



Dear Parents and Carers

School year 2022 to 2023.

Due to the severe impact of Covid 19, the Government have raised expectations of what constitutes full-time education by regular attendance at school. An attendance rate of 96% is required, unless absence is due to medical reason or otherwise. 95% attendance means that your child will have missed 10 school days over the year, which is a significant amount. In the Supreme Court case of R v Platt, regular attendance is defined as attending on time, and on the days that school have designated, and that even a minute late is an offence. This applies to all children enrolled at school and there is no exception for Nursery and Reception students.

While we understand that children become ill, minor illnesses will not be authorised. These are headaches, tiredness and minor colds. Public Health England guidelines will be followed, which can be found at:

https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Guidance_on_infection_control_in%20schools_poster.pdf

Absences over four days will need to be supported by medical evidence. This can be a copy of the prescription, a doctor's note or NHS text.

Unauthorised absences will be forwarded to the Local Authority for consideration of a Fixed Penalty, as at Section 7 below.

Family holidays will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. What are not exceptional circumstances are: seasonal work, holidays previously cancelled by Covid, family weddings abroad or being unable to take holidays during term time due to work. It is the Principal's decision as to what constitutes an exceptional circumstance. Multiple holidays in a school year will be referred to the Local Authority for consideration of prosecution before a Magistrates Court.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 have removed the reference to holidays during term time and now provides that a leave of absence during term time will only be granted where an application is made in advance to the school and the school consider that the leave of absence should be granted due to exceptional circumstances relating to that application.

Should you fail to apply in advance for absence due to family holiday or other circumstance then this will be recorded as unauthorised absence. If it has been decided that any holiday applied for does not constitute 'exceptional circumstance' then your child's absence will also be recorded as unauthorised.

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places upon parents a duty to ensure their child receives suitable efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or education otherwise.

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Section 444 (1)(a) of the same Act states that where a parent of a child who knowingly and without reasonable justification fails to ensure regular attendance of a registered pupil at that school, the parent of the child shall be guilty of an offence against that Section. The Local Authority may, where necessary, institute legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under this section of the Education Act 1996 against those parents concerned. Alternatively, Section 444B of the same Act empowers the Local Education Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty of up to £120.00 per parent, per child. In cases where this duty is not being fulfilled Section 444B of the same Act empowers the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty of up to £120.00 per parent, per child. This letter is a formal Fixed Penalty Warning should you cause your child to be absent from the Academy without authorisation.

We are happy to work with you to achieve the Government and our own attendance expectations, but you need to play your part too and good communication with the academies by you is crucial to success. I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your continued support.

Kind regards

Mrs R Pryme
Executive Principal

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