



# ASHCROFT INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Mildenhall, Tamworth, B79 8RU

‘Providing the best start in life for all children’

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25<sup>th</sup> February 2015

Dear Parents/ Carers

You will recall that last year the Department for Education (DfE) introduced changes to the law regarding parents taking their children out of school during term time. This in turn meant that the Local Authority had to amend its Code of Conduct which sets out how it will implement these changes and its use of penalty notices to ensure we promote the highest standards of attendance.

In September 2014 the Local Authority reviewed the changes to their policy and have amended the Code of Conduct previously issued. This has meant that there are some changes to the original policy. The main changes are:

#### Penalty Notice for leave of absence

- Removing the requirement for attendance to be below a certain percentage before a penalty notice can be issued.
- Clarifying that a parent can now receive more than one Penalty Notice per academic year.
- Confirming that ten sessions of unauthorised absence do not have to be consecutive and only two sessions have to be for unauthorised leave of absence.
- Confirming that the period for calculating the ten sessions will be based on the previous three school terms.

#### Penalty Notice for persistent absence

- Parents will now only receive one warning notice period for improvement in attendance in a single academic year. If attendance deteriorates again then no further warning notice will be issued and the Local Authority can automatically consider other statutory actions if unauthorised absence re-occurs.

Schools are being asked to inform parents/ carers of these changes which will take effect from the 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2015. Any requests for leave received before the half term holiday will be considered under the previous Code of Conduct. Any requests received from now on will need to be considered under this new Code of Conduct. These changes have been brought about to further raise standards in attendance and punctuality across all schools in Staffordshire.

At Ashcroft we regularly review our attendance figures and we are proud that our attendance is generally very good. We are however, still finding that some families are not informing us when their child is absent from school. Therefore a revised system will now be in place in the school office.

#### Illness/ Medical Appointments

- If your child is absent from school we would ask you to inform the school office before 9.20am. You are able to leave a message if you are unable to speak directly to a member of our office team stating the reason for your child's absence and how long you expect your child to be off school.

HEADTEACHER: Mrs Sarah Sivieri

DEPUTY HEAD: Miss Zoe White

**Dyslexia**  
friendly

**sing up**  
Silver Award

- If your child is going to be late into school due to a medical appointment, please telephone the office so that the appropriate code can be assigned to your child's absence.
- If you have not informed the office of the reason your child is absent by 9.20am, you will receive a telephone call asking you to explain their absence. If there is no answer your child will be given an 'unauthorised' absence mark in the register.

### Requests for Leave of Absence

- Please note that absence due to holidays taken in term time will be recorded as unauthorised.
- Absence can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.
- If you are intending on taking your child out of school during term time we ask that you state clearly the reasons you are taking your child out of school and the dates that this will take place over.

As Headteacher I will be monitoring closely the nature of the events that the absence is being requested, the frequency of such events, the efforts made by parents to seek authorisation in advance and to plan ahead to minimise disruption to their child's programme of education. If authorisation or notification is not sought in advance the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and may result in a referral for a Penalty Notice from the Local Support Team.

If you have any further queries regarding this information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S Sivieri  
Headteacher