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12th January 2024

Dear parent/ guardian,

Happy New Year!

Welcome back! I hope everyone had a lovely and restful Christmas holiday and feel rejuvenated for the new year ahead.

As the spring term is now firmly underway, I wanted to draw your notice to a few events in school and to also update you on some government initiatives.

Ygam

Ygam is a charity which supports schools in delivering evidence led education to help prevent gaming and gambling harms. As a school we have worked with Ygam for a number of years. You may be wondering what this has to do with parents of primary aged children; well, gaming and gambling harms can begin at a very young age. Consider:

- What might influence a young person to gamble?
- What is a loot box?
- Why are in-game items so important to my child?

Why not come and join Ygam at Tonacliffe on **Wednesday 31st January at 2:15pm-3:15pm** for a Gaming and Gambling Awareness and Information Session for Parents/Carers. This FREE information session will develop your understanding of gaming and gambling, enabling you to have conversations with your children about the potential harms.

Topics covered will be:

- Gambling: exploring the influences on children
- Gaming: discussing the benefits and concerns
- The blurred lines between gaming and gambling
- How to spot the signs of harm
- Useful tips to create a healthy gaming balance
- Where to get help and support

[Click here](#) to register for your free place. Take a look at Ygam's [Parents' Hub](#) for more help and advice.

Attendance

You may have heard of the new government initiative: Moments Matter/ Attendance Counts. Here are some facts from the government to share:

The link between attendance and attainment is clear:

- In 2018/19, just 40% of persistently absent (PA) children in KS2 achieved expected KS2 standards, compared with 84% of pupils who were regular attenders. (*Persistent absence is having an attendance of 90% or lower.*)
- And 36% of PA children in KS4 got 9 to 4 (grades) in their English and maths GCSEs, also compared with 84% of regular attenders.

And it's never too late to benefit from good attendance:

- More than half (54%) of pupils who were PA in Year 10 and then rarely absent in Year 11, passed at least 5 GCSEs, compared to 36% of pupils who were persistently absent in both years.

But attendance is important for more than just attainment:

- Regular school attendance can facilitate positive peer relationships, which is a protective factor for mental health and wellbeing.

In support of good attendance at school, the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) are reminding parents of back to school advice amid rising levels of winter illness. You may find the following link really useful:

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ukhsa-reminds-parents-of-back-to-school-advice?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=d2897b05-876e-4b17-96d6-0a01fa2e1827&utm_content=daily

If you need any support regarding your child's attendance in school, please do not hesitate to talk with your child's class teacher or me. Remember, we are here to help.

Friends of Tonacliffe: Bag2School

Bag2School will be collecting from school on **Friday 19th January 2024**. Please bring your bag (or bags!) to the school office by **Thursday 18th January** and help the Friends of Tonacliffe to have a really good collection.

In your bags you can include adults' and children's clothes, shoes (tied together please), hats, belts, handbags and soft toys, (please refer to <https://bag2school.com> for full details).

Parents' Assemblies

We have two parents' assemblies this half term. Parents and family of children in purple class are welcome to attend their child's class assembly on **Tuesday 30th January at 9:00am** and parents and family of children in gold class, on **Tuesday 6th February at 9:00am**.

I want to wish you and your family all the best for 2024.

With very best wishes,

J. B. Heap

Mrs Joanne B. Heap
Headteacher

