

21 September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

Please read the following changes to our school attendance policy.

ATTENDANCE ADDENDUM – ATTENDANCE POLICY - COVID-19 SEPTEMBER 2020.

In March this year when the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak was increasing, the Government made it clear no parent would be penalised or sanctioned for their child's non-attendance at school.

Now the circumstances have changed and it is vital for all children to return to school to minimise as far as possible the longer term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing and wider development. School attendance will therefore be mandatory again from the start of the Autumn Term 2020. This means from that point, the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

- **Parent's duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil and they are of compulsory school age.**
- **Schools responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence.**
- **The availability to issue sanctions, including Penalty Notices in line with local authorities codes of conduct.**

In addition, this is not the time to take your child out of school for a family holiday or other term time leave. It is unlikely that any leave will be authorised by the Head Teacher after so much enforced absence from school. The more your child is in school, the more they will catch up.

- No school or local authority wants to take legal action, and every attempt to resolve parents' concerns and improve a child's attendance will be made before any formal action is considered.
- After so much disruption to your child/ren's education over recent months, the most important thing is that the school and parents work together to get children back into school. The school is ready to listen so please contact us if you have any worries and we will try to help you.

The following are temporary changes to normal procedures outlined in our attendance policy on the school website.

ATTENDANCE RELATED TO COVID-19

- **Parents must follow the absence procedure of reporting absence preferably before 9am by either calling the school and leaving a message on the attendance answerphone or emailing attendance@leesbrook.co.uk**
- **Your child must not come into the school if they have coronavirus symptoms and they will be sent home to self-isolate for 10 days if they develop them in school. You will then be able to request a test for your child and will need to inform the school of the result immediately. If you are unsure and need advice about their symptoms then please contact your GP surgery or call 111, alternatively you can contact the school and request to speak to our school nurse.**
- **When notifying the school of an absence you will need to specify, in the cases of illness, whether the illness is Covid-19 related or not. Please do not say 'unwell' or 'just not in'. Please be clear when the symptoms started as this will be the date that self-isolation starts for your child and household. Please read the Government website on coronavirus before informing the school of any symptoms that may prevent them from attending school. For example, if you state, cough and a cold, you need to specify if this a persistent cough or not.**
- **If somebody in your household develops symptoms of coronavirus do not send your child to school. Notify the school immediately and arrange a test. Again, please inform us of the date the symptoms started.**
- **The school will remain in contact with parents/carers with an expected date to return to school after any period of self-isolation.**
- **Please let the school know if you need to speak to someone personally about the absence or require advice or guidance around attending school.**
- **The school will maintain an accurate record of students with Covid-19 related absence and the dates of students expected return to school after self-isolation and any test result. These names will only be shared with Heads of Year, the Head Teacher, relevant senior staff and the NHS Test and Trace if requested.**
- **If your child is under the care of a health professional and they have been advised to continue to shield then please notify the school immediately so we can arrange a plan for their education. A medical letter will also be required.**
- **If your child is well and self-isolating due to a family member having symptoms or a positive result, they will be expected to work remotely and will be referred to their Head of Year so that this can be arranged.**

STUDENTS SIGNING IN AND OUT DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

- If your child is going to be late to school you must contact the school by phone or email to explain the reason. They must report to Reception and will be collected to sign in by a member of staff and then escorted to their classroom. Please be aware that persistent lateness is not full time education and the Education Welfare Service can take further action if necessary.
- If your child has an appointment and needs to sign in and out of school, parents must send an email to attendance@leesbrook.co.uk at least 24 hours before the appointment or inform the school by telephone. On the day of the appointment your child must have a note to show their teacher so that they can leave the lesson. The student will be escorted from the lesson to sign out at student services. When returning from an appointment they will need to report to Reception and will be collected by a member of staff and then escorted to their classroom.

Lees Brook have put in place rigorous measures to reduce any risk within school and will be able to offer support and guidance to those parents and children who may be anxious or reluctant to return to school. It is vital that parents and school work together to secure regular attendance as this will be essential to promote their wellbeing and to help catch up on missed education.

If you require any advice, guidance or support around your child attending school then please contact the schools **Senior Education Welfare Officer Mrs S Davies** or if you require health advice then please contact the **School Nurse, Mrs L Wright**. Alternatively parents can contact their child's Head of Year if they prefer.

Yours sincerely



Zoe House

Headteacher