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Dear Parent/Carer

4<sup>th</sup> September 2023

### Re: Changes to Attendance Policy

With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023 previous national 'guidance' on the management of attendance in schools became statutory (a legal requirement).

As a result, our policy, procedures and systems have been reviewed and changed to reflect the legal requirements. Our new policy will be available on the policies section of the website in the next few days.

This decision has been taken by the DfE due to the fact that attendance rates have not returned to pre-covid levels across the country. Our own pre-covid average attendance was 96% and last academic year was down to 93%. In other schools it is significantly lower. For some individual children and families, attendance fell below 90% which is of concern as research shows that children attending for less than 90% do not make academic progress.

The policy also refers to persistent lateness which again impacts on children's learning when they join a lesson late and miss essential teaching input.

The new statutory requirements really tighten up expectations of schools to record reasons for absence in more detail and to take formal action to address unauthorised absences.

It is now a legal requirement of Head Teachers and Attendance Leads in school to report any unauthorised absences which exceeds 14 sessions to the Local Authority. Please note that 14 sessions equates to 7 school days. Therefore, if you take your child out of school for an unauthorised holiday for more than 7 school days, this will have to be reported to the LA and may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued.

There are numerous changes we have had to make internally due to this new statutory requirement to meet our legal duty.

We would like to invite parents & carers to attend a briefing session on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023 in order to learn more about these changes. We are offering two time slots of either 3.30pm or 5.30pm in order to allow as many parents as possible to attend.

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I really would recommend that you attend one of these sessions if at all possible as this is a significant change which you need to be aware of.

If you are unable to attend there will be a fact sheet issued following the briefing.

Yours sincerely

*Mrs D Cross*

Mrs D Cross  
Head Teacher

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