

# Newsletter

*Nurturing creative thinkers*



St. Mary's  
Church of England Primary School  
Kirkby Lonsdale

#011  
25/11/2022

Dear Parents and other members of the school community,

## PTA

I would like to begin this newsletter recognising the excellent work our busy PTA are doing for our children. With so many parents coming together to create various opportunities for our children they are having a huge impact. Not only providing wonderful social opportunities such as the disco and Christmas Fair, but then making every opportunity to share the funds generated so that the children benefit.

The **PTA** purchase many things for each class every year. They very kindly fund class budgets but also recently for example, provide funds so the children can buy new books each term. What a fantastic investment in all of our children.

Thank you to all of our families who give so much both in time, gifts and also financially to support the PTA events. I hope that you are able to join us at the Christmas Fair this Friday and that you have managed to book your place to see Santa via the link on our social media this week. Father Christmas is getting high tech!

## Coming Up

This week is the beginning of Advent, a time of preparing for Christmas. I hope that you have received our dates for **December Dates Sheet** which will have come via the children, in school bags this week. We will make every effort to stick to these dates to ensure the children have a wonderful experience at the end of term. Please note events such as the music concert for those children playing instruments and the reception nativity at church for the families of children in Reception Class. We have added school parties and also our annual (muddy) Christmas Run. I thought it was reindeer run in aid of St John's Hospice but when the hats arrived this year, it turned out we are doing an Elf Run. This charity is close to many of our parents, staff and children's hearts and it proves to be a very muddy but fun filled morning.

As part of this newsletter are details of **scarlet fever** and **attendance** information which we focus on at the end of each term. I hope you find this useful and informative.

This week sees a very exciting **Y6 trip to Liverpool** which the children really look forward to attending. They experience so much during three days and it is very exciting to be in Liverpool at this time of year. I hope the children are beginning to pack their own bag (it is always good to be independent with things like this) and get their things ready.

Wishing you all a very peaceful and fun advent as we prepare for Christmas,

Mr Jones

Honesty



Trust



Responsibility



Perseverance



Respect



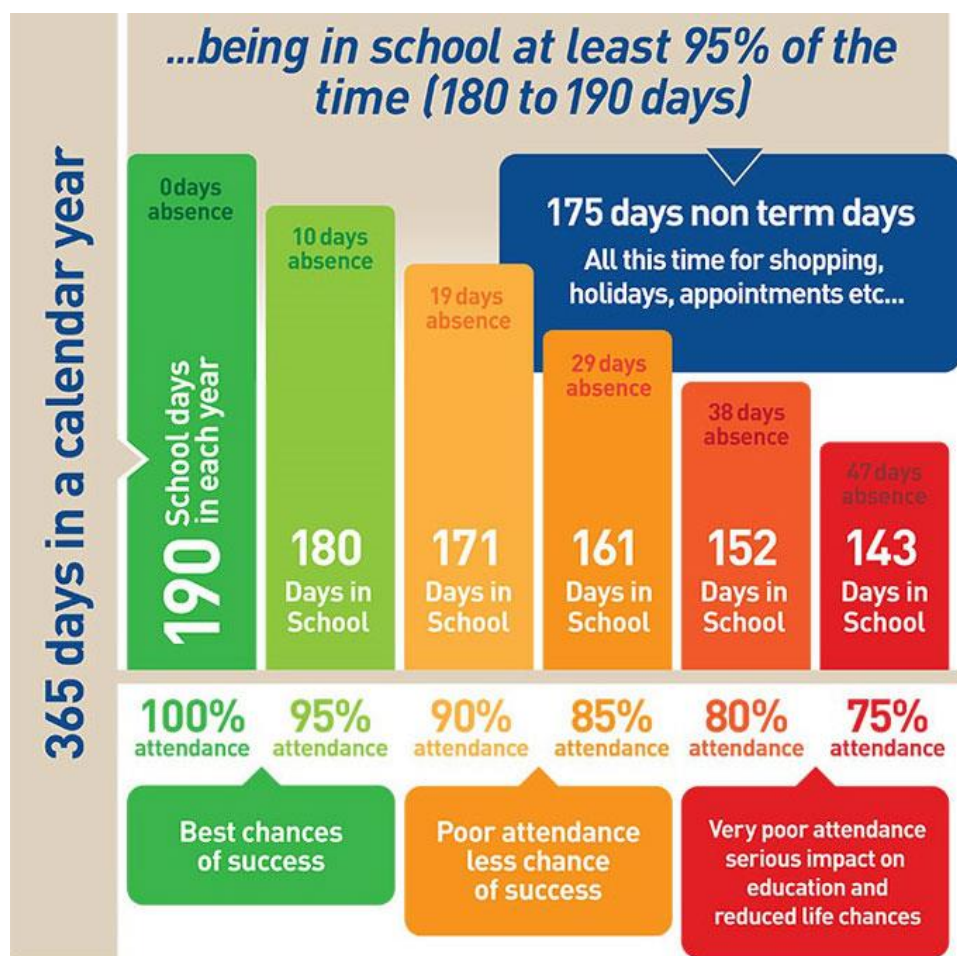
## Attendance

As educators, we are quite rightly, obliged to monitor attendance to ensure all of our children benefit from a good education. You will be aware that at this time of the year, we share attendance information with you. This comes via a text initially and then if necessary a follow up telephone call or letter.

