

Dear Parent/Carer,

Attendance

We are delighted to say that our school attendance rates confirm that the vast majority of children are attending school. We know that this is the biggest factor that affects your child's achievement in examinations and their mental health. National data confirms that those children with the best attendance are more likely to achieve GCSE grades beyond grade 4 in Maths and English.

As we approach the autumn, it is a time when general cold symptoms begin to increase and we are aware that parents/carers may face the question of whether to send their child to school. Chief Medical Officer, Professor Chris Whitty, has recently circulated a letter with all school leaders that highlights the importance of attendance and clarifies the following:

'It is usually appropriate for parents and carers to send their children to school with mild respiratory illnesses. This would include general cold symptoms: a minor cough, runny nose or sore throat. However, children should not be sent to school if they have a temperature of 38°C or above'.

The [NHS 'Is my child too ill for school?'](#) guidance has further information that we hope will be of help.

We know that some of our students suffer from anxiety and Professor Whitty sets out the following advice:


"In addition to respiratory illnesses, we are aware that more children may be absent from school due to symptoms of anxiety than before the pandemic. Worry and mild or moderate anxiety, whilst sometimes difficult emotions, can be a normal part of growing up for many children and young people. Being in school can often help alleviate the underlying issues. A prolonged period of absence is likely to heighten a child's anxiety about attending in the future, rather than reduce it'.

If your child is suffering from anxiety and you feel this is starting to impact on their attendance at school it is important to act fast and reach out to your child's Head of House who can put a support plan in place.

Finally, as a general reminder, we kindly ask that any absence is reported to us by 8am via absence@theweald.org.uk and, where possible, medical appointments are arranged for the afternoon to avoid a full day of school being missed.

If you have any concerns regarding your child's attendance, please make contact with their Head of House who will happily help and do what we can to support.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Brimacombe', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Mr R Brimacombe

Assistant Head Teacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead