



CHARMOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lower Sea Lane, Charmouth, Dorset DT6 6LR
Headteacher: Mrs Gillian Morris B.Ed.(Hons) NPQH
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Dear Parents

Attendance at Charmouth

You will have heard in the news in recent weeks and months that the Government has tightened the way in which attendance should be monitored and managed in schools. Our school is expected to have systems in place that will rigorously monitor the attendance of all children and inform parents if attendance is a cause for concern. Headteachers are legally bound to implement the law and follow the statutory requirements. Dorset County Council also supports schools in ensuring the law is upheld.

I hope the following information will explain why our school is required to follow the directives from the Government and put systems in place. There is a very strong connection between the safeguarding of children and attendance. The systems that schools are required to follow are implemented to ensure that children are safe. I am required to inform you that in law, parents and carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular and punctual attendance at school. Therefore, any unauthorised absence, such as taking holidays in term time, can result in a Fixed Term Penalty Notice. Failure to pay a Fixed Term Penalty Notice may result in a criminal conviction and a fine in the Magistrates Court.

If a child's attendance becomes a concern, the school will send an official letter to the parent/carer informing them of their concerns. If, after this, there is no improvement, the school is obliged to report this to the Early Intervention Service who will then contact the parents/carers to talk about the legal implications of continued poor attendance. Penalty notices may be issued if attendance does not improve.

The school has adopted a system where parents will be notified if their child's attendance is causing concern and will have an opportunity to come and discuss this with the headteacher. Hopefully this will pre-empt any serious problems and stop situations developing where attendance needs to be brought to the attention of the authorities.

Other absence from school which will not be authorised:

- Looking after brothers/sisters or unwell parents.
- Relatives visiting or visiting relatives.
- For any type of shopping.
- Minding the house.
- Resting after a late night.
- Birthdays.

Other absence from school which will be authorised:

- Approved sporting activities.
- Genuine illness.
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments (please try to make these after school if possible.)
- Days of religious observance.
- Exceptional circumstances such as bereavement.
- Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces.
- External Examinations.
- When traveller children go on the road with their parents.



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The law requires the school to open for pupils for 190 days each year and every day is important. Please help your child not to miss any of their valuable education time.

We hope that when you have read this information you will consider that your child's education is too important to take holidays or unnecessary days off during term time.

It would be advisable to carry the application form for leave of absence from school with you whilst travelling so that you have evidence of your child's authorised absence.

I hope that we can work together in the interests of your children.

Yours sincerely

Gillian Morris
Head Teacher