Attending is essential as you can see from the infographic below. Lack of attendance has a huge impact of a child's academic, social and long-term experience in education. If a child is ill, it cannot be helped, however it is important to have a conversation about how the impact of this can be mitigated so the children don't miss out on essential learning. There is also another consideration should a child be ill and a family chose to take their child out for additional holidays in term time. This will impact on your child's education significantly.

I am attaching below, a letter from the Assistant Director of Education sent to all schools this week, to note the implications of taking a term time holiday.

I hope you will appreciate the important need to discuss attendance, should your child's attendance be lower than the expected level of attendance.



Honesty



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Dear Parent/Carer

November 2022

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE IN TERM TIME

Absence from school due to family holidays taken in term time can be disruptive to children's education. It can also be disruptive to other pupils in the class. In addition, I am concerned that there could be some misunderstanding of the law in relation to absence from school because of holidays taken during term time.

Any absence from school should be avoided unless for medical reasons, as it can have a serious effect on your child's educational progress, and can create difficulties for them on their return to school, particularly if they are joining a new school or class. It is important to note that only the Headteacher can authorise absence from school. Parents/carers cannot authorise the absence themselves.

Changes to legislation have removed the discretionary 10 day period of absence which covered family holidays. Schools can only grant requests for a leave of absence in term time in exceptional circumstances. If you believe that your circumstances are exceptional you can make a request to the school. In considering your request, the school will take into account the child's age, the time of year of the absence and the nature of the visit. The Headteacher will also consider the child's stage of education and progress and the child's overall attendance record. It is highly unlikely that leave will be authorised if examinations or other important tests will be missed. Headteachers will not authorise absence unless they believe your circumstances are exceptional. In all cases it is best to have a discussion with the Headteacher in order to look at the issues as they affect your child.

All unauthorised absences, including holidays that have not been sanctioned by the Headteacher, are accumulated and parents who fail to ensure regular attendance of their children at school can be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice. The amount is £60 if paid within 21 days and £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days. It is therefore essential that parents take this into account if they are thinking of a family holiday in term-time.

The Department for Education define persistent absenteeism as below 90% attendance and schools may wish to use this figure to determine whether or not to pursue legal action such as the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Many people are working very hard to help your child to succeed. I trust you will support us in this matter, in partnership with your child's school.

Yours sincerely



Daniel Barton  
Assistant Director – Education & Skills

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[cumbria.gov.uk](http://cumbria.gov.uk)



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## Scarlet Fever

I sent a letter out with the children on Friday, highlighting concerns around an increase in scarlet fever in Cumbria. We are mindful of some cases in school but also the vulnerability of some parents and children in our school community. As a result, we will be introducing increased hygiene measures in classes over the next three weeks. This is to make every effort to help reduce the risk of scarlet fever to reduce the risk to vulnerable family members and children. We are not seeing a huge increase in cases but we want to do our best to reassure families that we are reducing the potential for the spread. This will mean we are adding additional hand washing measures each day and cleaning surfaces in class more regularly. This is similar to the measures put in place during the return to school following covid. Hopefully, this will have a positive impact.

Just to clarify also, parents should seek a G.P. appointment if we or you think a child has scarlet fever. Children will need antibiotic treatment if they have scarlet fever before they are allowed to return to school.

Thank you for your understanding and support as we navigate this issue over the winter months.

## Christmas Competitions

For anyone new to school, each year I create a faces quiz as advent begins, for the children to complete. This is coming out next week on paper and can be returned in a collection box outside of my office. Each year Wheelbase generously donate a voucher (£30) which is used as a prize. Please try to encourage the children to find out who these people are themselves and hand it in before 11<sup>th</sup> December. Any child in infants can also enter decoration activity and hand this in too. There is also a great prize for the winner. This can be handed in too outside the school office. Please check bags for these.

Juniors

Name the famous people wearing World Cup Party outfits.  
Hand in your form to Mr Jones by 11th December

Name  
Class

WHEELBASE

Infants

Decorate this Christmas Tree. You can use collage. And have a crazy theme if you want. Hand in your form to Mr Jones by 11th December

Name  
Class

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# Doodle Maths

Please note that children can access a special **doodle maths advent calendar** during December which will be really exciting. This will have extra challenges and additional rewards.

We will be getting in touch with parents soon if their children don't seem to be accessing Doodlemaths, so that we can assist with any technical problems. Please call if you are unable to get onto Doodlemaths so that we can assist you.



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