



PORTAL HOUSE SCHOOL

School Prospectus

September 2024

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Address: Portal House School
Sea Street
St Margaret's at Cliffe
Dover
Kent
CT15 6SS

Tel: 01304 853033

E-mail: office@portal-house.kent.sch.uk
headteacher@portal-house.sch.uk

Head Teacher: Mrs R. Bradley

Type of School: Community Special School. A Kent County Council SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs) school for secondary aged pupils.

Age Range: 11-16 years
Role 80 maximum capacity

Chair of Governors: Tricia Sherling

Area Education Office: South Kent Area Education Office
Kroner House
Eurogate Business Park
Ashford TN24 8XU

Tel: 03000 410 199



PORTAL HOUSE SCHOOL

Welcome to our School



Portal House School is a Kent County Council Special School for boys who experience Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH) aged 11 – 16.

The school is situated in its own grounds in the picturesque village of St. Margaret's, near Dover, Kent.

The school site has recently undergone a multi-million pound redevelopment and now operates out of one fit for purpose modern building.

SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN- PRIORITIES FOR 2023 – 2025

Priority 1: The Quality of Education

- 1.1 To embed a culture of curriculum review and evaluation to ensure high-quality leadership
- 1.2 To adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of 'more able and 'less able' students
- 1.3 To develop a comprehensive whole-school approach to literacy, across the curriculum
- 1.4 To confirm that teachers' effective deployment and use of Teaching Assistants ensure students are well-supported in their learning
- 1.5 To monitor that all students achieve accreditation in core subjects and GCSE's to enable movement to higher education

Priority 2: Behaviour & Attitudes

- 2.1 To ensure attendance is at least in line with the national average for Special Schools and the percentage of persistent absentees has reduced
- 2.2 To ensure pupil engagement in curriculum development
- 2.3 To introduce a whole-school Trauma informed approach.
- 2.4 To implement a creative form-tutor programme that promotes students independence and life skills

Priority 3: Personal Development

- 3.1 To enhance Careers Education in all subjects
- 3.2 To ensure personal and social development is baselined to target individual needs

Priority 4: Leadership and Management

- 4.1 To plan to mitigate against unforeseen financial pressures to ensure a healthy budget is maintained
- 4.3 Leaders to promote staff well-being and ensure reasonable workloads and a supportive environment to work
- 4.3 To introduce a comprehensive, 3-year strategic plan to integrate sustainable practices and climate change initiatives, in line with the DFE sustainability and climate change strategy
- 4.4 To review effective ways to monitor and evaluate In House 'alternative provision' (AP)
- 4.5 To develop school site and assets

Priority 5: Safeguarding

- 5.1 To improve Online Safety Education
- 5.2 To ensure effective guidance is provided to raise students awareness of specific safeguarding issues and situations that can put them and others at greater risk

CORE AIMS

'Raising standards, improving lives'

1. To secure for student's high levels of educational attainment through a rigorous focus on progress.
2. To enable students to develop personal resilience and self-awareness.
3. To improve students' social skills and foster British values and citizenship.
4. To improve students social and cultural awareness.
5. To prepare students for life beyond Portal House School.
6. To ensure that identified additional needs of students are met.
7. To ensure that all students leave Portal House with high levels of literacy and numeracy.
8. To work effectively with schools, professionals and the community in sharing our expertise and developing inclusive opportunities for students.
9. To develop a highly skilled workforce.

OFSTED INSPECTION

Portal House was inspected by Ofsted in March 2009, December 2011 and June 2015 and May 2019. On all four occasions the school was graded as a 'Good' school.

A copy of the previous Reports can be obtained on the internet at www.ofsted.gov.uk or on our school website at www.portal-house.kent.sch.uk

This is our latest Ofsted Inspection letter/report.

Ofsted

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28 May 2019

Mrs Rosemary Bradley
Headteacher
Portal House School
Sea Street
St Margaret's-At-Cliffe
Dover
Kent
CT15 6SS

Dear Mrs Bradley

Short inspection of Portal House School

Following my visit to the school on 15 May 2019 with Anne Allen, Ofsted Inspector, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in June 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You, your leadership team and staff share an ambitious vision for all your pupils, many of whom have had negative experiences of school in the past. Together, you are dedicated to ensuring that all pupils are equipped with the skills, confidence and resilience they need to move on to the next stage of their education or training.

Since the last inspection, the school has remained on the same site but moved into a purpose-built building. The new school was creatively designed to meet the complex needs of the pupils. You were instrumental in developing the plans and therefore ensured that quiet spaces for pupils to study, or to calm down, were incorporated into the design. Additionally, you understand that for some pupils participating in physical education (PE) lessons can be daunting. Pupils may not have a PE kit, or they may not want to get changed in front of other people. You

addressed this sensitively by ensuring that each pupil is given a clean PE uniform each day and by providing individual changing rooms. As a result, all pupils are equipped and eager to actively join in all sporting activities.

