



Portway Junior School

Creating life-long learners

12th September 2023

Dear parents and carers,

As a school, we are dedicated and passionate about providing the very best education we can for your children. We all know that the most successful children reach, and even exceed their potential, when home and school work in partnership together to maximize results. We are also very reflective, listen to, and where possible, act on parental feedback. With all this in mind, please find parent information sheets regarding the best way you can support your children below. Just five minutes a day, little and often will enhance their education, boost their self-confidence and in turn their self-esteem. The information provided is to help parents understand how they can support your child with their spelling, reading and maths. We often get parents enquiring how they can help at home and so as a team we have put together the following information. Please let us know your feedback.

Spelling

As a school, we are working hard to improve our children's spelling and appreciate your support in taking the time to fill in the questionnaire to feedback about spellings. We would greatly appreciate your support in helping your child to practise their weekly spelling homework and any of the exception words which they are struggling with.

After receiving feedback from the Spelling Shed questionnaire, I have put together some instructions on how to access different features.

We will also send home a printed version of the spellings each week but in a bid to save paper, I have put a list of spelling activities to support practise rather than sending out a worksheet each week.

Fun way to practice spellings

- 1) **Rainbow writing**- use different colours to write the spelling words with.
- 2) **Backwards writing**- Can the children write the words backwards?
- 3) **Bubble writing**- Children write the words in bubble
- 4) **I can do this with my eyes closed**- Can the children write the words with their eyes closed?
- 5) **Chalk writing**- Write the spelling words on the patio, drive, side of the house (however daring you are!) with some chalk.
- 6) **Physical spelling**- Get anything you can get your hands on (buttons, lego, coins, sticks, scrabble tiles) and spell the words using the objects.
- 7) **Spelling in the bath**- A favourite of mine from when I was younger. Get some foam letters that stick to the side of the bath and do spelling practise in the bubbles!
- 8) **Skipping whilst we spell**- Skip whilst spelling each word.
- 9) **Clap it out**- Spell the words whilst clapping them to a rhythm.
- 10) **Play hangman or snowman**- Classic spelling game for the whole family.

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Headteacher: Miss Emma Wilkinson B.A(Hons) with QTS



Maths

As a school, we are always looking for ways to improve our maths provision. We work hard to ensure that, within maths lessons, children are provided with lots of opportunities to develop their calculation, fluency, reasoning and problem solving skills in the most engaging and memorable ways possible.

How you can help at home

To ensure your children are given the best possible chance to succeed in maths, we would ask if you could practise the basics (times tables, number bonds and calculation methods) with your children at home as regularly as possible.

Times Tables, National Multiplication Check and TT Rockstars

The expectation is that children have a rapid recall of the 1-12 times tables by the end of Y4 as all pupils sit a national multiplication check in the summer term of Y4. Within the check, pupils answer 25 questions and have 6 seconds to answer each one. Pupils are required to answer all of the questions correctly to pass the check.

To help prepare the children we created the Portway Times Table Challenge and we ask if you can support the children at home as they work towards achieving the Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards. In addition, all of the children are provided with a TT Rockstars account and we encourage them to practise regularly. The staff will set up competitions between classes and year groups throughout the year so it would be great if everyone can get involved.

Year 6

Y6 pupils will be practising SATS style calculation papers regularly in class and the children will be encouraged to practise the first few questions they have struggled with the previous week at home. Pupils will bring the papers home and even a few minutes practice a day can result in a huge improvement over the course of a year.

MyMaths (Homework)

Maths homework in all years will be provided electronically using MyMaths. All pupils will be provided with log in details and the tasks will help consolidate what has been learnt in class.





Final thoughts

Whilst the multiplication check takes place in Y4, it is important children in all year groups are continuing to practise the basics and increase fluency. Rapid recall of multiplication facts makes learning other more complicated mathematical concepts 'ten times easier'. The recurring message within this letter is practice, practice, practice. Engaging with the activities above in 'little and often' bursts will really help improve mathematical confidence in all pupils.


Reading

As we embark on another exciting school year at Portway, we want to emphasise the crucial role that reading plays in your child's education and overall development. We believe that a strong partnership between school and home is essential for your child's success.

Why reading matters?

Children who read...	
	Are more likely to overcome disadvantage caused by inequalities
	Are more likely to be happier, healthier and experience better mental wellbeing and self-esteem
	Are more likely to do better at school and make more progress across the curriculum
	Are more likely to develop empathy and creativity

booktrust.org.uk/benefits-of-reading-news

 **BookTrust**
Getting children reading

Ways to support your child's reading journey at home

1. **Create a reading-friendly environment:** Set up a comfortable and quiet reading corner at home with a variety of age-appropriate books.
2. **Be a reading role model:** Let them see you reading for pleasure and emphasize that reading is not just a school task but a lifelong enjoyment.
3. **Read aloud together:** Share the joy of reading by reading aloud to your child regularly, even if they are independent readers.
4. **Visit the library:** Encourage your child to choose books from the library that pique their interest, and help them explore various genres and topics.
5. **Set a reading routine:** Establish a daily reading routine, such as bedtime reading. Consistency helps form good reading habits.
6. **Discuss what they read:** Ask questions about the characters, plot, and their opinions.
7. **Limit screen time:** While technology is valuable, it's essential to balance screen time with reading time.
8. **Celebrate reading achievements:** Celebrate your child's reading milestones, whether it's finishing a book or participating in reading challenges.

Reading expectations

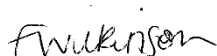
- Listen to your child read at least 3 times a week and sign their reading record.
- Ensure your child looks after their school reading books. Charges of £5 for any lost or damaged books will be issued.

Communication with Teachers

Our teachers are here to support your child's reading journey. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's reading homework, their progress, or if you need recommendations for age-appropriate reading materials, please don't hesitate to reach out to their teacher.

We really hope you find this information useful. Thank you for your continued support, it is always appreciated.

Miss Wilkinson & Team Portway



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