



# STEPHENSON WAY ACADEMY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

-Headteacher: Mrs T Page

-Stephenson Way, Newton Aycliffe, County Durham, DL5 7DD

-Tel: 01325 300324 -Email: office@swans.education www.stephensonway.co.uk

## Attendance Information Newsletter

September 2021

Dear Parents

I am writing to remind parents about our various procedures for managing attendance at school, including information about COVID-19 procedures.

### What to do if your child cannot attend school

- If your child is unable to attend school for any reason, **parents must contact the school office** (not the Class Dojo) on the first day of absence. This needs to happen by 9:00am, although parents can ring the school office earlier if they wish. Office telephone number: 01325 300324. Wherever possible, parents can use 'option 1' and leave an answerphone message.
- If the child needs to be absent for more than 1 day, **parents need to keep the school informed** on each day of absence.
- For sickness and/or diarrhoea, children need to stay away from school for **48 hours after the last time they were sick or had diarrhoea**. We follow the guidance issued by NHS England.

### What happens if a child is absent from school but we've not heard from parents?

- We will text out to parents. If there is still no reply we text again.
- We then telephone parents and if there is still no reply, we may do a home visit. This is because we are required to know that children are safe when not at school.
- If after sending texts, making phone calls and conducting a home visit, we are still not able to contact parents, we would then contact other agencies, such as social services or the Children Missing in Education team. **We are legally bound to follow up all absences and to ensure that children in our care are safe when not at school.**

### Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

Authorised Absences	This is when the school has been given an acceptable reason for the absence.
Unauthorised Absences	This is when the school has been given no reason for the absence, or that the reason given is not acceptable. Unauthorised absences can result in the county's Attendance Improvement Team becoming involved.



## Punctuality

**Our school starts at 8:50am but most children arrive at 8:40am onwards**, to come in, have a bagel and start the day with some quiet reading, where adults are available to listen to children read.

It's always better to come to school later rather than not at all – but of course it is much better for the children if they are able to start the day on time, with their friends and not miss any of their lessons. Children (and parents!) have done a brilliant job so far this term, because almost all the children are coming to school on time!

## Attendance and COVID-19

Here is a table, showing what actions need to happen in different circumstances, related to COVID-19.

Situation	Action
Child has no symptoms, but is waiting for a test result	Child can come to school
Child has symptoms and is waiting for a test result	Child should stay at home and wait for the test results
Child has symptoms but has tested negative	Child can come to school if well enough
Child has tested positive (Lateral Flow)	Child should stay at home and get a PCR test
Child has tested positive (PCR)	Child should isolate for 10 days from the test result/start of symptoms
Child has tested positive (Lateral Flow) but negative (PCR)	Child can come to school
Other people in the child's household have tested positive but the child has no symptoms	Child can come to school while awaiting a test
Other people in the child's household have tested positive but the child has tested negative	Child can come to school

Please note: if your child has symptoms of COVID-19 (high temperature AND/OR a new continuous cough AND/OR a loss of taste or smell) then **they must take a PCR Test. Parents should call 119 to order a test.**

## Leave of Absences/Holidays

Requests for leave of absence during term time (eg: for holidays re-scheduled due to Covid cancellations) are unable to be authorised. Please see the DfE information below:

### **Can a parent take their child on holiday during term time?**

Head teachers should only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. If a head teacher grants a leave request, it will be for the head teacher to determine the length of time that the child can be away from school. Leave is unlikely, however, to be granted for the purposes of a family holiday as a norm.

## More Information

More information can be found on our website at:

<https://www.stephensonway.co.uk/key-information/attendance>

If you have any questions about the information in this letter, or about attendance in general, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

Many thanks, Mr Jones.