



16<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Dear Families

Following our Academy Council meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> June, we have been informed that our letter regarding evidence for appointments requires some clarification. We are fully aware of the complexities that all our families face in supporting their children and it will never be our intention to make this more difficult. Our request for evidence is because we have to be able to guarantee that we know where our pupils are if they are not in school. There is now an expectation from the Department for Education that we have seen the evidence and can confirm that this is the reason for them not being in school.

Our attitude to attendance has not changed, and what we are trying to do at Saxon Hill is work together with our families to avoid financial penalties as these are no longer decided by us as a school. Our intention in making these changes is to support you to avoid any issues that could arise if your child's attendance reaches a certain threshold.

We would therefore like to clarify the following;

- We are asking for evidence of any appointment that your child attends during the school day. This can be a copy of the appointment letter, a screen shot of the text reminder for the appointment, or when you bring your child to school or collect them for the appointment you can let the office team know by showing them the letter or reminder. The team just need to be able to sign the register to say that they have seen the evidence.
- If you send evidence via [office@saxon.set.org](mailto:office@saxon.set.org), this is only seen by the office staff. All information will be destroyed immediately once seen. We do not need to see anything other than evidence of the reason why your child is not in school.
- Some pupils require a slightly later start to the day, and this is still agreed by Maggie on an individual basis through discussions with you. In these instances, our meetings and discussions are all that is needed for us to be able to authorise this as it can be considered a part of required adjustments.
- Schools are not allowed to authorise holidays. Unauthorised absences can lead to penalty enforcement and so we are instead hoping to support this precious time together by focusing on the exceptional circumstances that are often absolutely the reasons for these requests. We therefore just need you to be able to provide information that supports the exceptional circumstances for example, you need to holiday in term time because you cannot guarantee an accessible accommodation during school holidays.
- In the very rare situation where we have a pupil absent from school for holidays that don't meet this criteria (e.g. several times in a year during term time) we will be required to unauthorise the absence. This is the expectation of the Local Authority and the Department for Education.

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Thank you for your understanding and continued support.

Best regards,

The Senior Leadership Team