



Moorside Primary School and Nursery Attendance & Punctuality Policy 2024-2026

Date:	Review Date:	Coordinator:	Nominated Governor:	
03.09.24	April 2026	Mrs S Price	Mr C Lea	
Headteacher:		Mrs C Rowett	Date:	18.09.24
Chair of Governors:		Mr C Lea	Date:	18.09.24

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This policy should be read alongside other school policies which support learning. This policy has been produced with regard to the DfE statutory guidance (applicable from 19.08.24) 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance'.

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There are clear links between attendance and attainment, therefore everyone has a responsibility for promoting excellent attendance: governors, parents, pupils and all school staff.

Vision Statement:

We will give our children a secure foundation for life through:

- A culture of success and achievement for all.
- An aspirational and inspirational curriculum.
- Strong relationships between the school, families, pupils and our community.
- A whole school inclusive and nurturing ethos.
- High expectations for all stakeholders, surrounding our children with the best educators and specialists.

1. The importance of school attendance

Our vision is to build strong relationships and work jointly with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and working in partnership with families to remove them and develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.

Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. Good attendance begins with school being somewhere pupils want to be and therefore the foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils are keen and ready to learn.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, schools and partners should work in partnership with pupils and parents collaboratively to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. Securing good attendance cannot therefore be seen in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with schools' efforts on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources, including pupil premium. It cannot solely be the preserve of a single member of staff, or organisation, it must be a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff in school, the trust or governing body, the local authority, and other local partners.

2. Working together to improve attendance

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively in partnership with, not against families. All partners should work together to:

Expect

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

Monitor

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

Listen and understand

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

Facilitate support

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

Formalise support

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also

in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.

Enforce

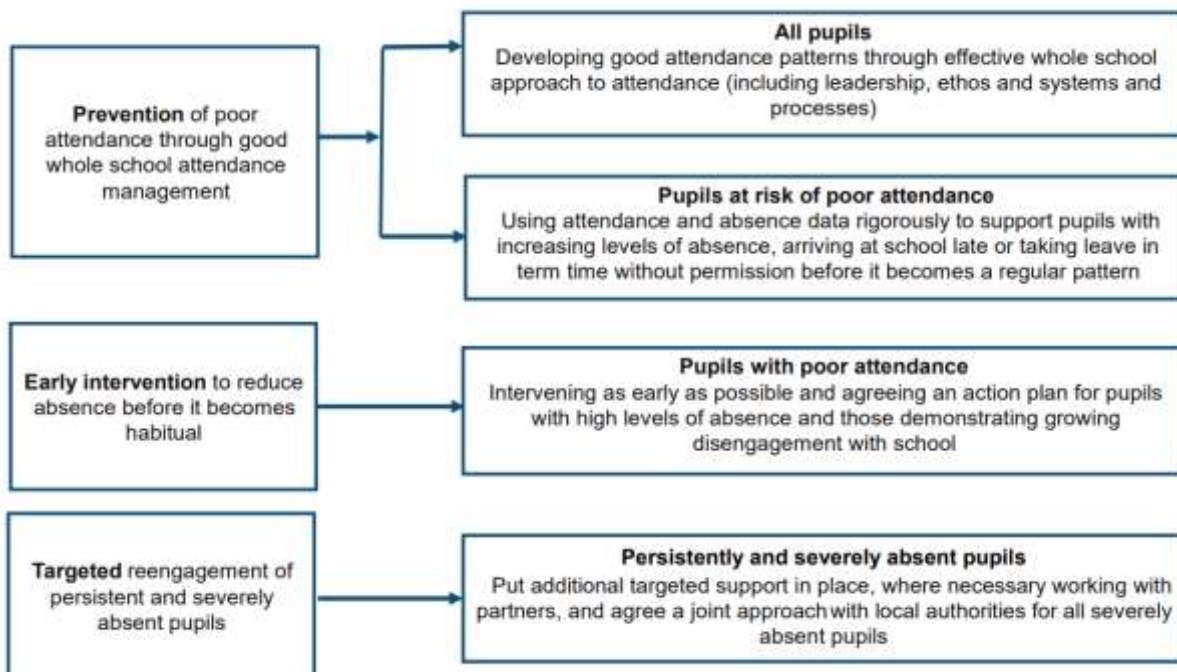
Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

3. Roles and responsibilities

School and our day to day process for managing attendance:

