Empower Trust Guidance for Parents on Good Attendance Practices

Every professional adult and parent that interacts with a child plays an integral part in supporting children back to school. As part of the Empower Trust Family, we all need to work together to promote good attendance. We feel that the following information is useful for you as parents in supporting good attendance.

Is my child too ill for school?

It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school or nursery when they're unwell. There are government guidelines for schools and nurseries about managing specific infectious diseases. These say when children should be kept off school and when they shouldn't.

If you do keep your child at home, it's important to phone the school on the first day. Let them know that your child won't be in and give them the reason.

If your child is well enough to go to school but has an infection that could be passed on, such as a cold sore or head lice, let their teacher know.

To find out whether your child is able to go to school, follow this advice for other illnesses.

Working together to improve school attendance

Being in school and having the best attendance possible underpins all the many benefits of school for your child, such as their learning, wellbeing and wider development.

For some children, attending school every day will be harder than for others. This is why schools, and local councils in some cases, are committed to working together with families to solve problems and support your child's school attendance. A guide has been produced which covers two areas:

- parents' responsibilities for school attendance and what you need to do when your child needs to be absent.
- How schools and local authorities will work with you to support your child's attendance

Letter to school leaders

The Chief Medical Officer and other health leaders have just written to schools about attendance, and they have asked that their letter can be shared with parents.

Leave of Absence in Term Time

You have to get permission from the head teacher if you want to take your child out of school during term time. You can only do this if:

- you make an application to the head teacher in advance (as a parent the child normally lives with)
- there are exceptional circumstances (holidays do not class as exceptional circumstances)

It's up to the head teacher how many days your child can be away from school if leave is granted. The head teacher can agree to some of the absence, but does not have to authorise all of it.

You can be fined for taking your child on holiday during term time without the school's permission.

Thank you for continuing to work with us to give the best outcomes for children in our schools.