



PURBROOK INFANT SCHOOL
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02 September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

Subject: Key National Policy Changes to be Aware of

I want to take this opportunity to offer a very warm welcome back after what I hope was a restful and enjoyable hot summer, and to extend an especially warm welcome to all of our new families joining Purbrook Infant School this year. I am confident that this will be a brilliant year for our children and staff alike, and I am genuinely excited to see the children settled in their new classes and busy learning today.

Over the summer, a number of new national policies and changes in the law have taken effect that impact how we operate as a school and necessitate a few small adjustments to our procedures. I write to explain the key points and to set out what these changes mean for our families.

Benedict's Law

This new legislation addresses the management of allergies within educational settings and reinforces our collective responsibility to minimise risk for children with known allergic conditions. In practical terms, the law emphasises the need for clear recording of allergic reactions, robust individual healthcare plans where required, and tightened guidance around the provision and administration of food in school. At Purbrook Infant School, most of our procedures relating to intolerances and allergies are already well established: we monitor school dinners carefully, manage food used for tasting and special occasions with consideration, and maintain clear communication with families about individual needs. Following recent discussions and staff training, we have taken the decision that when families choose to bring sweets, cakes or similar items for children to share on their birthdays, we will ask that these are distributed by the parent at the end of the school day rather than by class teachers. This small change ensures that responsibility for handing out such items rests with the adult bringing them and supports the consistent application of allergy-safe practises across the school.

Further information around this will be sent outlining in more detail what we are doing in school.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (Safeguarding)

The statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, is updated frequently in response to serious case reviews and changes in the law, and this year brings important clarification regarding the management and safeguarding of volunteers. Under the revised guidance, all volunteers who work regularly in school must hold an enhanced DBS check and must be checked against the barred lists for working with children. This brings volunteers into the same baseline of pre-engagement checks that we apply to staff and reflects the highest standards of safeguarding practice. Many of our regular helpers already hold DBS checks—this is something we have prioritised as a matter of safeguarding even before the change in law—but the update means that any parent or carer who wishes to volunteer this year (for example to help with reading, classroom support, on school trips, or in the forest school) should notify their child's class teacher as soon as possible so that we can initiate the necessary checks. These checks can take some time to process, and where places on trips or activities are limited, we will need to prioritise those parents who hold an enhanced DBS check.

I appreciate that this is a somewhat formal communication for the first day back, but it is important that you are aware of these changes and how they affect day-to-day practice at the school. Our priority remains the safety, well-being and educational progress of every child, and these measures support that work by ensuring clear, consistent and legally compliant procedures.

Thank you for your continued support and for working with us to keep our community safe and welcoming. I look forward to a productive and joyful year ahead.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L A de Carteret', with a large, sweeping flourish underneath.

Mrs L A de Carteret
Headteacher