- **The school day begins at 8:50am and finishes at 3:15pm for Early Years; 3.20pm for Key Stage1 (Year 1 and 2) and Key Stage 2 (Year 3, 4, 5 and 6).**
- **Morning registration takes place between 8:50am and 9am.**
- **Lunchtime registration takes place between 1pm and 1.05pm.**
- A child arriving after 9.00am, but before 9.15am will be given an L-Late (before registration closed) mark.
- If a child arrives after 9.15am they will be given a U-Late (after registers closed) mark.
- Children arriving after 1:05 will be given an L-late mark and after 1.15pm a U-Late mark. L-Late is recorded as a present mark and U-Late is recorded as absent for the session.
- School asks parents of late children to sign children into school with a reason why they are late. Staff will record how many minutes late the pupil is on Scholarpack. Parents who consistently bring their children to school late will be contacted for a meeting with the Headteacher.
- When no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is one that would be recorded using one of the codes statistically classified as authorised, then the appropriate code will be used.
- Our Admin team are responsible for first day calling and recording information received if parents have not contacted the school
- If no contact and/or explanation for absence from Parents/Carers has been received, the Parent Support Adviser will begin the process to establish contact (they will assess as to whether a welfare check from school is required).
- School will ask the Police to make a Welfare Call or make a referral to Social Care if Parents/Carers continually fail to answer phone calls or give reasons for absence for children with poor attendance
- Staff use Scholarpack to record attendance and the school uses the Department for Education absence and attendance codes as outlined in [Working together to improve school attendance](#).
- Pupils may be marked as unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances e.g. serious disruption to travel caused by the weather or an emergency school closure.

- The Headteacher, Mrs Rowett, or Parent Support Adviser, Mrs Price, has responsibility for considering all leave of absence for exceptional circumstances including holidays, and will only authorise such requests in exceptional circumstances as stated in [Working together to improve school attendance](#).
- Poor attendance is monitored and if necessary, Parents/Carers will be asked to an informal meeting with Mrs Price initially to address the problems
- Pupils whose attendance is below 92% will be contacted by Mrs Price or Mrs Rowett notifying them of this and asking to work together to improve the attendance
- Persistent Absence - With effect from 1st September 2015, a pupil will be deemed to be a 'persistent absentee' where their attendance falls below 90%. Missing this amount of school has a significant, detrimental impact on a child's learning. Parents/Carers will be asked to attend a meeting with Mrs Price and/or Mrs Rowett to identify how we can work together to improve their child's attendance.
- The Parent Support Adviser will liaise with the Early Help Service if a Family Outreach Worker is involved with the family.
- Promotion of regular school attendance will take place on a daily basis in classrooms and within school celebration assemblies.
- Attendance will be reported to parents weekly through the newsletter.
- Parents/Carers will be asked to provide medical evidence for children with poor attendance due to illness.
- Regular analysis of attendance and absence data will take place to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place. Please see the chart below on effective school attendance improvement and management.



Pupils:

- All pupils should be aware of the importance of regular school attendance. If a pupil is having difficulties which might be preventing them from attending school regularly, they should speak to their class teacher, Headteacher or the Parent Support Adviser
- Pupils are expected to attend school regularly and to be on time for registration and ready to learn.

Parents and Carers:

- If a pupil is prevented from attending school because of sickness (both physical or mental health related) it is the responsibility of the parent to contact the school on the first day of their child's absence. An I code will be given in this instance. If contact is not made with the school, an unauthorised mark - Code N - will be given until sufficient written or verbal confirmation of the absence is received.
- Pupils arriving late should be brought to the school office. Parents/Carers will then sign the late register on the electronic sign in, giving reasons for lateness. These records are monitored weekly and Parents/Carers of pupils who are regularly late are invited to school to discuss support measures with the Parent Support Adviser.
- Wherever possible, Parents/Carers should avoid making medical/dental appointments for their children during school hours. The school will request that proof of appointments be shown to the staff in the School Office. If proof is not provided, a U code - unauthorised absence - will be used
- If a Parent/Carer wishes to request a leave of absence they should complete a Leave of Absence During Term Time Request Form and return it to the school office. This form can be obtained from the school office. This form must be fully completed and clear.
- Parents/Carers do not have the right to take children out of school for a holiday during term time. A Parent/Carer wishing to apply for a leave of absence for exceptional circumstances will need to apply using the Leave of Absence During Term Time Request Form. This form is available from the office. Requests should be applied for 6 school weeks before the absence is required. Parents/Carers will receive a written response within a few days.
- It is an expectation that Parents/Carers will work with school and/or other local partners to resolve attendance issues
- As absence is so often a symptom of wider issues a family is facing, schools, trusts and local authorities should always work together with other local partners to understand the barriers to attendance and provide support. Where that is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents. Attendance legal intervention can only be used for pupils of compulsory school age and decisions should be made on an individual case by case basis

