



## **Wensum Junior School - An Evolution Academy Trust School**

*Headteacher: Ms V McConnell*

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21<sup>st</sup> September 2020

Dear parents and carers,

### Attendance at school and legal intervention

At Wensum Junior and Nelson Infant Schools, our aim is to work with parents to ensure that all our pupils receive the most from their education and reach their full potential.

This letter is to remind all parents/carers regarding the law that requires them to ensure that their child attends school regularly. The Government remains very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must continue to take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment. If your child needs to self-isolate due to Covid-19, these absences will of course be authorised.

At this time of year children often have common colds and runny noses! They can still attend school. If your child needs Calpol in school, you can sign a medical form and we can offer this while they are in our care.

Please find attached a very easy flow chart to ascertain whether your child should be in school or should be isolating. Can I urge all parents to obtain an accurate thermometer to measure your child's temperature. We are not medically trained and cannot diagnose. If you are genuinely concerned about your child having coronavirus symptoms, you will need to book a test and will only be allowed back to school on receipt of a negative test result.

If your child does need to isolate from school, we will offer their education via SeeSaw. Please ensure you have your child's log in details at home and inform us if you have a problem with technology at home.

If we do have a positive COVID test result, the whole year group pod (including staff) will be asked to isolate for 14 days. Work will be set in this time via SeeSaw.

In the DfE policy document entitled, 'School Attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities' it states, 'Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based



on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion'.

If the school does not receive a request for leave, the head teacher will be unable to consider your individual circumstances and the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. There will be no obligation on the head teacher to reconsider authorising the leave if an application has not been made in advance.

The Local Authority operates a system where any pupil will meet the criteria for legal intervention where they have:

- at least 9 sessions (4.5 school days) lost to unauthorised absence by the pupil during the last 6 school weeks

The intervention could be in the form of a fixed penalty notice. Any pupil at Wensum Junior or Nelson Infants who meets the criteria, will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered.

If a fixed penalty notice is issued the arrangement for the payment will be detailed on the penalty notice. The penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of the receipt of the notice. The fixed penalty notice is per parent per child. You should be aware that failure to pay the total amount within the timescale will result in legal action being taken.

Children who are displaying symptoms of Coronavirus should not attend school even if you feel that they are well enough to come in and should be tested. Any such absences will be authorised and parents will not be fined for non-attendance on these grounds.

I hope we can count on your support in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

*V McConnell*

Ms V McConnell  
Headteacher