You and senior leaders are determined to make sure that pupils achieve good academic standards, but you also recognise the importance of developing their personal, social and independence skills. You accomplish this skill development successfully. This was seen at lunchtime with pupils eating in small groups with the staff, learning valuable social interaction and life skills.

Leaders and staff have continued to build strong working relationships with pupils and their families. Staff have a comprehensive knowledge of pupils in the school and their individual needs and circumstances. They use this knowledge effectively to produce challenging, individual programmes. Leaders have appointed specialist teaching assistants for each department. This has ensured that all staff have secure subject knowledge and pupils get the right support. As a result, all pupils, including the disadvantaged, make solid progress. In lessons, we found pupils fully engaged and learning with enthusiasm. Your robust monitoring of teaching indicates that the quality of teaching is good and constantly improving. Leaders recognise that this is because staff are highly reflective and respond readily to feedback. You were therefore confident that any areas for development are always actioned.

Pupils told inspectors that they are very happy at school. Parents and carers were also positive about the school. All who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, said they would recommend the school to other parents. One parent said: 'The head and staff work hard to maintain an amazing school for boys with special needs, staff deal with the boys when they are having their "moments" professionally and respectfully, you really cannot fault the school in any way.'

Governors hold leaders to account. Governors have a wide range of skills which enable them to provide an effective balance of support and challenge to leaders. Governors are clear about the strengths and areas of development for the school and set challenging targets for improvement.

At the last inspection, inspectors highlighted the school's many strengths. They also recommended that the school improve the progress of most-able pupils. Leaders and staff have responded to this positively and there is a real drive and determination to ensure that all pupils achieve their potential academically. At the last inspection, only a few pupils left the school with GCSEs. Now all pupils, including the most able, achieve a wide range of qualifications at grades that match their ability. The last inspection report also suggested that pupils should be given more frequent opportunities to practise their writing skills across a wide range of topics. Leaders have addressed this effectively; however, they recognise the need for pupils to develop writing in greater depth.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a very strong safeguarding culture within the school. The school's recruitment procedures ensure that checks on staff are completed thoroughly before they start employment. Training is comprehensive and up to date, enabling staff to have a clear understanding of current legislation, guidance and their responsibilities. This ensures that staff are proactive in dealing with any safeguarding concerns. Leaders work with a range of agencies and, collectively, they help the most vulnerable pupils. This ensures that these pupils and their families get the support they need. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe when online. This enables them to make positive choices when using the internet and social-media sites outside of school. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy coming to school and know who to speak to if they have any concerns.

Inspection findings

- Pupils join the school with knowledge and skills well below the level typical for pupils of their age. Leaders assess pupils comprehensively to agree a secure starting point for every pupil, once they have settled into the school. This detailed information is used to plan suitable individual learning programs. Consequently, any gaps in pupils' learning are identified and addressed promptly. Pupils not making progress are given extra support and interventions. As a result, most pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make strong progress.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils in key stage 4 follow accredited courses and an individualised programme which equips them with the qualifications, attributes and skills for employability and life in the future. All pupils benefit from work experience which is tailored to meet individual needs and aspirations. Your staff team works tirelessly with parents and providers to ensure that all pupils progress confidently to the next stage of their education or training. As a result, last year all pupils successfully gained suitable places at college.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons, before school and during unstructured times is good. They understand what is required, and when they need to, pupils use the strategies they have been taught to regulate their own behaviour. Pupils are proud of the sustained progress they have made with their behaviour in and around school. Staff's consistent implementation of the school's behaviour and reward policy has led to substantial reductions in exclusions and incidents of poor behaviour.
- All leaders and governors recognise the importance of good attendance in keeping pupils safe and giving them the best opportunity to achieve well in school and beyond. All staff work proactively to engage with parents to improve attendance. There are clear structures to follow up poor attendance, which are having a positive impact. Consequently, pupils' attendance continues to improve. However, leaders are rightly focused on reducing absence further.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils have opportunities to write at greater depth across the curriculum
- they continue to work with pupils and their families to improve attendance.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Kent. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Susan Conway

Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, my colleague and I met with you, the school's leadership team, a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body, and the local authority's adviser. We visited classes in all key stages to observe pupils learning, talk with pupils about their progress, and look at their books.

We spoke to a group of pupils. We looked at four responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, including four free-text comments. We also considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys from 19 members of staff. We looked at a range of documentation, including information about the work of governors, safeguarding, the curriculum and assessment. We examined the school's analysis of pupils' progress and attainment, leaders' self-evaluation and their plans for improvement.

