

Dear parents and carers

OCTOBER 2024

During the Summer break the government changed the way school attendance is monitored and the processes for dealing with poor attendance from the start of this academic year. A copy of the statutory guidance we must now follow can be found [here](#) and the new AJS policy has been uploaded to the school website. Information about the new penalty fines issued by the Local Authority are summarised on page 2 and a new Attendance Roadmap is attached. Improving attendance is a key school improvement priority this year and a target has been set for each class to achieve at least 95% attendance by the end of the school year. We need to work together to reach this target!

Meet our Attendance Officer... Mr Isley

Our friendly Attendance Officer and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mr Richard Isley, is here to help improve attendance. He will be happy to meet with parents either in school or at home to discuss what support we can give in the event that parents are struggling to get children in regularly and on time. Of course there will be occasions when your children cannot attend through illness or an exceptional circumstance, but we hope these are rare. Whilst we are compassionate and may understand the reason behind the absences, we will challenge persistent poor attendance. We currently have many children who are classed as 'persistently absent' (at school less than 90% of the time) and we aim to support the parents and carers of these families to improve attendance to avoid possible fines and/or legal action from the Local Authority. If your child is struggling or refusing to come to school, please contact Mr Isley - we have many different strategies that we can use to help you and your child.



Mr Isley will be supporting with the following this year:

- **Late Gate** - If your child is late to school, parents and/or children will be asked to tell us the reason for lateness. If your child is regularly late Mr Isley will make contact with you to establish the reason and what the school might be able to do to support you. If there are no support requirements and the lateness persists there may be legal consequences such as a fine.
- **Home Visits** - If your child is absent and you have not called to tell us why, or replied to our email that is sent out shortly after registration, Mr Isley will pay you a home visit to enquire as to the reason for the absence and check on the wellbeing of the child and your family. Please don't take this personally! The Government and the Trust are very clear that school attendance is a safeguarding matter. If we are unable to see the child or speak to a parent or carer at the primary recorded address, the absence will be marked as unauthorised.
- **Term time leave** - Mr Isley will make contact if the school believes your child is absent because they have been taken on holiday. When our children miss lessons it reduces their opportunities to learn and socialise with friends so please avoid term time holidays.
- **Making contact after third day of absence** - If your child has been absent for three or more days, Mr Isley will contact you to see what support can be offered. Again, please don't take this personally or negatively, it's a measure to support you and your family. Where a child is regularly absent for significant periods we may ask for medical evidence such as screen shots of NHS appointments, copies of prescriptions or medicines in line with the new Government policy.
- **Unauthorised Absence** - If we have not been told why a child is absent, or we've been told and the reason is not within the guidance for authorising your child's absence (such as a family holiday or being tired after a weekend event), or they have arrived after the register has closed (30 minutes after it has been called) then their absence will be marked as unauthorised. Mr Isley will then investigate each absence and contact parents as required.

PENALTY NOTICE FINES FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IS CHANGING

FIRST OFFENCE

1

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular Attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days
Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

2

SECOND OFFENCE (WITHIN 3 YEARS)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child to be paid within 28 days. No reduced rate will be offered.

The following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued after **19th August 2024**.

3

THIRD OFFENCE AND ANY FURTHER OFFENCES (WITHIN 3 YEARS)

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Magistrates; fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child. Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on a Parents future DBS certificate, due to failure to safeguard a child's education'.

10 SESSIONS (5 DAYS) OF UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE IN A 10-WEEK PERIOD

Penalty Notice Fines will be considered when there has been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period.

"THIS MORNING, HE HAD A RUNNY NOSE... BUT LOOK AT HIM NOW!"




HM Government

Head to the NHS website to find out more.



"THIS MORNING, HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT SCHOOL... BUT LOOK AT HIM NOW!"




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Head to the Education Hub to find out more.

