



Achievement Assembly

Our achievement assembly this week celebrated children who have shown great levels of "concentration" this week. Well done to the following children:

Reception: Bella **Year 1:** Lola **Year 2:** Jaxon **Year 3:** Kieran
Year 4: Jessica **Year 5:** Frankie **Year 6:** Esmay

Celebrating Attendance

Well done to Year 5 for best attendance this week at 98%!

Whole school attendance is currently at 95.8 %

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

- Individual School Photos (younger siblings welcome) - Tuesday AM 10th October
- World Mental Health Day - Tuesday 10th October
- Y1 trip to Beamish Museum - Wed 11th October
- Y6 trip to Safetyworks - Thur 12th October
- VEX Go event in school - Fri 13th Oct (pupils only)
- 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

We will be having a small celebration for harvest in each key stage. The children will say a few words and sing a couple of songs to give thanks. If you would like to join them for the 20-30minute session, each child will bring home one ticket (one adult per child only please to attend). 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.



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School Photos Tuesday 10th October

If you would like your Portobello child to have their photograph taken with a younger sibling, please bring them along to school at drop off. We will ask the Tempest School Photographer to take sibling photos between 8.50 and 9.10.

World Mental Health Day on 10th October

Every year we celebrate World Mental Health Day on 10th October. The theme for 2023, set by the World Foundation of Mental Health, is 'Mental health is a universal human right'. World Mental Health Day is about raising awareness of mental health and driving positive change for everyone's mental health. At Portobello we have decided to raise awareness and support our children and families by taking part in 'Britain Get Talking'.

This weekend all children should complete the talking task below (your child will bring home a paper copy tonight).

Further discussions and activities will take place in school on Tuesday.

<https://www.itv.com/britaingettalking/assembly-video.html>

<https://www.itv.com/britaingettalking/pdf/ITV-BGT-homework-b&w.pdf>



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

To promote women and girls in STEM focused careers we are hosting and have invited four schools to attend a VEX GO celebration event at Portobello Primary School on Friday 13th October 2023.

Portobello Primary School is delighted to partner with Girl Powered supported by Google to host the event. We look forward to a day of events, meeting business partners and welcoming schools next week.

The day will be an excellent opportunity for girls from across Northeast schools to participate in a VEX GO robotics competition and hopefully take a further interest in Coding and Computational Thinking.

Staff updates

Today we say a fond farewell to Mrs. Gill who has been with us for 11 years as a Breakfast Club Assistant and Midday Supervisor, Mrs. Gill has decided to retire and enjoy time travelling, we hope you join us and wish her well in her future adventures.

We have appointed two new members to our Portobello team, and we hope you join us and welcome them to our school. Mrs. Bradford and Mrs. Johnson will be joining us as Breakfast Assistants and Midday Supervisors as of Monday 9th October. Mrs. Bradford is also one of our parents, with a daughter in Year 3 and a son in Year 1 and children will be familiar with Mrs. Johnson who is currently an assistant cook in our school kitchen and has been working at our school for over 25 years. Welcome to Team Portobello!

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.



BIG AWARD
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Team Portobello sport news

Another good week in the league for our Year 5/6 girls football team - Keep going girls, you're doing so well!

A huge well done to our Cross-Country team who represented Portobello with pride in the event this week, against some tough running conditions. Well done everyone.

Year 5/6 boys' football - Well done on the final week in the league for our boys team. Onto the cup matches next week.

Our Year 5/6 girls team played in a 5-a-side tournament today and made it through to the quarter finals against some tough opposition. Well done everyone.

#TeamPortobello

Right of the Week - Article 3

Article 3 (best interests of the child) The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.



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 Whickham 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>

Flu vaccination programme has been planned for our school on Tuesday 5th December.

Parents/Carers we need your assistance to support the programme. Please action below and complete the online form. If you would like your child to have the flu vaccine you must complete the online form by the end of November!

<https://www.northumbriaimmunisations.co.uk/Forms/Flu> using school code **NB108336**

Re 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>



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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 games which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

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 60 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
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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 experts site, GCInsider 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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