Headteacher	Mrs. Rose Bradley
Assistant Head, Academic progress lead	Mr. Dean Hill
Assistant Head, Pastoral progress lead	Mr. Stephen Donnelly
SENCO, Lead DSL	Mr. Daniel Long
Subject lead for P.E and Enrichment	Mr. Pete Bulteel
Subject lead for Art and Design	Mrs. Maddy Craggs
Subject lead for RE, PHSRE and Careers	Mr. Joe McClure
Subject lead for Science	Mrs. Carolyn Lavers
Subject lead for English	Mrs. Hannah Daniel
Subject lead for Maths	Mr. Doug Heaps
Subject lead for Geography	Mr. Kieran Renihan
Subject lead for Cooking	Mrs. Helen Rowarth (·6)
Subject lead for ICT	Mr. David Phillips
English Teachers	Mrs. Sian MacArthur, Mrs. Ana Ronchi
Mathematics Teachers	Mr Steve O'Brien, Miss G Newcombe (·8)
Science Teacher	Miss. Adrienne Clarke
Art Teacher	Miss. Sahra Carter (·8)
Apprenticeship Teacher	Mr. Henry Newcombe
Logistic Manager and Exam Officer	Mr. Darren Morgan
Inclusion support	Mrs. Karen Crossland (·6)
School Councillor	Mrs. Joanna Petri (·6)
Class based T.A. – 7P	Miss. Meg Weir
Class based T.A. – 7H	Mr. Jacob Cooke, Mr Philip Bird
Class based T.A. – 8P	Mrs. Jeanette Calway
Class based T.A. – 8H	Miss. Rachel Stephens, Mr Clifford Bradford
Class based T.A. – 9P	Mr. Darren Jenkins, Miss. Kayleigh Goldsmith
Class based T.A. – 9H	Mrs. Vikki Stirland
Class based T.A. – 10P	Mrs. Paulua Pompei
Class based T.A. – 10H	Mrs. Lauren Lee, Mrs Amy Tudor, Mrs Eliza Miller
Class based T.A. – 10S	Ms. Samantha Gilbert
Class based T.A. – 11P	Miss. Ella Gore/Mrs. E Marney
Class based T.A. – 11H	Mrs. Megan Hennebery, Mrs. Chelsea Cozens
Class based T.A. – 11PHS	
1:1 Support T.A.	Miss. C Larner, Mrs Samantha McDougall
SENCo Assistant	Mrs. N Aird (·4)
Finance Manager	Mrs. Linda Lever
School Secretary	Mrs. Vanessa Clewlow
Chef Manager	Mr Kevin Warriner
Kitchen Assistant	Mrs. Katherine Lydon (·2)
Caretaker/Site Manager	Mr. Jake Doble
Cleaners	Miss. Claire Andrews, Mr. Kevin Lawrence plus agency cleaners



***We aim to create a place where everyone can work together to achieve their very best; where skills and talents are encouraged and developed, and where everyone feels valued and needed;
Where everyone knows what is expected of them and is clear about the purpose of the whole school.***

ADMISSIONS

Children are referred to the School by placement panels and Local Education SEN Officers which operate at local and County level.

All of the children have Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs (SEMH) or Autism (ASD) as their main SEND. Many have in addition, complex health needs. Behaviour is the biggest barrier to accessing education.

Many of the children are underachieving and will require a great deal of help and support in the classroom.

On admission to the School, all children will undergo a period of assessment, as teachers find out what they can do, and where there are gaps in their knowledge. As this process proceeds, teachers will begin to identify individual learning targets for the 'new' child.

The School has the same holidays as other Kent Schools, and also has 5 staff development days when children are not in School.

PRE-ADMISSION VISITS AND MEETINGS

Prospective parents and children are welcome to visit the School as often as they like before the child is admitted to the School.

Visits to the school are designed to enable parents/carers and children to tour all parts of the School, to meet key members of staff and to ask any questions. Some parents/carers and children find it helpful to write down a list of questions beforehand.

