

Coastal Together

					
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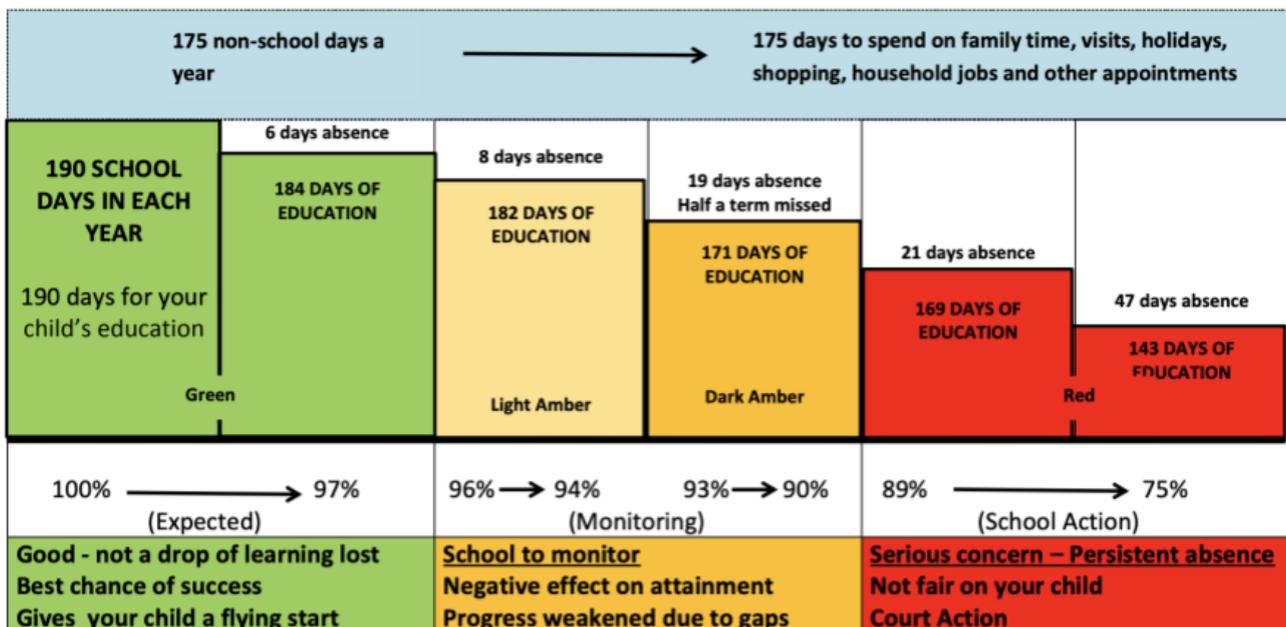
29 November 2021

School Attendance - Update

We have all heard the expression 'the more you read the better your writing gets' (I hope you have ... because it's true!) and the same goes for children's attendance at school. The more they are in attendance the more they learn.



What percentage attendance means to your child in terms of lost learning



80% attendance over 5 years = 1 whole year of education lost.

Research suggests that pupils who have an average of 20 days absent per school year see negative effects throughout their educational journey – resulting in a whole GCSE grade deficit by the time they leave secondary education.

Article 28 of United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child : The right to learn and go to school

The normal national attendance figure for schools is currently around 96% (pre-COVID) and this is the figure that we use in all of our schools to measure children's attendance rates. This equates to just over 7 days of absence across an academic year out of the 190 days that children attend school. Of course, when

you look at the figure of 190 days in the school year and compare it to the 365 days in a calendar year you can see just how important everyday of learning is.

One of the many duties a school has is to ensure that children's attendance rates are as high as possible which in our current climate of COVID is a very fine balancing act. We have thresholds that are imposed by Norfolk County Council and an obligation to follow their guidance.

After Christmas we will restart the issuing of letters to parents where children fall below the NCC thresholds. These letters are standard in their format and are sent to remind parents of their children's attendance levels. This is where the fine balancing act comes in. Whilst we absolutely understand that in this COVID era attendance levels may drop due to isolation, we also have to ensure that children's levels of attendance is high.

The thresholds are as follows;

- Parents will receive a letter when attendance is between 90% and 95%
- Parents will receive a further letter if attendance is below 90% - this is called 'persistent absence'

Please be aware that the criteria for the issuing of a 'Fixed Penalty Notice' (fine) from Norfolk County Council is as follows;

- at least 9 sessions (4.5 school days) lost to **unauthorised absence** by the pupil during the last 6 school weeks. (Current fixed penalty notices are £60 per child per parent.)

If a child has been off with a positive case of COVID for the 10 day period then this absence is classified as an authorised absence and will not be subject to a fixed penalty notice but will be included in the child's attendance record.

I hope this goes some way to explain what will be happening after Christmas. On a related but separate note - all holidays booked during term time will be classified as unauthorised unless they come under the 'exceptional circumstances' ruling of which there are very few. Please be reminded of the term dates below, so that you can avoid term time when booking holidays - which I know we will all be looking forward to this year - fingers crossed!

Simon Wakeman
Executive Head

