



The Minster Nursery & Infant School - Attendance changes from the start of this term

20th September 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

We are writing to you because the Department for Education (DfE) have introduced new attendance guidance for schools for managing and supporting school attendance. They have also introduced a new national framework for penalty notice and amended the law. These changes came into effect from the 19 August 2024 and all schools across the country are expected to follow the new statutory guidance.

In order for us to fully comply with these changes, we will have an updated Pupil Attendance Policy for 2024/25. This is available on our website for you to access and read through.

At The Minster Nursery & Infant School, we aim for children to achieve at least 96% attendance for a full school year. If children are absent from school, they will miss key learning opportunities resulting in gaps in their knowledge and understanding. This can significantly impact upon their learning and development. Absence from school should only occur when a child is unfit to learn, where there is an exceptional circumstance or when the child has a day of religious observance. If you have exceptional circumstances and wish to request a leave of absence during term time, you can complete the request form (available from the office and school website) and return it to the school office as far in advance of the requested leave period as possible.

Support first – We are here for our community

The importance of regular attendance at school cannot be stressed enough. We will promote school attendance and provide support when a pupil is struggling to attend school. This may mean that we may raise the issue of attendance even if your child has only had a couple of days off ill. This is not because we don't believe you. By working with you, the school can step in early to help to prevent patterns of absence developing. We may identify other underlying issues that are making your child reluctant to attend school and be able to help you and your child. For this to be successful we would ask you to support and work with the school.

National Framework for penalty notices

To provide consistency, the Government have introduced a new national framework for when schools and Local Authorities believe that they have exhausted all offers of support and the parent/carer is not engaging with the attempt to improve their child's attendance at school. The threshold for schools has now changed. Further information can be seen in the penalty notice information attached to this letter.

Term time holidays

Pupils should not be taken out of school during term time unless it is unavoidable. Schools are required to consider requests for leave of absence in term time. A family holiday is not an acceptable reason for a child to miss school. If a pupil is absent for 5 days or more then the school is expected to refer the matter for the consideration of a Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority.

Full details of all of the changes can be found by visiting the Government webpage:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-schoolattendance>



Children and families have 175 days off school to spend time together, including weekends and school holidays. There is a clear connection between regular attendance and achievement. As attendance deteriorates, so does performance, achievement, friendship circles and self-esteem.

Communicating with you

We believe that it is important to communicate with you effectively, so that you are fully aware of your child's attendance patterns. As a school, we will be doing this through letters, but also through emails and texts. We aim to use these methods of communication to report of positive attendance patterns as well as those that need to improve.

Attendance reboot - 'Be here and shine bright'

We believe that your child attending our school is something to celebrate and see promoting pupil attendance as a positive thing. To this end, we will be taking part in the '*Be here and shine bright*' pupil attendance re-boot that is taking place across all schools within our multi-academy trust, so do look out for the flyers and messages. This will be in addition to the usual attendance initiatives and celebrations that take place at The Minster Nursery & infant School.

We appreciate that there are a number of changes at the start of each term, and for many of you these will have little or no impact. However, if your child is struggling at school and you are worried about any aspect of your child's attendance, please speak with your child's teacher or the **Lisa Parker**, family support worker within the school. They are there to explore what support can be provided to help your child to attend school regularly.

If you have any questions or concerns about anything within this letter, please do get in touch with us to discuss further.

Yours Sincerely

Mrs Stephanie Edmonds
Head Teacher