

Portland Central School

Welcome to Kindergarten



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Find us on 

Welcome to Portland Central School

Our aim at Portland Central School is to make your child's transition into Kindergarten as smooth and enjoyable as possible, and to ensure that parents and carers are well informed throughout the transition process.

Starting school is one of the biggest milestones in a child's life. At Portland Central School, we have highly competent and dedicated staff who will ensure your child feels safe, comfortable and eager to learn.

Our emphasis on reading, writing and mathematics in the early years, with our specialised programs, builds the foundation for successful learning. Our teachers are committed to providing a range of high-quality learning experiences to meet the individual needs of every student through engaging, hands-on activities.

Our School Wide Expectations (SWE) underpin education at our school. We believe every student has the right to learn in a safe, respectful environment. We know that when students feel safe and respected their learning outcomes improve.

Our transition staff visit Blinky Bill throughout the year to develop positive professional relationships with their staff. This enables our teachers to get to know many of our future students. It also enables us to develop programs that promote the most successful transition for every child.

We look forward to working with you in close partnership to make a difference in your child's education and provide a wide range of positive experiences and learning opportunities.

Megan Davey
Transition
Teacher



Alissa Curran
AP Curriculum
& Instruction



Jodie Mason
Assistant
Principal



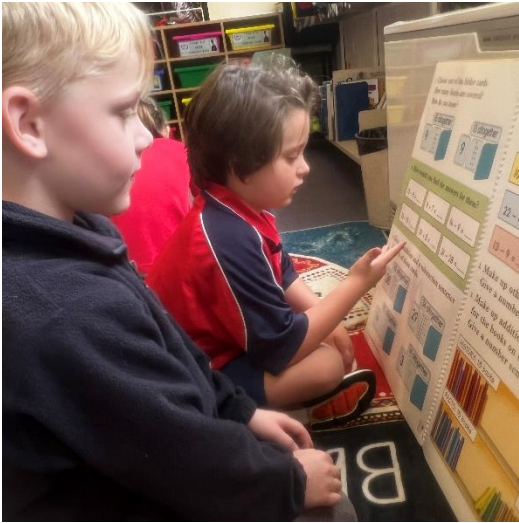
Kelly Gurney
Assistant
Principal (rel.)



Matthew Quirk
Principal



Is my child ready for school?



Children can start Kindergarten at the beginning of the school year if they turn 5 on or before the 31 July that year. By law, all children must be in compulsory schooling by their sixth birthday.

When your child starts school is an individual decision. You may wish to discuss this with your child's preschool teacher, doctor or during your chat with our principal or transition teacher. Our teachers are trained to work with your child regardless of their age or level of development.

Parents sometimes think that school readiness means being able to read, write and know colours or count before starting school, but these skills will be taught at school so they are not a priority.

Children cannot thrive at school if they have not developed the skills to manage things like getting along with other children, following instructions and communicating their needs.

School readiness in children includes many different skills and behaviours.

Some questions to consider are:

- How well does my child settle into the day once they have been dropped off?
- How confident are they in expressing themselves to others?
- How well do they follow routines?
- Can they make an independent decision and follow through on it?
- Do they have ideas of their own?
- Can they follow two or three instructions at the same time?
- Can they move on to new activities easily?
- Do they show interest in other children?
- Do they interact with other children?
- Can they recognise and express their feelings and needs?
- Can they concentrate on a task?
- How do they deal with frustration?

Please don't be concerned if your child doesn't demonstrate all of the school readiness skills and behaviours described.

Children develop at different rates and learn skills in different ways. Each child has their own strengths, interests, temperament and approach to learning. Our teachers at Portland Central will respond to the individual needs of all students and plan learning experiences based on the skills students bring with them to school.

If you feel concerned with your child's development, speech, vision, hearing or behaviours talk to their preschool teacher, doctor, transition teacher or principal for advice.

What can you do to help?