Equally, the admission meeting allows us to ensure that parents/carers and children understand how the School operates. Once parents/carers have decided that their child should attend the School, a starting date will be agreed

PORTAL HOUSE SCHOOL
KENT SPECIAL SCHOOLS: ADMISSION GUIDANCE

Name of school	PORTAL HOUSE SCHOOL
Address:	Sea Street, St. Margaret's-at-Cliffe, Dover, Kent CT15 6SS
Tel:	01304 853033
Email:	office@portal-house.kent.sch.uk
School Type:	Community Special School
Designation:	Secondary School for 80 SEMH students
Primary Need:	SEMH
Class Structure:	Year group classes
District served:	East and South
Area:	South Kent
Age range:	11 – 16-year-old
Maximum Capacity	80

- Portal House School is a secondary school for up to 80 children who experience significant Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs. Many have in addition, diagnosed health conditions such as Attachment Disorder, Autism, ADHD, ADH, ODD and OCD.
- The school offers a fresh start in modern fit for purpose facilities and is committed to reversing patterns of failure associated with school and learning.
- All students have broadly national average/above average academic potential according to recent formal assessments and/or have attained national average expectations for their age (potential to achieve 5 or more high grade GCSE including English and Maths). Year 7 students have attained scaled scores of 90+ in their KS2 SATS and age-related expectations at KS1.
- Our main curriculum offer is broad, balanced and academic. Students follow a secondary school timetable that leads to securing qualifications and life skills that will enable them to progress to their chosen pathways at 16+. In KS3 (Year 7, 8 and 9) students are taught the National curriculum programmes of study and sit Entry level qualifications. KS4 students follow a timetable that leads to 7 GCSE's- English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Biology, Physics and from the following option subjects- Art and Design, ICT, Geography and P.E. Additional GCSE's such as Chemistry, Computer Science and Statistics may be offered on request. Biology and English Literature GCSE's are sat in Year 10. Other subjects can be sat early if appropriate. In addition, all classes have weekly PSHE, RE/World views, cooking lessons and a 2 hours enrichment session. In Year 10 students undertake work experience preparation for college and life skills lessons. Year 7's and any student who is not yet a confident swimmer have the opportunity to have swimming lessons at Whitfield swimming pool. We offer a bespoke curriculum with different learning pathways to those, who due to their current needs/circumstances are unable to access our main curriculum offer.
- At 16+ our students go to either 6th form, College, Apprenticeships or work after achieving on average 8-9 subject accreditations (GCSE, Btecs and Entry level).
- Students are taught in small year group classes by qualified staff and supported by class T.A.'s. Class sizes vary depending on need (4 – 7 per class).
- Behaviour is their biggest barrier to accessing education.
- A high proportion of students are eligible for pupil premium.

TRANSPORT

All transport to and from the School is organised centrally by Kent County Council, Passenger Transport. The contact numbers are given below:

**PASSENGER TRANSPORT 03000 414771
03000 410644**

ADMISSIONS 03000 416309

If there are difficulties with transport, please inform the school and we will do our best to sort it out. Ultimately, the responsibility lies with Kent County Council Transport Department.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

The School values the contributions that parents/carers have to make, and acknowledges the need for parents/carers and the School to work closely together.

Parents and carers are welcome to contact or visit the School at any time, particularly if they have any worries or concerns about their children.

HOME/SCHOOL LIAISON PROCEDURES

The School liaises with parents/carers on a day to day basis. Daily liaison covers a range of issues, e.g. attendance, medical matters, transport arrangements and the reporting of significant incidents – either at school or at home.

If your child is ill at home then it may be better to allow him time to recover, before returning him to school. Please contact the school either by email, telephone or letter advising us of any reasons for absences your child may have.

Children who become ill whilst at School will be looked after until we can contact parents/carers and arrange for them to come home.

Each pupil receives a weekly report, written by his form tutor, which outlines progress made in lessons, behaviour, major achievements and any concerns. These weekly reports are emailed directly to parents/carers/Social Workers.

All students receive two academic reports per school year (Mid Year and End of Year School Reports).

In addition to the above, the School holds an Annual Review of the child's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), and two provision plan reviews punctuated across the year. Annual School Reports are sent home to all parents towards the end of the Summer Term. Parents evenings are held shortly after to discuss reports, celebrate achievements and plan for the following year. At the end of the Summer Term there is a Sports Day, which provides an opportunity for staff, parents and pupils to meet in a less formal setting.

EQUIPMENT

The school provides all items of equipment needed for lessons.

JEWELLERY

Pupils are asked not to wear any visible jewellery – only watches, ear studs or sleepers. If a pupil arrives at school with other items of jewellery, they will be asked to remove it for Health and Safety reasons.

VALUABLES

Pupils are asked not to bring money to school, unless specifically asked for a special occasion. If mobile phones, I-pods, personal stereos etc., are brought into school, students will be asked to hand in/lock away such items during the school day. These items can be a source of disruption and confrontation.

The school will not accept responsibility for the safety of such items.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

All pupils are expected to wear school uniform. Pupils are encouraged to take pride in their appearance.

Our school uniform is:

- Black school trousers or black/navy blue plain shorts
- Trainers or black school shoes
- Navy blue polo shirt with school logo
- Navy blue fleece with school logo
- Navy blue school coat (optional)

Under exceptional circumstances, usually due to physical or sensory needs and by agreement, plain black/navy loose cuffed jogging trousers may be worn.

