

Long Stratton High School

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Achievement For All

27th September 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

Attendance, Legal Intervention, Illness and Commitment to Learning

Research commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even one day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. For more information on the research please see

www.gov.uk/government/publications/absence-and-attainment-at-key-stages-2-and-4-2013-to-2014.

At Long Stratton High School our aim is to work with parents to ensure that all our pupils receive the most from their education and reach their full potential and this includes attendance because it is so vitally important to a pupil's success. Within our "Commitment to Learning" grid we have defined "Outstanding" attendance as 100% and "Good" attendance as 97% or over. Anything less than 97% "Requires Improvement" as we believe, for a pupil to achieve their full potential, they need to be in school every day. Any pupil with attendance of 90% or less is a "Persistent Absentee". This is the Government's definition and equates on average to half a day off school per week. This level of absence always affects a pupil's learning.

All pupils should aim for 100% attendance. We value attendance so highly that any pupil with 100% attendance in a week will receive a credit. Medical and dental appointments should therefore be made outside school hours wherever possible. If an appointment must be during a school day, please submit a "Notification of Absence" form before the day and the pupil should attend school up to the time that it is necessary to be collected and return to school afterwards if practical. If you feel your child is too unwell to attend school (this would include, for example, a vomiting bug), you must ring or e-mail the school to let us know by 8.30 am (attendance@lshs.org.uk). If you do not notify us before registration, your child's absence may not be authorised.

If a child feels unwell while at school, they should tell a member of staff. The staff in the main office will assess the pupil and decide upon the best course of action. If a child needs to go home or parents/carers need to be contacted, the office staff will make that judgement and call home. **Pupils should not call home** to say they feel ill and ask to be collected. If your child does contact you during the day saying they feel unwell, direct them to the main office then call the office to alert them to your worries. Then please allow our staff to assess the situation and deal with any issues. Do not assume your child will need to be collected and come to school to collect your child unless we ask you to do so.

If your child is off school and you have medical evidence of diagnosis, treatment or any letters describing the effect on their ability to attend school, please provide a copy to school.

This letter is also to remind all parents and carers that the law requires you to ensure that your child attends school regularly; it is your legal responsibility. The Government remains very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must continue to take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment.

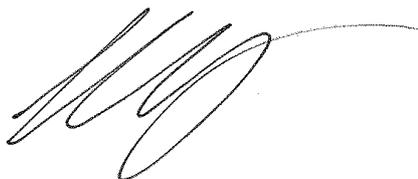
The Local Authority operates a system where any pupil will meet the criteria for legal intervention through the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice where they have:

1. 10 consecutive sessions (equivalent to 5 days) of unauthorised absence where some or all of the absence may be attributed to an unauthorised holiday in term-time; or
2. 15% unauthorised absence over a period of 6 school weeks for reasons other than unauthorised term time holiday. This equates to 9 sessions (4.5 days).

Any pupil at Long Stratton High School, who meets either of the criteria, will be referred to the Local Authority for legal action to be considered. If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, it is a fine of £60 per parent per child which must be paid in one payment within 21 days. If a Notice is unpaid within 21 days, the fine will double to £120 per parent per child, if paid within 28 days. If a fixed penalty notice fine is not paid in full within 28 days, the Local Authority is required to start legal proceedings against the parent(s) in the local Magistrates' Court for the offence of failing to ensure their child has attended school regularly.

If you require any further support or advice, please contact me at the school and we will be happy to support you. I hope we can count on your support in maximising your child's attendance, aiming for 100% every week, which will show outstanding commitment to learning and ensure the best chance of achieving success.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C Gallant', written in a cursive style.

Mrs C Gallant
Assistant Head teacher