Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you very much for your assistance with a great start to Term 1; there is a lovely calm, kind atmosphere around school with children engaged in purposeful learning and doing a super job of being 'Ready, Respectful and Safe'. A very warm welcome to all our new families, both in Puffins Class and across the school. We are really looking forward to you being part of our school family.

Attendance

It has been great to see children arriving in school on time and being ready in their class to begin learning. Just a reminder that school starts promptly at 8:45am; we are now shutting the gates and doors at 8:50am, so if your child arrives after this, they will need to enter via the school office.

Thinking about attendance in general, I'd like to remind all parents and carers about the importance of your child attending school every day, unless they are too ill or there is another exceptional reason. School is not only a place for your child to learn, but is also key in building lasting friendships and relationships and supports children's confidence, resilience and growing independence.
Did you know that…

- Attending 4.5 days a week = 90% attendance = 4 weeks missed learning per year.
- Attending 4 days a week = 80% attendance = more then half a term learning missed.
- An average attendance of 80% or less across the child's school career up to Year 11, adds up to missing a *whole 2 years* from school, and would be more than a year missed of primary school education.
- Being late for school by 5 minutes every day add up to three days of learning missed.
- Being 15 minutes late everyday adds up to two full weeks of missed education.

We aim for all children's attendance to be 96% or above; this will provide them with the greatest chance of success in their education journey. We will inform you of your child's attendance at key points throughout the year, but we may be in touch if their attendance appears to be dropping and work with you to ensure they are in school as much as possible.

Frequently asked questions:

What should I do if my child is too ill to attend school?
If your child is ill, please call the school absence line by 8:30am, where you can leave a message explaining the reason for your child's absence. The school phone number is 01752 567660.

What should I do if my child has a medical or dental appointment?
Wherever possible, we ask for parents to arrange appointments outside of school hours, but when it is not possible, please provide evidence of the appointment (e.g. reminder text message, letter from hospital) to the school office.

We have booked a holiday in term time – what should I do?
Ideally, all holidays should be taken during school holidays as it is a legal requirement for your child to attend school, however, we understand that this isn't always possible. If you have to take your child out of school during term time, for whatever reason or duration, you will need to complete an 'Absence Request Form', which is available from the school office. The Headteacher will decide

whether your child's absence will be authorised or not. If it is not authorised and you still take your child out of school, you could be liable for a fixed penalty notice (fine) from Plymouth City Council.

Dates for the diary

I thought it might be useful to give you some dates for events that we are planning for the coming two terms, although some are still to be confirmed and are subject to change. Hopefully, this will give working parents plenty of time to book a bit of time off work in order to attend special events like shows, meetings etc.

• Speak out, Stay Safe (PANTS) Week	5th- 9th October
• Curriculum Information Evenings for all year groups (more info soon)	Wednesday 7th October 3:30-5pm
• Harvest Assemblies for Puffins & Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2	Tuesday 13th October (morning)
• School Council Fundraiser	Friday 16th October
• PTA Halloween Discos	Thursday 22nd October (evening)
• Half Term Holiday	Monday 26th October to Friday 30th October
• Remembrance Service at Alexandra Park – whole school and any parents who would like to join us	Wednesday 11th November – leaving school at roughly 10:25am
• Individual and sibling photos with Jelly Images	Thursday 12th November
• World Kindness Day and Children in Need fundraiser	Friday 13th November
• Anti-bullying Week	16th – 20th November
• PTA Christmas Fair	Wednesday 25th November
• Nativity performances for Puffins and Key Stage 1	Tuesday 8th December (morning and afternoon performances)
• Christmas Concerts for Key Stage 2	Monday 14th December (morning and afternoon performances)
• Christmas Jumper Day fundraiser for School Council charity • School Christmas Dinner	Thursday 17th December
• Christmas holiday	21st December to 5th January
• First day of Term 3	Wednesday 6th January

I will give you more dates for later in the year soon, so that you know when some of the important weeks like Arts Week, Sports Week, Year 6 SATs etc will be.

Many thanks for your continued support,
With best wishes,
Mrs Francis