Children learn best through play. Here are some easy things you can do to help your child get ready for starting school:

- Try to arrange play dates with other children starting at the same school. This gives your child the chance to develop their social skills and will give them the confidence that they will have a friend to talk to when they start school.
- Let your child practise drawing with a range of different materials, such as pencils, crayons and textas to help develop their fine motor skills. Remember to praise their efforts!
- Encourage your child to dress and undress themselves, and to use the toilet independently.
- Encourage your child to have conversations with you. Ask them questions, listen to their answers, and encourage them to talk about what they think and feel so they can express themselves with new friends and teachers.
- Read with your child as often as possible. Enjoying books with you develops early literacy skills and helps encourage a love of reading. When reading with your child, talk to them about the story, point out new words, and ask questions. This will help with their comprehension, vocabulary and language skills.
- Help your child develop a basic awareness of numbers and responsibility by helping around the house. They could set the table and count the plates, match socks from the washing line, or measure the ingredients for some baking.
- Play games with your child. Simple board games (like Snakes and Ladders) and card games (Snap, Concentration and Go Fish) are great for practising taking turns, sharing, waiting and learning to cope with not winning.

Transition to school

We have two aspects to our transition program at Portland Central School. The first is 'Ready, Set, School!' which provides children with their first look at our wonderful school. Preschool aged children are invited to attend each Wednesday morning for 2 hours during Term 3, beginning Wednesday 26 July, supported by their parents and friendly faces from preschool. If your child attends Blinky Bill on Wednesdays, they will be brought down by their teachers.

Children become familiar with the important areas of our school and key members of our staff. They participate in a wide range of fun activities providing opportunities to develop their skills and become comfortable in new surroundings.

Our formal transition program 'Paddling Preps' commences in Term 4. This program provides a look at what it's like to come to 'big school.' Children move into our Kindergarten classroom where they participate in a variety of activities with their future classmates, our current Kindergarten students and their teacher. Your child will participate in a range of activities including art, language, craft, numbers, using technology, music, reading, fine and gross motor skills and developing social interactions.

Key dates

- **School Tours and Principal interviews** by appointment.
- **Ready, Set, School!** Term 3 Wednesday mornings 26 July - 13 September.
- **Paddling Preps** Term 4 Wednesday mornings from 18 October – 6 December.



The enrolment process

1. Make an appointment with the Principal to discuss your child's enrolment.
2. Complete the enrolment form in this pack.
3. Return all required documents (outlined below) to our front office.
4. You will receive a letter of confirmation for your child's enrolment.
5. Ensure your child attends our transition programs to help them feel confident and comfortable about coming to school.

Documents required to complete the enrolment process:

- Completed enrolment form
- Birth certificate (office to sight and copy)
- Immunisation certificate (office to sight and copy)
- A document stating your residential address eg. driver's licence, account or lease (office to sight and copy)
- Copies of any family law or other relevant court orders (office to sight & copy)
- If required*, Rural & Regional School Travel. Once you have confirmed your school enrolment, complete the online application form at:
<https://transportnsw.info/tickets-opal/ticket-eligibility-concessions/child-student-concessions>.
- Health Plan (if applicable) – copy of student Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan for anaphylaxis or asthma or any other medical concerns.

2024 Term dates

Term 1	Thursday, 1 st February 2024	Friday, 12 April 2024	10 weeks
Term 2	Tuesday, 29 April 2024	Friday, 5 July 2024	10 weeks
Term 3	Tuesday, 22 July 2024	Friday, 27 September 2024	10 weeks
Term 4	Monday, 14 October 2024	Thursday, 19 December 2024	11 weeks

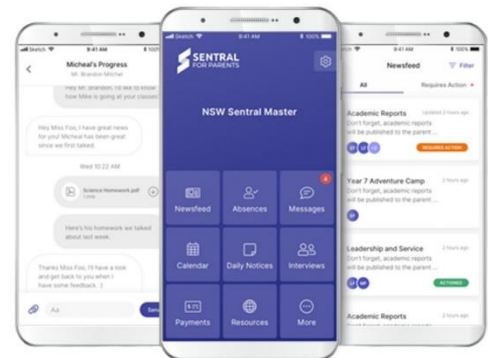
Communication

There are a number of ways to keep up to date on what is happening at Portland Central School.

