



St Mary's C.E. Primary School

Stocks Lane, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S75 2DF

Tel: 01226 206422

Executive Head Teacher: Mr. L Spencer

Deputy Head: Ms R Steele

Email: www.barnsley-stmarys.org.uk

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21 February 2023

Dear Parents / Carers

Good attendance at school is vital for your child's education and means they can make the most of all aspects of school life. Excellent attendance at school allows a child to have the best possible start in life. There are lots of reasons why a child should attend school:

- To learn
- To build confidence and self-esteem
- To understand responsibility
- To develop new skills
- To grow as individuals
- To make new friends, have fun and develop life skills

Primary school children rely on their parents to make sure that they attend school. As a parent, you are legally responsible for making sure that your child gets a full-time education. Once your child starts school, you're responsible for making sure that they attend regularly and are not taken out of school unnecessarily.

Make sure your child has good attendance:

- From starting Reception Class, teach your child the importance of good attendance and getting to school on time every day
- Show an interest and ask about what they're doing at school
- Encourage them to take part in school activities
- Encourage them to tell you about any problems they may have at school - let their teacher or headteacher know about anything serious
- Don't let them take time off school for minor ailments - particularly those which would not stop you from going to work
- Where possible, make appointments after school, at weekends, or during school holidays
- Try to take family holidays outside of term time

Since lockdown, we have struggled to raise our attendance as a school back towards National percentages.

Our current attendance for the year is 93.4%, whereas before lockdown the school would normally be at around 96%. Our attendance target is 97%.

We understand that some parents may feel anxious when their child feels ill. However, some childhood illnesses, such as coughs and colds, are a normal part of growing up and children are better coming into school if they are able to with these.

Your child's wellbeing is the most important thing to us and we will always contact you if we have any concerns or your child becomes unwell at school. As a school, we may ask for proof of medical appointments if your child is absent for a period of time (for example for more than 3 days). You can find further information regarding infections and illnesses and whether your child can be in school by following the below link:

[Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)



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All holidays during term time are unauthorised and therefore, may result in a fixed penalty notice. As a school we have always tried to avoid issuing fines, however unfortunately due to an increasing number of holidays taken in term time and an increase in the number of persistent absences, this is something we will be doing from September 2023. This is in line with both Government and Local Authority guidance.

Persistent absenteeism is classed as any child whose attendance falls below 90%. **This is the same as 19 school days per year.**

Persistent absenteeism from school, in particular where a child has an attendance below 80%, may also result in the involvement of the Education Welfare Office and/or a fixed penalty notice. As a school, we will always strive to work with and support families to improve their child's attendance, including through attendance meetings before these actions are taken.

If you have any concerns regarding your child's attendance, please contact school and speak to either myself, Ms Steele or Mrs Goodyear.

Kind regards

Mr Spencer