



West Sussex County Council

**East Preston Infant School**  
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Headteacher Mrs Claire New

Dear Parents/Carers

### **Attendance Expectations for Academic Year 2023/24**

We know that the majority of our pupils have good attendance at school, and we know parents are supportive in achieving this. We know that you are fully aware of the effect poor attendance can have on a child's progress, not only from an educational perspective but also developing their communication and social skills. Our role is to make sure we are preparing all of our children for their future and ensure every child maintains the best attendance possible. Research indicates a strong correlation between a child's attainment and progress in school and good attendance.

As we start a new academic year, we would like to take this opportunity to remind parents and carers of our expectations for school attendance. The law states, all children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16) must get regular full-time education. As a parent, you are responsible for making sure this happens, either by registering your child at a school or by making arrangements which provide a suitable full-time education. Once your child is registered at a school parents are responsible for making sure their children attends regularly. Regular full-time education is regarded as attending school for at least 96% of the school year. Every school day has an attendance register taken once in the morning and again in the afternoon. Each day therefore has 2 attendance sessions. If your child feels unwell at the start of a day but feels better as the morning goes on, we would welcome them back in school.

As a parent it can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school when they are unwell. There are government guidelines for schools about managing specific illnesses. These say when children should be kept off school and when they should not. This link <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/> can help you make that decision.

Parents should try to make medical/dental appointments outside of school time wherever possible. Children need to be in school for the entirety of the school day and should not be picked up early. If your child's attendance falls below 90% we will ask you to provide evidence to verify the absence. If this is not provided, absences could be classed as unauthorised.

We understand the challenges that some individual children face in relation to attendance, recognising that this can also extend into those adults in the children's life. However, the expectation remains that all school age children attend school on a regular basis. This expectation is supported in full by all medical staff, schools and both local and national government.

As outlined in the Department for Education attendance guidance, a leave of absence during term time is not permitted unless there are exceptional circumstances. If you wish to request absence from school, please fill out our "Exceptional Absence Request Form". All requests are considered on their merits. However, please be aware term time family holidays, will not be classed as an exceptional circumstance and any absence of 5 days/10 sessions, may result in a referral to Pupil Entitlement for

**Article 29** : Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

*Learning, Playing and Laughing Together  
to be the best that we can be*

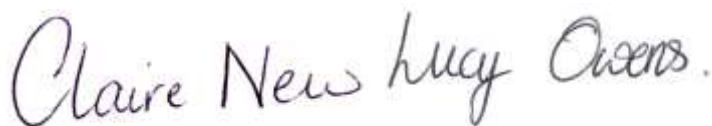
consideration for a Fixed Penalty Notice. Repeated receipts of Fixed Penalty Notices can result in being taken to court by West Sussex County Council.

Exceptional circumstances may include, a sudden, unexpected, severe incident relating to a family member; a family bereavement or taking part in a religious festival. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list and there may be other activities considered to be exceptional.

It is our hope that the above information outlines the school's position regarding the importance of regular attendance at school from this point onwards. We have also provided with this letter an overview of attendance interventions we have in school.

As a school, we do our utmost to support our children's welfare and we have staff who really do care. If you feel that you need help, support or guidance to support regular attendance please contact a member of the attendance team (Mrs Owens, Mrs Waller and Mrs Woodcraft) or Mrs New on 01903 773177 or by email [secretary@epinf.co.uk](mailto:secretary@epinf.co.uk). We can then discuss any specific issues further. Should you have any further questions regarding attendance, please make contact with the Attendance Team.

Thank you for your support.

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Claire New Lucy Owens." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mrs Claire New  
Headteacher

Mrs Lucy Owens  
Attendance Lead