

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are aware that a number of our students take part in Morris Dancing Championships and other competitions that take place across weekends. We fully recognise the commitment, dedication and significant amount of training that students put into these events, and we are very proud of our students when they represent themselves, their families and their communities through activities such as Morris dancing.

We have received a number of requests for students to be absent from school on the Friday before, and/or the Monday following, a weekend championship.

We would like to clarify the school's position regarding these requests.

Under the Department for Education's statutory attendance guidance, schools may record a pupil as attending an approved sporting activity using attendance code P where the pupil is participating in an approved sporting activity during the school session. The activity itself must take place during the session being recorded.

Where a Morris Dancing Championship takes place over a weekend, the Friday before and Monday following the event are normal school days. The absence on these days is therefore not absence for participation in the sporting event itself. Travel to and from the event, preparation, or recovery time associated with a weekend competition cannot be recorded as participation in the sporting activity.

The Headteacher does have discretion to authorise an absence in exceptional circumstances. However, in line with our attendance policy, we do not consider travel or preparation associated with a weekend sporting championship to constitute exceptional circumstances warranting leave of absence. This approach will be applied consistently to requests relating to sporting competitions and events, regardless of the particular sport or activity.

We would therefore strongly encourage students to attend school on the Friday before a championship and to return to school as soon as possible on the Monday afterwards. This will help to minimise the amount of learning missed and reduce the impact on their overall attendance.

We understand that balancing school commitments with sporting activities can sometimes be challenging, and we very much value the opportunities that participation in sport and other activities provides for our students. Our decision is not intended to diminish the importance of Morris dancing or the achievements of our students. Rather, we have a responsibility to ensure that students receive their full-time education and that attendance decisions are applied fairly and consistently.

Thank you for your continued support in helping your child maintain strong attendance and make the most of their education at school.

Yours faithfully,



Carlton Bramwell
Executive Headteacher