

# Newsletter

November has been another busy month for us at Portswood Primary school, with our children continuing to work hard – building on the excellent starts that they have made to the year already. Year 4 have had their visit to Butser Ancient Farm and Year 5 have enjoyed the first of several visits to Cantell for a science workshop.

The end of term will also be a busy few weeks with performances and the Winter Fayre. You still have time to drop in your donations for the Fayre and the Festive hampers.

Now that the weather is turning colder, can I please ask that you send your children in with a coat and gloves.

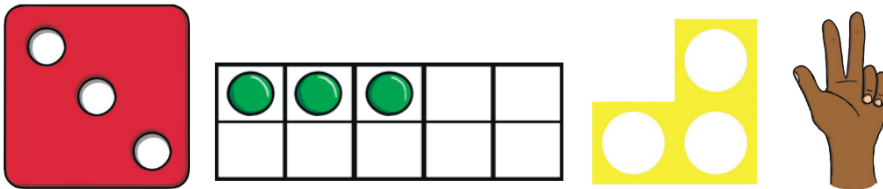
**Tony Head**  
Headteacher

## Curriculum update.

### Year R

We have been enjoying learning about Diwali and fireworks night including making lots of amazing firework pictures using different mediums – the glitter was lots of fun!

In maths, we have been practising careful counting by moving or touching items as we count. We have also been learning to read numbers presented in various ways such as numerals and different images. For example, three could be shown in the following ways;



We have continued to explore traditional tales in Literacy including The Three Little Pigs and Little Red Hen. We have been working hard to retell the stories with actions.

We have been enjoying our daily handwriting lessons and practising our three friends hold pencil grip whenever we can!

## Year 1

This month, Year 1 have been busy showing off their creativity and resilience in both Design Technology and Art.

The children worked incredibly hard to design and construct their very own Portwood buildings. They carefully joined pieces of card together to make sure their structures were strong and stable. They showed fantastic resilience by adding extra details such as roofs, bricks, doors, and windows.



In Art, the children explored clay and experimented with different techniques. They made a variety of shapes, imprinted objects to create unique patterns, and learned how to join pieces of clay securely. With these new skills, the children created their own clay animals, all of which looked amazing.



A special thank you goes to all the parents who volunteered and supported the children during these creative projects. Your help made the experience even more enjoyable and memorable.



**INSPIRING  
FUTURE  
TEACHERS**  
HSP TEACHER  
TRAINING



**TRAIN TO TEACH  
IN HAMPSHIRE** 



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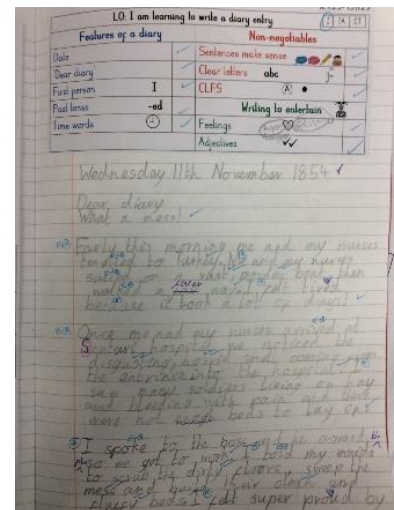
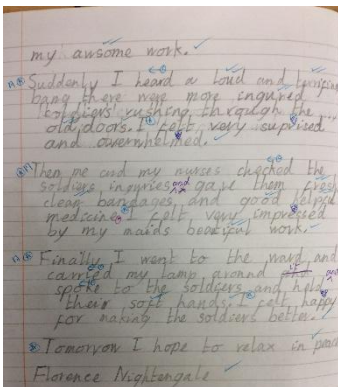
## Year 2

In Year 2, we have been on an exciting learning journey exploring the life of the remarkable Florence Nightingale. We learned about the key events in her life by looking at timelines, and we found out how she helped care for soldiers in the Crimean War and made hospitals cleaner and safer for everyone.



As part of our learning, we were very lucky to have a special visitor — Florence Nightingale herself! She told us all about her life, her time in Crimea, and how she worked hard to improve healthcare around the world. We loved asking her questions that we had written and finding out what it was like to be a nurse in the 1800s.

In English, we wrote a diary entry as if we were Florence Nightingale. First, we described her long journey to the Scutari Hospital and what she saw when she arrived, including the poor conditions and the challenges she had to face. Next, we wrote about how Florence and her nurses worked hard to clean the hospital and make it safe and tidy. Finally, we explained how she became known as the “Lady with the Lamp.”



