

Bottisham Community Primary School



Headteacher: Rachael Johnston

Wednesday, 4th September 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

Attendance

We believe that for pupils to progress and achieve their full potential they need to have a good level of attendance at 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. Their guidance states that schools are required to send out copies of their Attendance Notification Letters when pupil's attendance falls below 96%.

We recognise that many parents may be concerned if they receive 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%. Where this is the case, 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.

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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Bottisham
Cambridgeshire
CB25 9BE
01223 811235

01223 811235
office@bottisham.cambs.sch.uk
www.bottisham.cambs.sch.uk
twitter.com/BottishamPri



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

Finally, the County Council expectation is that all schools in Cambridgeshire will make a referral for a Fixed Penalty Notice for term time leave – i.e. unauthorised absences. These may be actioned for 8 non-consecutive unauthorised absences over an 8 week period or 6 consecutive unauthorised absences over a 3 day period (1 day is classed as 2 sessions – morning and afternoon).

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

Yours faithfully,

Rachael Johnston
Headteacher

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