The school stocks the polo shirts and fleeces.

The cost of these items are as follows:

- 1 polo shirt - £8
- 1 fleece- £15

All available to purchase from school.

We also have a large selection of good, nearly new uniform available at no cost.

P.E. Kit

Pupils are expected to change for P.E.

P.E. kit is provided and washed at school.

- Navy blue shorts
- Mid blue Polo shirt with school logo
- Navy blue tracksuit with school logo

Students will need to provide their own trainers.



THE SCHOOL DAY

All pupils are transported to and from school by taxi paid for by the Local Education Authority.

The School Day starts at 8.45 a.m. Pupils are met on the playground as they get out of their taxi and registered as present by support staff, then go to their form rooms for tutor time.

Breakfast is available in the Dining Room for any pupil from 8.45 a.m. – 9.00 a.m. (start of 1st lesson). There is usually a selection of cereals, milk and fruit.

Lessons begin at 9.00 a.m.

As far as possible, children are in the same National Curriculum Year Group as they would be in a mainstream school.

Classes are small. On average there are 7 pupils in each class. The pupils are taught by experienced, well qualified teachers and supported by teaching assistants.

School Day Times

8.45 – 9.00	Tutor Time
9.00 – 10.00	Lesson 1
10.00 – 10.20	KS3 Break
10.00 – 11.00	Lesson 2 KS4
10.20 – 11.20	Lesson 2 KS3
11.00 – 11.20	KS4 Break
11.20 – 12.20	Lesson 3
12.20 – 1.05	Lunch
1.05 – 1.25	Tutor Time (DEAR)
1.25 – 2.25	Lesson 4
2.25 – 3.25	Lesson 5
3.25 – 3.30	Tutor Time

The school day finishes with all pupils returning to their tutor rooms and meeting back with their own class staff. From 3.30 p.m. onwards pupils are called to their taxi to travel home.

On Friday's lessons finish at 12.30 p.m. Between 12.30 – 12.45 pupils are called to their taxis to travel home.

When after school clubs are arranged, staff or taxis transport children home from 13.45 onwards. Revision sessions are scheduled and finish at 13.45.

SCHOOL MEALS

Breakfast

Breakfast is available in school, from 8.45 a.m. – 9.00 a.m., for those who were unable to eat before leaving home. At present this meal consists of a choice of cereal, fruit and a glass of milk. – There is no charge for this meal.

Lunch

A cooked lunch is provided for all, prepared on site by our own staff.

The meals are traditional, wholesome and balanced. The menus are varied and promote healthy eating.

Mealtimes are seen to be pleasant, social occasions, and children are expected to show good table manners.

Children are encouraged to eat a little of everything, but they are not forced to eat anything that they do not like.

The School is able to provide alternative diets, e.g. vegetarian or gluten-free, should parents request this. Alternatively, pupils may bring a packed lunch to eat.

All pupils eat lunch in the school dining room between 12.20 p.m. – 1.05 p.m. KS3 eat lunch first, then have a break. KS4 have a break first then eat lunch.

On Fridays, a light snack style lunch is provided and eaten in the dining room. There is no charge made for lunch.

PRAISE, REWARDS AND SANCTIONS

At Portal House we recognise, praise and reward good work and appropriate behaviour. We operate a Whole School Behaviour Management Scheme, whereby pupils earn points for “getting it right”. They are awarded points for consistently achieving their personal provision plan targets and following the six school rules. Pupils are monitored and awarded points throughout the day. Each week points are totalled and during class Praise Assemblies on Fridays, pupils are presented with a certificate in recognition of their point’s achievement. Pupils who achieve the ‘Gold’ target number of points are invited to ‘Gold Time’ from 10.30 a.m. – 12.00 p.m. on Friday mornings.

Pupils who consistently achieve excellent points, feel ready to be self-monitoring, and are self-motivated to achieve, are awarded Senior Status.

The school does all it can to focus upon the things that pupils do well, but sometimes, for whatever reason, a pupil will disobey school rules. There are always consequences to actions. All the usual school sanctions apply with regard to individual needs and circumstances.

Our school rules are accepted by all and recognise that we all have individual rights and responsibilities.

THE SCHOOL RULES

1. Be in the right place – be safe
2. We do as we are asked
3. We speak politely to everyone
4. We do not hurt anyone
5. We respect other people's possessions and property
6. We do not swear

Rights:

- To be able to teach and learn and make the most of the opportunities available.
- To be treated with respect.
- To be safe emotionally and physically.
- To have a pleasant environment in which to teach and learn.

Responsibilities:

- To allow others to teach and learn.
- To treat each other with respect.
- To ensure the safety of all people in the school community.
- To look after our own and other peoples' belongings.
- To look after school – furniture, equipment and environment.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

The School Council is a pupil body whose aim is to promote the best interests of the school and to provide experience of the democratic process for all of its members.

