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20th April 2018

Dear Parents/Carers

Attendance and Punctuality

Our Attendance Policy has recently been updated to include information regarding requests for longer periods of absence; for example requests for extended leave of absence or leave of absence to temporarily reside abroad for reasons other than holiday eg. professional or academic sabbatical. The appendix to our policy provides guidance to Parents/Carers, who may be considering taking children out of school for extended periods. The process that the school will undertake in responding to such requests is also outlined.

Regular and punctual attendance is essential for children to learn successfully and to develop a good work ethic and your support in promoting and sustaining good habits is paramount. I have written to parents in the past to highlight that, as a school, we do need to improve our overall attendance. In line with current regulations, Blean School does not authorise holiday in term time. For any requests for absence, parents should submit requests in writing. Attached to this letter, and on our website www.bleanprimary.org on the Home Page - Current Letters, is a new Leave Request form to be completed by parents **at least four weeks prior to the event**. Agreement to any request for exceptional leave is at the discretion of the Headteacher, acting on behalf of the Governing Body. The Headteacher's decision is final. In common with the EduCant collaboration of Canterbury schools, Blean School will consider each request individually. Reasons that may be considered for authorised leave may be bereavement, wedding/civil partnership ceremonies, non-routine medical appointments, religious observance, auditions or external examinations.

Parents/Carers should be aware that the school will consider issuing Penalty Notices for parents who elect to take unauthorised leave where children's attendance is below 97% and for parents who have taken unauthorised leave in previous academic years. Penalty Notices will also be considered in cases of persistent lateness.

As a reminder parents should note that, at Blean Primary School, the register is taken at 8:55 am and 12.55pm for Infants and 1.15 pm for Juniors. Pupils arriving after these times must enter school by the main entrance and report to reception where their name and reason for lateness will be recorded using our electronic Inventory system. The pupil will be marked as late before registration has closed (Code 'L'). If pupils arrive after the register has closed they will be marked as 'Code U' and this will count as an unauthorised absence.

Please notify the school as soon as possible if your child is unwell by telephoning the school office and leaving a message on Option 1 – Reporting your child Absent or emailing absence@blean.kent.sch.uk. Our Administrative team check registers and follows up absence if children are not in school so that we can be sure that they are at home safe with you.

If you would like to discuss any concerns or difficulties regarding attendance or lateness please contact Mrs Lawrence, Headteacher by emailing absence@blean.kent.sch.uk.

Please note that we have a Development Day on Friday 13th July, this may well be a good opportunity for families who like to take a long weekend to visit family or to organise a longer weekend break during the summer.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Lynn Lawrence

Mrs L Lawrence
Headteacher