

'A Caring Christian Family Where We Grow Together'

Bunbury Aldersey CE Primary School

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Dear Parent/Carer,

Recently Bunbury school received a Local Authority spot check register inspection. Overall school attendance figures showed that despite Covid absences through this academic year, our overall school attendance was at **94%**. Currently nationally this figure stands at **89%** taking into account the impact of Covid.

As a school, we obviously want all children to have 100% attendance but realise that this is not always possible, therefore we set ourselves an expectation of 95% attendance.

Despite the pleasing percentage, there were a large number across the school whose attendance has fallen below 95% and indeed below 90%. I do appreciate that it has been a difficult year for school attendance and that as parents you have supported the school with isolation and helped to keep our cases as low as we possibly can by keeping children at home when symptomatic or positive. As we move out of the pandemic and indeed in the near future when isolation will no longer be a statutory requirement we ask that children attend school whenever possible.

Where children's attendance drops below our expected percentage we always explore and investigate through our register records why this might be. Obviously at present we are taking into account any absences due to Covid and the rules around isolation etc. At the start of the next half term we will though be looking again at all children's individual attendance figures and the reasons for the absence. This may result in an attendance letter being sent home to make you aware of your individual child's attendance percentage to date.

Whilst many of these high levels of absences are mainly due to Covid and this will be taken into account. I have noticed a marked increase in term time holiday requests and other unauthorised absences. With the tough couple of years, we have all experienced, I can fully appreciate the temptation to take your child out of school during term time for a holiday or even a long weekend. The school will not authorise term time absence for holidays unless there are extenuating or exceptional circumstances to which proof will be required.

We understand that there will be times when absence is unavoidable and acceptable. Each absence is classed as authorised or unauthorised. Absences are coded as authorised where reasons are considered valid and unauthorised where no explanation or unacceptable reasons are given.

The following reasons are for example not acceptable:

- shopping visits
- care for family members
- days out
- parents' work commitments or business trips



- holidays taken in term time (including long weekends taken on Fridays and / or Mondays)
- parental illness
- sleeping in / missing school transport
- birthdays or birthday treats

I am sure you are all aware that term time absence has an undoubted negative impact on a child's learning and through the remaining part of the school year we would ask that any absences are kept to a minimum.

The chart below illustrates the effect persistent absence can have, impacting your child's learning.



Thank you for your continued support.

Best wishes



Nic Badger

Principal of Bunbury Aldersey CE Primary
 Executive Headteacher of Rural Church Schools Academy Trust