At the beginning of every term a representative is elected from each class. The representative then attends monthly meetings where items supported by a majority of a class are discussed. The representative is responsible for relaying the events of the meeting back to the class.

ANTI-BULLYING STATEMENT

Portal House is totally opposed to bullying in any of its forms and it will not be tolerated in school.

We have a comprehensive anti-bullying policy, which operates within school. All pupils, parents and staff are made aware of the content of the policy and what to do should a pupil feel they are being bullied.

We are committed to providing a safe, caring environment for all pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure environment.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND ACCESS

Portal House School aims to provide all pupils with equal opportunities. They will have equal access and opportunities within the curriculum, both formal and informal, so that when leaving our school, they have the widest possible options available to them, educationally, socially and vocationally.

Unfortunately, the school site was not designed to enable easy access for non-ambulant persons, however the new school building takes into consideration relevant legislation to provide accessibility for all.

LINKS WITH THE LOCAL AND WIDER COMMUNITY

Portal House actively pursues community links with the village of St. Margaret's and the surrounding Dover/Deal area. Most Governors live in St. Margaret's or the surrounding area.

The school frequently welcomes a range of visitors to the school to enhance the curriculum and education experiences of the pupils. Enrichment activities often involve visiting local venues and engaging with the wider community.

The school has established several curriculum links with a variety of secondary schools in the area.

Portal House is a partner member of the Kent Special Educational Needs Trust (Ksent).

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY (SEN POLICY)

All pupils at Portal House have Special Educational Needs and have a current Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) issued by the Local Education Authority. This document clearly states individual needs and what provision is required to address these.

For all pupils at Portal House the main or dominant Special Educational Need will be of a Social, Emotional and Mental Health nature or Autistic Spectrum Condition. Most pupils have additional health needs, specific learning difficulties, Autism – including Asperger's syndrome, ADHD, ODD and other medical or psychological conditions.

Our policies, procedures, staff environment and curriculum enable us to meet the special educational needs of the pupils.

All pupils have equal access to our broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. We teach the National Curriculum. Where necessary the curriculum content is differentiated to meet individual needs. The level of support a pupil may receive is tailored to individual needs. All pupils have Provision Plans which are reviewed three times a year. Targets are discussed and set with individual pupils and shared with parents/carers. Progress towards targets is monitored and reported to parents on a weekly basis.

All pupils have individual learning targets as well for each curriculum subject. These are also discussed and set each term and shared with parents/carers.

We support the national agenda to promote social inclusion and where appropriate pupils are encouraged to return to mainstream education on a part-time or full-time basis.

Each classroom/learning environment is spacious and well resourced. We have specialist areas for Science, Art and Design, cooking, Music, P.E. (gymnasium, fitness room, playground area, sports field). Each tutor room has an electronic teaching panel and a computer for each pupil.

The school uses local swimming pools at Whitfield or Deal to teach pupils to swim and develop their skills.

HOMEWORK

Portal House does not set formal homework for pupils.

However, we do encourage pupils to pursue out of hours learning and when requested provide support and resources to enable this to happen. The needs, motivation and confidence of the pupils are of paramount importance. Where pupils are identified as having an interest or individual need, they are encouraged and supported to develop these outside normal school hours.

All pupils are encouraged to use and practice their literacy and numeracy skills whenever possible in their out of school life.

The Government guidelines on homework do not apply to Special Schools.

Our Curriculum Offer

(National Curriculum Year Groups 7, 8, and 9)

The School is obliged to teach the full range of National Curriculum Subjects and Religious Education to Key Stage 3 pupils. We operate a two-week timetable.

Key Stage 3: - Curriculum Offer

Subject Hours per 2-week timetable.

Subject	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
English	8	8	8
Math's	8	8	8
Science	5	5	5
R.E	2	2	-
I.C.T	3	3	4
Art	4	4	4
Geography	4	4	4
Cooking	2	2	2
PSHE	2	2	2
P.E	4	4	4
Swimming	4	-	-
Enrichment	-	4	4

The school places great emphasis on ensuring that the curriculum is interesting, relevant and modern, and has a degree of challenge that engages all.

The school encourages all to have high expectations and positive attitudes to learning.

It is hoped that the majority of our KS3 pupils will achieve National Averages in the core subjects.

Curriculum Plans provide an outline of the modules of work covered in each of the KS3 years and are available from the various subject leaders.

Towards the end of key stage 3, students sit entry level qualifications in Maths, English and Science

KS4
(NATIONAL CURRICULUM YEAR GROUP 10 AND 11)

All pupils are taught a range of subjects to G.C.S.E. level and have the opportunity to experience various work-related learning activities, PSHE, cooking lessons and enrichment activities.

