



May 2022

Expectations of Attendance

Dear Parents / Carers

Now that we have returned to more normal times following the COVID-19 pandemic it seems a good time to remind parents of the expectations around attendance.

The huge majority of children continue to have good attendance, despite maybe having had time off with COVID-19.

We cannot stress enough the importance of regular attendance at school. There is lots of research that shows that not having regular attendance at school means that children do not do as well academically.

There is no getting away from the fact that learning over the last two years has been disrupted by the enforced closure of schools for the majority of children and the move to online learning. On top of this, a large number of children have missed time from school having caught COVID-19.

It is therefore really important that attendance is maximised to make up for any lost ground.

In normal times the national average for school attendance is 96%. As we have moved into the summer term we are seeing attendance returning to this figure which is fantastic.

However it still needs to improve.

Absence

Children do get ill and will from time to time have to miss school. If your child is unwell and not able to be in school, it is the parent's responsibility to contact the school office on the first and subsequent day(s) of absence.

The school office is open between 8:00am and 4:30pm. Outside of these hours, parents can call and leave a message by pressing option 3.

If we do not hear from parents regarding a child's absence, we do follow this up with phone calls. This takes up valuable time for the office staff that could be better spent elsewhere. If we can't make contact with you further actions including home visits and police visits may be carried out to check on you and your child's wellbeing.

Medical Appointments

Please try to book doctor and dentist appointments for after school or in the holidays. We appreciate that sometimes this isn't possible and, in such cases, please provide the office with details of the appointments and the time out of school required.

Term Time Holidays

Holidays during term time will not be approved and will be marked unauthorised. We have seen an increasing request for absence this term for holidays. Any parent who takes their child out of school for a term time holiday for a week will be issued with a fine by the Essex school attendance team. This will be issued to each parent for each child. There are plenty of weeks holiday in the year and at Larchwood parents are able to benefit from



cheaper holidays in the extended half term break in October. Any request for time off, holiday or otherwise, needs to be completed on the appropriate form available from the school office.

Regular Absence

Each month we look closely at pupil's attendance and the parents of any child whose attendance we are concerned about will get called in to meet with me to discuss this and any issues that may be affecting their attendance. Parents who do not ensure that their child has regular attendance in school could be referred to the Essex school attendance team and could end up being fined.

Start of the school day

School starts at 8:30am and anyone arriving after 8:40am is late. The overwhelming majority of children are in at 8:30am and already learning. Children who arrive after 8:40am will need to be taken to the school office as they are late. This can be upsetting for the children as they have to walk into a lesson while the other children are learning. It also means that they have missed important learning time. Please ensure you are on time.

Celebrating Attendance

Each week in assembly the class with the best attendance wins the attendance award. As well as seeing their class name at the top of the attendance ladder in the hall, the winning class gets five minutes extra play. We also share the top 5 classes' attendance on News and Views each week as well as the weekly school average.

We look forward to seeing attendance continue to improve this term.



Mr S Bowsheer
Headteacher