4. The law on school attendance and the right to full-time education

Under the 1996 Education Act, parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so could result in legal intervention taking place

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where Parents/Carers decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

This is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. At key stage 2, pupils not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths had an overall absence rate of 4.7%, compared to 3.5% among those meeting the expected standard. Moreover, the overall absence rate of pupils not meeting the expected standard was higher than among those meeting the higher standard (4.7% compared to 2.7%).

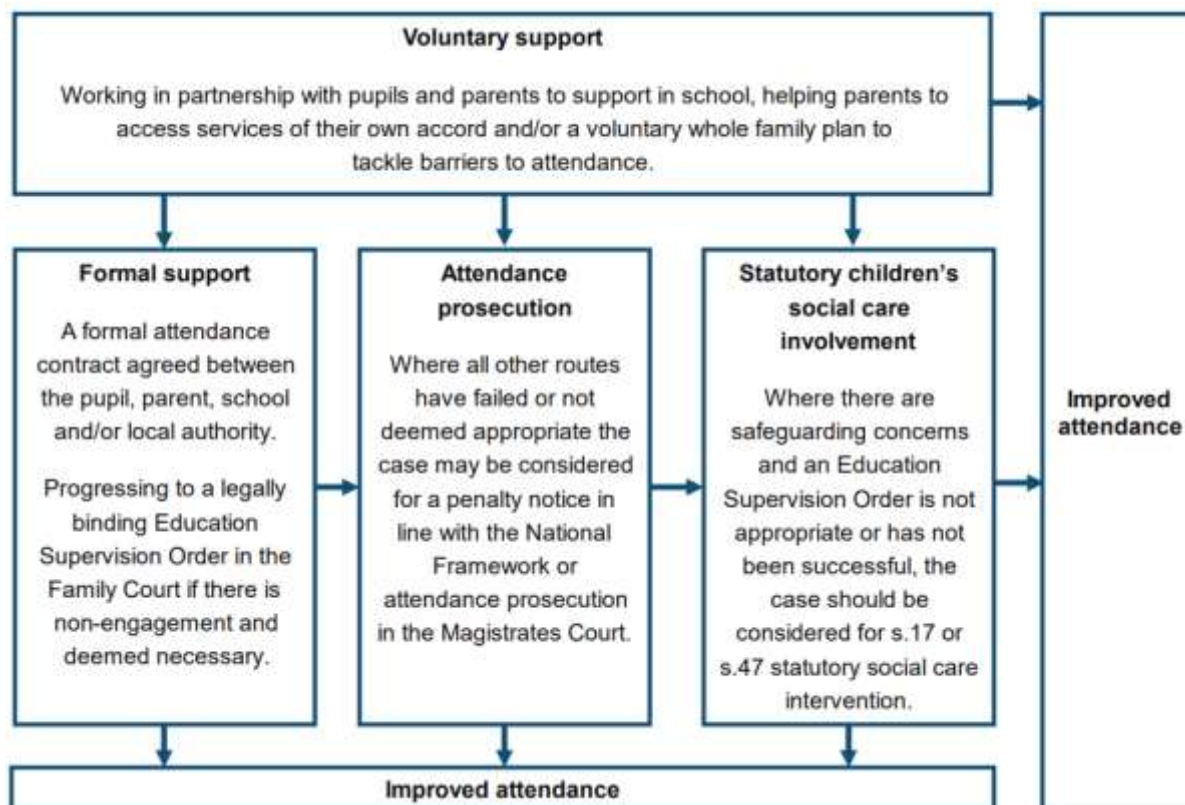
For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of extrafamilial harms, including crime (the proportion of children that had been cautioned or sentenced for any offence that had ever been persistently absent was 81% and for serious violence offence was 85%)

The school admission register, sometimes known as the 'the school roll', must be kept in accordance with the [School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#). Regulation 8 sets out the contents of the admission register

All schools can grant a leave of absence when a pupil needs to be absent from school with permission. All schools are expected to restrict leaves of absence to the specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of the [School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#) and schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority must do so.

