Edenfield C E Primary School

21st February 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the mid-point of the school year, I thought it would be helpful to share the following reminders and updates.

Attendance and Procedural Framework

Types of absence

Every half-day absence from school is classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required from parents and carers. As a school, we will always work with parents (and other agencies, as appropriate) to understand the reasons underlying absence.

Authorised absences

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as illness, medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, and emergencies.

Unauthorised absences

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable. If a pupil continues to have unauthorised absences, the school may refer to the Pupil Attendance Support Team or request legal interventions from the School Attendance Legal Team. Examples of unauthorised absences are:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy during the school day
- Absences which are not explained satisfactorily
- Children who arrive at school after the register has closed
- Days off for shopping, birthdays or looking after other children
- Day trips and holidays in term time
- Days that exceed the amount of leave agreed by the head teacher
- Leaving school early unless it is for an authorised reason

It is the head teacher's responsibility to decide if an absence is authorised or unauthorised. Hence, if there is any ambiguity relating to an absence, school may request further evidence from parents before an absence is authorised. This may be in the form of a prescription, appointment card or similar. Parents should not ask their doctor (GP) to provide "sick notes" to excuse absence.

Persistent Absence (PA)

Persistent absence is when a child misses 10% or more of their schooling across the school year for whatever reason, authorised and unauthorised (including illness, exclusion, holiday, etc). Absence at this level will damage any child's educational prospects and we expect parents' fullest support and co-operation to address this.

At Edenfield C E Primary School, we monitor all absence thoroughly, therefore any pupil whose attendance indicates they are likely to reach the PA threshold will be prioritised and parents will be informed of this promptly. Pupils who are persistent absentees are tracked and monitored carefully and the attendance procedures below will be followed.

Attendance concerns

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with us in resolving any attendance problems together; this is nearly always successful. However, if concerns persist, school will use the following procedures and interventions, as required, to support parents in improving their child's attendance and/or punctuality:

- Telephone calls and/or letters to make parents aware of school's concern about their child's attendance.
- Invitation to meetings to discuss concerns with the head teacher.
- Use parenting contracts to identify barriers to regular attendance, ways to overcome these and agree targets for improvement.
- Use incentive and reward schemes for individual pupils, if appropriate.
- Use of the common assessment framework (CAF) and/or referral to other agencies and services.
- Request support from the local authority Pupil Attendance Support Team.
- For unauthorised absences, request legal interventions by the local authority, such as penalty notices, prosecution or other attendance-related court orders.

At any stage, we may seek advice from our School Attendance Consultant.

Childcare Arrangements

Should you make any changes to after school childcare, for example, nominate different family members or friends, to collect at the end of the day, or book your child into after school club for additional sessions, please can you **notify the school office promptly** so that we can update our records and inform relevant staff members. If your child is in Y6, and you would like them to walk home unaccompanied, we require signed written permission from parents and carers.

Please can we ask that you do not pass messages on at the school gate as this is a very busy period and messages may get accidentally missed. Furthermore, as school and EBASC are two different organisations it is necessary to inform both providers of any changes. Thank you.

Voluntary Contributions for Educational Visits

We are very grateful to our parents and carers for their generous support in contributing to the many additional visits we organise for the children to enhance their learning. We are only able to provide such a rich range of visits due to the voluntary contributions made. Over the last year, coach costs have soared (on average a coach costs between £500 and £600 per visit) and, due to restricted fundraising, the PTA do not currently have the funds to contribute to these costs. Furthermore, voluntary contributions from parents have decreased since we introduced ParentPay. As a result, we may have to reduce the number of visits planned for the next academic year. Please note that that if you miss the deadline on ParentPay we are able to adjust this so that you can still make a contribution.

Residential Visit

As the residential visit is part of the statutory curriculum we can charge for this. We operate a system which provides a good notice period, allows parents to pay in instalments and we also encourage

parents to inform us of any financial difficulties so that we can support you accordingly. In addition, if your child is entitled to free school meals, the cost is significantly reduced. The deadline for payment has now passed and outstanding balances remain. Please contact the school if you require support with payment. Failure to contact school or make the payment may result in the debt being passed to the LCC debt recovery team for collection.

Medicines in School

Please be reminded that the school operates a ***no medicines in school*** policy in line with LCC guidance. This includes over the counter medication such as paracetamol and prescribed medicines such as antibiotics. Should your child require antibiotics it may be worth asking your GP to prescribe medicine which requires three doses which can be organised around school hours. Please do not send medicine of any description into school in your child's book bag. In the event your child has specific health needs which require long term medication, please contact Mrs Garner so that a school healthcare plan can be approved and implemented.

Uniform

Please ensure that your child is wearing the correct uniform for school. This includes the correct school shoes. Trainers and fashion boots must not be worn. The only jewellery item permitted is a plain wrist watch (smart watches are strictly forbidden).

Thank you for your ongoing support and if you have any queries about any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

C. L. Garner
Headteacher