



Our Ref: CTALET/Attendance23

14th September 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

As we move into a new term, I would like to raise awareness of the importance of good attendance. The Children's Commissioner has set out an overarching goal that every child should be in school every day and ready to learn. Every child has the right to a fantastic education and missing school means missing out on key learning and it will affect their overall attainment.

We are committing ourselves as a school to work with you and your child to ensure that they can be in school every day, supported and ready to learn. This is in keeping with our school vision of "Higher Expectations, Raising Aspirations, Transforming Lives."

Where students are frequently late to, or absent from school, whole classes can be affected. We want to assure you that we are making every effort to ensure that your child's learning is not unduly disrupted by the frequent absence or lateness of other students.

To help parents decide whether they should allow their child a day off school when poorly, the NHS has produced guidance on common illnesses. This guidance is available via the NHS – 'Is my child too ill for school?' and underpins our decision on whether the reason provided for absence is to be authorised.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

The NHS message is quite clear –

It is okay to allow a child or young person to go to school with some common or minor illnesses.

Common colds, minor coughs, sore throats or headaches alone do not mean they are too unwell to attend school.

Only absences that are UNAVOIDABLE will be authorised at Clacton County High School.

As such, if you have to contact the school to report an absence, you will hear a slightly different absence message, that helps to reinforce these expectations:

"Student absence from CCHS will only be authorised when UNAVOIDABLE. Please clearly state your child's full name, form group and the unavoidable reason for absence. In accordance with current NHS guidelines, please be advised that it is not necessary for your child to miss school due to minor illness such as coughs, colds, sore throats and headaches. Reporting absences as "ill", "unwell", "sickness" or "poorly" does not provide the school with enough information to make our decision whether or not to deem the absence as unavoidable in nature. Please ensure you give further detail to avoid unauthorised absences"

Similarly, if a student reports to the medical room during social times with any of the symptoms above, we will look to administer first aid in school and then return the student to lessons. Obviously, there are times when a student is too ill to stay in school, and in these instances, we will ask that a parent or named contact collects the student from school. If your child calls you directly then please direct them to First Aid where the

school can assess the situation. If a parent asks that a student be sent home linked to the above symptoms or illnesses, then the absence may not be authorised.

Where we have attendance concerns for students, ***Aquinas School Attendance Provisions*** will also be working with students and parents to support attendance. Please work with us in promoting the importance of attendance, providing medical information when requested, and contacting the school if you are in any way concerned about your child's attendance.

Can I ask that you support your child by monitoring their attendance at school and be aware of the impact that missing school undoubtedly has for our students.

Many thanks for your ongoing support.

Regards

Mr Chris Taylor

Mr Chris Taylor

Head of School