5. Attendance legal intervention

Schools, trusts and local authorities are expected to work together and make use of the full range of legal interventions rather than relying solely on penalty notices or prosecution. It is for individual schools and local authorities to decide whether to use them in an individual case after considering the individual circumstances of a family. These are: Attendance contracts, Education supervision orders, Attendance prosecution, Parenting orders and Penalty notices. The chart below outlines providing support first before attendance legal intervention looks:



Where they are used, it should be clear that it is the most appropriate intervention to change parental behaviour and in making the decision to use an intervention, headteachers and local authority officers should have regard to their safeguarding duties as set out in the statutory guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Schools and local authorities should decide which Parent(s)/Carer(s) to involve in attendance legal intervention, but this should usually be the parent or parents who have allowed the absence.

Where a family chooses to take a holiday during term time which is not authorised, the absence will be coded as unauthorised - G code - and legal intervention may take place where 5 or more days of unauthorised absence are recorded.

If leave of absence is taken without the request having been agreed, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised with the appropriate code. This may result in legal intervention taking place.

Legal intervention may take place where there have been at least 10 sessions (1/2 a day is 1 session) of unauthorised absence during the previous 10 school weeks. This includes unauthorised late arrivals, coded U, which count as unauthorised absence for the whole session.

In compliance with the Education Act 436A (Chapter 2 Part 6) the school will, after making appropriate checks, report all Children Missing from Education to the Local Authority, Education Welfare Service, who has a duty to investigate the whereabouts of such children and negotiate their prompt return to suitable education.

For further guidance please refer to:
 NYC: - [School Attendance | CYPInfo \(northyorks.gov.uk\)](https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/cypsinfo/school-attendance)

Working together to improve school attendance: applies from 19th August 2024 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

6. Who to contact for support with attendance

If you have concerns about your child's attendance, the first person to speak to would be the class teacher of the child. They can be contacted via the school office. If this contact has not led to improved attendance then Parents/Carers may be signposted to contact our Parent Support Adviser – to further continue the supportive process.

The school telephone number is 01765 604208. The school admin email is admin@moorside-pri.n-yorks.sch.uk

7. Attendance targets

Each school has an annual attendance target set by Senior Leadership and Governors. It is expected that the whole school community will work together to achieve this target which, for Moorside Primary School and Nursery, is 96%

Attainment is strongly linked to attendance, and research has shown that if pupils are to achieve their full potential, they must attend school regularly.

8. Promoting and incentivising good attendance

The school recognises that sometimes medical appointments during school time are unavoidable. Absences due to medical appointments where proof has been shared with the school office will not be counted when acknowledging good attendance.

Pupils in each class will work together to achieve the best collective attendance each week. 100% attendance. The winning class each week receives an additional breaktime.

Children are also rewarded daily with marbles in their class jar for 100% attendance and this contributes to a whole class reward when the jar is full.

Children with 100% attendance at the end of the school year also receive a certificate

Procedures for dealing with children who are not collected at the end of the day

Moorside Primary School and Nursery recognises that it has a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its pupils, and that this duty extends to having arrangements in place for dealing with pupils not collected from school at the end of the school day or school activity.

School Protocol:

- 5-10 minutes -children to be taken to the school office. A phone call will be made to parents in contact priority order.
- 10-30 minutes - school will continue to attempt to make contact with parents/carers, and other emergency contacts. If there is space in wrap around care, children will be cared for until a parent or carer arrives with a charge incurred for this service.
- 30 minutes - If no contact has been made school will seek advice from North Yorkshire Children's Social Care. There will be additional charges for our wrap around care club.

Appendix A

Moorside Primary School and Nursery Cause for Concern Overview Relating to Attendance

The highest standards of attendance and punctuality are encouraged for all pupils at all times. School will endeavor to work with all parents/carers to assist them in carrying out their duties as required by the DfE. Where a child's attendance causes concern, the following parameters and actions will be considered by the Headteacher/Parent Support Adviser. Each case will be considered individually based on circumstances.