In Art, we learned about an artist called David Hockney. We looked closely at his paintings and photographic collages and searched for different types of mark making. Then we pretended to be David Hockney ourselves! We created our own photo collages using pictures of ourselves and a partner to make a brand-new image.

After that, we used our skills to create a collage of Florence Nightingale, using both photographs and our own drawings. We made sure to think carefully about our mark making as we worked.

Have a look at our amazing artwork!



### Year 3

Year 3 have been working really hard over the last few weeks. In maths, they have been learning to multiply using the expanded column method and will soon be moving on to division. Their art topic this half term is portrait drawing and have been inspired by the work on Monica Lee. So far, they have investigated the types of marks made by different types of pencils and charcoal. The highlight of this month, was our French breakfast, where the children and their grown ups enjoyed croissants and hot chocolate while learning language about this topic.



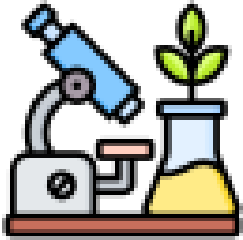
### Year 4

Year 4 have had a very busy month! Some highlights have included our recent trip to Butser Ancient Farm, where we learned more about life in the Celtic and Roman times. We saw a genuine Roman mosaic, held different artifacts, made Roman jewellery and discovered cordage. Despite the rain, we had a great day and the Butser Hill staff commented on how well behaved the children were.



## Year 5

It has been another exciting month for Year 5! The children have been immersed in the book *Holes*, and they even had a go at digging their own holes. They were surprised to discover just how difficult the task would have been — especially when using a heavy shovel!



In addition to this, they had the pleasure of visiting Cantell Secondary School to take part in the first of five science workshops. We enjoyed working in a secondary school laboratory and carrying out experiments. We learnt how to be safe when heating different substances to find out how much energy they contained.

Well done, Year 5!

## Year 6

Year 6 have started our new English topic: *Macbeth*! They took part in a fantastic workshop led by Mr Head. The children had the chance to act out the scenes and discuss the characters and events in the play. Year 6 have also been learning about natural selection and the theory of evolution in science. They have researched Darwin's Finches, and this week have investigated the way their beaks adapted with the help of some kitchen tongs!



## November Sports News.

### Football news



Year 6 have been taking part in the St Mark's football league competition this half term. The boys and girls teams have worked exceptionally hard and the staff have been so impressed with their confidence as a team, footballing skills and their encouragement of each other - all whilst battling freezing temperatures!



Both teams have worked hard against well-practiced opponents, and we look forward to seeing the final results of the leagues.

### Cross Country League

Well done to all the children who took part in the cross-country league.

Special congratulations to Sadie in Year 5 and Yalika in Year 4 who have placed high enough to make it through to represent Southampton at the Hampshire finals in March 2026.



### PE Kit reminders

With the cold weather now upon us, please ensure that your child is wearing appropriate clothing including gloves for outdoor P.E.

All jewellery, **including earrings**, should be removed rather than taped to ensure the safety of your child.

## Reminders

### Parking and Air Pollution

As mentioned in the October Newsletter, as part of our work with the Local Authority they have invited the children to take part in a competition. This is the 'Winter Clean Air Challenge.' The challenge invites the children to become smell detectives – sniffing out cosy alternatives to wood burning that reduce air pollution and protecting health.

If your child wishes to take part, please see below for instructions:

1. Take a walk outside one evening and complete the [activity sheet](#) (attached for reference, please receive a paper copy from your teacher). Can you smell wood smoke in the air? Is it strong or faint? Can you see where it's coming from? Try to describe it.
2. Draw a picture or write a poem about fun things you can do in winter to feel cosy, other than burning wood.
3. Hand your entry into reception by Friday 12th December. Please include your name, class/year and school on your entry.

If you have any questions about the competition or would like further information about wood burning and air quality, please contact the team at tEC on [cleanair@environmentcentre.com](mailto:cleanair@environmentcentre.com).

### Sickness

This time of year will always bring colds and viruses and it can be difficult to decide whether to send your child to school. The NHS have published a list of guidelines to follow: [Is my child too ill for school?](#)

## Festive Hampers and Winter Fayre – Wednesday 17 December.

You still have time to drop in your donations for the Festive hampers.

Here is a reminder of what you can bring for the Festive Hampers. We will need your donations by 5 December 2025.

