



EDWARD THE ELDER
Primary School

Attendance Newsletter

Autumn 2020

Dear Families,

Welcome back!

We are really pleased to be able to allow all children to return to school from Wednesday 2nd September.

Government advice is clear that is now safe for all pupils to return because:

- *The prevalence of coronavirus has decreased*
- *The risk to children of becoming severely ill from coronavirus is very low*
- *The Test and Trace system is up and running*
- *We have clear guidelines for keeping children safe in school*

Returning to school is vital for children's education and wellbeing. Attendance at school is once again mandatory and our usual systems for monitoring attendance will resume.

Please be reassured that our plans for ensuring the safety of your children are robust and follow Government guidelines. Our systems are explained in risk assessment and newsletter, which are available on our school website.

We are really looking forward to seeing you all and settling into our 'new normal'.

**Many thanks for your support,
Mrs Highman.**

Coronavirus procedures

Pupils or adults experiencing the following symptoms should not come into school:

- a new, continuous cough

- a high temperature

- a loss of normal sense of taste or smell

Any pupil/adult experiencing these symptoms in school will be sent home immediately. They should isolate for 7 days and arrange to have a test through the NHS Test and Trace website or by calling NHS 119 to see if they have coronavirus. Members of the household should self-isolate for 14 days.

Please inform school of the results of the test as soon as possible.

Anyone testing negative may be suffering from a cold/flu virus and can return to school as soon as they feel well enough and are no longer experiencing symptoms.

In the case of a positive result, school would contact the local health protection team who would advise us of any necessary actions. This may involve anyone having direct, close contact with an infected person self-isolating for 14 days. As children will be kept in class/year group bubbles, this should only include be a small number of pupils.

Leave of Absence during term time

During 2019-20, a number of families faced fines for taking unauthorised Leave of Absence.

*Leave of absence during term time will not be authorised unless there is an **exceptional** circumstance.*

If, for any reason, you do require a Leave of Absence please telephone the school office to make an appointment to meet with Mrs Highman to discuss the request.

Leave will be **unauthorised if it is for a holiday** (even if it is due to financial circumstances) and, you are likely to receive a fine from the Local Authority. Currently the fine stands at £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days, increasing to £120 per parent per child and if further non-payment within 28 days, court action may be taken.

Local Authority regulations state that Leave of Absence applications should be made **at least 4 weeks prior to the Leave taking place**, and, if it is for a holiday, ideally before the holiday is booked.

If your child does need a Leave of Absence, for Safeguarding purposes, it is essential that you meet with Mrs Highman before the Leave takes place.

Absences from School

It is the law to attend school.

Poor attendance has a detrimental impact on pupils learning and over a 5-year period a pupil whose attendance is 90% will have missed half of a school year – this is a lot of lost education!

'Persistent absence' is classed as anything under 90%.

Parents may be prosecuted if their child's attendance falls below 90%.

If your child is not attending school for any reason you must contact school to inform staff of the reason why. If the phone line is busy please leave a voicemail, this is checked regularly and there is no need to call back to check we have received the message. Attendance is checked weekly by our Education Welfare Officer Dawn Roe. Evidence of illness may be requested for pupils with attendance below 96%.

It is essential you contact school so that we know your children are safe.