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Dear Parent / Guardian,

A Parent's Guide to School Attendance

Evidence shows that the pupils with the highest attainment at the end of each school year are those with the highest rates of attendance. When your child gets the best results that they can, it gives them more choices and opportunities throughout and beyond school. Going to school helps to build friendships and develops skills for managing day to day life.

Most children will have some absence from school, usually due to illness. It is important, however, to remember that not all illnesses mean your child cannot attend school, and that your child should return to school as soon as they are able.

The longer children are away from school the harder it can be to fit back into school life. The more school work they miss the harder it will be to catch up. Even though written work can be caught up, the lesson itself cannot be re-taught and valuable explanation or group activities can be lost.

We want your child to get the most from their time in school and the ways you can support us with this is to:

- Where possible book doctors, optician, dentist and other appointments after school, or during school holidays.
- Consider whether your child is well enough to attend school if they are feeling under the weather. Your local pharmacy can offer advice and over the counter medication for most common illnesses. For information on how long children should be off school with different illnesses, visit the gov.uk [website](#).
- Check that your child's vaccinations are up to date. Vaccines will protect your child against a many serious illnesses. Check with your GP if you are unsure.
- Avoid taking holidays in term time.

There could be other things that stop your child going to school. They may have a health condition like asthma, or special educational needs and may need a care plan in school to support school staff to meet your child's health needs. It could be that they are struggling with their mood and are feeling low or anxious. We work together with [Doncaster Zone 5-19](#) to support children and parents with a range of health and wellbeing needs. Support is available by calling 03000 218 997.

There are a range of services and information available to help you and your family stay well. Website links are below.

For support with mental wellbeing contact '[With Me In Mind](#)'.

The [Healthier Together website](#) has been developed in partnership between parents and healthcare professionals from across South Yorkshire. You'll find information on common childhood illnesses, including advice on what 'red-flag' signs to look out for, where to seek help if required, what you should do to keep your child comfortable.

NHS 111 can help if you have an urgent medical problem and you're not sure what to do. Visit the [website](#) or call 111. You can contact NHS 111 if you are unable to get a GP appointment.

For information on how to find an NHS dentist [click here](#).

Thank you for working with us to support your child to be in school and ready to learn.

Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rachael Leslie', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rachael Leslie
Deputy Director of Public Health