

Thursday, 18 July 2024

Dear Parents

### RE: DfE Attendance Update

You may or may not be aware that, from September, the Department for Education will be increasing its focus on attendance in schools. As a result of this, all schools nationally have been asked to make good attendance a priority. Currently our attendance is at 96% which is good. However, despite this we are still required to adopt a new policy with regards to attendance.

Attending school is crucial to your child's development and learning. Regular attendance ensures your child is able to access the curriculum, develop their social skills and enjoy their time in school. Every term the leadership team analyse individual children's attendance and all too often there is a link between poor attendance and issues of low self-esteem, finding learning difficult or struggling to maintain relationships. We have also identified that 'broken weeks' (where a child misses a day here and a day there) are much more detrimental to your child's learning.

As always, we want to work with parents and ensure that the relationship between home and school remains strong. Therefore, if your child's attendance becomes a concern we will be contacting you to offer support.

The government have made some changes to procedure which we feel is worth you knowing.

- Schools are no longer able to approve holiday in term time – all holiday will be unauthorised
- The school is now required to send daily attendance data to the local authority
- Five or more days (10+ sessions) of unauthorised absence in a ten-week period could result in a fine from the local authority. ***Please note that the school does not fine parents or receive the money***
- Continued unauthorised absence could result in prosecution (see page two)
- If your child's absence falls below 90%, the school are required to offer support
- The school may be required to ask for evidence of sickness depending on the time-frame/when the sickness occurs

While I appreciate that this information will not impact many of our families, it is worth noting that the school will be under extreme scrutiny with regards to attendance. We ask for your patience and understanding as we work together to ensure attendance at Sherston remains strong.

Our new attendance policy can be found on the [website](#). We will always encourage you to send your child into school even if they are a bit under the weather. If you are unsure if you should send your child into school please refer to this [NHS advice](#).

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's attendance, please do get in touch.

Kind regards,



Mr Towers

## Information from the Local Authority

If absence does result in a fine, the following penalty notices can be issued by the local authority:

### Five or more days (10+ sessions) of unauthorised absence

- First Penalty Notice
- £160 per parent per child – reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days

### An additional five or more days (10+ sessions) of unauthorised absence (within three years of the first)

- Second Penalty Notice
- £160 per parent per child within 28 days

### A further five or more days (10+ sessions) of unauthorised absence (within three years of the first)

- Penalty notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the magistrates court