

# Bottisham Community Primary School



Interim Head: Lisa Perry  
Deputy Heads: Christine Sheppard and Debbie Heijne

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to update you on our procedures around the monitoring of attendance at Bottisham School.

As you may know, we receive regular visits from the County Council Education Welfare Officer whose job it is to ensure that we are following correct procedures around monitoring the attendance of pupils at Bottisham School. In order to comply with this advice, we have already begun to send out copies of their Attendance Notification Letters when pupil's attendance falls below 96%.

We recognise that many parents have been concerned that they have received a letter due to absence through illness which is of course, unavoidable. We support and expect parents to keep children away from school where they may be infectious to other children, or because they are feeling just too unwell to be able to attend. However, the Local Authority requirement means that all absences have to initially, be treated the same, regardless of the reason for absence, and so a letter of notification will still need to be sent home, even when the absences are authorised and no action is required. Maintaining a dialogue with the school during periods of absence really helps to ensure that we are aware that the child has a legitimate reason for being absent, and that parents can seek clarification or support where they need it.

The most recent advice from our Education Welfare Officer has been about pupils whose attendance falls below 90%. We have been asked to meet with the parents of these pupils in order to provide support where needed, and to put targets in place to ensure that the child's attendance improves. From 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019 we will begin applying this procedure.

In addition, we have been given new advice regarding pupils who do not arrive at school, for whom we have had no email or telephone call to inform us of a reason for absence. We are now required to go to the pupil's home address, in order to ensure that the absent pupil is safe and to establish a reason for absence. If we are unable to speak with a parent at the pupil's address, in order to establish the safety of the pupil, we have been advised to then call the police.

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01223 811235

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twitter.com/BottishamPri



For this reason, we would be grateful if parents could ensure that their contact details (3 different contacts whenever possible) are up-to-date and that they inform the school office before 9:30, by email—[office@bottishamprimary.org](mailto:office@bottishamprimary.org) - or by telephone—**01223 811235**—if their child is absent from school.

Finally, there is now a County Council expectation that all schools in Cambridgeshire will make a referral for a Fixed Penalty Notice for term time leave – ie unauthorised absences – of 8 unauthorised absences over an 8 week period (each day counts as 2 sessions – morning and afternoon).

We have included a copy of the letter sent by Jonathan Lewis, Cambridgeshire County Council's Education Services Director detailing their expectations and procedures.

We know that our parents at Bottisham School recognise the importance of regular attendance at school and the impact this has on a child's education, friendship groups and their life chances. We thank you for your continued support in ensuring your child attends school regularly.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Perry

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