

Attendance

Experience has shown that where attendance is strong a child achieves more and is more settled. We find that when a child has been absent, not only is it the days missed, but also the catch up time afterwards. It is not easy to fill in the gaps when the remainder of the children have moved on. Our attendance and late arrivals are monitored by the Local Authority Educational Entitlement and Inclusion Team. Whilst they are impressed by the strong attendance at Grangefield they have asked that we remind parents of the statutory guidance regarding school absence. They have also requested that we follow up where it has been breached.

The right of a head teacher to authorise any absence has been taken away. Consequently no family holiday, short break or day out can be authorised, except in exceptional circumstances. Therefore a family holiday, short break or day out is classed as an unauthorised absence. We also have to mark children as 'Late' if they arrive after the register is completed (9.05) and where a child is later than 9.15am this is coded as an unauthorised absence.

Whilst we can appreciate families wish to take holidays during term time as many holidays are cheaper, it is important that families understand the consequences of making such a decision.

Warning letters are sent to families where the following applies:

- 10 sessions missed in a 10 week period when unauthorised holiday has been taken
- 28 unauthorised sessions in a calendar year
- 20 continuous unauthorised sessions of absence

Please be aware that 10 sessions is equivalent to 5 days. It is worth drawing parents' attention to the fact that if they take two, two week family holidays over two academic years, they could find that they have taken four weeks holiday in a calendar year and a penalty notice could be issued. This could be in the region of £60 per child, per parent. We would not wish this to happen, but need to ensure that we have a consistent approach to the holidays. As important are the days where children are taken out of school on a Friday or a Monday, in order for the family to have a long weekend. Where this is happening on a regular basis, warning letters will also be issued.

We thank you for your continued cooperation and we are proud that amongst Gloucestershire schools we have a high level of attendance. We recognise that some parents may continue to take children out of school for family holidays or individual days, but we want all parents to understand what the consequences will be.