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Parent-friendly schools

Dear Parents/Carers,

Illness and Attendance

Firstly, thank you for your continued support in ensuring your child attends school every day so they can progress in their learning and personal development.

To help you further, we would like to clarify our expectations and procedures around illness-related absence from school.

Our expectation is that all students attend school every day unless they are too unwell to do so. We understand that students will occasionally become ill, and we will always consider individual circumstances, however, we are concerned at times that some students remain off school for minor ailments which could be managed better so they do not miss out on learning and end up falling behind.

Please consider the following if your child experiences a period of illness:

Vomiting

We do **not** follow a strict 48-hour absence policy following sickness.

If your child has stopped being sick, has no temperature, feels well and has been able to eat, we are happy for them to return to school.

Headaches

A headache on its own would not normally be considered a reason for absence from school.

If your child has a headache, please consider treating it with appropriate over-the-counter medication and let us know that you have done so. If a headache is their only symptom, we would encourage your child to attend school.

If your child experiences regular or persistent headaches, we recommend seeking appropriate clinical advice.

Periods

Periods are not normally authorised as illness-related absence.

However, please let your child's House Team know if they require additional support in school or are receiving medical treatment or intervention relating to their periods.

We have a large supply of sanitary products available in school for free and easily accessible in toilets, which students can access when needed.

Mental Health

We recognise that mental health difficulties can sometimes present symptoms that make attending school challenging. We are committed to supporting students and families during these times.

As with physical health concerns, we encourage parents and carers to seek appropriate professional advice and support. Where a student experiences prolonged absence due to mental health difficulties, we may ask for further information to help us understand their needs and ensure that appropriate support is in place.

Where there is no supporting information or evidence that appropriate professional advice has been sought, absences may be recorded as unauthorised in line with our attendance procedures.

If your child is experiencing difficulties with their mental health, please contact their House Team as soon as possible so that we can discuss how we can support them. We also encourage you to contact your GP or other appropriate healthcare professional for advice and support.

Reporting an Absence

If your child is too unwell to attend school, please report their absence **as early as possible on each day of absence** using our **text-only absence number: 07860 050051**.

Please include:

- Your child's **full name**
- **House and Year group**
- The **reason for their absence**

When reporting an illness, please avoid general terms such as *"feeling unwell"*. We do not require extensive medical details, but a clear description of the illness helps us to record the absence accurately and appropriately.

If an illness-related absence is prolonged, we may ask for supporting medical information to help us authorise the continued absence. Examples include a copy of a medication prescription or a letter from your GP, information that shows the student's name and date.

If your child has several illness-related absences over a short period, we may contact you to discuss this further. Our aim is to understand any health-related barriers your child may be experiencing so that we can put appropriate support in place and help them attend school regularly. Information about ongoing treatment, referrals, medication or other relevant medical support can be helpful in enabling us to do this.

Medication in School

We are very happy to have medication in school for your child, including appropriate over-the-counter medication such as paracetamol or ibuprofen, as well as prescribed medication.

If you would like medication to be kept in school for your child, please contact your House Office. They will arrange for the medication to be handed in safely and for the necessary form to be completed.

Please do not send your child to school with medication in their school bag.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us to promote good attendance and ensure that students receive the support they need to remain in school.

Yours sincerely

Robin Grover
Principal

Rachel Ilgunas
Attendance Lead