

Date: 10<sup>th</sup> November 2015

Dear Parents

### **Government changes to Persistent Absence threshold from September 2015**

As you will be aware, at Randal Cremer Primary School we make the regular attendance of children in school a priority as this will support them to make as much progress as they can in their learning. Attendance is generally very good at Randal Cremer Primary School.

As you will have seen in the media, children's attendance at school continues to be very high on the Government's agenda and as of now (September 2015) there will be an even greater pressure around this as the Department for Education have set new expectations for pupil attendance. The government is committed to reducing absence and expects every pupil to maintain an attendance level above 96%.

The persistent absence threshold has now increased to 90% (it was previously 85%). This will mean that any child whose attendance is lower than 90%, at any point in the school year will be classed as 'Persistently Absent'.

We have in-school procedures for monitoring attendance and in addition to this, the Hackney Attendance Officer also monitor the attendance of all children across the Borough. We have fortnightly meetings with the Attendance Officer linked to our school, and persistent absence could prompt a referral to the Education Social Work Service.

The table below (provided by the Hackney Education Social Work Service) shows the impact of lost learning hours in one school year.

<b>Descriptor</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Lost hours of Learning</b>
Excellent	100%-99%	0-10
Good	98%-96%	20-37.5
Requires Improvement	95%-91%	47.5-85
Persistent Absentee	90%-86%	95-135
Critical	85%-80%	142.5-190

Our expectations for your children are high, and we need them to be in school as often as possible. Therefore, we would like to take this opportunity to remind you to please make appointments outside of school hours (wherever possible) and make sure your children are in school on time. Whilst it is appreciated that children are unwell from time to time, please think carefully before allowing your child to be absent from school.

We would also like to remind you that **schools are now not permitted to grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.** We continue to urge you not to book your holidays during term time as it is extremely unlikely that any absence for this reason will be authorised.

If you have any questions or concerns about attendance, please do not hesitate to contact one of us.

Thank you for your support.

*Jo Riley*

(Headteacher)

*Romala Schwartz*

(Assistant Headteacher)