

Headteachers message to families - Autumn 1 / Friday 16th October
Belong, Engage, Enjoy!

Happy Half-Term:

As we finish for half-term today, I just wanted to say thank you for all of your support over what has been a really busy few weeks. We've packed a lot into this half-term, with lots of events, some changes, some new faces joining our school community, and plenty of wonderful memories made along the way. Most importantly, it has been fantastic to see the progress our pupils continue to make every day.

We hope all of our families have a lovely, restful break and enjoy some quality time together.

A reminder that school closes for the October half-term break today, Friday 16th October, and will reopen to pupils on Monday 2nd November.

We look forward to seeing everyone back after the holiday, refreshed and ready for another great half-term!

Halloween Disco

Today, pupils will be enjoying our Halloween Disco, with music, dancing and plenty of fun throughout the afternoon.

The disco will be in three sessions:

- 1:00pm - 1:45pm: Lower School
- 1:45pm - 2:15pm: Quiet Disco Session
- 2:15pm - 3:00pm: Upper School

We also have a Halloween photo booth, featuring some fantastic Halloween-themed decorations created by our classes. Pupils had the opportunity to have their photograph taken to share at home and to celebrate the occasion with their friends.

Many pupils have come to school dressed in Halloween colours and festive accessories, helping to create a fun and atmosphere across the school!

Post-16 Transport Update

You may recently have received a letter from the Local Authority regarding proposed changes to Post-16 transport arrangements from September.

The Local Authority is hosting two information and engagement events at Portland College, providing parents and carers with an opportunity to hear more about the proposed changes, ask questions and discuss any concerns directly with Local Authority representatives.

The events are scheduled for:

- Tuesday 3rd November at 6:00pm

- Saturday 14th November at 10:00am

As these events are being held at Portland College and are specifically focused on the proposed transport changes, we would encourage any interested parents and carers to attend.

At this stage, please consider this a save the date. We will share further information, including booking arrangements and any additional details, as soon as they become available.

Signing In and Out Reminder:

A polite reminder to all parents and carers that, when visiting school, you must sign in on arrival and sign out when leaving the site. This is an important safeguarding and health and safety requirement, ensuring we have an accurate record of everyone on site in the event of an evacuation or emergency.

We've noticed that this is occasionally being missed recently, so we'd really appreciate everyone's support in making sure the signing-in book is completed every time you visit.

Soft Play Installation:

Our new soft play area will be installed over the half-term break! This is something we know many of our pupils will really enjoy, and we can't wait to see them exploring and making use of the new space when they return.

The soft play area will provide another fantastic opportunity for pupils to develop their physical skills, communication, confidence and enjoyment through play. We will be sharing some photos once it's all ready and welcoming pupils back to this exciting new addition to our school.

Class Overviews for 2026/27

This week, we have updated our school website with the class overviews for each of our classes. These overviews provide information about the topics pupils will be exploring and the key areas of learning they will be focusing on throughout this academic year.

If you would like to find out more about your child's learning journey, simply visit the page below, find your child's class, and click on the relevant overview:

Fountaindale Classes 26/27:

<https://www.fountaindaleschool.org/page/?title=Fountaindale+Classes+26%2F27&pid=51>

Seesaw Reminder:

If your child is due to attend respite, please send a quick message to your child's class team via Seesaw to let them know the dates and how long they will be attending for. This helps ensure that all transport escorts are aware of arrangements and supports a smooth transition onto transport before and after their respite stay.

Health Care Plans:

A reminder that Health Care Plans were sent home at the beginning of term and now need to be completed and returned as soon as possible. These plans are a legal requirement and are essential in helping us meet our duty of care and follow school health procedures. If you have not yet returned your child's Health Care Plan, please do so at your earliest convenience.

Safeguarding Update: Internet Safety for Children with SEND

Many of our pupils enjoy spending time online, whether that's watching videos, playing games, using apps or communicating with family and friends. While the internet can offer lots of positive opportunities, children and young people with SEND can sometimes be more vulnerable to online risks and may need additional support to recognise when something isn't right.

Over the half-term break, it can be helpful to:

- Regularly check the apps, games and websites your child is using.
- Use parental controls and privacy settings where appropriate.
- Talk to your child about who they are communicating with online.
- Encourage them to tell a trusted adult if anything online worries, upsets or confuses them.
- Revisit family rules around screen time and internet use.

There are some excellent resources available for parents and carers:

NSPCC Online Safety Hub

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

Internet Matters Parental Controls Guides

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/>

Childnet Parent and Carer Advice

<https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/parental-controls/>

Have a great half-term break,

B Norman

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