



23.6.23

Term 3, Week 9

In This Issue

- Safeguarding
- School Notices

Our Christian Values:

Thankfulness,
Hope,
Friendship,
Wisdom and
Trust.

Our classes will focus on this value around school and in our collective worships, led by Mr Gillan and individual classes.

Online Resources and Safety:

1. www.swiggle.org.uk

Safeguarding Notices:

challenging term-time holiday and persistent absence

After a meeting with our Local Authority Education Engagement Officer, I felt it worth reiterating some points to families. In particular, some of the context around challenging term-time holiday absences and challenging persistent absence. Head teachers have discretion to grant leave during school term time, but this is not an automatic entitlement. The law governing such leave of absences was tightened up from September 2013. Under current regulations, head teachers may not grant leave of absence during term-time unless there are exceptional circumstances. These circumstances are explained to families on our request forms, as are the potential consequences of taking such holiday. The local arrangements in Somerset are that penalty notices will be issued via the local authority on behalf of all educational settings in respect of pupils who are of statutory school age.

- **Term-time holiday requests:** Penalty notices can be issued to each parent (or person with parental responsibility) and for each child when it is deemed that an offence has been committed. This protocol ensures that penalty notices are administered consistently and fairly across the local authority. The Education Engagement Service fulfils this duty on behalf of the Local Authority.
- **Applications for term-time** leave must be made in advance and in writing. Failure to do so will result in the resulting absences being unauthorised. When an application for term-time leave is declined, any resulting absences will be unauthorised. Unauthorised absence relating to term-time leave being taken will be sent to the Local Authority for consideration of a Penalty Notice when 10 or more consecutive sessions are unauthorised.
- **Ten absences = 1 school week.** If it is found that a family has been given warning of any consequence (as on the back of our term-time request form), then this is uploaded to the Local Authority online system and they will be the body to issue the penalty. The fixed amount for this Penalty Notice is £120, which must be paid within 28 days to avoid prosecution. A reduced rate of £60 is payable if payment is made within 21 days. Payments cannot be paid in instalments. Step parents can be fined, also. The school upload this information on the return of the pupil to school.
- **Tackling persistent absence:** we work tirelessly with families to ensure that attendance is communicated clearly and find solutions to any persistent problems for individuals. In school, we will send out a letter

Safer online searching – it creates search lists from educational sites only. Please do give it a go at home, as it should bring up some very interesting sites for home projects / research.

3.
<https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/>
Some beautiful images and great facts on this National Geographic site.

Contact Us

Thurlbear@educ.somerset.gov.uk

01823 442277

Bible Thought:

“You welcome me as an honoured guest and fill my cup to the brim.”

Psalms 23

We are a proud part of the Diocese of Bath and Wells:

www.bathandwells.org.uk

notifying you that your child has fallen into a category whereby they have missed at least 10% of their school days, so far. This can sound a lot, but only 3 or more days per half term makes a child persistently absent. We are sensitive to families having very different needs and this is a completely different route to the term-time pathway. Many families do not realise they have fallen into this bracket until they are presented with the evidence and we check to see if there are any patterns. For example, our Management Information System can track whether a pupil has a pattern of every Friday off, or doesn't attend on a Monday. All these factors can be unpicked and worked on together to improve attendance. Only when all avenues have been exhausted would the Local Authority look to proceed further with penalties. Working together is always our aim!

In conclusion, please do be aware of the information on the back of the term-time forms and understand the consequences that the gov't and Local Authority have put in place. I am held account, by Governors and by Ofsted, on the approach we take and what measure we put in place to encourage attendance at school. **Supporting attendance** is something that we do to the best of our abilities, but we can always improve and outside agencies are a huge part of this vital offer.

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) is a term used to describe children and young people (CYP) who experience challenges in attending school due to negative feelings (such as anxiety). EBSA is commonly associated with emotional and physical distress, and a reluctance to attend school, which can lead to reduced attendance and further anxiety regarding school.

Pupils in Years 5 and 6 and beyond can access guidance, here:

<https://www.supportservicesforeducation.co.uk/Page/20034>

Adults, parents and carers can find information on this link:

<https://www.supportservicesforeducation.co.uk/Page/19956>

Another signpost for family support is **Somerset Big Tent**, which is a partnership of Charities, Charitable Incorporated Organisations and Community Interest Companies. These are organisations that provide a range of services including positive activities, therapeutic services and specialist support to increase positive wellbeing and improve mental health within children and young people aged 5-25 in Somerset.

All services on the Somerset Big Tent website have gone through a *quality and safety assurance process*, this means that Somerset Big Tent has met with each organisation and are satisfied with the key documents and information that they have provided them with. Here is the link for you to check out. Some things need a school referral, some are for parents/carers and some things are a paid-for service:

<https://www.somersetbigtent.org.uk/>

I am very happy to say that **YOUNG SOMERSET** have asked our school to work with them from next year. Our current Year 4 will be given a chance to

work with **YS** for one hour a week as a whole class, learning skills that can be passed onto other pupils across the school. This is excellent news and a real benefit to our school. **What is Young Somerset?** Young Somerset is the primary voluntary and community sector youth work organisation in Somerset and their mission is to put young people first. They deliver a range of services that are aligned to statutory provision and support young peoples' personal, social, economic, educational development. They collaborate to strengthen the sector's offer to deliver positive, sustainable outcomes for children, young people, their families, and their communities.

School Notices

Mr Gillan

- **ALL DATES** that we know of, right now, have been updated and can be found on our calendar on the website:
<https://www.thurlbear.somerset.sch.uk/events/>
- A message from Tempest: "For those parents who are yet to order **online**, they have until **Monday 3rd July 2023** to take advantage of free delivery back to school." Please look in Class Dojo or Tapestry for the secure link. Tempest are returning, next week, to re-do our Year 6 photos.
- **Next week**, we have included a special extra dress down Friday and the contribution to school is for any bottle of your choice, please! This will form the backbone of the prize stall at our Summer Fair, the following Saturday.

The Week Ahead

Monday: Year 2 to the woods

Tuesday: Girls' Cricket Regional Final (Come on, girls!)

Tuesday: RSPCA workshops in school

Thursday: Y3 and 4 / Year 5 and 6 Quad Kids event

Friday: SPECIAL DRESS DOWN FRIDAY in aid of the Summer Fair