

Beer C of E (VA) Primary School



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Executive Headteacher – Miss Rebecca Porter

Chair of Governors – Mrs Jean Smith

Wednesday 19th April 2017

Dear Parents,

RE: Attendance

We believe that in order for a pupil to fully benefit from their education, good attendance is crucial. Therefore, recently, we have been evaluating our systems as we want to work more closely with you to ensure that we are all promoting good attendance at school. We are implementing a number of steps to enable us to liaise more effectively with you regarding attendance as full attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career. These include:

- a) We will be issuing attendance reports twice a year now (previously we did this annually) and you will receive one with your child's interim report and one with your child's end of year report if your child is in years 1-6. Reception parents will receive their child's attendance report during the February parent consultation meeting and then with the end of year EYFS report.
- b) We will periodically report on whole school attendance in the weekly newsletter.
- c) We have developed a RAG (red/amber/green) rated system to alert parents to the fact that attendance is falling. We have worked with the Education Welfare Office on this and a flow chart accompanies this letter to explain the system. Office staff will monitor attendance on a monthly basis and send 'red/amber/green' letters/persistent lateness letters to parents as appropriate according to the criteria outlined on the flow chart (attached).
- d) Finally, we will be celebrating excellent attendance on a termly basis – this will not be limited to those with 100% attendance as there are children who have excellent attendance and have only a small number of missed sessions due to illness and it is important that we take this into account to be fair to all.

With regards to holidays and absences during term time, an amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration, England) Regulations 2006 came in to force in September 2013 and greater clarity was introduced to the issue of schools authorising absence requests. These changes reinforced the Government's view that every minute of every school day is vital and that pupils should only be granted authorised absences by the school in 'exceptional circumstances'.

A family holiday is not normally considered by the Government to be an 'exceptional circumstance' and therefore will not be authorised by this school. Schools are



required to notify the Local Authority if a pupil has a number of unauthorised absences. Unauthorised absences can be acquired when;

- 1) Leave has been requested, but the circumstances are such that the school is unable to authorise the leave and it is taken anyway.
- 2) Leave is not requested and/or the school has grounds to believe that the child has been taken out of school for an avoidable reason (example – a family holiday). Only the Head teacher can authorise an absence. There are occasions when school have been notified that the pupil is sick, but the school later discovers and reasonably believes that the reason given for the absence is not genuine and in these circumstances, absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- 3) A child continually arrives late after the registration period has closed; our attendance policy specifies that registration closes at 9.05am. A child arriving late often misses the crucial introduction to a lesson/the school day and this causes disruption both to the child and the whole class.

This school will be notifying the Local Authority in all of the circumstances listed above.

We understand the disappointment that the refusal of a leave request may cause and we apologise, but as you can appreciate schools have a responsibility and commitment towards providing your child's education and supporting their future life opportunities. We hope you will support us by ensuring that your son/daughter obtains the maximum benefit from their time at school by attending school regularly and punctually. It is always our aim to foster good home-school relations and work together in partnership to secure the best social, emotional and academic outcomes for every child.

Thank you for your anticipated support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Porter
Head Teacher