



## DELVES LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Delves Lane, Consett, Co Durham, DH8 7ES

Head Teacher: Mrs R A Woods

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### September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

We would like to thank you for your continued support during this challenging and uncertain time. Please be assured that we are doing our utmost to safeguard all children to enable a safe return to school. Your child's well-being is our priority therefore strict measures are being implemented in line with current government guidance and we are finding new ways to support your child back into school. In August 2020, the Government launched its "Back to School Safely" campaign. Parents were encouraged to visit [gov.uk/backtoschool](http://gov.uk/backtoschool) for information and practical guidance to help them plan for their children's return to school.

Having a good education will help to give your child the best possible start in life and it is vital for all children to return to school to minimise as far as possible, the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing, and wider development. We understand you and your child may be a little nervous and worried about returning to school, however if you do have concerns, particularly if there are other risk factors, please discuss this with school. We are here to listen and advise.

We are pleased to inform you that we will continue to work with **A star Attendance & Support Limited** who work in partnership with us, to support, monitor and encourage good attendance. We value regular and punctual attendance at school and our goal is for all pupils to meet the target of 97% - 100% attendance. If your child falls below this target, you will receive a letter advising you of this and a home visit from an A Star Attendance Officer. You may also be invited to a meeting at school to discuss the reasons for the poor attendance. Good attendance is a team effort and you can support us by:

- Encouraging your child to attend school punctually.
- Telephoning on the day of an absence and sending a letter to explain the absence on your child's return to school.
- Informing us of any changes or circumstances at home which may affect your child. Any such information will, of course, be kept in the strictest confidence.
- Supporting your child and the school by attending parent's meetings and taking an interest in your child's schoolwork.
- Leave of Absence in Term Time. Head Teachers are no longer able to grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

We have adopted a 'Traffic Light Initiative' system to raise pupil attendance levels as follows:



**Red=below 91% - Very poor attendance**

**Amber=between 92% and 96% - Attendance is cause for concern**

**Green= 97% and above - Good attendance**



In March, when the COVID-19 outbreak was increasing, the Government made it clear that no parent would be penalised for their child's non-attendance at school. However, since schools returned at the beginning of September, the usual rules on attendance apply, including:

- Parents/Carers have a legal duty to ensure their child regularly attends school if they are of compulsory school age.
- Schools have a legal responsibility to record attendance and follow up absence.
- Schools are at liberty to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' code of conduct.

Where there is no valid reason for absence, school and the Local Authority may utilise their legal powers to enforce attendance, however where children are not able to attend school as parents are following clinical and/or public health advice, the absence will not be penalised.

We would like to take the opportunity to support you in any way possible to make the transition back to school safe and seamless. Should you wish to discuss your concerns or any other matters regarding school attendance, we can arrange to do so via telephone consultation or a doorstep visit under socially distanced measures through our Attendance Officers. If this is something that you would like to consider, please do not hesitate to contact **Jill Robson** of A Star Attendance on **07387 371 915**.

Thank you for your support, it is appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Mrs R Woods

**Head Teacher**