



Reading Portage Service Guide

An explanation of the Reading portage service for staff and professionals

This is a service registered with the National Portage Association. The portage service covers the whole of the Reading borough.



What is the portage service?

The portage service is a home visiting education programme for pre-school children with additional support needs and their families. It is based on the principle that parents are the key figures in the care and development of their child.

The scheme was developed in Portage, Wisconsin, USA in 1969 and introduced into the UK in 1976. The National Portage Association (NPA) was founded in 1983. The Reading service is an accredited member of the NPA.

Portage helps families to recognise their child's progress and celebrate their success. This is achieved through a planned and structured teaching programme.

Together, the family and the portage home visitor find ways to encourage a child's development, making it fun for everyone.

How can portage help families?

Families who receive the portage service are visited regularly in their home by a trained portage home visitor who offers support, encouragement and advice through a home teaching programme.

The portage team will work with families to:

- Encourage children's social interaction with their peers and adults
- Include children in early years activities outside of the home

- Agree learning and development goals for children
- Build on each child's individual strengths and identify next steps for their development
- Support multi-agency liaison
- Support transition into nursery or school.



Portage is suitable if:

- The child is of pre-school age and has at least two terms before entering school or a maintained nursery class
- The child has a significant delay in two or more areas of their development
- Parents are able to meet with a portage home visitor at an agreed time and on a regular basis.

Who can refer?

Requests for portage home support can come directly from parents and carers. Professionals refer (with parental consent) through the [Children's Single Point of Access](#). Parents can refer by contacting the Reading portage team or visit servicesguide.reading.gov.uk stating that it is a portage referral.



The Reading portage service is part of the Brighter Futures for Children's education department.

The portage service consists of:

- Service manager - principal educational psychologist
- Portage supervisor – senior educational psychologist
- Senior portage home visitor
- Portage home visitors



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www.brighterfuturesforchildren.org/for-parents-carers/under-5/under-5-with-send/

www.portage.org.uk

The National Portage Association
registered charity number: 1087865