



Merstham Primary School
London Road South
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24th January 2019

Dear Parents and Carers

I need to write a letter to parents and carers as we continue to have a number of children arriving late for school often on a regular basis; having ad hoc days off and missing learning to go on holiday.

There will always be last minute serious issues that mean that a child may be late for school or absent, but these are very rare occurrences. This year, we have opened the school slightly earlier to try and ease the pressure on the roads and footpaths around the school so that it is easier for parents and carers to get their children to school on time.

However, we continue to have a number of children who regularly arrive in school late, or who frequently miss school. As well as missing out on their learning, arriving late may cause problems with the ordering of hot school meals and may mean that your child does not get the meal of their choice.

The school is going to be working even more closely with the Education Welfare Service and is already monitoring attendance, including lateness very closely.

The Education Welfare Service has issued warnings and fines to parents; and although this is not something that the school wishes to pursue, I feel that it is only fair to advise all parents and carers that the school will not authorise avoidable absences during school time and that the school will not hesitate in taking measures where needed.

The table below shows the potential impact of attendance.

<p>Above 97%: Less than 6 days absence a year Excellent attendance! These young people will almost certainly get the best grades they can, leading to better prospects for the future. Pupils will also get into a habit of attending school which will help in the future.</p>
<p>95%: 10 days absence a year These pupils are likely to achieve good grades and form a habit of attending school regularly. Pupils who take a 2 week holiday every year can only achieve 95% attendance.</p>
<p>90%: 19 days absence a year Young people in this group are missing a month of school per year; it will be difficult for them to achieve their best.</p>
<p>Under 90% The Government classes young people in this group as 'Persistent Absentees', and it will be almost impossible to keep up with work. Parents of young people in this group could also face the possibility of legal action taken by the Local Authority.</p>

There is a clear link between children missing school and not making good progress/achieving good results at school.



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At Merstham Primary School we celebrate good attendance each week in our assembly. The class with the highest attendance win our attendance rabbit which they get to keep in their class for a week and we will soon be including the class attendance in our newsletters

I do hope that you understand that the school is trying to ensure that the children in our care receive the education to which they are entitled.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Gavin Oulton
Headteacher