



**Link
Academy
Trust**



Broadhempston Village Primary School

5th April 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

You will have received a letter from Nicky Dunford which stated that:

“Government expectation is that we return to our previous rigorous approach to Attendance, so pupils will no longer be recorded differently if they are absent with Covid and therefore any future absence will contribute to pupil’s individual record of attendance.

Attendance protocols will return, and monitoring of attendance will resume.

There will be no expectation to test pupils when they are poorly to identify whether they have Covid as there will be no free testing kits available.

We expect pupils to remain at home if they are unwell and their illness would stop them being able to access learning effectively. Time at home will be considered an absence.”

In light of this, the Link Academy Trust will be stepping up our response to attendance from the return to school after the Easter break and there will be the expectation for all children to be in school, on time, 100% of the time.

No matter how brilliant a school’s curriculum, children will not achieve their potential in a school with poor standards of attendance and behaviour. Children with no absence at key stage 4 are almost 2 times more likely to achieve 5 or more GCSEs than children who missed 10-15 percent of lessons. Persistent absence impacts attainment and children’s safety, with 90% of young offenders persistently absent.

Authorised and Unauthorised absences

If a child is of compulsory school age and is absent from school, the register must show whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised.

Authorised absences.

When a pupil is absent from school for a genuine reason such as illness or a family bereavement, then the school, after being advised of the reason may authorise their absence. This authorisation is at the discretion of the headteacher and will be carefully considered.

In order for your child's absence to be authorised, you **MUST** inform school of their absence and the reason for it. If you do not inform us, then we will try to contact you as it is our duty to ensure that the children in our care are safe. If we are unable to contact you by telephone then you may get a home visit from a member of staff.

If we have not established the reason for your child's absence by 9.30am then the absence will be marked as **Unauthorised**.

We appreciate that children do get poorly with colds or other mild illnesses and that they might not feel like their normal self, but it is likely that they are well enough to come to school. In order to prepare for secondary school and for adult life, children have to learn resilience and as such, we would ask that before letting your child stay at home you ask:

- Are they well enough to come to school?
- Is their attendance already cause for concern?
- Are they not wanting to come to school because they are worried about something, either at home or at school?

Of course, if your child is genuinely unwell then we wouldn't expect them to come to school and there are some instances when we would ask that you don't send them. This is in line with the guidance we follow in the "Spotty Book, notes on infectious diseases in schools", and includes things like chicken pox or diarrhoea and vomiting.

Unauthorised absences.

An unauthorised absence is when the school has not received a reason for the absence or is not satisfied with the reason given.

Term Time Holiday Requests

As of September 2013, an amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 came in to force and greater clarity was introduced to the issue of schools authorising absence requests. These changes reinforced the Government's view that every minute of every school day is vital and that pupils should only be granted authorised absences by the school in 'exceptional circumstances'.

A family holiday is not considered by the Government to be an 'exceptional circumstance' and therefore will not be authorised by the school.

If you would like to request 'leave' to be considered for authorisation due to exceptional circumstances, please request, complete and return an S2 form to the school.

Should you choose to take your child out of school without authorisation, then Parental Responsibility Measures could be instigated.

Punctuality

Every minute of the school day counts, and so when your child is late it is not only impacting on their attendance, but it is also disruptive to the rest of the class. We therefore expect all parents to ensure that their children are in school, on time, every day.

We hope this letter, along with our school website will give you a clear understanding of the Link Academy Trust's attendance objectives, expectations and of what our response to attendance will be and demonstrate that we really do want the best for the children in our care. If you have any questions, then please do not hesitate to look at the attendance pages on our websites or contact the school office or the Academy Head.

