

Friday 9th March 2018



Dear Parents/Carers

Re: School Attendance

At our recent Governing Board meeting we have been reviewing school attendance and the impact of rewards for attendance. We understand that recently there have been some concerns around this subject from school and parents alike. We would therefore like to share our thoughts. The majority of our group are also parents.

We would like to ask that all parents/carers consider the following 3 areas:

1. Holidays During Term Time

From 1 September 2013, a change to government legislation means that schools are no longer allowed to authorise requests for children to be taken out of school for a holiday during term time. Requests for leave can only be granted by schools if there are exceptional circumstances, and holidays are not considered exceptional.

2. Sickness

When your child is unwell, it can be hard deciding whether to keep them off school. The advice on the following link should help you consider whether they should attend or not:

<https://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Yourchildatschool/Pages/Illness.aspx>

3. Snow Days

Living in Queensbury it is inevitable that during the winter months, it can be more difficult to travel to school. School does all it can to ensure that it is open as normal during these times. Please make every effort to ensure that if school is open that your child is able to attend. If it is going to be difficult to make your normal journey please consider alternatives or why not ask parents of other children in your immediate area to share the burden of the journey.

Along with other rewards, school will continue to award those children during certain times for good attendance. We consider that this should be seen as a positive experience for everyone.

Whilst school has targets to maintain, we do not feel that it is essential that parents/carers and pupils are focused on these targets as this is the school's concern. What we would like you to focus on is your own child's attendance and the impact this can have. As a parent/carer you clearly want the best for your children and regular attendance at school is vital to help children achieve and get the best possible start in life.



The facts about school attendance

Did you know that: a child who is absent a day of school per week misses an equivalent of two years of their school life?

If your child misses just 1 week of school each year they would miss the equivalent of a whole term of school throughout their entire school life.

GCSEs may seem a long way off for you and your child but all absence at any stage leads to gaps in your child's learning. This in turn can:

- mean that they fall behind in work
- affect their motivation
- affect their enjoyment of learning
- lead to poor behaviour
- affect their desire to attend school regularly
- affect their confidence in school
- mean they miss out on the social life of school and extra-curricular opportunities and experiences
- affect their ability to have or keep friendships.

If you want to read more, please follow the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/absence-and-attainment-at-key-stages-2-and-4-2012-to-2013>

Social Media

Whilst we are writing to you, we would like to ask, should you have any concerns about school that you refrain from discussing these on social media. These discussions are often counter-productive as they display your child's school in a poor light, in a very public way. Whilst we understand that at times you may disagree with a school decision or feel the need to complain, we would urge you to speak to someone in person. Both staff at school and the governors are a very friendly, approachable bunch of people. Misunderstandings can usually be cleared up and everyone benefits from the speedy resolution of difficulties. Suggestions for improvement are always welcome.

If you have a concern or complaint you should make contact with the appropriate member of staff. This may be the class teacher in the first instant. If you do not feel the matter is resolved you should make contact with a senior leader in school, the Assistant Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher.

If your complaint is still not resolved, you should put your complaint, in writing, to the Chair of Governors. We may be contacted via the school office or via email.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully

Board of Governors

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