



7th March 2024

Dear Parents & Carers

We are seeking your help in supporting our message to students with regard to demonstrating resilience, a value which is closely linked to our ethos around developing Warlingham Learners. We have recently experienced an increase in the number of students seeking medical attention for relatively minor issues such as headaches and colds. This results in students missing out on learning and is putting a considerable strain on our student support team. If a student comes to school with a headache, cold or develops one during the school day, they should be able to sit in a lesson, sipping water whilst maintaining their progress, as we believe this is building resilience for adult working life.

You will read in the letter to school leaders on mild illness and school attendance from Professor Chris Witty (Chief Medical Officer) and other medical professionals, reassurances and expectations around attendance even with a minor cough or cold.

[\(Link to full letter here.\)](#)

***“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.”

Chris Whitty continues, ***“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.”***

We will of course continue to teach and treat students with warmth and kindness. Students must practise working through periods of their day and week when they are tired, ‘under the weather’ or have a headache. We strongly recommend a good night’s sleep, eating and drinking well throughout the day to prevent any ill-health. Students who do suffer migraines, injury or have medical plans can continue to visit the medical room for treatment. Students who can be in school, and therefore be in lessons will be asked to return to their lesson.

As a school, our attendance is above the national average and this will undoubtedly have a positive impact on student progress. The development of students' resilience will only help to enhance this further. For more information you can read the [NHS 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance](#).

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Strachan', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Mr S Strachan

Assistant Headteacher