



Wilcombe Primary School  
Lazenby Road, Tiverton,  
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Dear Parents

### **Re – Attendance / Absence**

Regular attendance is extremely important as missing school can have an impact on learning, and as I am sure you are aware it is a legal requirement. Good attendance enables students to keep up with the work required. All children's attendance is monitored throughout the year.

As a parent it is your legal responsibility, as stated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that your child attends the school at which he/she is registered, regularly and punctually. It is vital that if your child is absent from school for any reason that we are informed. If we are not informed on the day and provided with a valid reason for absence, it will be recorded as unauthorised.

We have a legal duty to inform Devon County Council of unauthorised absences which may result in penalty notices being issued. These can be issued for all unauthorised absences and persistent lateness - not just when holidays are taken.

We would also like to remind parents that medical evidence may be requested if excessive absence due to illness is recorded. I.e. Appointment cards/letters or sight of medication if prescribed anti-biotics etc.

Please see the notes below.

### **NOTES TO PARENTS/CARERS**

The law does not grant parents/carers an automatic right to take their children out of school during term time. If the request is for an absence in term time you must have Parental Responsibility and be the parent/carer with whom the child normally lives. Permission must be sought in advance. If the circumstances relating to this request are considered exceptional and the absence is authorised by the school, the authorising of the absences will be conditional on the child(ren) attending satisfactory up to the date covered by this request.

### **WARNING TO PARENTS**

If the school refuses your request and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. If the school are unable to authorise this absence this may result in legal action which could be a Penalty notice or summons to court proceedings which could result in a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

Parents should note that in normal circumstances, current practice is that only one penalty notice will be issued to a parent relating to the absence of a particular child within a two year period. Should a further period of unauthorised absence be recorded, then the



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parent(s) will normally be summonsed to appear at a Magistrates Court, unless an Education Supervision Order is considered more appropriate.

Some examples of reasons for authorised / unauthorised absences are listed below.

<p><b>Unavoidable absence from school will be authorised if it is for the following reasons:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Genuine illness</li><li>▪ Unavoidable medical / dental appointments (but try to make these after school if at all possible)</li><li>▪ Days of religious observance</li><li>▪ Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces</li><li>▪ External examinations</li><li>▪ When Traveller children go on the road with their parents</li></ul>	<p><b>Other examples of absence from school that <u>will not</u> be authorised:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Any type of shopping</li><li>▪ Looking after siblings or unwell parents</li><li>▪ Minding the house</li><li>▪ Birthdays</li><li>▪ Resting after a late night</li><li>▪ Relatives visiting or visiting relatives</li></ul>
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If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the school office.

Kind regards

Reg Gilbert  
Headteacher