023/10/13/talk-your-children-about-conflict-and-war/>

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FLU VACCINATION

Protect

**NASAL SPRAY OR INJECTION
FIGHTING FLU STARTS WITH
YOU**

CONSENT



SCHOOL NAME:

**PORTOBELLO PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

SCHOOL CODE:

NB108336

SCHOOL YEAR:

FIND OUT





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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

AMONG US

A multiplayer 'social deduction' game set in outer space, Among Us enjoyed a surge in popularity in 2020, and has since maintained a dedicated fan-base (globally, around 80 million regular players each month) thanks to its unique nature, simple premise and ease of access across numerous platforms. The game's on-screen action revolves around danger, disguise and deception – and there are certain parallels to be drawn with some of the real-life risks that parents and carers of young Among Us players need to be aware of.

AGE RESTRICTION
7
PEGI

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SENSITIVE PREMISE

In Among Us, up to three players are secretly assigned to be alien imposters, tasked with murdering their colleagues, while the survivors try to unmask them. While the concept's not far removed from traditional games like Wink Murder or TV shows such as The Traitors, some parents may feel uncomfortable about their child playing a video game in which deception and killing are prioritised.

VIRTUAL VIOLENCE

The on-screen death of characters may be fundamental to the gameplay of Among Us, but the majority of the animations depicting this are deliberately cartoonish and only appear very briefly. However, it is worth bearing in mind that the game has a PEGI age rating of 7 – meaning that certain elements (however heavily stylised they may be) could still upset some younger players.

CHAT BETWEEN PLAYERS

With up to 15 people participating in each game online, a large part of Among Us' appeal is speculating with fellow players who the imposters might be and making accusations. This dialogue through the in-game text chat can occasionally become heated – and could, of course, involve your child being put into contact with people (including adults) who they don't know in real life.

GOING OFF PLATFORM

While Among Us provides basic ways to communicate, many gamers prefer to use external services such as Discord: a popular app which offers voice and video chat functions. These undeniably make cooperation easier, but also create a potential route for children to hear inappropriate language – or for strangers to message them privately in an environment which isn't regulated by the game itself.

IN-GAME PURCHASES

Among Us is free to download on mobile devices, and costs less than £5 to obtain on console and PC. A related longer-term pitfall, though, is that the game also includes options to pay for upgrades such as removing ads on the mobile version or adding cosmetic touches to characters (such as different costumes). It's certainly possible that a child could spend a significant sum without realising it.

Advice for Parents & Carers

CONSIDER SOFTER ALTERNATIVES

Although Among Us is hugely popular with young gamers, it's possible that some children might find the murder themes unsettling. If so, plenty of similar social deduction games are available (in both digital and traditional board game formats) which downplay the potentially grislier elements: some centre around undercover spies, for instance, and there's even a Marvel superhero-themed variant.

CHAT ABOUT CHATTING

You might feel it's prudent to talk to your child about the risks associated with voice chat while gaming, explaining in particular that strangers online aren't always who they claim to be. Keeping the conversation relaxed will reinforce your child's confidence that they can always come to you with any online concerns – not just about Among Us, but any potential future issues as well.

DISCUSS DISCORD

In general, Discord is an excellent app for keeping online communities together because of its use of dedicated individual servers, which allow comprehensive control over who can join – and who can't. Once you're familiar with the platform, you could set up a secure server for your child and their friends to communicate during games of Among Us, with no access for people they don't know.

AMONG US, AMONG FRIENDS

When your child and their friends get together, they can enjoy a private game of Among Us by choosing a 'local lobby' – that is, only people connected to the same WiFi (your home network, for example) can enter. This prevents any random online users – who may be total strangers – from joining and removes the need for voice chat, as the players are all physically in the same location.

STOP SURPRISE SPENDING

If you're concerned about the possibility of your child racking up an unexpected bill on Among Us' microtransactions, you could consider using a prepaid card with a set limit. Likewise, you could specify in the game's options that adult authorisation is required for every purchase – or you could make sure that no payment methods are enabled on the device that your child plays the game on.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Editor in Chief of gaming and esports site GGWrench and has worked in the gaming media for around four years. A regular visitor to the App Store to try out new tools, he's also a parent who understands the value of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his articles have been published on influential sites including IGN and Techradar.



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