

Date 1st December 2016

Dear parents and carers,

As a school community we need to focus on our pupils' attendance and punctuality. Children who repeatedly miss days suffer academically and socially in school. We understand that if children are genuinely unwell they need to stay at home but are concerned about the persistent absence and punctuality of some children.

Good attendance will help your children do well in primary school, secondary school, university and at work.

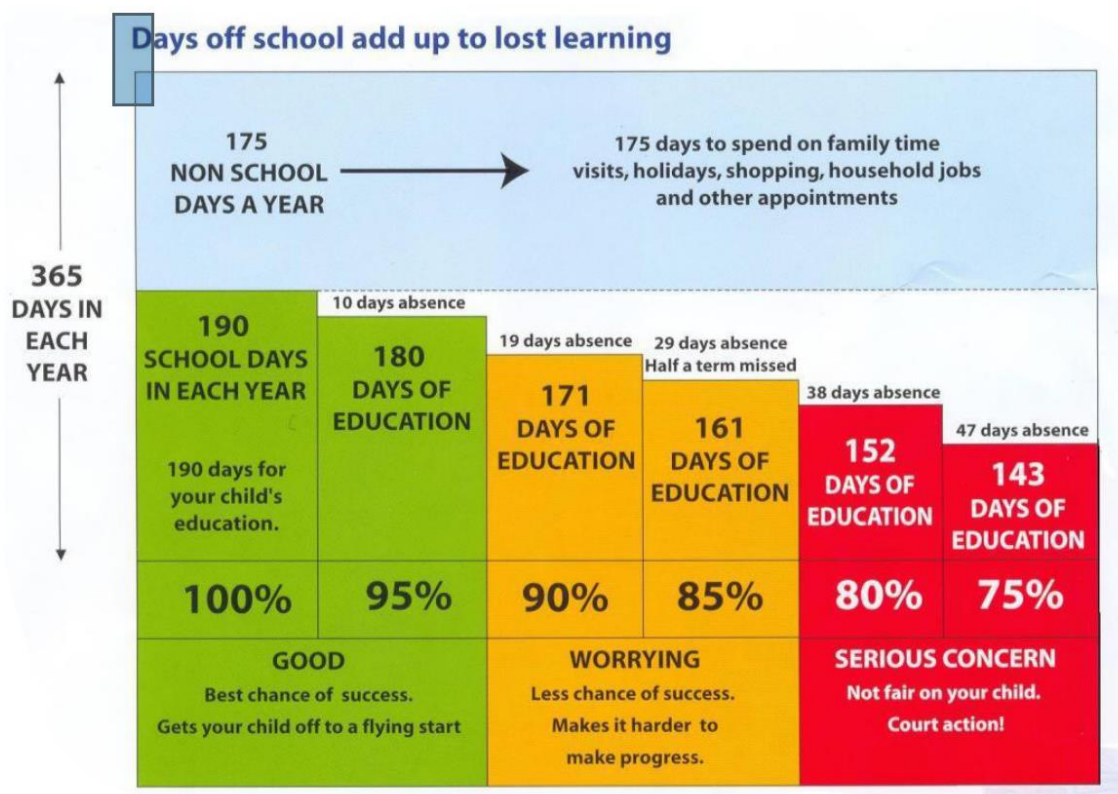
- **Your children can suffer academically** if they miss 10 percent of school days. That can be just one day every two weeks, and that can happen before you know it
- **It doesn't matter if these absences are excused or unexcused.** They all represent lost time in the classroom and a lost opportunity to learn
- **Attendance matters as early as Reception.** Studies show many children who miss too many days in Reception and Year 1 can struggle academically in later years. They often have trouble mastering reading by the end of Year 3
- **Nursery is a great time to start building a habit** of good attendance. Studies show that poor attendance in Nursery can predict absenteeism in later grades
- **By secondary school, chronic absence is a leading warning sign** that a student will drop out
- **Too many absent students can affect the whole classroom**

Holiday requests

George Tomlinson Primary School operates the DfE zero tolerance approach to extended holidays and notifies parents/carers of this so that they can make informed decision about removing children from school for this reason. We refer children with unauthorised extended holiday absence to the local authority who arranges for fixed penalty fines to be issued. Currently the fine is £120 per child for each parent. If this is paid within 14 days the fine is reduced by 50%. Our intention in issuing fines is to emphasise the importance and negative impact on children's progress and achievement caused by extended periods of absence.

Lateness

The morning bell rings at 8.45am to indicate that lesson time is beginning. Pupils should be on the playground at least 5 minutes before bell time so that they can enter school calmly with their class and organise themselves ready for the first lesson. All lateness is recorded and lateness after the registers close is marked as absence. If a pupil regularly arrives late for school we monitor and offer support to develop strategies to improve their punctuality.



In assembly with the school I discussed the importance of attendance and punctuality and reminded the children that **'every day counts!'** There will be rewards for children who have good attendance throughout the year and we will give out trophies to the class with the highest figures for attendance and punctuality each week.

We will be closing the gate in the morning at **850am** and children who are late will need to be brought in through the main office after this time.

I appreciate your support with this matter.

Kind regards,

Verity Carter
Headteacher