

15<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Dear families,

### **Attendance**

Improving attendance is an important area for our school which we are continuing to work upon this year. Our children make good progress in their learning each year and we know that with better attendance, they will achieve more. We trust that we have your support for this. I am writing to you to ensure that you are fully aware of the importance of good attendance and punctuality, and that you are aware of your responsibilities as a parent.

We are committed to promoting and modelling good attendance and behaviour – which is essential for pupils to achieve their potential. Poor attendance is directly correlated to a pupil's level of success and development in their education.

As a parent, you have a legal requirement to ensure that your child is on time and attends school on a regular basis.

We understand that there are times when children will need to be absent from school for a number of reasons. This could include:

- Sickness or ill health.
- Medical or dental appointments which fall during school hours.
- Religious or cultural observances.
- Family emergencies.
- Bereavement purposes.

We ask that all parents follow our Attendance and Absence Policy when reporting absences. Our Attendance Policy is written in conjunction with local school as part of the Upton Education Improvement Partnership (EIP) schools and in consultation with The Local Authority. Any parent who has not reported their child as absent will be contacted by the school via telephone, text message or email. Failure to provide reasoning for your child's absence may result in your child receiving an unauthorised absence and could lead to penalty notices being imposed on you.

Absences during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances and the length of any authorised absences will be determined by the headteacher. Requests for leave of absence during term time for the purpose of a family holiday will not be accepted.

Authorisations will not be granted for absence in the following instances:

- Day trips and holidays in term time
- Leaving school for unnecessary reasons during the school day

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- Not attending school for an unnecessary reason such as shopping or birthdays
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have not been properly explained or have failed to follow the absence procedure

Please ensure your child arrives punctually each day, as arriving on time sets a positive tone for learning but also allows for a smooth start to the school day. The school day begins at 8.45am and the gates to the school site open at 8.30am. We ask that children arrive on site by 8.40am each day, to guarantee punctuality. Just 5 minutes late every day means 3.4 days of learning lost every year and being 15 minutes late every day leads to 10.3 days of learning lost over the year. All classes begin the day with important learning so please make every effort to be on time, every day. The school day finishes at 3.10pm – please make sure that children are picked up on time.

Should your child arrive after the register closes, they will receive a mark to show that they are on-site, though this will still be recorded as an absence. Continuous lateness will, therefore, result in several unauthorised absences, despite your child being on-site for the rest of the school day. Teachers are trained and encouraged to identify and report any potentially at-risk pupils, should they notice any of the stated unauthorised absences as common occurrences, including lateness.

It is now possible for parents to be issued penalty notices for unauthorised absences. Penalty notices begin with an initial fine of £60, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Following failure of these payments, the local attendance officer may decide to prosecute a parent. If so, parents can be fined up to £2,500 or imprisoned for failing to ensure that their child attends school regularly.

We have our own Attendance Officer, Miss Myers, who works in school each day between 8.30am - 3.45pm. If you wish to contact her regarding any issues or concerns with Attendance and Punctuality then please contact her on: 01244 455275, or email [attendance@chesterbluecoatce.cheshire.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@chesterbluecoatce.cheshire.sch.uk).



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