

11th September 2023

Dear Parent / Guardian

As we move into the next academic year, we will be having a huge push on improving attendance in our school. Attendance this year at Sir Francis Hill is at the lowest it has ever been (over $\frac{1}{4}$ of the school with less than 90% attendance), and we need your help to improve this, for the sake of our children's educations.

Attendance at school is so important! As the table below shows, all those odd days here and there, add up to a lot of missed learning. It is therefore essential that we try and improve attendance so that our children have as many opportunities as possible to learn.

Even regular lateness to school can have a huge impact on your child's learning, particularly as it is often the first part of the day (before register) where intervention activities or recaps of learning are carried out.

ATTENDANCE AND LATENESS - THE FACTS:

Poor attendance can have the following effects:

- poor academic progress, having knock on effects in primary school, secondary school and in employment later life.
- difficulties with social interactions as they miss out on essential opportunities and experiences with their friends
- behavioural difficulties
- anxiety caused by missed learning

Absence/lateness	Effect
Less than 90% attendance over the course of 5 years	equates to half a school year being lost.
Less than 80% attendance over the course of 4 years	equates to a whole school year being lost.
5 minutes late each day	3 full days of learning lost every year
10 minutes late each day	6 full days of learning lost every year.
15 minutes late each day	10 full days of learning lost every year
20 minutes late each day	13 full days of learning lost every year
30 minutes late each day	19 full days of learning lost every year.

Of course, we appreciate that there are occasions where absence/lateness cannot be avoided e.g. medical appointments and illness, but where possible, your child/children should be in school every day, in order to get the most out of their time in school. Medical appointments should ideally be made during the holidays or outside of the school day.

In order to keep attendance as a high priority at school, we will now follow the following procedures:

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- all pupils falling below 90% will receive a text at 8am everyday to remind them of how important their attendance is. This will continue until their attendance increases above 90%.
 - all pupils with attendance below 90% who are absent will receive a daily phone call from our Attendance Officer.
 - if improvements are not seen after 2 weeks, all pupils still below 90% attendance will receive a Concern 1 letter.
 - if attendance still doesn't improve after 2 weeks, you will be asked to attend an attendance meeting with our Attendance Officer our child's class teacher.
 - if attendance falls between 51% and 79% - at risk of severe category, our Attendance Officer will call you on a weekly basis.
 - if attendance falls below 70%, you will be asked to come to an attendance meeting to complete an Early Help Assessment.
 - if attendance falls below 50%, you will be asked to come to a meeting in school to discuss the involvement of the Pupil reintegration Team.

To reward consistent attendance, children who have attended all week will be entered on to their class's attendance wheel, with a chance to win a small prize.

It is also important to note that holidays should not be taken during term time. From September, the new nationwide policy is that all holidays will go down as unauthorised on the register and, any pupils whose attendance falls below 95% will also receive a fine for term-time holidays. These fines are issued by Lincolnshire County Council and, as a school, we have no flexibility or control over this.

We appreciate that all of this can sound very daunting, but at Sir Francis Hill we know how important your child's attendance is. Above all, we are here to support you, and want to work with you to solve any barriers to attendance that you may be facing. If you feel you need any support to improve your child's attendance or have any further questions, please come and speak with our Attendance Officer, who will be happy to look at strategies and see what help we can offer.

Yours sincerely

Mrs C Scally