



Attendance update

Dear Parents/carers,

Important Notice: New Government Attendance Changes Effective 19 August 2024

As I'm sure you are aware, poor attendance continues to be a national concern. We are proud that Frogmore Infant School has effective relationships with parents and carers and that we will always do our best to support you with school attendance. Please take the time to carefully read this letter. As part of our ongoing commitment to ensure the highest standards of education and wellbeing for all children, we are writing to inform you about the new attendance regulations introduced by the UK government. We are duty bound to adhere to this national directive and we have very little flexibility in authorising leave during term time.

Overview of Changes:

The UK government has revised its attendance policies to enhance educational outcomes, reduce absenteeism and improve punctuality. These changes are designed to ensure that all children can benefit fully from their education.

Increased Monitoring and Reporting:

Schools are now required to monitor attendance more closely and report any absences to local authorities (LA) more frequently. This will involve more regular checks and communications regarding your child's attendance record.

Where it can be demonstrated that a parent/carer is not fulfilling their parental responsibility to ensure that their child receives a suitable full-time education then the school can consider requesting that the LA take further action. This can be in the form of a penalty notice, prosecution, or the school may suggest other formal interventions.

National Framework for penalty notices

To provide consistency, the Government have introduced a new national framework for when schools and LAs 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:

FINES WILL BE ISSUED FOR 10 SESSIONS OF UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE WITHIN A 10 WEEK PERIOD

One day equals two sessions (morning and afternoon registration)- one week of absence equates to 10 sessions.

Please note that fines can also be issued for non-consecutive unauthorised absence within the 10 week period.

Please be aware that late arrivals after 9am are marked as 'Unauthorised late after registers close' and count towards the unauthorised absence tally.



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FIRST OFFENCE

The first time a Penalty Notice is used for unauthorised absence, the fine will be £160 per parent per child to be paid within 28 days.

If the fine is paid within 21 days it is reduced to £80 per parent per child

SECOND OFFENCE WITHIN A THREE YEAR PERIOD

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence within a three year period, the fine will be £160 per parent per child to be paid within 21 days.

FURTHER OFFENCES WITHIN A THREE YEAR PERIOD

Any further offences within a three year period will not result in a Penalty Notice as the case will be referred straight to the Magistrates Court where fines can be up to £2500 per parent per child.

Term time holidays

The Department for Education does not consider a need or desire for a holiday/leisure activity as an exceptional circumstance. The following reasons (not an exhaustive list!) are not deemed to be exceptional circumstances and will result in unauthorised absence:

- My work does not allow me to take holidays in school holidays
- My child needs to take a holiday in quieter times because of their needs
- Our holiday has been gifted by someone to us
- My child has 100% attendance
- We cannot afford a holiday during the school holidays

Lateness

Your child should be on time for the start of school and registration at 8.40am. Class doors close at 8.50am. If your child arrives after this time, they will receive late mark for the morning session. If your child arrives after 9am after the closure of the register they will receive an unauthorised mark for the morning session.

Support Services:

Our school works closely with families to address any barriers to regular attendance. All schools are expected to promote school attendance and provide support to remove barriers where a pupil is struggling to attend school. This may mean that the school raises the issue of attendance even if your child has only had a couple of days off ill. This is not because they don't believe you. By working with you, schools can step in early to help to prevent patterns of absence developing. If you feel support is required, please do not hesitate to speak to the school office.



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Your Role as Parents and Guardians:

The DFE guidance states: Where parents 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. We ask for your cooperation and support in ensuring your child attends school regularly and punctually.

Here are some ways you can help:

- Ensure your child arrives at school on time every day.
- Schedule appointments outside of school hours where possible.
- Communicate promptly with the school regarding any absences and provide necessary documentation/medical evidence when requested.
- If you plan to take your child on holiday, please ensure that a request for absence form is completed and submitted to the school office. This will remove the requirement for the school to complete a home visit.

I understand that there may be times when your child is unable to attend school, and we will work closely with you to support your family during these periods. However, it is crucial that we maintain high levels of attendance to maximise each pupil's learning opportunities and achieve the best possible outcomes.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding these new attendance requirements, please do not hesitate to contact the school office. Thank you for your continued support and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Jill King
Headteacher



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ATTENDANCE MATTERS



Every school day counts BUT every minute is equally important!