



LANGSTONE JUNIOR ACADEMY

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Headteacher: Mrs Jane Bush

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14th May 2019

Dear Parents/Carers

Attendance Newsletter - 2019

Langstone Junior Academy, working alongside Portsmouth City Council, is committed to ensuring that every child gets the chance to go to school to help them to get the best possible start to life

It's important to ensure that each child attends school regularly. Evidence shows that children who do so are more successful, not only in school, but in all areas of life. Missing school means not only missing out on lessons, but also clubs, friendships, careers support, trips and all the other opportunities that school has to offer.

If children understand the importance of 'regular and punctual attendance' from an early age, it helps them to maintain that attitude throughout their school life and into their work life.

Did you know?

- Last year **1 in 5 children in Portsmouth missed a week of school** because of unauthorised absence, leaving gaps in their learning.
- Each day of school missed by a child will reduce their attendance by 0.5%, and will mean they miss five lessons. Ten whole days of school has been missed if a pupil has 95% attendance - that's 50 lessons. Twenty whole days of school has been missed if a pupil's attendance is 90%. **Catching up on missed lessons impacts on the pupil, the teacher and other pupils in that class.**
- **If a pupil is persistently absent (90% attendance) they have missed 4 weeks of schooling.**
- **Being 15 minutes late each day** is the same as missing two weeks of school over the year.

| Absence during the year | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Number of days absent by the end of the year | Number of lessons missed | Absence percentage | Overall attendance percentage |
| 1 | 5 | 0.5% | 99.5% |
| 5 | 25 | 2.5% | 97.5% |
| 10 | 50 | 5% | 95% |
| 20 | 100 | 10% | 90% |
| 30 | 150 | 15% | 85% |

What is authorised and unauthorised absence?

- Term-time absence must be approved by the Headteacher. This is called authorised absence.
- At the Head teacher's discretion, absence may be authorised for genuine illness, for reasons of religious belief or for family trauma. Check with your school to be sure you understand their policy on authorised absence.
- **Any absence not approved by the Headteacher is an unauthorised absence.**
- Unauthorised absence includes things like time off for shopping, birthdays, holidays, visiting relatives, arriving late and having days out.

Langstone Junior Academy Attendance Data 3/9/2018 to 14/05/2019

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------|
| | <u>Sessions</u> | <u>Lost Learning Time</u> | <u>%</u> |
| Unauthorised absences | 835 sessions | 417.5 days | 0.75 |

When is a child too ill to come to school?

We know that illness is sometimes unavoidable and to be expected. However it is very important to inform the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence, letting them know the reason, by phone, email, and letter or in person at the school office so that the absence is authorised.

Not all illnesses need time off school.

Parents and carers are legally responsible for making sure their children attend school regularly - unless they are home educated - and schools can offer help and support to any families who are struggling with attendance for any reason

Top tips to help prevent absence

- talk to your child about how important it is to attend school
- inspire them to think about what they would like to be when they grow up, and how school can help with that
- ask regularly about how school is going
- book all holidays outside of term time
- book medical and dental appointments outside school hours if possible - and if not possible, ensure your child attends school before and after the appointment
- if your child complains of boredom, contact their class teacher to find out more
- provide a good environment for study at home and ensure they have time set aside for homework
- find out if your child wants to avoid school for a reason that they're frightened to tell you.
- 'NHS Healthier Together' has helpful advice on discussing a range of issues with your child.
- work with the school to address any attendance issues

School attendance - penalty notices

The law states that parents and carers whose children of compulsory school age are absent from school without good reason are committing an offence, and those parents may be prosecuted in a magistrates' court. Once your child is registered at a school, you are legally responsible for ensuring that they attend regularly. If your child fails to do so, you risk getting a fine (each parent could be fined up to £1000 for each child) or be prosecuted. Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 introduced additional powers under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 authorising local authorities to issue penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school.

When will a penalty notice be issued?

The School Attendance Team will always aim to ensure schools, parents and carers work together to improve pupil attendance. However, they do have the responsibility to issue penalty notices in the following situations where unauthorised absence occurs:

- following 10 sessions (five days) of unauthorised absence in a term
- parentally-condoned absences
- unauthorised leave of absence in term-time
- late arrival at school after the register has closed

Parents and carers will always be issued with a formal written warning of the intention to issue a penalty notice, before the notice is sent out. *The only exception to this is if you have a leave of absence in term time without permission of the school, as a penalty notice can be issued immediately in those circumstances.*

On receipt of the warning, you will have 30 school days to improve your child's attendance. In that time your child must have no unauthorised absences from school. If your child's attendance improves and there are no further unauthorised absences, you will not receive a penalty notice. Please be aware that there is no legal right of appeal once a notice has been issued against you.

How do I pay and what happens if I don't pay the penalty notice?

Details of payment arrangements will be included on the penalty notice. The penalty must be paid in full. The penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days.

If you do not pay the penalty in full within 28 days of issue, the council is required to start legal proceedings against you in the local magistrates' court for the original offence of failing to ensure your child attends school regularly. This may lead to a fine of up to £1,000.

Once payment of a penalty notice has been made parents and carers will no longer be liable for their child's absence from school during the period to which the notice relates. But, if your child has further periods of unauthorised absence from school, the local authority may decide to issue further penalty notices.

Langstone Junior Academy Attendance Data 3/9/2018 to 14/05/2019

| | <u>Sessions</u> | <u>Lost Learning Time</u> | <u>%</u> |
|---|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| Unauthorised absences due to holidays being taken in Term Time | 587 sessions | 293.5days | 0.53% |

Punctuality

**** The number of children arriving late into school continues to be at an unacceptable level. ****

When a child arrives late into the classroom, the lesson has already started. The class teacher has to stop the lesson and reteach what has already been taught. The teacher then has to re-engage the rest of the class in order for the lesson to continue. This is to the detriment of the teacher, the class pupils, as well as the late pupil.

We would like to remind all parents/carers that the school day starts at 8.50am.

I am sure that as a parent/carers you are aware of the importance of regular and punctual attendance in order that your children make firm academic progress at school. Children also benefit from the social interaction with their fellow pupils in the playground before school.

Langstone Junior Academy Attendance Data 3/9/2018 to 14/05/2019

| | <u>Sessions</u> | <u>Lost Learning Time</u> | <u>%</u> |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| Late arrivals into school | 745 | 225 hours | 0.67% |

We trust that our parents and carers at Langstone Junior Academy realise the importance of regular and punctual attendance as agreed and signed by you on our Attendance Protocol.

We also offer support for any issues that may affect your child's attendance. Please contact Mrs Louise Geall (Home and School Link Worker) or Mrs Lorraine Reeves (Attendance Officer). We believe, that by working alongside parents and children, we can maximise your child's full learning potential at our school.

If your child's attendance or punctuality gives the school reason for concern, our Attendance Officer will make contact with you. This may be by telephone, letter or by inviting you in for a meeting.

We can also help if you are struggling to make sure that your child comes to school.

Thanking you for your continued support.

JBush

Mrs Jane Bush
Headteacher



1 in 5 pupils in Portsmouth had one week of unauthorised absence from school last year. Don't be one of them. Go to school today and see what you could become.

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