Cause for concern	Action(s) to be considered
95% attendance or below at any point within an academic year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance will be monitored by the School and attendance history considered. • Contact with Parents/Carers if necessary. <p>PREVENTION</p>
92% attendance or below at any point within an academic year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Parents/Carers asking them to work with the School Attendance Champion to improve attendance. <p>EARLY INTERVENTION</p>
90% attendance or below at any point within an academic year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted support will be put in place with the School Attendance Champions and where necessary, other partners in the local authority. <p>TARGETED</p>
Repeated incidences of illness-related absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact made with Parents/Carers by the PSA and strategies established to improve attendance • Referral to school nurse. • Request that parents/carers provide proof of doctor's involvement (appointment card with child's name on / letter / copy of prescription etc). • Work for the pupil might be sent home to be completed.
Repeated arrival at school after 8:50am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact made with Parents/Carers by the PSA and strategies established to improve attendance
Repeated arrival at school after 9.10am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact made with Parents/Carers by the PSA and strategies established to improve attendance
Persistent and severe absence	<p>Where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year), schools and local authorities are expected to work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these pupils. In doing so, schools should sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support for children who might be facing difficulties, rather than reaching immediately for punitive approaches.</p> <p>If no improvement is seen, legal intervention will take place.</p>

Appendix B

Letter sent to parents September 2024 - New DfE statutory attendance guidance

Dear Parents/Carers

There has been growing national concern regarding declining school attendance rates across the UK. In response, the Department for Education has introduced new statutory guidance, effective from August 2024, aimed at reducing term-time holidays and unauthorised absences, and supporting families whose children are struggling to attend.

'Support First'

As the DfE notes, 'Improving attendance is everyone's business', and it is important that we, as your child's school, work together in partnership with you, your family, your child, and the wider community.

The new 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' Guidance emphasises a 'Support First' ethos, and recognises that 'the barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families... [It] is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances.'

If you are concerned about your child's attendance, then please contact Mrs Sally Price, Parent Support Advisor as soon as possible so that barriers to attendance can be understood, and appropriate support can be put in place to support you, your family, and your child to prevent further absences.

Formalising and intensifying the support

Where voluntary support has not been effective and/or has not been engaged with, we will work with partners, including the local authority, to formalise and intensify the support.

As part of the measures introduced, if a pupil has 10 or more unauthorised absences (one day is 2 sessions) within 10 school weeks, the pupil's parent(s)/carer(s) may receive a 'Notice to Improve' notification sent via email on behalf of the school and issued by the local authority (LA). Each day of absence is recorded as two sessions (morning and afternoon). Unauthorised absences include:

- unauthorised absence (where there is no reasonable circumstance for the absence taking place),
- arriving late after the register has closed,
- or a combination of these with holidays taken during term time

These 10 weeks can span different terms, academic years, and even different educational settings, such as transitions to secondary school or in-year school changes. For instance, if your child misses 3 days of school for a holiday in July (6 sessions) and is late after the

register closes on 4 occasions (4 sessions) between September and October, you may be issued a 'Notice to Improve' notification.

The 'Notice to Improve' notification will set out the expectations and period notice for the improvement of attendance such as 'no further unauthorised absences'. Should the expectations not be met in the improvement period, then a Penalty Notice may then be requested by the school and issued by the LA to each parent/carer responsible for the child.

Any holiday-related absence taken that includes 10 sessions in 10 weeks, may result in a Penalty Notice. In this instance, a 'Notice to Improve' notification will not be issued beforehand.

The penalty amount is increasing to £160 from September (reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days for the first offence). If a parent receives a second penalty notice within a rolling three-year period, the fine is £160 and there is no option to pay the fine at a reduced rate.

Parents with parental responsibility, and adults residing with the child, including for example, stepparents who have day-to-day responsibility for the child, may be fined, and this applies to each child who is absent. For example, if two adults take two children out of school, the total fines would be £640 (reduced to £320 for a first offence paid within 21 days).

If a Penalty Notice is not paid within the time limits set out in the letter to the parent, the Local Authority may proceed the case to court.

We recognise that these Penalty Notices may be unpopular with families, but it is important to inform you of these changes promptly.

Nationally, Headteachers are:

- not permitted to approve term-time holidays except in genuinely exceptional circumstances, and
- are to consider each application for a leave of absence individually before making our decision.

The law clearly expects Headteachers to enforce these penalties strictly.

The new policy also states that all schools must consider issuing Penalty Notices if the criteria is met. This is a national statutory process and will be followed by all English state funded schools.

Our revised school attendance policy in line with these requirements can be found on the school website.

The primary goal of these measures is to ensure that children do not miss out on their education. Every lesson is a crucial part of your child's learning journey, and frequent absences can significantly hinder their progress. Thank you for your continued cooperation in working with us to support your child's education.

Mrs Rowett

Headteacher