



## FOW:

This week we had the EGM for the Friends of Watton and we were really pleased to have people stand forward to create the new committee. Our new Chair is Alex Tyrrell. Thank you to all of you who came along to the meeting – it was lovely to feel the enthusiasm and energy of the group!

### Coffee mornings:

We have planned some coffee mornings for parents to come along to this term. These will be held on Wednesday mornings and will involve covering a topic or theme that parents have requested. They will run from 9.00 to approximately 9.30am and there is no need to sign up, just pop along to the office after drop-off.

**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> November – 9.00 – Behaviour and anti-bullying work.**

**Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> November – 9.00 – Phonics and spelling**

**Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December – 9.00 - Maths strategies**



### Attendance:

We are focussing on improving the attendance in the school and we thank so many of you for your support with this. We appreciate that it might be tempting to take holidays during term time due to reduced costs, but we urge you to think about how children missing even a week at school can have a detrimental impact on their learning. We realise that the vast majority of our parents avoid taking holidays during term time.

In line with the Government's commitment to reduce absence, the Persistent Absence threshold has been raised from 85% to 90%, with effect from September 2016. Any child whose attendance at school is lower than 90% at any point in the school year will be placed in this category.

*Please see the table below showing the new Department for Education expectations and the impact of absence on days and hours of learning lost. The expectation is that every pupil attending school maintains an attendance level of 96% or above.*

Descriptor	Attendance %	Whole Days Absent	Learning Hours Lost
Excellent	100-99	0-2	0-10
Good	98-96	4-7.5	20-37.5
Cause for concern	95-91	9.5-17	47.5-85
Unsatisfactory	90-87	19-25	95-125
Serious concern	86	27	135
Critical	85-80	28.5-38	142.5-190

We are currently tracking all attendance and have meetings with parents when we are concerned with attendance rates.

In cases of persistent absence we request medical authorisation before we mark an absence as illness. Please note that it is ultimately our decision how we mark absence in our registers. In a few cases, it will be necessary to hold a formal School Attendance Meeting.

While we appreciate that some children are unwell from time to time and there can be exceptional circumstances for absences, please think carefully before allowing your child to be off school. Holidays can only be authorised for exceptional reasons. Persistent absence is proven to have a major impact on pupil performance and personal development.

You may get a letter in the coming week to draw your attention to your child's current attendance.

### **Christmas Jumper Day – 16<sup>th</sup> December**

Just a date for your diary. We would like you all to get in the spirit of Christmas by wearing something Christmassy (it doesn't have to be a jumper, it could be a hat or anything red or green). We will be asking for a donation of a £1 to support Save The Children Fund.



### **School Logo Competition**

We would like to run a competition to have a new school logo for letterhead purposes only. It has been some time since this has been changed and we have developed significantly as a school to incorporate our preschool children and in leading the children centres at Watton and in Hertford.

We would like the design to:

- be eye-catching
- include the Watton at Stone water pump if possible
- look good when copied with black and white
- show our name Watton at Stone Primary and Nursery School

Please could it be drawn on paper no bigger than A5 size. We have a closing date of Friday 18<sup>th</sup> November, please sharpen your pencils for this weekend!