Wombwell Park Street Primary School

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Chief Executive Officer of the ECM Trust: Mrs G Foster-Wilson
Headteacher: Mrs C Lawson
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Dear Parent / Carers,

Attendance and Punctuality - June 2021

Attendance is always high on our priorities but this year has been very different because of the COVID-19 pandemic and government restrictions imposed because of this. As we all know this has had a huge impact on the time our pupils have been able to come into school for face to face learning but we thank all our parents who have supported our remote learning programme that we provided.
We are gradually getting back to some kind of normality and for our last half term of 2020-21 we hope that we can engage with our pupils and parents in ensuring that standards around attendance and punctuality are as high as we can possibly get them.
As a school we want to ensure that your child receives the optimum education on offer. This means attending and arriving on time every day where possible and working to the best of their ability.

A reminder of our up to date procedures for managing and supporting attendance / punctuality are detailed below:

Circumstance	Action from parent / carer	Action from school
If your child is too ill to attend school:	Please inform school of your child's absence by 8.45am, giving an explanation and specific details for their absence (i.e. illness specific) and their expected day of return. We have a dedicated attendance line on 01226 752029 or you can send us a text message via the School Gateway.	If you have not made contact, school will send you a text message asking you to inform us of the reason. If you do not do this, school will try to ring you for a reason. If contact is not made then the absence will be coded as unauthorised and you will need to speak to school to discuss these absences. In some cases, a home visit may be necessary to ensure the safety of your child and / or family.
If your child is late for school:	Children are expected to arrive at school on time. Our school day should start at 8.40am however due to COVID-19 we have a staggered start and end of day system. Children should be ***in their classroom by 8.50am at the latest*** so they can be registered in class. When children are late, this disrupts the start of their day and the rest of the class – plus it is very embarrassing for a child to walk into a classroom / lesson late. If a child arrives at school after 8.50am, they should come through the main school doors and be signed in by the school office. ***All pupils arriving late should be accompanied by an adult*** so that they can be signed in with the reason for lateness.	If your child arrives at the school office alone, parents will receive a phone call asking you why your child is late and reminding that they need to be signed in by an adult. Where your child is late 3 times or more, you will receive a letter inviting you to attend a meeting with the Attendance Officer and our Education Welfare Officer to discuss how school can support you to ensure your child arrives on time.

If your child has an essential medical appointment:	Parents need to provide school with evidence of any appointments in order that they can be authorised. This can be a letter, appointment card or text message. Where an appointment falls mid-morning or during the day, the child should attend prior and return after appointments where possible to avoid them missing important learning time. Siblings are expected to attend school and their attendance should not be affected by other family member's appointments.	Genuine illnesses and essential medical appointments are usually authorised. **Appointments should be made outside of the school day wherever possible**. Where a child is persistently having time off because of illnesses, the school nurse may be able to help. In some cases a letter will be sent out requesting evidence of illness. If this is not provided in these cases, the absence will be unauthorised and may result in Education Welfare Service interventions or referrals.
If your child has sickness or diarrhoea:	If a child is absent due to sickness / diarrhoea and this is due to a bug, parents are asked to keep their child off for 48 hours after the last bout of this. However, if this is due to food or a build-up of mucus etc and therefore unlikely to be infectious, the child can return to school as soon as they are well.	If school policy has not been followed, we will contact parents for the child to be collected to avoid the spread of any infection.
If your child's attendance falls below 90%:	This could be due to various reasons and it is likely that the school are already working with you to improve your child's attendance.	At this point your child is classed as being a persistent absentee. Regular meetings will take place with school and the EWO to support in improving attendance. Other options of intervention and support could be an Early Help Assessment where professionals can become involved such as school nurse, health professionals and SENDCO.
COVID-19 **Strict Guidelines for those displaying symptoms and those who test positive**	All of the school community must follow strict guidelines to protect everybody. Anyone who feels unwell must contact the school as soon as possible via phone to discuss their symptoms. If anyone has a temperature, new persistent cough or a loss / change in taste or smell they **must not** enter the school grounds. If you are asymptomatic but have a positive LFT result or 2 x void results then a PCR test must be arranged and the person and household must isolate until you receive a negative result. Please inform the school as soon as a result is received.	If a member of staff or child in a bubble were to display symptoms during the school day, they will be immediately removed from the classroom and taken to an isolation room. The person displaying the symptoms needs to have a test as soon as possible and the household should isolate until the result of a PCR test is received as negative. If the person tests positive the school will follow the guidance of Public Health England and contact parents to inform them of any further action that is required and whether children and staff from this group will have to self-isolate at home for the next 10 days. School will keep in contact with you should this event take place.
In the event of an COVID-19 Outbreak		If the school experiences an outbreak, either because we have two or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 among children or staff within 14 days, or we see an increase in child or staff absence due to suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19, we will contact the local Health Protection Team. This team will advise us if additional action is required. The vast majority of our staff are completing twice weekly Lateral Flow Tests.

Leave of absence applications during term time	We do not authorise school absence purely for family holidays. This is also applicable for holidays re-arranged due to COVID-19. If you feel you have an exceptional circumstance it is advised that you speak to school before making plans. Leave of Absence forms are available from the school office or can be emailed to you and should be completed and submitted **at least 14 days** before the requested leave to give sufficient time for processing.	School will process applications and contact you by text when your letter of response is ready. Any unauthorised holidays that are still taken may have to be referred to the Local Authority and a fine may result. For instances where an application is not submitted or parents do not notify the school in advance of a holiday being taken, school will follow procedures and a penalty notice may still be issued. **Please note fines are paid to the Local Authority and not received by school.**

We also feel that good communication is vital as well as rewarding good practices.

So, from 07.06.21, we will be re-introducing some of our rewards including stickers and an email home for all those who achieve 100% attendance and arrive on time for a full week.

Attendance for every class is also celebrated; each week in our Golden Book assembly, the top 2 classes with the best overall attendance will receive a £5 credit which they save and 'bank' to spend in the last week of term on what the class chooses. The winning classes receive a large £5 note to display in their classroom.

We will discuss the importance of coming to school regularly and arriving on time with our pupils. Good attendance and punctuality are a lifelong expectation and these early messages build for a good future.

Once again, I would like to thank you for your amazing continued support of the school and staff since March 2020 and for your anticipated support as we begin our final half term.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Chloe Lawson Headteacher	Mrs Cathy Turner School Business Manager	Mrs Rebecca Clark Attendance Assistant	Mrs Carol Hitchens Parent Support Advisor