Puriton
Primary School

Puriton Primary School
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Friday 27th September 2024

Dear Parents/Carers

You may have heard in the news recently, that the Government have made some changes to a Department for Education policy called 'Working Together To Improve School Attendance' and have now introduced a new statutory National Framework for Penalty Notices. This change came into effect from 19th August 2024. Since returning to school in September, we have had several requests for term time leave and we wanted to ensure that these changes are fully communicated to all of our families.

There is now no longer a H (Holiday) code for authorised term time leave and in accordance with government guidelines, we cannot authorise holiday requests unless there are exceptional circumstances. If your child is absent for the period requested, it will be recorded as unauthorised term time leave and in line with national approaches and statutory guidance, a fixed term fine will be issued.

The main changes are:

- A Penalty Notice can be issued if a child's unauthorised absences total 10 sessions (5 days) or more over a 10-week period and are issued per parent/carer, per child.
- 1st Penalty Notice - Somerset Council can issue each parent a fine of £80, rising to £160 if you do not pay within 21 days.
- 2nd Penalty Notice – Penalty Notice will be £160. If you do not pay the fine in 28 days, you may be taken to court for keeping your child out of school.
- If your child is off school 3 or more times within the 3 years you will not be fined but may be taken to court.

This is a national change in statutory guidance which all schools MUST follow in order to safeguard children and maintain attendance.

I would like to thank you all for your support and understanding with this change and if you wish to find out further information, you can look at the gov.uk website at School attendance and absence: Legal action to enforce school attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and also at our Attendance Policy which can be found on our school website.

Yours Sincerely

K Williams

Miss Katie Williams

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