



# Portesham C of E VA Primary School

'Putting children first'

www.Portesham.dorset.sch.uk

6 September 2017

Dear parents

The summer holidays have whizzed by and here we are back in school for the start of the new year. Miss White and I would like to welcome everyone back and we have put together the following information which we hope will be helpful to you.



### Home/school communication

There will be no communication book this year as this is going to be replaced by an email system. Please email the office at [office@portesham.dorset.sch.uk](mailto:office@portesham.dorset.sch.uk) with any messages, particularly if somebody else is picking up your child.



### Reading in school

Reading skills are critical for children's development and consecutive studies have shown a link between competency in reading and overall attainment across all subjects. The focus in school is on teaching children the skills to enable them to read rather than on listening to individual children read. However reading practice is also vital to progress. Last year, we were very lucky to have Liz Draper (from the village) and Karen Enikova (Eliza's mum) as volunteer reading helpers and this had a tremendous impact on progress for a lot of children. If there are any other parents or grandparents who could also help out with reading, we would be extremely grateful. It doesn't have to be for a long time—half an hour when dropping children off in the morning, or when collecting in the afternoon, would be great. Please let me know if you can help.



Healthy Schools

Sue Vernon, a local volunteer librarian, also comes into school on a regular basis for a story time session with the children.

### Home Reading

It is very important that all children experience regular home reading. Please encourage your child to read for about 10 minutes each day and record reading in the reading record book. There are some ideas to help with home reading just Inside the front cover of the reading record. You can also try sharing the reading with your child, which can be fun.



Reading books will be changed once a week on a Monday and each child will be given three books. Please ensure that all three books, together with the reading record, come into school every day as they are needed when children read to adult helpers. A zipped wallet for reading books and the reading record has been provided by school to help keep everything together. Wallets should be placed in the appropriate year group box by the classroom door as the children come in each morning. If your child reads all three books before they are due to be changed and you require more, please let us know. Children need to develop a love of books and reading to them is an important aspect of the reading process.



### PE kit

I have timetabled PE for Wednesday afternoons, but It is essential that children have the appropriate PE kit available in school at all times as lessons sometimes have to be rescheduled due to weather or hall commitments. A track-suit would also be a good idea for this term if your child feels the cold.



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### **Spellings**

Your child will have spellings stuck into the front of their orange books each week and tests will take place on Wednesdays. The children will use the middle of the same book for the test, so that you will be able to see how well they have done. Word walls will be stuck into the back of the orange book.

### **Word Walls**

There are a number of words that children are expected to be able to sight read—some from the Read, Write, Inc scheme and others stipulated in the National Curriculum for each year group. These have been produced on 'word walls' for children to practice (in back of orange book). Please just spend a few minutes on a regular basis to look at these words with your child and tick any that they can confidently sight read. We will also be checking in class and when appropriate children will move onto the next word wall.

### **Homework**

There will be four 'talk-up, write up tasks' over the course of the term. These tasks are powerful because it enables children to imitate the language they need for a particular topic. I will send detailed information with the tasks when they are set. There will also be some dimension related homework from time to time. .

### **Dimension**

This term's dimension is 'Beep Beep, Toot Toot'. A copy of the curriculum plan is available on the school website. I have planned a trip to the Haynes Motor Museum at Sparkford on Thursday 19th October and will confirm this once final arrangements nearly the time. I will need some parent support for the trip in order to meet child/adult safety ratios, so please contact me if you think you would like to come along with us.

### **Coats, hats and jumpers**

With the unpredictable English weather, the children will still need a sun hat in school, but also a coat in case of rain. Please ensure that jumpers are named, as it makes identifying missing jumpers much easier. If named, I am able to return 'missing jumpers' to cloakroom pegs at the end of the day. There will also be a lost property box outside the classroom for any un-named items of clothing.

### **Hot school dinner orders**

I have been asked by Mrs Barnes to remind parents of the importance of ensuring the lunch orders are completed. It can be very difficult for her to ensure that children get their choice meal if lunch orders are not submitted at the appropriate time.

### **PE and Swimming**

PE will be on Wednesday afternoons but it would be helpful if children could have PE kit in school at all times as there are sometimes changes to the timetabled sessions. All PE kit and uniform needs to be named as children often get clothing muddled when they change. Swimming lessons have also been scheduled for Mondays throughout the year. Each child will receive nine lessons over the course of one term. Year 2 children will take part in sessions starting Monday 11th September and Year 1 will go in the Summer term, starting Monday 16 April.

### **Toys in school**

Please discourage your child from bring toys etc. into school as there is very little space in the classroom.

### **Talking activity**

Unfortunately it will not be possible to do 'morning talks/talk-about's' this year. Instead the children will have an opportunity to take home one of the class soft toys to share in home activities, which they can then record in the accompanying book. On returning the soft toy, children will be given the opportunity to talk about their adventures with the rest of the class. Year 2 will be looking after Blaze Bear and Year 1 will have Jemima duck.

### **After school information session**

Parents are invited to come into the classroom **after school on Thursday 7 September** when I can go over any classroom procedures or practices and answer any queries that may arise.

I hope that I have covered everything, but if you have any other queries, please do not hesitate to catch either Miss White or myself.

Best wishes

A ALDRIDGE

Class 2 teacher