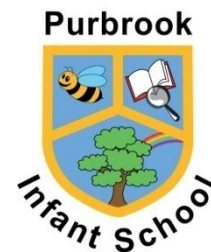


PURBROOK INFANT SCHOOL
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Headteacher: Lisa A de Carteret
Deputy Headteacher: Lara G Jelliff
Business Manager: Hazel K Dean



19 October 2018

Dear Parents and Carers

Firstly, we would like to thank all our parents and carers who work hard in partnership with the school to ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually. We would like to thank our parents/carers in particular for responding so effectively to the changes in law related to leave of absence from school being for exceptional circumstances only.

Following on from the Supreme Court's judgement on the Isle of Wight Council's appeal, we would like to clarify Hampshire's current position regarding issuing fixed term penalty notices as a means to improve attendance and performance. Schools should now be fully implementing Hampshire's Code of Conduct where needed.

We are clear in our code of conduct that where a child or family requires support to achieve attendance rates above 90% that this is the first priority for the school. We are also clear that where parent and carers chose to ignore the law and are complicit in their child absence, then all schools within the Local Authority, must take legal action through a penalty notice fine or prosecution in court.

To clarify our current position, all schools will be required to work with Hampshire County Council to take legal action if:

1. A child has unauthorised absence for 10 or more sessions within a 100 session (This is 5 full days within a 50-day period).
2. A child is continually late to school and this lateness is unauthorised for 10 or more sessions.
3. A child has any unauthorised absence during any formal examinations, assessments or testing.

Please note each parent/carer can be issued a separate penalty notice for each child.

Similarly, as in the world of work, pupils should only be absent or late when they are ill or for medical or dental appointments (where these cannot be scheduled outside of school hours). Any other absence needs to be requested and in all cases the decision is the Headteachers' and only if within the criteria of exceptional circumstance (defined as 'rare, significant and unavoidable'). In law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at the school.

All children must meet certain expectations of punctuality. If a child arrives later than 9.25am an 'unauthorised absence' will be recorded for one session. We will continue to work with you and support our parents and carers to ensure acceptable attendance levels are maintained. The impact absence has on performance becomes increasingly stark if you consider it over the years of schooling.

PTO

Below is a conversion of attendance rates to time missed over 12 years of your child's education.

Attendance % during one school year	Equals days absent	Equals weeks absent	School time missed by the end of secondary school
95%	9 days	2 weeks	¼ of a year
90%	19 days	4 weeks	½ of a year
85%	29 days	6 weeks	¾ of a year
80%	38 days	8 weeks	A whole school year

Research suggests that children who attend school regularly could also be at less risk of getting involved in anti-social behaviour or crime.

You can help your child by:

- Making sure they understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- Taking an interest in their education – ask about school work and encourage them to get involved in school activities discussing any problems they may have at school – inform their teacher or head teacher about anything serious
- Not letting them take time off school for minor ailments – particularly those which would not prevent you from attending work

Please visit Hampshire County Council's website for further information on attendance:

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/hias/learning-behaviour-attendance/attendance-guidance-for-parents/possible-penalties.htm>

Thank you for your support in this matter, if you have any concerns or further questions regarding attendance please do not hesitate to pop into school to talk to the Attendance Officer (Mr Stray) myself.

Yours sincerely



Mrs. L A de Carteret
Headteacher