

# Attendance Guidance for Parents and Carers

School Motto: **Dream Big, Aim High**

School aims:

We are caring  
We are confident  
We are creative



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### What does good attendance look like over the year?

Above 96%	<p><b>Less than 6 days absence a year:</b> Excellent attendance! Pupils with this attendance should achieve the best grades they can, leading to the best possible start in their secondary education.</p>
95%	<p><b>Less than 10 days absence in a year:</b> Pupils with this attendance are likely to achieve their target grades and will be well prepared for starting secondary education.</p>
90%	<p><b>19 days absence over the year:</b> Pupils with this attendance are missing a month of school per year and may fall behind in Maths and English; it will be difficult for them to achieve their best. Attendance at this level is deemed to be persistent absence - parents of pupils with this level of attendance could be issued with a Penalty Notice by the LA.</p>
85%	<p><b>29 days absence in a year:</b> These pupils are missing 6 weeks of school a year, it will be very difficult for them to keep up and achieve their best.</p>
80%	<p>Pupils with this attendance are missing a day for every week of school. It will be almost impossible to keep up with work.</p>

#### Why good attendance matters

All parents want the best for their children and for them to have the best possible start in life in life. Having a good education is important to ensure that they have the best opportunities in their adult life. They only get one chance at school, and your child's future may be affected by not attending school. The aim should be to attend 100% of the time. It is also important to arrive at school on time. If a child arrives late to school every day, their learning begins to suffer. Much of our learning follows a carefully sequenced learning approach and lessons build on previous learning, therefore when they are absent they often struggle when they return. Irregular attendance also affects children friendships and peer relationships.

#### Rewards

Attendance is actively promoted through a range of rewards. It is implemented consistently across school

1. Weekly attendance – on Friday the class with the highest attendance receives 'Butler's Bear' and a certificate to display for the following week.
2. Weekly attendance for the class will be shared and celebrated with parents via Do-jo and displayed in the classroom window.
3. Half termly - children with 95+% receive a certificate, 100% attendance receive a certificate and 100% attendance sticker.
4. Half termly – the class with the highest attendance receives a whole class treat – i.e. film and popcorn afternoon etc.

5. Yearly – all children who have had 100% attendance over the year receive a special award and the class with the highest attendance over the year will receive an additional trip out i.e. a picnic in the park etc.

### Sanctions:

1. We have a strategies in response to low attendance:  
Letter 1 – Advising you your child's attendance has fallen below the required 97%,  
Letter 2 – Attendance has not improved and you are invited into school to discuss an action plan for improvement with the **Attendance Officer**.  
Letter 3 – *Given when you attend the meeting to advise what happens next, attendance will be monitored for 12 weeks should there be in excess of 3 days (6 sessions) of unauthorised absences recorded a request will be made to the Local Authority to issue a Education Penalty Notices, or a referral will be made to Early Help where necessary.*  
Letter 3a – *Issued if failed to attend meeting and details above. Letter 3 and 3a are final warning letters.*  
Letter 4 – *Issued when Education Penalty Notice has been requested.*
2. We take actions in accordance with this policy between school and outside agencies.

### School timings:

Foundation Stage 2 and Key Stage 1 (year 1 and 2) starts prompt at 8.45am

Foundation Stage 1 (Nursery) starts at 8.40am – 11.20am for morning session and 12.20 – 3.20 for afternoon session

KS 1

- A Late mark will be given up to 9.15am and marked as an L on the register. This will also be monitored.
- After 9.15am your child will have an unauthorised U mark for that complete morning session.

### Lunch times are as follows:

F1 – 11.40 - 12.20 pm

F2 – 11.45am – 12.45pm

Year 1 / 2 - 12.00 - 1.00pm

If your child will be late or absent please call the office as quickly as possible in order for your child to be accurately recorded on the register. You must call for each subsequent day they are off and after.

