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Dear Parents and Carers,

We are aware that it can be difficult to decide whether your child is well enough to attend school. However, we are finding that many of our pupils are taking time off for minor illnesses which do not necessarily need time at home. If this happens frequently, we see that the impact on the child is that they become anxious and lack confidence as they feel they have fallen behind. They also miss key building blocks in their learning, meaning they can then struggle to understand new information or concepts.

As such, we have created an 'RPS Illness Guidance' leaflet, detailing the usual illnesses children face, and colour coding them like traffic lights to help you make the decision. We will send you a copy of this along with this letter.

We currently have an excessive number of children who are categorised as having 'Persistent Absence', meaning their attendance this year is less than 90%. Sometimes this is due to unauthorised absences, but often it seems that children are staying at home unnecessarily for a day or two of illness at a time. These children often struggle as described above, as they lack confidence and knowledge to progress. Obviously, we know and understand that some children who fall within this category have genuine and very valid reasons for their absence.

As from now, if your child falls into this category as a 'Persistent Absentee' (attending less than 90%), we will ask you to attend a meeting to discuss how we can support you to improve their attendance. In addition to this, for any future illnesses we may also ask you to provide evidence of the illness or any medical appointments (this can be a prescription, a Doctor's appointment card or a letter etc). If we do not receive the evidence, the illness will be classified as unauthorised. You can use the attached leaflet to help you make decisions about when to keep your child off.

If you would like any support surrounding your children's attendance, please do get in touch - our Family Support Worker will happily meet you and offer guidance or advice.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Ogle

Mrs Catherine Ogle
Executive Headteacher.