- Year R - Chocolate
- Year 1 – Christmas Nibbles
- Year 2 - Sweets and Treats
- Year 3 - Gold
- Year 4 - Foods of the World
- Year 5 - Red & White
- Year 6 - Body, Bath & Beyond



## Christmas Dinner – Tuesday 16 December 2025

Children are to select their meal choice as normal on Arbor. If you have already selected a meal choice for this day (Tuesday 16 December 2025) please check that you are happy with the following choices:

Meal choice showing on Arbor is....	This will be replaced with....
Sweet Chilli Chicken Noodles	Festive Chicken and Stuffing
Hoisin Sticky Vegetable Noodles	Festive Vegetable & Stuffing Pastry
Jacket Potato	Jacket Potato with cheese and/or beans

## Christmas Jumper Day

For this years Save the Children Christmas jumper event we are choosing to do something different. We would like to give you and your children a choice. If your child would like to wear their festive jumper for the whole of the last week, Monday 15 December to Thursday 18 December, all they need to do is make a donation of £2.

If they only want to wear their festive jumper on the last day of term Thursday 18 December, they only need to make a donation of £1.



All your child needs to do is wear a festive woolly, instead of their usual school sweater, and bring in a donation. There is no need to splash out on snazzy new sweaters to join in the fun – why not swap, borrow or bling up an old woolly with some festive decorations.

We would really appreciate your support to make Christmas Jumper Day a success – it is a great cause, so together we can make the world better in our sparkly sweaters!



## Children in Need

The children and parents of our school once again helped us support this worthwhile charity by dressing up in spotty or yellow clothes.

Due to your contributions, we were able to raise over £308.00.

Thank you again for your participation.



## Book Fair

As in previous years the book fair proved to be tremendously popular whilst it was here. You managed to raise £1000 for the school to use on new books for the classrooms.

Thank you to all those who came to visit during this time.



## Cake Sale proceeds

After an enormously successful cake sale, we have taken delivery of our wonderful new piano.

Thank you so much to our whole school community for making this happen. If you have a budding young pianist in your family, please do encourage them to sign up to play to us during assemblies.

Music club are also excited to be visiting Spitfire Lodge at the beginning of December and are busy practising their Christmas songs to sing to them.



## Dates / Activities

Date	Activity
Wednesday 3 December 2025	MHST Workshop, "Understanding Challenging Behaviour" - registered parents only.
Wednesday 3 December 2025	Music club visit to Spitfire Lodge.
Friday 5 December 2025	Year 4 Performance 2.45pm
Monday 8 December 2025	Last week for clubs
Tuesday 9 December 2025	Year 1 & 2 Performance - 9.30am and 2.30pm
Friday 12 December 2025	Year R Nativity - 9.30am and 2.30pm
Friday 12 December 2025	Year 5 Egyptian museum
Tuesday 16 December 2025	Year 2 Parents in to help make ambulances
Tuesday 16 December 2025	Christmas Dinner
Wednesday 17 December 2025	Winter Fayre
Thursday 18 December 2025	Save the Children Christmas Jumper Day
Friday 19 December 2025	Inset Day – School closed.
Monday 5 January 2026	Children back to school

**FUNDRAISER EXTRAVAGANZA!**  
FOR: NASA TRIP 2027 & THAILAND ADVENTURE 2026

# CANTELL CHRISTMAS FETE



**SATURDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER**  
**CANTELL SCHOOL**  
11:00 AM - 2:30 PM

**FREE ADMISSION!**

- HOME-MADE FOOD & TREATS
- CHRISTMAS CARDS & DECORATIONS
- FUN ACTIVITIES
- MEET FATHER CHRISTMAS
- RAFFLE!



2027

**ALL STALLS CASH ONLY**

2026



## Family Concerts

The following event is offered as part of our family concert programme. Tickets are £4-£5 and can be booked online.

[Click here](#) to download our digital family concert handout that can be sent to parents and carers.



### Winter Lullaby and Blown Away

**Date:** Saturday 13 December, 11:00 & 14:00

**Audience:** Winter Lullaby is suitable for children aged 0-2 and their families. Blown Away is suitable for children aged 3-8 and their families.

This December, we'll have double the fun for family audiences with two performances produced by Concerteenies.

In the morning, Winter Lullaby offers the perfect opportunity for families to connect with their little ones through music and sensory play. Slow down and listen to cosy lullabies complete with sound-healing percussion, bubbles and more!

In the afternoon, join Penguin Blue and his friends as they journey from the wintry Antarctic to the jungle tropics. This is a brilliant introduction to music, storytelling and animation for children and families.