



WOODLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL & OAK TREE FOUNDATION UNIT

Winding Way, Salisbury
Wiltshire SP2 9DY

T 01722 335849
F 01722 414117

E admin@woodlands.wilts.sch.uk
W www.woodlands.wilts.sch.uk

Headteacher: Matthew Kitley

13 May 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Term Dates

We break for the Half term holiday at 3pm on Friday, 28th May and then we return to school on Tuesday, 8th June 2021. Please note Monday, 7th June is a Teacher Training day for staff and the school will not be open for pupils.

Attendance Update

I have recently received several absence of leave requests which have asked for leave to take a term time holiday. Please can I remind all parents and carers that this is not deemed as an exceptional circumstance and will not be authorised. If a pupil accumulates 10 or more sessions of leave in a 6 month period of the current academic year, then the school must notify the local authority and a penalty notice will be issued. As you all know all pupils have missed a significant amount of teaching time over the last two academic years. As a school we are doing everything we can to help the children catch up but our best efforts will be significantly hampered if children are taken out of school. There has never been a more important time to ensure your child (ren) has good attendance.

I sent the below on our last Newsletter but attending school is very important so I am sending the below again so that it is fresh in everyone's mind.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential.

We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils/ students and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Parents and pupils play a part in making our school so successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all.

It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital they are at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

Good attendance is important because:

- *Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%*
- *Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically*
- *Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with*
- *Regular attenders find learning more satisfying*
- *Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, and higher education, employment or training*

Attendance facts

Above 97%	Less than 6 days absence a year	Excellent attendance! Pupils with this attendance should achieve the best they can.
95%	Less than 10 days absence a year	Pupils with this attendance are more likely to achieve their targets at the end of the year.
90%	20 days absence over the year	Pupils with this attendance are missing approximately a month (20 days) of school per year and may fall behind in Maths, English and other subjects; it will be difficult for them to achieve their best.
85%	30 days absence over the year.	These pupils are missing approximately 6 weeks of school a year. It will be very difficult for them to keep up and achieve their best
80%	Pupils with this attendance are missing a day for every week of school.	It will be almost impossible to keep up with their work and achieve their best.

Overall Punctuality

Being late can mean.....

5 minutes late every day	3 days of school lost learning time a year
10 minutes late every day	6.5 days of school lost learning time a year
15 minutes late every day	10 days of school lost learning time a year
20 minutes late every day	13 days of school lost learning time a year
30 minutes late every day	19 days of school lost learning time a year

Illness

We obviously recognise that there are times when children fall ill and of course we want them to remain at home when this is the case so they do not infect other children.

Just to remind you, your child must stay off school for 48 hours if they have suffered from sickness and/or diarrhoea. However, if your child has a minor complaint such as a runny nose or mild sore throat, then they could attend school.

We know that illness is unavoidable and to be expected. **However, it is very important that you ring us every day that your child is absent from school, letting us know the reason why.**

You would not need to ring every day if we know your child is going to be off for a specific amount of time. For example, after an operation, with chicken pox etc.

If you do not contact us, we will need to ring you, as part of our safeguarding procedures, to find out why your child is not at school.

Holidays and leave of absence in term time (taken from our attendance policy)

Amendments to school attendance regulations were updated and enforced from September 2013: **(Pupil registration) (England) regulations state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.** It is important to note that Headteachers can determine the length of the authorised absence as well as whether absence is authorised at all.

The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, or unavoidable which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. **There are no rules on this** as circumstances vary from school to school and family to family. There is however, no legal entitlement for time off in school time to go on holiday **and in the majority of cases holiday will not be authorised.**

Parents/Carers wishing to apply for leave of absence need to fill in an application form (available from the School Office) in advance and before making any travel arrangements.

If term time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will **be unauthorised** and if the number of sessions absent hits the thresholds set down in Wiltshire's Code of Conduct parent/carers will be issued with a fixed-penalty fine, or other legal action in accordance the code.

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children out during school time.

Rewarding good attendance

From Term 5 onwards, children who have 100% attendance each term will receive a certificate (at the end of each term) and those who have 100% attendance over the academic year receive a special gold certificate at the end of the year. It is important to know that absence due to having to self-isolate due to Covid-19 will not reduce a child's overall attendance figure.

Face Masks

Thank you to everyone for complying with the rule of wearing face masks on school grounds. The advice we have received is to continue with this for the foreseeable future as the playground and access ways are busy at drop off and collection. We thank you for your continued patience in this.

Dates for your diary:

31/05 – 04/05/2021 – Half Term Holiday

07/06/21 – Teacher Training Day – school closed to pupils

29/06 and **30/06/21** – Parents Evening

08/07/2021 – Induction morning for incoming reception parents for September 2021

09/07/2021 – Reports go home

Matthew Kitley



Headteacher