

Exwick Heights Primary School
Exwick Lane Exwick
Exeter EX4 2FB

Phone: Exeter 01392 209030

Fax: Exeter 01392 208776

Email: admin@exwickheights.devon.sch.uk

Date: July 2017

Dear Parent/Carer,

Attendance/Absence/Term-Time Holidays

For the information of all parents/carers, we are writing to inform you about our approach to school attendance.

As you may be aware, the Government made significant changes in June 2013 as to the way schools could authorise absences/holiday requests during term time. The changes have been in place since September 2013 and all parents were informed. The information is also on the website.

What were the changes?

'The changes to the law made it very clear that head teachers **may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances**. Please note that this does not apply to children who are under 5 and therefore not yet in statutory education.

Holiday requests

- No holidays will be authorised unless they are for exceptional circumstances
- Unauthorised absences totalling 10 sessions (5 days) in any one academic year will be referred to the Local Authority.

Illness:

In the case of illness, please contact the school by 9.15am daily. If a child has a sustained illness (i.e. absent for more than 4 days) we request confirmation that they have been seen by a medical professional i.e. an appointment card/prescription information from a GP surgery or walk-in centre - we do not require a letter from the Doctor.

If a child is absent for a number of days and the parent does not contact the school (and we are unable to make contact with the parent) the absence is automatically unauthorised.

If we have reason to believe that the child has been on holiday or the absence was not for genuine illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised by the school. The absence will remain unauthorised until the school is satisfied with the reasons given. If there remains doubt and/or the school is informed retrospectively that an absence was not genuine, we may refer to the Local Authority.

Please be aware it is the parents LEGAL responsibility to provide evidence as requested, it is not for the school to prove the absence.

Routine Appointments

Routine dental check-ups and eye-tests should be taken after school or during the school holidays. In the rare event that this is not possible, we request that parents/carers bring in confirmation of the appointment which will then be copied and put onto the pupil's file. It is expected that pupils' return to school after an appointment.

For all other appointments (hospital, speech therapy etc) please bring in a copy of the appointment letter which will be copied and put onto the pupil's file.

Attendance

Exwick Heights Primary School is committed to providing a full and effective educational experience for all pupils. We believe that for pupils to benefit from education, daily, punctual attendance is crucial. If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance, we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. The school works closely with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) who visits the school every half-term to monitor attendance.

A new directive regarding 'persistent' absence came into force in September 2015. Any pupil of statutory school age with attendance below 90% is considered to be 'persistently absent' and will automatically be monitored by the EWO. If an improvement is not evident, a formal meeting will be held with the EWO to discuss the issues.

If you have any queries relating to the above, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Eastley, who monitors attendance across the school, or myself.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs C. Neal
Acting Headteacher