

FAQs for Parents

What are the ways to get in touch with the school?

Telephone: Main office - 01 803 8056

Email: office@portmarnockcommunityschool.ie

This is the official email address for Portmarnock Community School. It is also the contact email address for Ms Deeney (Principal of PCS), the Board of Management and for Accounts.

Parent Contact Email: admin@portmarnockcommunityschool.ie

This is the email address to use for daily correspondence when you have a student in the school. For example, to inform the office of family holidays, subject changes, illness etc. this is the email to use.

What do I do if I need to collect my child early for a scheduled appointment?

Write a note in the student's journal. The student should show the note to their Tutor/Year Head at the appropriate time; the teacher will then sign the note and allow the student to sign out at the office. For student safety reasons it is very important that every student signs out before leaving the school.

What do I do if I need to collect my child early for an unscheduled appointment?

Phone the office at 018038056 as soon as possible and we will get a message to the student. To avoid class interruptions announcements are made three times a day at 11.10, 12.40 and 15.40 and we are happy to call students at these times to pass on messages. For student safety reasons it is very important that every student signs out before leaving the school.

What do I do if my son/daughter has lost an item?

Students should retrace their steps to search for the item lost. If a lost property item happens to be handed in to the office, the item is announced over the intercom during one of the three announcement times and can be claimed from the office during break times only. Please bear in mind that there are more than 900 students attending Portmarnock Community School so please clearly label all of your child's property with their name. There is a label already on school coats which only needs your child's name to be filled in.

What do I do if my child has forgotten an item for school (e.g. lunch/books etc.) and I want to drop up to the school for them?

These items can be brought to the office for collection by students at break times. Student names will be included in announcements which are made at 11.10, 12.40 and 15.40. Please note we cannot interrupt class to give any forgotten items to students. They may be collected only at break times or at the end of the school day.

What do I do if my child is going to miss school due to an appointment/ event?

Write a note in the student's journal or contact the office by phone (01)8038056 or email admin@portmarnockcommunityschool.ie.

What do students do if they forget their locker key?

Students should speak with the appropriate Deputy Principal who will arrange to have the lock removed from the locker. The student will then need to replace the lock.

What do students do if they feel ill?

Please be vigilant in not sending your son/daughter to school if they are sick. If a student feels ill in school, they need to inform their Tutor or Year Head, or the Deputy Principal who looks after their year group, and he/she will write a note in the student's journal giving permission to phone home from the office. The student should present the note at the office and the secretary will then phone home to speak with a Parent/Guardian. It is important that you have access to your own mobile phone during school hours in case of illness or emergency. (Please note that all calls must be made through the school office, the use of mobile phones is strictly prohibited.) If permission to leave school is given by a Parent/Guardian, the student must sign out at the office. Students will complete a signing out slip which they then carry with them as evidence of permission to leave. For student safety reasons it is very important that every student signs out before leaving the school.

How can I get a message to my child during the school day?

We can facilitate getting a message to a student in the case of emergency or unexpected events only. Email admin@portmarnockcommunityschool.ie or phone the office at 018038056 as soon as possible and we will get a message to the student. To avoid class interruptions, announcements are made three times a day at 11.10, 12.40 and 15.40. We can call students at these times to pass on messages. It is up to the students to listen carefully to the announcements and come to the office if their name is called. In the event of an emergency, additional announcements can be made.

Can I come to the school to see a Teacher/Year Head/Deputy/Principal?

You must first schedule an appointment to see any of the above. We cannot facilitate a meeting without prior arrangement. To make an appointment to see a member of staff please phone the

office at 018038056 or email admin@portmarnockcommunityschool.ie. You will appreciate that with more than 900 students the staff are kept busy so an appointment is necessary!

Can I contact my child through their mobile phone during the school day?

The use of mobile phones is strictly prohibited throughout the school day. Phones that are switched on at school will be confiscated. To contact a student in an emergency please contact the office at 018038056 or email admin@portmarnockcommunityschool.ie.

What do I do if there is an emergency at home during the school day and need to contact my child?

To contact a student in an emergency please contact the office at 018038056 or email admin@portmarnockcommunityschool.ie. In the event of an emergency the school staff will pass a message to the student in confidence and will allow the student to phone home or be collected if necessary.

Who do I speak to if my child is having problems in school?

Your child's school experience can be discussed with the **Class Tutor; Year Head or Deputy Principal**. The tutor is the first port of call. From there, he or she will defer to or liaise with a Year Head or Deputy Principal if necessary. If you wish to receive a phone call from any of the above or to make an appointment please phone the office at 018038056 or email admin@portmarnockcommunityschool.ie.

What if my child wants to change subjects and/or class teacher?

Requests for subject changes must be made in writing or email to admin@portmarnockcommunityschool.ie. The request is then passed on to the Deputy Principal in charge of the student's particular year group. A decision will be made and the student will be informed.

How do I access my child's school exam reports?

Reports are available online only through **VSware**. Access is through the school website www.portmarnockcommunityschool.ie. Usernames are sent to parents/guardians by text. Passwords can be set/reset when logging on with a valid username.

What happens if my child comes late to school?

Students who arrive late should go straight to class using the student entrance to the school. Students do not sign in at the office. Please provide a note in the student's journal explaining why he/she is late to school. Please note that on some occasions, students who come to school after Period 1 may be marked absent for the morning and their parents may receive a text stating such.

What is the “absent text”?

A text is sent each day to the parent/guardian of students who have been marked Absent for Period 1 and/or Period 7 roll call. The text is sent only to the primary guardian as specified by parents on the student’s registration form in 1st Year.

What if I receive the “absent text” and know that my child is actually in school?

Contact the office and we will check with the teacher involved. If the teacher made an error in the marking he/she can amend it. Please note that there are times when students arrive late to class and the class is already in full swing- it is not always the case that teachers can go back to amend the roll call taken before the student arrived to class. In such cases, parents may get the text.

How do I find out about important dates in the school year (e.g. mid-term break etc.)?

The school calendar is available in the About Us section on the school website at www.portmarnockcommunityschool.ie. Announcements are often made over the intercom regarding important events/updates. It is important that students listen carefully to the announcements made three times a day.

How does the school get in touch with me?

The school contacts parents/guardians through the student journal, by text, phone, email, post and the school website.

What do I do if my child is going to be away on a family holiday during the school term?

You can let us know by writing a note in the student’s journal or by contacting the office. We can then mark the extended absence on VSWare as H for Holiday so that the student is not recorded as an unexplained absence.

What do I do if I am going to be away for any length of time and my child is being looked after by a relative/friend?

Please telephone the office with the name and contact phone number of the person who will be looking after the student in case of illness or emergency.

I am having difficulty using *Easypayments* to pay for a school-related activity, what should I do?

- *If it is your first time using *Easypayments*, you will need to activate your account. Please note that you will need the student’s name and the mobile number of the primary guardian that you specified on the student’s Registration Form for 1st Year.*

- *Once you have activated your account, you will use your email address to log-in from then on. If you change your email address, you must inform the school office so that we can update it on Easypayments to prevent you getting locked out of the system.*
- *If the 1st Year student has a sibling in the school, they will be linked on the Easypayments System as long as you are using the mobile number you provided for the older sibling (i.e. as long as the mobile numbers for both students match).*

(Note: if you change your mobile number at all throughout your child's time in PCS, you must inform the school office so that the administrators can amend the records. It is important that we have the correct contact details for Parent(s)/Guardian(s) in case of emergency).