- Our website <https://portland-c.schools.nsw.gov.au>
- Sentral Parent Portal and App (download on Google Play or the App Store)
- Fortnightly newsletters (accessible via our website or Sentral Parent Portal and App)
- Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/PortlandCentralSchool/>
- Our digital school billboard
- Talk with your child's teacher on a regular basis.

Sentral Parent Portal and App

The Sentral portal gives parents access to attendance, academic reports, wellbeing, timetables and a whole range of student information. Once enrolments are finalised you will receive an email with registration instructions.



Assemblies

Families are encouraged to attend our school assemblies and celebrate their child's progress.

Primary assemblies are held fortnightly on Fridays at 2:20pm.

A whole school assembly is held twice a term in Week 5 and 10 at 2:15pm in the Community Hall.

What to expect in the first weeks

How to prepare for the first day

Talk to your child about school. It is important children feel happy, excited and comfortable about school.

Remember your child will need to be doing more things independently at school.

- Practice how to unwrap food and open containers and pre-packaged food.
- Practice taking off their own jumper and putting jumpers on.
- Encourage them to recognise their own name.
- Provide opportunities for your child to look after their own belongings.
- Encourage your child to play with other children and to share and take turns.
- Show your child the safest way to school and how to use the pedestrian crossing.
- Always meet your child at the school gate at the end of the day so that they do not have to cross the road when cars are leaving the school.
- Label all items your child will bring to school.



If your child is upset on arrival at school, we advise you to leave as soon as possible. They will settle more quickly this way. Try not to show them your anxiety: this often makes them more upset.

Bell times

Morning Session	9:00am – 11:05am
Recess	11:05am – 11:25am
Middle Session	11:25am – 1:05pm
Lunch	1:05pm – 1:45pm
Afternoon Session	1:45pm – 3:00pm

What to pack when coming to school

- **Fruit:** our school is a Crunch and Sip school. This means all classes break at 10am for fruit and water. Each child has their own drink bottle in class, supplied by the school.
- **Healthy lunch:** it is important children eat healthy food to keep their brains active and ready for learning and concentration. To keep students safe from allergic reactions, do not pack anything with nuts.
- **Drink bottle:** water is the best choice for a drink.
- **Hat:** our school is a 'no hat, no play' school. All Kindergarten students are provided a new school hat as part of our Transition to School program, with their surname embroidered on the hat. Students must wear hats during all break times to play.
- **Paint smock:** art is an important part of early years development and students will complete regular art experiences. A paint smock or old shirt will protect their uniform.
- **Library bag:** students make a personalised library bag during our Transition to School program ready to borrow books from our school library. Class library days will be communicated in the first few weeks of school.
- **Spare clothes:** students often become engrossed in learning and play and can sometimes leave it a little late to make the toilet. It's better to be prepared.

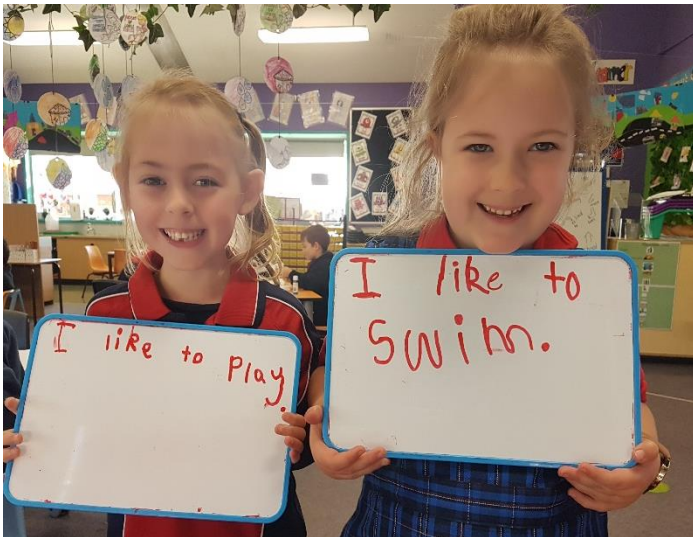
Lunch orders

Unfortunately, our school does not have a canteen. However, we do have some options for our students to purchase lunch.

