

SEA/JM/da

29th September 2023



**Bloxwich Academy**

[www.bloxwichacademy.co.uk](http://www.bloxwichacademy.co.uk)

Dear Parent/Carer

We write to you to update you with guidance from Chief Medical Officer, Chris Witty regarding illness and attendance as we continue through the Autumn term and winter months. This guidance is to support schools and parents with professional medical advice to understand when it is appropriate to send your child to school with mild illnesses.

We have been asked by the Department for Education (DfE) to provide you with a clinical and public health perspective on mild illnesses and school attendance.

We are aware that the COVID-19 pandemic may have caused some parents to feel less confident with assessing whether their child is well enough to be in school so we have laid out some information which we hope you will find helpful.

There is wide agreement among health professionals and educational professionals that school attendance is vital to the life chances of children and young people. Being in school improves health, wellbeing and socialisation throughout the life course. The greatest benefits come from children and young people attending school regularly.

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. Further information and guidance can be found on the following [NHS 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance](#).

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. DfE has published useful [guidance on mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance](#) and those who are experiencing persistent symptoms can be encouraged to access additional support.

We thank you for your continued support and understanding of the importance of attendance for your child.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Seager', written over a white background.

Mr A Seager  
Headteacher

Bloxwich Academy Secondary  
Leamore Lane  
Bloxwich, Walsall  
West Midlands  
WS2 7NR



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