# Dropmore Infant School

## *10. Attendance Letter*

Dear Parents and Carers

**School Attendance**

*Regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential.*

*At Dropmore Infant School we believe that regular school attendance is the key to enabling children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community. We encourage parents to do all they can to ensure that their child attends school promptly and regularly. Good habits formed early will benefit a child's education and are a good preparation for life.*

Dropmore Infant School - Attendance Policy - January 2019

We would like to take this opportunity to inform you of our School Attendance Policy and to provide you with a clear outline about absence procedures at school and the Local Authority.

The threshold for Persistent Absence in primary schools is defined by the Department for Education as 90%. At Dropmore Infant School the threshold for good attendance is 96%. Any attendances falling below 96% will be closely monitored and parents will be asked to provide evidence to support any absence in order for it to be classified as authorised absence.

**Sickness Absence**

If your child is ill, the school should be informed by telephone, email or in person before 9:30am on the first day of absence and be kept updated on a regular basis. In addition to the regular notification, a letter is required on your child's return to school, clearly stating why he/she has been absent. Where a child is absent through illness or medical appointments, this will normally be counted as authorised. If a letter is not received, then the absence will be treated as unauthorised. Where we have concerns over patterns or timings of absence, the Headteacher will discuss this with you in order to gain a better understanding and to offer support.

We understand that there can be bouts of illness in school, particularly during the autumn term. However, we ask you to consider sending your child back to school as soon as possible after illness. The policy states: "If parents are unsure as to whether or not to keep a child home or send them to school, we generally prefer them to come to school if they are well enough (except in case of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, when we apply the '48 Hour Rule'). If the child deteriorates, then we will always contact the parent. Children frequently 'perk up' when they are at school, and this procedure saves children missing time from school unnecessarily. Children should not stay at home simply to finish a course of antibiotics if otherwise well.

**The 48 Hour Rule**

Diarrhoea and/or vomiting commonly affect children and staff. Unfortunately, it is not possible to distinguish between the causes, and infections can be easily spread, especially in children. It is essential that the same rule of exclusion applies in all cases: any child or staff member with diarrhoea and/or vomiting symptoms must not return to school until they have been free of symptoms for 48 hours (the '48 Hour Rule').

Healthy School
YOUTH SPORT TRUST SILVER QUALITY MARK 2017-19
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND
Artsmark Gold Award Awarded by Arts Council England
Ofsted Outstanding 2011|2012

**Leave of Absence**

Applications for leave of absence should be made in advance to the Headteacher using the appropriate form (which may be obtained from the office) before any commitment is made. The Headteacher may in **exceptional circumstances**, authorise absence. Documentary evidence of leave and return dates may be required in order to process the request. It is particularly important that exceptional leave applications are not applied for (or granted) where children already have a poor record of attendance. If a child has already missed a significant amount of curriculum time, it is unlikely that an application for leave would be approved. Parents should never anticipate approval for leave of absence. Work will not be set or sent home by teachers for pupils to complete during absence for holidays during term time. Leave of absence will not be granted for any child during Assessment weeks or for Year 2 pupils during National SATS Test weeks, which always fall during May. If the permission to take leave is not granted and the pupil is absent, the absence will be **unauthorised**. Where there are serious concerns about your child's attendance, the school will refer the matter to the County Attendance Team.

**Be honest**

Whether an absence is authorized (for example: illness) or unauthorized (for example: holiday) does not change your child's attendance percentage. In keeping with our school values and ethos we ask that you are open and honest about your child's reasons for absence.

**Lateness**

Finally, we would like to bring your attention to the importance of punctuality. Please ensure your child arrives at school on time, so they are present for registration at 9am promptly. The start of the school day is an important time for children. Children arriving after 9am miss out on early morning activities to consolidate their learning.

Arrival after 9:00am will be marked as late. If you arrive at school after 9:00am, please enter the school through the main door. We will lock the gate at 9:00am to ensure this procedure is followed. You will be required to fill in the late book, while your child makes their way directly to their classroom, to ensure minimum amount of time is lost.

If your child arrives after 9:30am, this will be treated as an unauthorised absence. Only where a genuine reason for lateness exists will this become an authorised absence.

We hope this letter has explained the policy and procedures. A copy of the Attendance Policy as well as an Attendance Information leaflet is available on our website at:
http://dropmoreinfant.eschools.co.uk/website/attendance

Please would you sign and return the attached slip to acknowledge receiving this letter. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Streete, who will be very happy to help you.

Yours sincerely



Tim Wicks
Chair of Governors
on behalf of the Governing Body of Dropmore Infant School