13 January 2017

Dear Parents

**Attendance and Holiday Procedures**

At Marston Green Infant Academy we place a high emphasis on the importance of regular and punctual school attendance. We believe that through good attendance at school, children will achieve higher attainment, have better opportunities and establish good habits that will support them throughout their lives.

We do understand that there may be, through unavoidable circumstances, rare occasions when your child is absent from school and we would take this opportunity to remind you of the school absence procedures.

**Illness:**

- If a child is absent from school, parents should contact the school on the 1st day of absence to inform the school of the reason for absence.
- Parents are expected to maintain contact with the school throughout the absence.
- At 9.15am the school registers are checked for any absences where there has been no contact by parents and/or reasons given.
- School staff will attempt to make telephone contact with the parent to ascertain a reason for the child’s absence from school.
- If staff are unable to make contact with parents or ascertain the reasons for a child’s absence this will be followed up in writing and may be referred to Mrs Sierzega - Attendance and Welfare Officer.

It is a school’s decision whether to accept a reason for a child’s absence and whether to authorise that absence. In the majority of cases a parents’ note explaining that their child was ill can be accepted without question or concern. In exceptional circumstances further evidence of a child’s illness may be requested

**Leave of Absence Requests (Exceptional Circumstances):**

- All leave of absence requests will be unauthorised unless the circumstances are exceptional. A parent/carer should complete an absence request form (available from the school office) and submit this to the school at least two weeks prior to the date required.
- If the Headteacher deems that the reasons are not exceptional, the leave of absence will not be authorised. A letter informing the parents of this decision for each child and warning of the legal implications of the absence been taken will be sent to each parent.
- If once notified in writing of the decision to unauthorise the leave of absence, the absence is taken, it will be marked as an unauthorised absence on the pupil’s register.
- If the trigger of 10 unauthorised absences (sessions) is met then the absences will be referred immediately to the Education Enforcement Team for consideration and could result in the issue of a fixed penalty notice.
**Medical and Dental Appointments:**

- Where possible such appointments should be booked outside of school hours.
- When a Pupil has medical or dental appointment this should be confirmed with an appointment card or letter.
- The child is expected to attend school prior to the appointment or return to school after the appointment.

**Parents can support regular school attendance by:**

- Making sure their child leaves for school with plenty of time to arrive on time.
- Supporting and encouraging their child by attending parents evenings and other events.
- Contacting the school to discuss any concerns regarding their child’s attendance.
- Working in partnership with the school to resolve any issues that are impacting on their child’s attendance.

We will be monitoring attendance and writing to all parents whose children’s attendance has fallen below 90% during the past academic year as these children would be classed as persistently absent under the new DfE thresholds and we have a duty to try and improve their attendance.

We thank you for your support and cooperation in helping us to continue to secure and raise school attendance for all children at Marston Green Infant Academy.

If you would like to discuss any of the issues raised in this letter then please contact me through the school office.

Yours sincerely

Ms Beverley Elliott
Headteacher