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Dear Parents / Carers,

Attendance

We have been delighted with the strong start to the new academic year and the significant improvement in attendance across the school. Children have returned positively, settled quickly into routines and are benefiting from being in school every day.

We are committed to maintaining these high standards throughout the year. Excellent attendance gives children the best possible chance to succeed academically, develop socially, build positive friendships and fully participate in all aspects of school life. Every day in school matters, and even occasional absences can have an impact on learning and progress.

To support families in understanding our expectations and the circumstances in which absence may or may not be authorised, we have provided the following Frequently Asked Questions. We appreciate your continued support in ensuring that all children attend school regularly, arrive on time and are ready to learn.

A reminder that 10 unauthorised absences over a 10 week rolling time period will result in a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Frequently Asked Questions: Exceptional Absence During Term Time

What is an exceptional absence?

An exceptional absence is a request for leave during term time that meets the school's criteria for exceptional circumstances. Absence from school is authorised only in exceptional circumstances and all requests must be supported by appropriate evidence.

Do holidays during term time count as an exceptional circumstance?

No. Family holidays, city breaks and recreational travel during term time will not be authorised.

What evidence is required?

All requests for exceptional absence must be supported by appropriate evidence. Requests without evidence are unlikely to be authorised.

Can my child attend a medical appointment during the school day?

Yes. Medical, dental or hospital appointments may be authorised where evidence is provided, such as an appointment letter, text message or screenshot from a healthcare provider.

Where possible, appointments should be made outside school hours. In most cases, pupils should attend school before or after the appointment and only be absent for part of the day.

Can my child attend a funeral?

Yes. A funeral of a close family member may be authorised. Normally, one day of absence will be authorised. Evidence may be requested.

Can my child be absent for a religious celebration?

Yes. One day may be authorised for a recognised religious observance or celebration. Evidence may be requested.

I am unwell and unable to take my child to school. Will this be authorised?

No. A parent's illness is not normally considered an exceptional circumstance for a pupil's absence.

Parents should make alternative arrangements to ensure their child attends school. If a parent is too unwell to bring a child to school, there may also be concerns about the child's welfare if they remain at home all day.

We have transport difficulties getting to school. Will this be authorised?

No. Transport problems, including car breakdowns, missed buses or difficulties arranging transport, are not considered exceptional circumstances.

Parents should make alternative arrangements wherever possible.

My child is refusing to come to school. Will the absence be authorised?

No. School refusal or anxiety-related absence will not automatically be authorised.

Please contact the school as soon as possible so that we can work together to identify the difficulties and put support in place.

What should I do if my child is finding mornings difficult?

Please still bring your child to school, even if this means arriving later than usual.

It is always better for a child to attend part of the school day than to miss the whole day. Staff will support your child on arrival and help them settle into learning.

What if I don't provide a reason for absence?

If your child is absent and you do not inform school by 10am with a reason, this absence will be recorded as unauthorised. If you fail to provide a reason or contact the school for two consecutive days, we will consider this a safeguarding concern and will take action in line with our safeguarding policy.

Key Message:

Unless there are exceptional circumstances supported by evidence, absences from school will be recorded as unauthorised. Regular attendance is essential for children's learning, progress and wellbeing.

Kind regards,

Mr James Berry
Headteacher