*Christ Church CE Academy* *Wrose Brow Road*

 *Shipley*

 *West Yorkshire*

 *BD18 2NT*

*Headteacher: Mrs P.Foster*

Telephone: 01274 410349

Email: admin@christchurchacademy.bradford.sch.uk

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**AVOIDING ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL**

The main reason for absence from school is illness. Whilst many of these absences are for good reasons there are some that could be avoided. Unless children are ill they should attend school. We need your help and support to deal with this problem.

In order to avoid preventable absence, parents and carers need to think carefully about their child’s illness before deciding to keep them off school. **If your child requires a medical appointment they should be made outside of school hours wherever possible.** If your child has an appointment in school time please bring an appointment card or medical letter if one has been provided.

**CONJUNCTIVITIS**

If your child has, or you suspect your child may have, conjunctivitis you will need to seek medical attention. Once treated your child does not need to be kept off school.

![MC900232730[1]]()

**COUGHS AND COLDS**

Children may attend school with a minor cough or cold. If it is a bad illness or a long lasting cough you will need to seek medical advice as soon as possible, however they can still attend if they are well enough. Don’t forget to wash your hands to prevent the illness spreading!

**HEAD LICE**

If your child has head lice it should be treated immediately and again a week later to ensure they are all gone. If lice or eggs are still found, this process will need repeating. If you keep your child off school due to them having head lice the absence will not be authorised.

**MEDICATION**

![MP900448486[1]]()Parents sometimes keep their children off school because they are on medication. In many cases school are able to help children take their medication at school and prevent unnecessary absence. If your child’s medicine is to be taken three times a day it can be taken before school, after school and before bedtime to prevent any disruption. If your child is taking prescribed medication during school time the medicine must be brought to the office by the parent /carer, where they will be asked to complete a form giving details of medication and dosage and authorising a member of school staff to give the medicine to their child.

**MINOR ACHES and PAINS**

If your child has a headache with no other symptoms they are usually well enough to attend school and do not need to be kept at home.

If they have toothache they should be seen by a dentist as soon as possible but can still attend school. The same applies if your child has earache, they can still attend but please seek medical advice.

**SORE THROAT**

If your child has a sore throat with no other symptoms then your child is usually well enough to attend school. It is only in severe cases that there may be good reason for them to stay at home. If you are unsure please ring the school office.

**VOMITING and DIARRHOEA**

If your child has vomiting, diarrhoea or both, they will need to be kept at home until **48 hours after the last episode.** If there is no improvement, or you are concerned, you should seek medical advice. We appericate that this is inconvenient and your child may be better in themselves, however, keeping them off for this period of time should reduce the risk of infection for all children in school. Don’t forget to wash your hands to prevent the illness spreading!

**GOOD PRACTICE**

Think carefully before keeping your chil d off school for medical reasons. If they wake up saying they feel unwell consider whether the symptoms they have mean they need to stay at home. **Do not keep your child off school ‘just in case’ when they could** ![MC900446304[1]]()**be in class learning with their friends.** We will always send your child home if we believe that they are too ill to attend school.

**INFORMING SCHOOL OF MINOR ILLNESS**

![MC900434383[1]]()If your child is absent due to a minor illness you must contact the school first thing in the morning to inform them of the reason for the absence and how long you expect them to be off school. It is helpful if you let us know the nature of the illness to help prevent it being spread around school.

**ABSENCE FOR LONG PERIODS OF TIME**

If your child is absent from school due to illness for a long period of time, or is often absent for short periods, school may ask for supporting evidence to confirm the absence. If your child is frequently ill and you are concerned please contact the school office who will in turn give you the details for the school nurse, who may be able to support you and offer advice.

**HELP AND ADVICE**

For further advice you can talk to a member of school staff or the school nurse. If you need any further medical advice you can call NHS Direct, visit your local chemist, walk in centre or your G.P.

**SCHOOL CONTACT DETAILS**

You need to make sure that school has your current contact details including your work, home and mobile telephone numbers, and an emergency contact. It is important that school is able to contact you during the day if necessary.