### Authorised and unauthorised absences and illness

In line with guidance from the DfE and LA, school will not routinely ask for all absences to be authorised.

However, we still have a responsibility to act promptly and robustly to raise attendance.

In light of both these directives, school will authorise clearly diagnosable conditions (e.g. chicken pox, measles etc.) as illnesses without requesting evidence unless the child's attendance is causing concern or we have cause to question the reason given.

For parents reporting symptomatic conditions, (e.g. headache, feeling under the weather, got a cough / cold etc.) we will authorise the first three days each year as illness but then will ask for evidence to support getting the correct code for any further absences.

Where we decide an illness is authorised we will record it as 'I' in the register. Where we decide it will not be authorised it will be recorded as an 'O' code.

Both of these codes count as absences and will impact on your child's overall attendance, regardless of whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

#### Incorrect reasons for absence given by parents

The school has a legal obligation to complete the register for each child accurately. To do this we rely on accurate information from parents/carers.

If the school believes that a parent/carer has given incorrect information, we are entitled to ask for evidence for that absence. If it cannot be provided, we will ask that evidence is provided for all future absences.

The most common instance of this is a parent reporting their child as being ill when they are actually on holiday, believing it will avoid a fine. If we think you have been on holiday but you have said otherwise and you cannot provide evidence to support the illness we reserve the right to not authorise the absence and to proceed as if the absence was an unauthorised holiday.

#### Medical and Dental Appointments

Wherever possible, medical appointments should be made outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, it is expected that pupils only miss part of the day. Evidence in the form of an appointment card, text or email should be provided.

#### Sickness

After sickness or a stomach bug, please keep children off for 4-8hrs after the last episode. Please ensure they are able to eat and drink something and are fit for a day of school activities before they return. Please note you may be required to prove medical evidence if your child exceeds 3 days of symptomatic illness for the illness to be authorised.

#### Home visit – The Local Authority Advice is as follows

Visiting parents/carers and students at their homes is a reasonable and suitable response to attendance concerns. It will often be the first contact with a family and will establish a line of communication and hopefully form a positive working relationship.

(Notts County Council - Improving School Attendance: A Toolkit for Maintained schools, July 2020).

#### Holidays during term time

The Department for Education (DfE) does not allow children to take holidays during the school term.

However, the school and the DfE understand there may be exceptional circumstances and will deal with these on a case by case basis through discussion with parents and the Head Teacher.

All requests for such leave of absence must be sent to the school in writing (a proforma is available on the school website or from the school office).

Unauthorised holidays taken during term time could be subject to a fine from the Local Authority.

#### Fines and Prosecution

##### Local Authority Guidance outlines Fines and Prosecution

You can be fined for taking your child on holiday during term time without the head teacher's permission **or if attendance is deemed as persistent.**

**You, as parent, have legal responsibility under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996, for ensuring that your child attends school regularly. Failure to ensure this happens can result in Education Penalty Notices being issued under Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996 for failing to ensure your child attends school regularly.**

Penalty notices are issued at £120 (per child, per parent) and must be paid within the statutory 28-day deadline. Penalty notices are only reduced to £60 if they are paid in full, within 21 days of issue. All fines must be paid within 28 days of issue otherwise you may be prosecuted in court

**Schedule for the issuing of Penalty Notices for holidays in term time**

Parent applies for holiday	Reply to application in writing to explain that the holiday absence has not been approved and the absence will be unauthorised and that this may lead to a PN being issued
Child is absent for family holiday	Mark register as unauthorised
Child returns to school following holiday	Write to parent to explain that request has been made to LA for issuing PN
	Write to LA with all info necessary to issue a PN within 2 weeks of holiday.

We thank you for your on-going support and look forward to working together to ensure your child can fulfil their true potential both now and in the future.

Nottinghamshire County Council School Attendance Flow Chart (2018) Weblink:

<https://nscp.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/media/eufnuyn5/school-attendance-flowchart-january-2018.pdf>