Our MCAT students prepare food every day, including toasted sandwiches, hashbrowns, fish fingers and spring rolls. They also have Milo, poppers, water and Zooper Doopers in summer. Prices range from \$1.00 – \$3.00.

Senior students studying Hospitality offer a lunch special, usually \$5, during the winter months as part of their assessment.

Best Start Kindergarten Assessment



The Best Start Kindergarten Assessment is a state-wide assessment that helps to show teachers the literacy and numeracy skills of each student at the beginning of Kindergarten.

The assessment, implemented on the second day of school, provides teachers the opportunity to sit one on one with each child and focus on what they can do. This helps teachers to plan lessons to best support the learning needs of every child.

Attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential to assist students in maximising their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students.

Parents are required to explain the absences of their children from school promptly and within seven days to the school. An explanation for absence must be provided to the school within seven days of the first day of any period of absence.

Every minute counts: Impact on attendance

Per day	Per week	Per year	13 years of school
10 minutes	50 minutes	1.5 weeks	Half a year
20 minutes	1 hour 40 minutes	2.5 weeks	1 year
Half an hour	Half a day	4 weeks	1 ¹ / ₂ years
One hour	1 day	8 weeks	2 ¹ / ₂ years

Our uniform

At Portland Central School students are expected to wear the official uniform. Uniform provides a sense of belonging and pride. We are proud of our school and our students, and by wearing uniform our students will stand out when representing us in the community.

K-6

Boys

Grey shorts or trousers
Red school polo shirt or red skivvy
School jumper/jacket
Grey socks
Black shoes
PCS hat or beanie

Girls

Navy Skort
OR Navy shorts/pants
Red school polo shirt or red skivvy
School jumper/jacket
White socks
Black shoes
PCS hat or beanie

Sport K-6

Navy shorts / track pants
School jumper / jacket
White socks
Joggers

Price list

Red polo	\$26.00
Skort	\$22.00
Jumper 6-14	\$30.00
Jacket	\$35.00



Uniforms can be purchased at the Portland Central School Uniform Shop.

Getting involved in your child's learning

- Volunteer as a classroom helper and listen to students read.
- Attend our special events during the school year including Easter Hat Parade, Education Week, Book Week and Grandparents Day.
- Participate in Focus Group Meetings.

Focus Groups

Portland Central School's Parents and Community Focus Groups are designed for parents, caregivers, teachers and community members, to come together and discuss key school planning priorities. Focus groups will be held during Weeks 4 and 8 of each term in the staff common room of the administration building. The focus groups aim to bring together key stakeholders of our school and community to gather valuable insights and promote and strengthen relationships to ensure that students gain the maximum benefit from their time at Portland Central School.



Family Resource Centre

Parenting is a challenging job, but it is the most important one we can ever do. What you teach your child before school, and how you support them at school, sets them up for life. At Portland, we are very fortunate to have a Family Resource Centre.

- Portland Playgroup runs every Monday 10:00am to 12:00pm.
- Toy Library is available Monday 10:00am to 12:00pm.
- We offer parenting advice and referral to other services.
- We also facilitate the parenting program “Circle of Security.”

The Families NSW Classroom is located in the Primary section two classrooms down from our Kindergarten Classroom. The Resource Centre is open and available every Monday until the end of 2023.

We ask families to bring along some fruit for morning tea and a sunhat.

Parking is available in Vale Street. If you do not wish to enter the school grounds, access to the room can be gained via the rear entrance from the laneway adjacent to the butchers.

For more information, please contact:

Jackie Vogel

Playgroup Facilitator

LINC: (02) 63 545 906

jackie@linc.org.au

