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Dear Parent/Carer

## **Attendance Update**

I am writing to inform you of the current situation with regard to attendance. There were some changes to the regulations over the covid pandemic, but the government now expects schools to return to implementing statutory regulations regarding absences.

In order to keep attendance as high as possible it is important that we all know the role that we play in supporting children to attend school. I have included a poster which sets out these responsibilities.

The expectation is for a child to have a minimum of 96% attendance unless there are significant medical reasons as to why this is not achievable. Where students fall below 96% we may need to see medical evidence from a health professional such as hospital consultant, GP or psychiatrist. You are welcome to get in touch with your child's House Learning Leader to discuss a suitable professional to provide evidence.

Children who are absent waiting for a PCR test are coded "not required to be in school" and this does not affect their attendance. Students who are absent with covid related illness are coded as being ill, which does count as an absence and will affect attendance. Children with covid should still remain at home until their self-isolation period has finished.

Parents, or carers, considering taking their child out of school during term time must apply to the school for permission. The school can only grant permission if the request is for exceptional circumstances. Government guidelines are clear that family holidays, weddings and similar gatherings are not considered exceptional circumstances. Permission must be given in advance of any absence. If the child is taken out of school without permission then a fine can be issued. The fine is calculated per child, per parent, per week of absence. Over the last eighteen months we have been sympathetic when interpreting requests for leave of absence as we understand the stress that has been put on families at a time when they have not been able to see their relatives. However, from February half-term we will implement the regulations in line with government expectations. I have included a copy of our latest Attendance Policy. You can find details of leave of absence in Appendix 2 on page 15.

If you have any further questions then you are welcome to email me and I will get back to you as soon as I can.

*Steve Bolsover*

**Steve Bolsover**  
Deputy Headteacher