



Jowitt Avenue, Kempston, Bedford, MK42 8NW
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Headteacher: Mr P Stanyard

Friday 8th December 2017

Dear Parents and Carers,

Attendance

Good attendance is essential for children to make progress in their learning. OFSTED identified a clear link between persistent absentees and lower than average academic progress. At Camestone pupils with an attendance below 92% are tracked weekly. If your child's attendance falls below 90% you will be asked to attend a meeting in school to discuss it, and if necessary, meet with the Bedford Borough Education Welfare Officer. We have also developed a number of targeted initiatives to support families to improve pupil's attendance and punctuality.

We expect 100% attendance however we do appreciate that childhood illnesses occasionally mean it is not appropriate for your child to be in school.

Holidays in Term Time

Government policy over recent years, has focused on the impact of term time holidays on children's education. Head teachers are only permitted to authorise absences from school in exceptional circumstances.

At a recent meeting of the Camestone School governors a decision was taken that from September 2018 **holidays in term time will be unauthorised and parents who remove their children from school should expect to receive a penalty notice issued by the Local Authority. This is in line with many other schools locally and nationally.** If you have already booked for September 2018 onwards please provide proof of booking to the school office by Friday 15th December 2017.

It is important to carefully consider the implications of taking your child out of school during term time. There are 190 statutory school days a year; so there are 175 other days (weekends and school holidays) available which would not have a negative effect on your child's education. If you take your child out of school for a leave of absence:

- They will be missing significant learning opportunities. Teaching is planned carefully to ensure all children are following the National Curriculum over the year.
- You will be giving them an unspoken message that school does not matter.
- Some children find it difficult to renew friendships with other pupils when they return to school.

If you do need to take your child out of school, you should request this as soon as possible and always 4 weeks before the first day of leave. A form is available from the school office. The school will only authorise your request in exceptional circumstances. Government guidance will be taken into account.

The following reasons are NOT considered to be exceptional circumstances:

- availability of cheap holidays;
- availability of the desired accommodation;
- poor weather experienced in school holiday periods;
- periods overlapping the beginning or end of term.

Your understanding and co-operation in this matter is appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Mr P Stanyard
Head Teacher

Mrs J Surman
Chair of Governors