

Meersbrook Bank



Community Primary
School

Meersbrook Bank Primary School

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Deputy: Mrs C. Shaw

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Date: 21st January 2019

Dear Parents and Carers

Please see attendance information below from Newfield School agreed by the schools listed in our Family of Schools. The attendance figure quoted may vary in schools dependent on their context.

The Headteachers of the schools in your local area are increasingly concerned about falling attendance rates. In order to ensure our schools continue to raise standards in education and provide opportunities for our young people, pupils must attend school regularly. We know that young people with poor attendance are at risk from falling behind their peers and will achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

As outlined in the DfE guidance September 2018, the government expects:

- Schools and local authorities to:
 - o Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;
 - o Ensure every pupil has access to full time education to which they are entitled; and,
 - o Act early to address patterns of absence.
- Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age attend regularly.
- All pupils to be punctual to their lessons.

In our school, we expect all pupils to have an attendance above **97%** over the full school year. Twenty days will have been missed if a pupil's attendance is 90% and at 85%, they have missed 6 full weeks of school. We believe that for children to gain the greatest benefit from their education and consequently to have the best start in life, it is vital that they attend school on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. There is a clear link between attendance and academic attainment. Statistics suggest that a student whose attendance is below 90% will have significant impact on student progress. Students often find it difficult to catch up on learning that they have missed through absence. If absence is frequent, the student will experience a slowing of their progress and feel they are falling behind their peers. This can affect how a student feels about school and can make their attendance even worse. A downward spiral of attendance can occur rapidly.

Regular patterns of attendance are vital for young people to maintain friendships and peer networks. Students with regular absence can quickly feel isolated from their peers and this again affects how they might feel about coming to school. Good attendance is important if students are to participate in and enjoy school community events like sporting fixtures, drama and music productions and charity fundraising events.

As Headteachers in this area of Sheffield, we are concerned about the number of term-time holidays that are being taken by families in our schools. Taking a holiday during school time will affect a child's schooling as much as any other absence and all our schools expect parents/carers not to take children on holiday during term time. We believe that any financial saving made is offset by the cost to the child's education.

Importantly, children aged between 5 and 16 years are not legally entitled to holidays in term time. For this reason, the Headteachers of the schools listed below will not *routinely* authorise any holiday during term time, and will liaise with the Local Authority to issue a fixed penalty notice for any parent/carer who takes their children for holidays of 5 consecutive school days or over in term time.

Newfield School
Anns Grove Primary
Bankwood Primary
Carfield Primary
Meersbrook Bank Primary
Mundella Primary
Valley Park Primary

Please refer to the Sheffield City Council website, guidance from the Department for Education and your child's School Attendance Policy for further information and guidance.

Note that you can only allow your child to miss school if either:

- They are unwell.
- You have permission from the school.

We hope you can support your school with ensuring high standards of attendance and punctuality.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Edwards
Headteacher