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Dear Parents and Carers,

Working together to improve school attendance

Earlier in the year updated guidance regarding attendance was issued to schools and local authorities, this came into effect from September 2022. In response to this, we are in the process of reviewing and updating our systems for reporting and tracking attendance. As part of my role, I will be taking on responsibility for attendance and will be reviewing our policy to ensure we are following the updated guidance. I will be sharing the reviewed attendance policy later in the year but wanted to write and share some immediate changes with you.

It is important to note that improving attendance is a key priority for all schools, and our school is no exception. We have a duty to ensure all children attend regularly so that they have the best possible opportunity to achieve their full potential. We understand that there are many factors that may affect a child's attendance and we strive to be understanding of each child's personal circumstances, and to be as supportive as possible in our approach, when it comes to dealing with issues relating to absence.

We are implementing the changes below to ensure our systems are as robust as possible and to ensure support is available for those who need it.

Reporting absence

We're pleased to announce that Biggin Hill is introducing a new, more efficient and secure system for reporting your child's absence due to illness, called Studybugs. The Studybugs app is now our preferred method for you to report absence due to illness and we encourage all parents to download and register on the app.

Get the app or register now (<https://studybugs.com/about/parents>)

If for whatever reason you are unable to report using the app, you can still phone or email the office as you normally would. It is important that this is done as early as possible on the first day of absence and each day thereafter.

Traffic light system

In order to improve how we report attendance to parents, we are introducing a traffic light system for attendance:



- Green - 96% and above - this is considered good attendance
- Amber - between 90% and 95% - this is starting to be a concern
- Red - below 90% - this indicates a concern.

You will receive an automated email at the end of this half term with your child's attendance percentage so far this year, and where this falls on the traffic light system.

Persistent absence

As a school we regularly monitor the attendance of all pupils and have systems in place to support families when there is a concern. A child with attendance below 90% is considered to be persistently absent. Across a full school year, less than 90% attendance equates to over 20 days of absence from school. We know that being persistently absent from school can have a detrimental impact on a child's learning and development, therefore it is important that we do what we can to identify and support children when this is the case.

Concerns regarding attendance

During the first half term, only a couple of days of absence can cause a child's overall attendance to become a concern. If this is the case, and they continue to attend school regularly, we should soon see an improvement in the overall percentage. Further absences would however continue to have an impact, therefore the following actions will be taken:

Below 96%	As part of regular monitoring with the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer, letters may be sent to the parents of children whose attendance falls below 96%, to remind them of the school's attendance aims and to inform them of their child's current percentage.
Below 93%	If no improvement is made, we will look more closely at the reasons for absence and a phone call home will be made by a member of the senior leadership team.
Below 90%	Subsequent letters are sent if no improvement is seen. In addition, at this point parents may be invited to attend a meeting with the Education Welfare Officer. The purpose of this meeting is to ascertain whether there is an underlying difficulty, issue or reason for the absence.

I will be providing more updates regarding attendance throughout the year and via the newsletter, but should you have any queries regarding attendance or our new systems, please do not hesitate to contact myself or your child's class teacher.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Devlin

Andrew Devlin
Assistant Head Teacher





Every School Day Counts



0 days off school	100%	Perfection
Equates to 2 days off school each year	99%	Excellent
Equates to 5 days off school each year	97%	Good
Equates to 10 days off school each year	95%	Slight concern
Equates to 20 days off school each year	90%	Concerned
Equates to 30 days off school each year	85%	Very concerned
5 days absence over the whole year. 97% - 100% Good chance of success and progress.	20 days absence over the whole year. 90% Less chance of success and harder to make progress.	20+ days absence over the whole year. Under 90% Detrimental to success and progress.

Every Minute Counts

LATENESS = LOST LEARNING

(Figures below are calculated over a school year)

5 minutes late each day	=	3 days lost!
10 minutes late each day	=	6.5 days lost!
15 minutes late each day	=	10 days lost!
20 minutes late each day	=	13 days lost!
30 minutes late each day	=	19 days lost!



**Be at the
classroom on
time and ready to
learn!**