Currently, the timetable is designed to offer all pupils the opportunity to study 7 G.C.S.E.

At the end of Yr. 9, students choose 'Options' and an individual timetable is written for each student to follow in Yr. 10 & 11.

The G.C.S.E. subjects are as follows:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics
- ICT
- P.E.
- Geography
- Art and Design

All G.C.S.E/Entry level certificate course outlines are available on request from subject teachers.

SUMMARY OF CURRICULUM HOURS FOR 2023/2024

Sept 2023 – 24					
	<u>Yr 7</u>	<u>Yr 8</u>	<u>Yr 9</u>	<u>Yr 10</u>	<u>Yr 11</u>
English	8	8	8	9	9
Maths	8	8	8	8	8
Science	5	5	5	7	7
Cooking	2	2	2	2	2
RE/World V	2	2	1	1	1
PSHE	2	2	2	2	2
Core PE	4	4	4	3	1
PE option				5	5
ICT option	3	3	4	5	4
Geo option	4	4	4	5	4
Art option	4	4	4	5	4
Pub Service option					4
Enrichment		4	4	4	4
Swimming	4				

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT KS4

GCSE performance	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Number of year 11 pupils	9	19	20	19	20	18
% 9-4 English & Maths	13%	47%	15%	11%	10%	11%
% 5+ Standard passes including English + Maths (9-4)	0%	26%	15%	0%	10%	11%
% 5+ standard passes (9-4)	0%	47%	15%	0%	10%	11%
% 5+ accreditations	18%	73%	80%	68%	70%	72%
% any accreditation	30%	90%	95%	95%	95%	100%
Attainment 8 Average	15.1	25.32	22.15	18.8	15.73	tbc

KS4 Exam Results 2024

Number of pupils in cohort 18

100% of pupils achieved a qualification

33% of all year 11s pupils achieved 3 grade 4s

50% of the onsite learner achieved 3 grade 4s

75% of the onsite learners achieved a grade 4

72% of onsite pupils achieved 5 or more qualifications

32 grade 4s or above were achieved out of the 90 GCSEs exams were taken in year 11.

In the core subjects (Eng, Maths, Sci) 58% of our onsite pupils achieved a grade 4 or above, with a top grade 7 in English Language

In foundation subjects (Art, IT, PE, Geo, Public Services) 75% of our onsite learners achieved a grade 4 or above, with a top grade 8 in Art

WORK EXPERIENCE

All Year 10 pupils participate in one week blocks of work experience placement of their choice. This is organised by the School. The work experience week takes place in during a week in June, while Year 11 sit their GCSE exams.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL & HEALTH EDUCATION & CITIZENSHIP (P.S.H.E)

Our aim is to enable all pupils to develop their personal identity and self-worth and at the same time develop respect for others. Great emphasis is placed on self-advocacy, although many pupils do find this difficult. As a consequence of this we constantly seek ways of enabling pupils to make decisions and choices appropriate to their needs and age.

We have a close relationship with other children's services who visit the school for various meetings from time to time.

Form Tutors play a valuable role in helping students develop appropriate social and emotional responses and character skills.

Student Wellbeing

The school employs a counselor three days a week so that children can have regular sessions and drop-in sessions in our specialist therapy room.

R.E, COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AND WORLD VIEWS

Religious Education is an important part of the curriculum at Portal House. It follows the approved Kent Syllabus, which is non-denominational in character. Parents/carers are welcome to see the Scheme of Work. KS3 students have an RE lesson every week and KS4 students have a World View lesson once a fortnight.

Religious Education has a special status as part of the basic curriculum and has equal standing in relation to the core and other foundation subjects. Whilst we consider that the fostering of spiritual and moral values is the responsibility of every teacher and should permeate all aspects of the curriculum, Religious Education is formally timetabled as a subject in its own right, and is co-ordinated by a designated member of staff.

Tutor group assemblies are held once a week (Fridays) and are broadly, though not exclusively, Christian in nature. Whole school assemblies also occur at the end of each term.

Parents who wish to exercise their right to withdraw their child from religious activities are asked to arrange an appointment with the Headteacher before doing so.

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (P.H.S.E)

Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 requires relationship and sex education to be provided as part of the National Curriculum at Key Stage 3. It is taught with due regard to moral considerations and an emphasis on the value and importance of family life. The programme, which has been ratified by the governors, is not taught in isolation but within a framework of a personal development programme dealing with the many aspects of growing up.

A policy and plan is available on request from the school.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from sex education lessons and should discuss the matter with the Headteacher should they wish to do so. They are also welcome to discuss policy matters in this area with the Headteacher, to view teaching materials, look at the policy documents, or to submit a discussion item for the agenda of the governors' annual meeting for parents.

