



**Rye Community Primary School & Starfish Pre-school**  
**The Grove, Rye, East Sussex TN31 7ND**  
**[www.ryeprimary.co.uk](http://www.ryeprimary.co.uk)**  
Executive Headteacher: Mr Barry Blakelock  
Headteacher: Miss Kelly Martin  
[office@ryeprimary.co.uk](mailto:office@ryeprimary.co.uk)  
01797 222825



27th September 2023

Dear Families,

As you know, at Rye Community Primary, we are dedicated to supporting strong attendance for all children so that they receive an excellent education. The benefits of being in school are clear and I am grateful for our attendance staff and others who are working very hard to improve our whole school attendance. It is clear however that improving attendance is everyone's business.

Research published by the Department for Education makes it clear that:

- excellent attendance has a clear and positive impact on children's **mental health and wellbeing**;
- that those with excellent attendance enjoy **higher academic outcomes**, and
- that those whose attendance and punctuality begin to slip, will find it **impossible to catch up** the work that they have missed.

The **NHS** has also provided some excellent guidance which I have shared for you at the end of this letter. If we follow this guidance, attendance will likely improve, as it removes any doubt parents may have about whether to send their child into school. It states very clearly that for most day to day illnesses and conditions, you can still send your child into school.

There are some notable exceptions to this however, the main ones being **vomiting and/or diarrhoea** or a **high temperature**/fever like symptoms (a high temperature is defined as 38 degrees or above). Conditions such as chicken pox or other specific infections will have particular guidance and or recommendations on medication and when it is the right time to return to school. **Please do take time to read this.**

### **Mental Health and wellbeing**

We strongly believe that excellent school attendance can impact positively on most children's mental health. Clear routines, learning new knowledge and skills, leadership opportunities, regular exercise and social opportunities all play their part here. At Rye, we enjoy the additional benefit of living out our I respect values each day. Leaders are careful too to make sure that children receive outstanding support and education around personal, social and health issues and this includes wellbeing and mental health.

### **Academic Outcomes**

Good academic outcomes matter. They open doors to the next steps of your child's education and allow them, to flourish further as young people and adults. The knowledge that we teach in our schools and the skills we foster, allow pupils to become part of the future conversation locally and nationally. Government research pointed to the fact that:

At KS2, pupils not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths had an overall absence rate of 4.7%, compared to 3.5% among those meeting the expected standard. Moreover, the overall absence rate of pupils not meeting the expected standard was higher than among those meeting the higher standard (4.7% compared to 2.7%).

At KS4, pupils not achieving grade 9 to 4 in English and maths had an overall absence rate of 8.8%, compared to 5.2% among those achieving grades 9-4. The overall absence rate of pupils not achieving grade 9 to 4 was over twice as high as those achieving grade 9 to 5 (8.8% compared to 3.7%).



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### Perceived ability to catch up on missed education

The Government's report states that...

"Parents report that they think their children are able to catch up on missed education effectively. This means they may consider small periods of absence from school manageable, without realising the possible wider negative impact."

This is simply incorrect (especially when looking at the data above). There is no substitute for time in front of the teacher, as they deliver our carefully planned curriculum.

You may think that figures such as 80% or 90% represent acceptable attendance. This is simply not the case. Accepting an attendance rate of 90% means that we are accepting that your child misses 190 lessons each year. This means that a child who enters Rye in Reception and progresses onto year 6 would miss **1,330 lessons!**

Finally, whilst we have very high standards around attendance and punctuality and regularly celebrate those with great attendance, I do acknowledge that there are exceptional circumstances that lead to children being unable to attend school. It is part of our school ethos to support you in this and make sure they make a safe return as soon as possible.

In order to support you with attendance, working alongside Mrs James, our attendance officer and Mrs Homewood, our FLO, Family Liaison officer, we also have Emma Granger, an EWO, Education Welfare Officer, who works with all of the schools in the local area. Emma, Mrs James or Mrs Homewood may contact you to offer support and advice about getting your child into school regularly.

Best wishes,

Miss Kelly Martin

Headteacher



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**NHS Guidance** - <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

### **Coughs and colds**

It's fine to send your child to school with a minor [cough](#) or [common cold](#). But if they have a fever, keep them off school until the fever goes.

Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues and to wash their hands regularly.

### **High temperature**

If your child has a [high temperature](#), keep them off school until it goes away.

### **Chickenpox**

If your child has [chickenpox](#), keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over.

This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.

### **Cold sores**

There's no need to keep your child off school if they have a [cold sore](#).

Encourage them not to touch the blister or kiss anyone while they have the cold sore, or to share things like cups and towels.

### **Conjunctivitis**

You don't need to keep your child away from school if they have [conjunctivitis](#).

Do get advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.

### **COVID-19**

If your child has mild symptoms, such as a runny nose, sore throat, or slight cough, and feels well enough, they can go to school.

Your child should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people if they have [symptoms of COVID-19](#) and they either:

- have a high temperature
- do not feel well enough to go to school or do their normal activities

### **What to do if your child has tested positive**

Your child is no longer required to do a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test if they have symptoms. But if your child has tested positive for COVID-19, they should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day they took the test.

### **Ear infection**

If your child has an [ear infection](#) and a high temperature or severe earache, keep them off school until they're feeling better or their high temperature goes away.

### **Hand, foot and mouth disease**

If your child has [hand, foot and mouth disease](#) but seems well enough to go to school, there's no need to keep them off.

Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly.

### **Head lice and nits**

There's no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice.

You can treat [head lice and nits](#) without seeing a GP.



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### **Impetigo**

If your child has [impetigo](#), they'll need treatment from a GP, often with antibiotics.

Keep them off school until all the sores have crusted over and healed, or for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment.

Encourage your child to wash their hands regularly and not to share things like towels and cups with other children at school.

### **Ringworm**

If your child has [ringworm](#), see your pharmacist unless it's on their scalp, in which case you should see a GP.

It's fine for your child to go to school once they have started treatment.

### **Scarlet fever**

If your child has [scarlet fever](#), they'll need treatment with antibiotics from a GP. Otherwise they'll be infectious for 2 to 3 weeks.

Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics.

### **Slapped cheek syndrome (fifth disease)**

You don't need to keep your child off school if they have [slapped cheek syndrome](#) because, once the rash appears, they're no longer infectious.

But let the school or teacher know if you think your child has slapped cheek syndrome.

### **Sore throat**

You can still send your child to school if they have a [sore throat](#). But if they also have a high temperature, they should stay at home until it goes away.

A sore throat and a high temperature can be symptoms of [tonsillitis](#).

### **Threadworms**

You don't need to keep your child off school if they have [threadworms](#).

Speak to your pharmacist, who can recommend a treatment.

### **Vomiting and diarrhoea**

Children with [diarrhoea or vomiting](#) should stay away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 2 days (48 hours).