



Wednesday 2nd October 2019



'Dream... Believe... Achieve...'
Headteacher: Mrs Hannah Connor-James

Dear Parents/Carers

School Attendance – Important Information

Regular attendance at school is essential to ensure uninterrupted progress and enable children to fulfil their academic potential. In line with this, parent/carers are legally responsible for making sure that their child attends school regularly and punctually, and this obligation forms part of our home school agreement.

Following a Supreme Court judgement last year, the meaning of 'regular' school attendance, as outlined in Section 444 Education Act 1996, has now been defined as '100%, unless there are exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence'. We understand that our students will fall ill from time to time, however all students should be striving to be above 97% in their attendance.

All schools, in conjunction with local authorities, are required to be rigorous in terms of attendance monitoring and are required to take action when overall attendance drops below 95%.

We operate a 'whole school approach' to monitoring attendance, with intervention from Class Teachers, myself and the Attendance Advisor for the ACES Trust, as appropriate. The school will write to parent/carers where a student's attendance gives cause for concern and meetings may take place in school where attendance fails to improve.

The decision as to whether an absence is authorised rests solely with the school. However, in order to assist us, you may, as per local authority guidelines, be required to provide supporting paperwork e.g. clinic appointment cards or copies of consultation/prescription etc., to authorise any medical appointments or illnesses. Such paperwork could prevent further action by the Local Authority.

Students whose attendance is below 90% are considered by the Department for Education to be persistent absentees. Previously, cases falling into this category were referred to the Education Welfare Officer. This will no longer occur.

Where attendance has failed to improve sufficiently, following school intervention and support, cases will be 'fast-tracked' to the Education Welfare Legal Panel, who will determine if a fixed penalty notice or legal proceedings are applicable. We strongly urge you to work with the school in order to prevent such action.



'Dream... Believe... Achieve...'
Headteacher: Mrs Hannah Connor-James

Parent/carers are reminded that leave of absence will not be authorised during term time. Consideration will only be given to requests made under very exceptional/unavoidable circumstances. Leave should be requested at least 10 school days in advance. The application form and associated guidelines are available on the school website.

It is unfortunate that in the last academic year the Local Authority has once again issued a number of penalty notices to Cromwell families for holidays in term time. This includes some families who initially reported their children as ill.

Finally, I would like to express my appreciation for the efforts of the vast majority of our parents who successfully ensure their children's regular and punctual attendance.

Kind regards

Mrs Connor-James
Headteacher