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King's Academy College Park

A King's Group Academy

Headteacher: Mrs R Carlyle

Wednesday 11th September 2024

Attendance and punctuality

Dear Parents/Carers

I am writing to you to address the need for improvement in our school's attendance and punctuality. Last year, there were 736 late marks for infants and 1,375 for juniors. Additionally, we recorded 3,021 I codes (illness) for infants and 4,287 for juniors.

These statistics are concerning and highlight a significant issue that requires our collective effort. Ensuring that children arrive on time and attend school regularly is essential for their academic success and overall well-being.

With the above in mind, I would like to inform you about attendance expectations, and the changes you may see in line with the new government guidelines. We want to provide you with a clear outline about our attendance procedures, and how King's Academy College Park and Portsmouth City Council will respond to poor attendance.

Regular attendance at school is imperative, however, we recognise that there will be times when absence is unavoidable. This letter explains the approach we will be following to manage attendance.

Types of absence

Each absence is classified as either authorised or unauthorised, both of which affect a child's attendance percentage to reflect the lost learning. Absences are coded as authorised where reasons are considered to be valid and unauthorised where no reason or unacceptable reasons are provided.

Children with 95% attendance or below will receive a letter regarding their attendance. Medical evidence may be required for absence relating to illness/injury.

The following reasons are *not* classed as acceptable:

- . care for family members
- . days out
- . parents' work commitments or business trips
- . holidays taken in term time
- . parental illness

Absence and First Day Call

If your child is unable to attend school, you should inform us on the first day of absence before 08:30am via message on studybugs or telephone, with the reason for absence. Parents/carers are required to call each day a child is absent.

If we do not receive a reason for your child's absence by midday and we are unable to reach any of the contacts listed on our internal systems, we will conduct a home visit to ensure your child's safety and well-being. If there is no response during the home visit, we will then contact children's social services to support.

Medical/Dental and Optician Appointments

These must be booked outside of school hours. Where it is unavoidable, we ask that appointments are made as early as possible, or as late as possible in the school day. Children will be expected to attend school prior to or following their appointment. Evidence of the appointment will also be required for us to be able to authorise the absence. Once evidenced, medical appointments count as an authorised absence.

Emergency Occasions

There are some occasions such as bereavements, where it may be inappropriate for children to attend school. We will of course be sympathetic to such needs, and they will be dealt with on an individual basis.

Punctuality

It is essential that your child arrives at school on time each day, so that they are ready for registration. Registration opens at 08:45am. Children who arrive after registration closes will enter via the late gate and this will be recorded as late on the register. Children arriving after 09:15am will be marked as late after the register closes. This is an unauthorised absence, and an accumulation of these will lead to a referral to Portsmouth City Council for irregular attendance and could result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued.

Requests for absence in term-time

Permission from the Head Teacher must be sought for all absences that occur during term-time. A leave of absence form must be completed in advance of the absence and these are available from the school office. Under current department for education regulations, schools cannot authorise any holidays taken in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. School will require evidence of exceptional circumstances, which should be attached to the form. Please note, absence due to illness that is reported either side of a holiday will require medical evidence in order to be authorised.

Persistent Absence

Children with attendance of 90% or below are classified as persistently absent. The school will endeavour to notify parents prior to attendance reaching this level. A meeting will be arranged if attendance does not sufficiently improve. Continued absence will lead to a referral for a Fixed Penalty Notice or a School Attendance Panel, depending on circumstances.

All children with attendance of 90% and below due to illness/injury will be required to provide medical evidence for future absences to be authorised. Parents/carers will receive a letter notifying them of this.

Fixed Penalty Notices

Regular and punctual attendance of children at school is a legal requirement and essential for children to make the most of the opportunities available to them at school to reach their full potential. It is the parent(s)/carers responsibility to ensure their child receives full-time education.

Please be aware, that all Fixed Penalty Notices are issued by the local authority and not the school itself. Therefore all monies collected from Fixed Penalty Notices are **not** received by, or given to the school.

From Autumn term 2024;

- The first penalty notice issued to a parent will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent of the same pupil within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead. This will often include prosecution.

Thank you for your continued support. Your involvement and cooperation are invaluable to our school community. I know you understand how crucial attendance and punctuality are for your children's academic success and overall well-being.

Best wishes,

Kings Academy College Park