Subject: Attendance and Wellbeing – Winter newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers, 13th October 2026

As we move into the colder months, coughs, colds and other seasonal illnesses can become more common. We want to work together with families to keep our pupils healthy, happy and in school as much as possible.

We understand that children do sometimes become unwell, and their health and wellbeing will always be important. However, some mild illnesses do not necessarily mean that children need to miss a day of school. By following a few simple steps, we can help reduce the spread of germs and support good attendance across our school community.

1. Is your child too ill for school?

It can sometimes be difficult to decide whether your child is well enough to attend school. The NHS provides helpful guidance to support parents and carers in making this decision.

NHS – Is my child too ill for school? (https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/)

Mild coughs, colds and sore throats: Children can usually attend school if they feel well enough. Coughs, colds and runny noses do not usually require children to stay at home.

Headaches, tummy aches and school attendance: We understand that children can sometimes experience headaches or tummy aches, but these symptoms do not always mean your child needs to miss school. A little discomfort does not always need to mean a day off school. We are here to work with families to help students attend regularly and access the education they deserve.

Period pain/heavy periods and school attendance

We understand that period pain can be uncomfortable and may affect how your child feels during the school day. However, period pain does not automatically mean that your child needs to miss school.

At The Portsmouth Academy, we have a range of products available to support students, including:

· Heat pads to help ease period pain.

· A range of sanitary products.

· Feminine hygiene wipes.

· Disposable underwear.

Medication in school

Where appropriate, school can administer prescribed medication to pupils. If your child requires prescribed medication during the school day, please contact the school to discuss the arrangements. Medication must be provided in its original packaging, with the appropriate information and permissions in place, in line with the school's medication policy.

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We understand that some pupils may need medication to manage ongoing health conditions or symptoms during the school day. With the right arrangements in place, we may be able to support your child to remain in school and continue learning.

If your child becomes unwell during the school day

Our team will assess the situation and contact you if your child needs to go home. Please remember that regular attendance is important for your child's learning, progress and wellbeing.

2. Simple steps to stop the spread of germs

We can all play a part in keeping our school community healthy. Please encourage your child to:

· Wash their hands regularly with soap and water, particularly before eating and after using the toilet.

· Cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.

· Put used tissues straight into the bin.

· Wash their hands after coughing, sneezing or using a tissue.

· Avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

These small habits can make a real difference in helping to prevent the spread of illness.

3. Winter vaccinations

Vaccinations can help protect children and young people against certain seasonal illnesses, including flu. We encourage parents and carers to check that their child is up to date with the vaccinations recommended for their age. If you have questions about vaccinations or whether your child is eligible, please speak to your GP, school nurse or healthcare professional.

4. Medical appointments and school attendance

We understand that medical and dental appointments are sometimes unavoidable. Wherever possible, please try to arrange appointments outside school hours to minimise disruption to your child's learning. If an appointment must take place during the school day and your child is well enough to attend, please support them to come into school before the appointment and return afterwards.

Every lesson matters, and even attending for part of the day helps pupils stay connected to their learning, teachers and friends.

5. Every day in school makes a difference

At The Portsmouth Academy, we recognise that good attendance supports not only academic progress but also friendships, confidence, routine and emotional wellbeing. We appreciate that some pupils face challenges that can make attending school difficult. If your child is struggling with

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attendance, please contact us so that we can work together to understand any barriers and explore appropriate support.

Our aim is to work in partnership with families, offering support and encouragement to help every pupil access their education.

6. Reporting an absence

If your child is too unwell to attend school, please ensure that their absence is reported promptly through Arbor. Please provide clear information about the reason for the absence and keep us updated if your child's illness continues.

Thank you for your continued support. By working together, we can help keep our pupils healthy, support their learning and give every child the best opportunity to achieve their potential and transform life chances.

Kind regards,

Clare Blake

Attendance Improvement Coordinator, The Portsmouth Academy

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