

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2024

**Pupil Attendance & Punctuality Policy**

Dear Parent/Carer

You may be aware that the Government has passed new legislation regarding school attendance, which all schools are required to follow. Consequently, we will have a new attendance policy in place from 19th August 2024, a copy of which will be shared before the end of the summer term. You will be welcome to give your feedback on this policy during the consultation period. However, the legislation is already in place which requires all schools to include the following key points in their attendance policy:

1. Follow up with parents if their child's attendance is causing concern, due to it falling below the school attendance target of 96%. **All parents have a legal duty to ensure their children attend school every day, on time**, unless leave of absence is authorised (Section 1).
2. Record **all term time holidays as unauthorised** (Section 3).
3. Mark **lateness after 9.20 am as unauthorised** absence (Section 6).
4. Inform the Local Authority if a child has **15 days or more sickness absence** within the school year (Section 7).
5. Refer parents or carers to the Local Authority for a **penalty notice if a child's unauthorised absence reaches 5 days (10 half day sessions) within a rolling 10-week period** (Section 10).

The Headteacher can still use their discretion if there are exceptional circumstances which merit an authorised absence from school. We will also continue to work closely with families to support any child who has barriers to expected levels of attendance and punctuality. However, the national picture is that attendance levels are a challenge in schools, which is having a detrimental impact on children's learning. We are therefore bound to follow the new legislation, along with all other schools in the country.

Also enclosed is a useful reference document on when/how long to keep your child at home if they are unwell. This is now included within the attendance policy for all Essex schools. Please notify the school by using Studybugs by 09:20 daily if your child is unwell - they will use this document and NHS guidance to advise you whether your child should attend school.

We appreciate your support with this new policy, as all schools and families will now be working to exactly the same requirements.

Kind regards

Mr R. Wade  
Head of School

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