

South Bersted CE Primary School

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Headteacher: Mr Noel Goodwin

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Attendance

At South Bersted Church of England Primary School, we want to work with parents and carers to improve our whole school attendance. This half term, we have seen a significant increase in holiday request forms. There are 12 weeks across the school year where holidays can be taken.

Latest evidence from the Department of Education (DfE) shows that the students with the highest attendance throughout their time in school gain the best GCSE and A Level results. Their research found that pupils who performed better both at the end of primary and secondary school missed fewer days than those who didn't perform as well.' (DfE June 2023).

What is the expected attendance?

| Below 90% | 90.1% - 95.9% | 96%+ |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|------|
| Serious risk of underachievement | Risk of underachievement | Good |

As shown in the table, we identify 96%+ as good attendance. Often when we see a figure of 90% we may interpret this as a good attendance; however, if your child has an attendance of 90% across the school year, this represents 19 days of absence from school, which is equivalent to approximately 4 weeks of missed school.

The below table shows the impact in days and weeks for different attendances:

| ATTENDANCE DURING ONE SCHOOL YEAR | EQUATES TO DAYS ABSENT | WHICH IS APPROXIMATELY |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| 94% | 10 days | 2 weeks |
| 90% | 19 days | 4 weeks |
| 85% | 29 days | 6 weeks |
| 80% | 38 days | 8 weeks |
| 75% | 48 days | 10 weeks |
| 70% | 57 days | 11.5 weeks |
| 65% | 67 days | 13.5 weeks |

How are we promoting good attendance?

Each term, we reward pupils with 100% attendance. During Collective Worship, pupils receive a certificate. Pupils who have an attendance of 97% or above are entered into a termly raffle. The winning child will then choose a gift set from an 'Attendance Menu'; they will be able to select gifts from art, cooking, Lego or sport.

How do I inform the school if my child is unwell?

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Notifying the school on the first day of absence before 9.15am, or as soon as possible. Parents can report an absence by telephoning the school office, emailing or via Class Dojo.
- Providing medical evidence where possible, on the child's return to school.
- Ensuring that as far as possible, medical appointments are arranged for outside school hours. Where this is not possible, parents are expected to provide evidence of the appointment in advance, and the child should attend school before/after the appointment.
- Liaise with the school as soon as possible regarding any specific issues that might cause absence or lateness, e.g. a sick parent/carer.

What is the school's responsibility in relation to an absence from school?

Where a pupil has not attended and we are unable to contact any parent or carer by telephone, including the use of emergency contact numbers, we will consider the matter from a safeguarding perspective. Where appropriate, the headteacher and/or safeguarding lead will take further steps to ensure the wellbeing of the child, which may include home visits, referral to the Integrated Front Door (IFD); formerly known as MASH, or by seeking further advice from the local authority's team for Children Missing in Education.

Does the school authorise holidays?

No.

Holidays during term time are not authorised. This is in line with the Felpham and Bognor attendance protocol, which all locality schools have agreed to.

Does the school issues fines?

Yes.

Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) can be issued to families where a child has missed at least 5 days of school in a ten-week period, without authorisation. Fixed Penalty Notices incur a fine of £120 per parent, per child, (£60 if paid in 28 days). A parent is any person who has parental responsibility for the child.

In addition to this, if an absence is for 15 consecutive school days then the local authority can bring the matter directly to the courts. If 2 FPNs are issued in a 12-month period and a third referral is made, the FPN team will refer it directly before the courts.

Further information regarding Fixed Penalty Notices can be found on the attached leaflet.

If you have any questions regards the information in this letter, please contact the school office or discuss the matter on the school gate.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely



Mr Noel Goodwin
Headteacher