ATTENDANCE DATA (RAW ATTENDANCE)

Year	Authorised	Unauthorised	Attend %
2020-21	11.8	2.5	85.7
2021-22	13.1	3.9	83.0
2022-23	18.0	8.0	74.0
2023-24	19.2	9.4	71.4
2024-25 (to date)	13.9	4.3	77.5

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS

We want all our pupils to have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities, both on and off site, within and outside the curriculum, regardless of their family's financial means. This policy sets out our school approach to charging and remissions, and is informed by local authority guidance. In doing this our intention is to ensure transparency in setting charges and ensure all children are able to access all the provision on offer.

1. **Admissions**

No charge will be made for admission.

2. **School Meals**

No charge will be made for school meals.

3. **Public examinations**

No charge will be made for the entry fee for examinations.

4. **Activities for pupils that take place during school hours.**

(‘school hours’ are those when school is actually in session and do not include the break in the middle of the school day)

No charge will be made for activities provided during school hours.

No charge will be made for transport during school hours e.g. to swimming.

No charge will be made to cover the cost of ingredients or materials for set lessons.

5. **Activities for pupils that take place outside school hours (non-residential)**

No charge will be made for an activity that takes place outside school hours when it is:

- a. A necessary part of the curriculum
- b. Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
- c. Part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education

Optional extras:

We may ask for a donation to help offset the cost for some other activities that take place outside school hours. The Headteacher will decide which activities we ask for a donation. Where we ask for a donation, the total collected will not

exceed the cost of providing the activity and no parent will be asked to subsidise the cost to other pupils by donating more than an amount equal to the total cost of the activity divided by the number of pupils participating.

6. Residential

Residential are classified as being within school hours if the number of school sessions missed by the pupil is at least 50% of the number of half days spent on the trip.

Board and lodging

We may charge pupils an amount up to the full cost of board and lodging on residential whether it is classified as taking place within or outside school hours except where pupils are legally entitled to remission. In such cases no charge will be made for board and lodging.

Travel

If the residential is classified as being within school hours, no charge will be made for travel costs.

Where the residential is classified as being outside school hours, no charge will be made for travel costs.

Activities on residential

If the residential is classified as being within school hours no charge can legally be made for the educational activities provided.

If the residential is classified as being outside school hours, a charge may be made for the educational activities provide.

7. Music tuition within school hours.

No charge will be made for instrumental tuition the school elects to provide within school hours.

8. Damage to property and breakages

We may seek to recover some or all of the costs incurred due to damage or breakage of property through any act other than accidental belonging to the school or to a third party where the school has been charged. This will be determined by the Headteacher but will not exceed the actual costs of the damage. Students will be charged £10 for falsely setting off the fire alarm.

9. Remissions and Concessions

We may choose to subsidize, in full or part, charges for certain activities and pupils, as determined by the Governing Body, advised by the Headteacher. The circumstances in which concessions are applied will be reviewed regularly.

10. Voluntary Contributions

We may in certain circumstances invite parents to make a voluntary contribution towards activities that are exempt from charging.

Where we do ask for voluntary contributions, we will make it clear that children of parents who choose not to contribute will not be treated differently from those who do. No pupil will be excluded from the activity if their parents do not contribute.

If an activity cannot go ahead without sufficient voluntary contributions, this will be explained to parents when the contribution is requested. If the activity has to be cancelled due to insufficient funds, all monies received will be returned to parents.

Portal House School Calendar 2024-2025

August 2024						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

September 2024						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

October 2024						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

November 2024						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

December 2024						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

January 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

February 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		

March 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

April 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

May 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

June 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

July 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

August 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

School Day's
School Holiday's
Inset Day's

INSET/ Non-contact days for teachers: Over a school year, pupils are required to attend for 190 days/380 sessions. In total, teachers may be required to be available for work on up to 195 days, with the additional days specified by individual schools as non-contact days. Schools may also require teachers to work additional hours before or after school sessions, as an alternative to full non-contact days, provided that any teacher is not required to work in aggregate more than 1,265 hours during a school year. Schools may therefore choose to require teachers to make up the full equivalent of the 5 non-contact days wholly through additional hours, or use a mixture of additional hours and non-contact days.

Term 1 - 35 Days 02/09/24 – 18/10/24
Term 2 - 35 Days 04/11/24 – 20/12/24
Term 3 - 30 Days 06/01/25 – 14/02/25

Term 4 - 30 Days 24/02/2025 – 04/04/2025
Term 5 - 23 Days 22/04/2025 – 23/05/2025
Term 6 - 37 Days 02/06/2025 – 22/07/2025