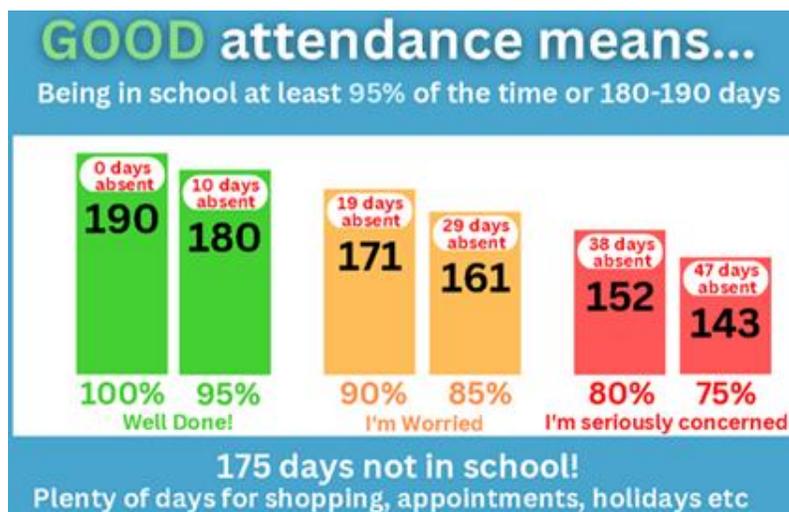




Dear Parents & Carers,

In August 2024, the Government released updated statutory guidance titled “*Working Together to Improve School Attendance*”. This aims to ensure a consistent national approach to school attendance and support across all schools.

We know that good attendance is key to successful learning, and we believe our children can be among the very best. While we always aim for 100% attendance, our current target is 97%, which is used to compare us with other schools nationally.



We have robust systems in place to support and encourage good attendance. Sinead, Caroline and Amy monitors attendance data closely and works with families to implement support and interventions. However, considering the new guidance, we are updating our expectations and procedures.

### Key National Changes Last Year

#### 1. New National Framework for Attendance Penalty Notices

- Each parent will receive a separate penalty notice for each child who is absent without authorisation.

- Fines are £160 per parent, per child, payable within 28 days. This is reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second offence within 3 years will incur the full £160 fine with no reduction.
- A third offence will be escalated directly to Magistrate's Court.
- This applies to term-time leave and irregular attendance.
- Schools must conduct a home visit by the third day of absence if term-time leave is suspected.
- Irregular attendance (10 or more unauthorised sessions in a 10-week period) may lead to prosecution. Sessions refer to half-days.

Please notify the school office daily if your child is absent, including the reason and any medical evidence (e.g. appointment letters or prescriptions).

## **2. Updated DfE Guidance**

The updated *Working Together to Improve Attendance* guidance outlines expectations for parents, schools, and Local Authorities. It promotes regular attendance and provides strategies for support and intervention.

## **3. Modernised Attendance Coding**

The H code (holiday leave) has been removed. Headteachers cannot authorise holidays during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances, which may be recorded under the C code. Any unauthorised absence of 5 or more days will result in a penalty notice.

## **4. Daily Attendance Data Sharing**

From 19th August 2024, all state-funded schools must share daily attendance data with the Department for Education and Local Authority. This live data helps identify patterns (e.g. repeated absences at the same time each year) and enables earlier support through tools like Early Help services.

## **Working Together**

We are proud of the generally strong attendance across our schools and want to continue working with families to avoid fines and ensure every child benefits from consistent learning.

For more information, please visit the Attendance section on your school's website.

Yours sincerely,

Rene Africa

Headteacher