

"We are committed to inclusion and ensuring no child or family is left behind."



Friday, 16 February 2018

Abraham Moss Community School

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Dear Parents & Carers,

Attendance Expectations

The expected attendance at Abraham Moss is 97% for all pupils, from Year 1 to Year 11. The law requires children of school age, 5 years to 16 years of age to attend for 190 days, or 380 sessions. Each day is split into 2 sessions, one in the morning (AM) and one in the afternoon (PM) giving the total of 380 sessions.

Parents and guardians have a legal duty to ensure their child attends regularly; any parent or guardian failing to ensure their child/children attend school regularly is breaking the law and ultimately may face prosecution in the courts.

Pupils with excellent attendance make the most academic progress, they also make better social, emotional and personal development which enables them to make a seamless transition from one phase of education to the next, and finally into employment.

Abraham Moss is full in all year groups, from Nursery to Year 11; many year groups are oversubscribed which means we have more pupils than we have places for. We also have a waiting list for every year group, so please value your child's education and place at Abraham Moss by ensuring they attend at least 97% of the time.

Pupils who have known medical conditions which require regular hospital treatments are protected by the Equality Act 2010. Reasonable adjustments are made for pupils with disabilities or medical conditions that reduce the amount of schooling they are able to access through no fault of their own. In 2015 to 2016 the persistent absence statistic for pupils attending special schools in England was 26.9%. We aim to ensure that all children with disabilities are supported fully at Abraham Moss so they can attend regularly and make excellent progress. We will not punish any child who has a disability or medical condition that means they cannot attend school regularly, to do so would be immoral and would be in breach of the Equality Act 2010.

Punctuality Expectations

Pupils are expected to be punctual to school every day. Parents and guardians who bring their children to school are expected to ensure they bring their child/children to school on time. There are very few valid reasons for lateness; excuses such as oversleeping or the car would not start are not acceptable, most of our pupils live in the locality and those that do live close to the school have no excuse for being late. Learning time lost will have to be made up at break, lunch or at the end of the day. When our pupils enter the world of work they will be expected to make up any working time lost due to poor punctuality, and ultimately they may lose their job.

To illustrate the point further, when we go on vacation we know we have to be at the airport well before the flight departs, we do not expect the plane to wait for us because we know it will not wait. Please show your child/children that you value their education and respect the staff



who teach them by ensuring they are on time and ready to learn. My staff are always punctual to work and ready to teach your children. The value placed on education by pupils is reflected in their punctuality, attendance, behaviour, progress and attainment – these values start in the family home, they extend into the community and are reinforced at school.

Extended Leave Request – Death of a member of the immediate family

The authorisation of absence from school during term time can only be given by the Headteacher and must be done before removing children from school. Extended leave cannot be authorised retrospectively. This means you cannot take your child out of school and inform us of this after you have done so.

Extended leave will only be granted in extenuating circumstances such as the death, or imminent death of a member of the immediate family. Whilst we are sympathetic regarding relatives that suffer with long-term ill health, or who have had operations and/or medical procedures I am not in a position to grant authorisation for extended leave. Authorisation will not be given to families who wish to go and visit sick relatives; this can be done during one of the many holiday periods pupils are given. Whilst this may seem harsh this is what the law states and the school will not deviate from the law. The same applies to my staff who also have relatives who are sick and may need caring for, my colleagues understand that they must make alternative arrangements for the care of their relatives.

Extended Leave Request – Religious pilgrimage

All religious pilgrimages can be performed as adults and do not have to be carried out as a child, therefore no request for extended leave will be authorised for religious pilgrimages.

Payment of ‘Fixed Penalty Notices’ (FPNs)

The payment of FPNs will not be rescinded. These are only ever issued when extended leave is taken without prior application. FPNs are always issued to families who take extended holidays as the school believes 12 weeks holiday each year is more than adequate and the law requires children of school age to attend school for 190 days. If families can afford flights and airport taxes they can afford to pay FPNs when they are issued for taking children on holiday during term time.

Child Benefit

Parents and guardians who are in receipt of Child Benefit receive this payment to assist them in meeting the costs of their child’s education. If a child is removed from education for extended periods of time parents and guardians are required to inform HMRC and the payment of Child Benefit may be stopped or a reduction made.

Holidays

School children have 12 weeks holiday each year which is more than adequate for families to travel and visit relatives who may live abroad. Long distance flights are very expensive and have to be budgeted for and therefore families must save in order to be able to afford to travel during school holidays and not during term time.

Yours sincerely,



Ms. G. B. Houghton
Headteacher