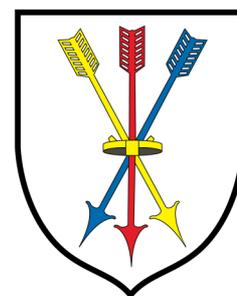


Purbrook Junior School

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DREAM BIG!



Respect - Team - Achieve

27th September 2017

Dear Parents

Attendance Update: Relating to Legal Intervention for Term Time Absence

The school has received guidance from Hampshire County Council regarding Legal intervention for Term Time Absence:

Further to the Supreme Court judgement (06-04-17), schools are expected to follow the Hampshire County Council Code of Conduct for legal intervention relating to term time absence and not to authorise pupil absence unless the reason for the absence is exceptional.

Under the Code of Conduct, a penalty notice should be issued to parents where a pupil has 10 unauthorised sessions in the last 100 school sessions and there are no exceptional reasons why the pupil has been prevented from attending school. [Please note that each school day is formed of 2 sessions – morning and afternoon.]

Where a pupil has persistent lateness to school, and this is impeding pupil progress, parents should be clearly warned that, unless the pupil's punctuality improves, further lateness will be recorded as unauthorised absence. This unauthorised absence may lead to a penalty notice being issued when the 10 session threshold has been reached. Where the situation is more complex and other external agencies are involved in supporting the family, an Early Help Hub referral or Area Legal Panel referral may be a more appropriate course of action.

The Supreme Court judgement made it clear that pupils should attend school regularly in accordance with the school's rules. Hampshire County Council expects all schools to follow the Code of Conduct consistently and consult with neighbouring schools where siblings attend more than one local school. A Headteacher has discretion to decide whether the reasons for absence is exceptional and can be authorised. However, the Law states that unauthorised absence should result in legal intervention and we expect all maintained schools to respect this. The Local Authority has a duty to ensure schools comply with the Law and support them in providing a legal intervention framework through the Code of Conduct.

Further information is available on the Hampshire County Council's website <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/has/learning-behaviour-attendance/attendance-guidance-for-parents/possible-penalties.htm> . Parents should note that if they receive a Penalty Notice there is no right of appeal unless it can be proved that it has been issued in error or unlawfully.

For your information, I attach a copy of the school's Attendance Policy, together with a Hampshire County Council Leaflet titled 'Good School Attendance Guide'.

The following table highlights how much school time is missed for varying levels of attendance:

Attendance during one school year	Equals – days absent	Which is approximately weeks absence
100%	0	0
95%	9 days	2 weeks
90%	19 days	4 weeks
85%	29 days	6 weeks
80%	38 days	8 weeks
75%	48 days	10 weeks
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks
65%	67 days	13.5 weeks

So, despite 90% seeming great for a test score, it makes for a worrying attendance figure. Being LATE after registration will also LOWER attendance.

If you require any further information regarding attendance, or would like to discuss this matter further, please do contact me.

Yours sincerely



Mr C Williams
Headteacher