



September 2015

RE: SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Dear Parent / Carer

As you know, we emphasise the importance of students achieving an excellent attendance record and, with your invaluable support, achieve an overall level of attendance that is 'outstanding' for a secondary school. We know that you are aware of the impact of absence on academic progress and of the importance that employers and further education establishments place on high levels of attendance for prospective employees and students. We also recognise the various pressures and challenges placed upon families and have, until now, been able to exercise some discretion when considering any requests for planned absence.

However, from September 2013, the Government has amended key legislation relating to attendance. This decision has been made to encourage schools to take a firmer stance on absence and to make parents aware that there is no entitlement to time off for holidays during term times. This statement was released by the Government to clarify their position:

'As of 1st September 2013, Headteachers cannot authorise any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.'

Any requests for leave during term time in exceptional circumstances should be made in writing to the Headteacher, who will respond in writing to the request.

Full details of our current Attendance Policy and Procedures are on the schools website and these have been amended in the light of the above changes, but it is important that you understand that leave in term time will not be agreed by us at any time unless circumstances surrounding the request can be evidenced, by parents, to be exceptional. Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

Should your child be absent from school due to illness then please contact the school on each morning of absence before 9.00am via the absence line 01296 689720 or studentabsent@cottesloe.bucks.sch.uk, clearly stating the reason for absence, your child's name and tutor group.

For pre-planned absences such as hospital appointments that cannot be arranged out of school hours, please complete the Request for Absence form which is on our website and send into to school for the attention of our Attendance Officer via your childs form tutor no less than one week before the planned absence. If the absence is authorised a slip will be sent home via your child.

Yours sincerely
Mr A McBurnie
Headteacher