



ATTENDANCE NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

We are writing to all parents/carers to provide clear expectations for school attendance and outline the absence procedures.

At Higham Lane School we will always encourage pupils to strive for 100% attendance; however, we do understand that this is not always possible and have therefore set a school attendance target of 96% for the academic year 2023/24. There is a strong link between attendance and academic achievement and therefore it is very important that your child attends school every day unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Only with the full support of parents/carers can high attendance be achieved. Parents or carers are legally responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and to inform school of the reason for a child's absence on the first day of absence and to provide further information as is required.

ILLNESS AND FIRST DAY CALL

SCHOOL TERM DATES 2023-2024

Autumn Term

INSET Days: 1 September, 4 September, 5 September

Students return to school: 6 September

INSET Day: 27 October

Half Term: 30 October – 3 November

End of Term: 22 December

Spring Term

INSET Day: 8 January

Students return to school: 9 January

Half Term: 12 February – 16 February

End of Term: 22 March

Summer Term

INSET Day: 8 April

Students return to school: 9 April

Half Term: 27 May to 31 May

End of Term: 19 July

If your child is unable to attend school through illness or another reason please inform us on the first day of absence before 9:00am providing details of the reason for your child's absence and expected day of return to school. This can be done via ClassCharts or MyEd apps, or a phone call to school on 024 7638 8123 or 024 7675 7000. If your child has further days absence after the first day, parent/carers must continue to notify school on each day of absence.

IF YOUR CHILD FEELS UNWELL AT SCHOOL

If your child feels unwell at school we ask that, unless this is an emergency, they stay in lessons until either breaktime or lunchtime and then report to Student Services. Students are not allowed to contact parents/carers directly from their own phone, Student Services will contact parents. In most cases students are able to stay in school and feel better once they have had a drink, some food and where necessary a paracetamol. Therefore to support us with this please ensure your child has breakfast or bring some food with them to school, they have a drinks bottle and if they suffer from ongoing issues they can bring their own paracetamol into school.

PUNCTUALITY MATTERS TOO!

Good punctuality to both lesson and to school leads to higher levels of achievement. When students arrive late at school, they miss out on essential teaching and learning at the beginning of the school day. This can reduce achievement, regardless of a student's academic ability. Your child may also feel awkward arriving to the classroom where everyone is settled and students arriving late can disrupt the entire class.

Being 10 minutes late every day equates to over 30 hours, (approximately 6 days) of learning lost each year.

Please ensure that your child arrives at school by 8:35am, ready for line up with their form tutor on the playground at 8:40am. The main school gate on Higham Lane will close at 8:40am and students arriving at 8:40am or after, need to report to Student Services via Brookdale Road entrance. Lateness will result in a breaktime detention unless the school are informed of a valid reason is provided by parent/carer. In the case of persistent lateness parent/carers will be notified and students punctuality will be monitored, if no improvement is made further sanctions will be issued. There are a number of temporary traffic lights that has increased the amount of traffic in the local area. If you are driving your child to school and traffic is heavy, please ensure you give extra time to avoid the additional traffic and consider dropping your child off at a safe point away from the school site e.g. Lidl or Aldi and allowing them to walk the rest of the journey to school.

If students are late, they need to enter the School through Student Services to sign in.

REWARDS



Rewarding good attendance

Excellent attendance will be monitored and rewarded by the School. Rewards for attendance will be issued termly using the following two categories:

- Excellent Attendance: 100% attendance in a term = certificate worth 10 house points.
- Excellent Attendance: 100% in a year = certificate worth 30 house points.

Students will receive the above in assembly or tutor time. There will also be a weekly attendance prize awarded to the form in each year group with the highest attendance for the previous week.

Congratulations to our Amazon Voucher winners this half term, all students with 100% attendance were awarded with a certificate and entered into a raffle. Two students from each year group were awarded £10 Amazon Vouchers.



TYPES OF ABSENCE

Each absence is classed as authorised or unauthorised. Absences are coded as authorised where reasons are considered valid and unauthorised where no explanation or unacceptable reasons are given.

The following reasons are not acceptable:

- shopping visits or days out to theme parks or to attend concerts/shows
- care for family members
- parents' work commitments or business trips
- holidays taken in term time (including long weekends taken on Fridays and/or Mondays)

For guidance on whether or not to keep your child off school when they feel unwell please check the NHS guidance provided on the link below:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

The Headteacher shall not grant any leave of absence during term time unless: An application has been made in advance, by the parent with whom the child normally resides and they consider there to be exceptional circumstances relating to the application. Unauthorised Leave of Absences will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service and this could lead to a fixed penalty fine. Where parents wish to take their child(ren) out of school during term time for purposes other than holidays, they should complete the leave of absence form. This is available via the website at

<https://www.highamlaneschool.co.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=2192&type=pdf>

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and your ongoing support with setting the highest expectations for your children. If you have any queries please contact me on 024 7638 8123 or 024 7675 7000 or via email at contactus@highamlaneschool.co.uk FAO: S Taylor/ A Williams to discuss this matter further.

**Your child's progress
academically as well as
socially is our shared
priority.**



LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

UPDATED INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

The Supreme Court recently reached a decision in the case of *Platt v Isle of Wight Council* which has clarified the law on unauthorised leave, including holidays, during term time. The parents of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that they attend school on a regular basis. The Supreme Court has made clear that attending school 'regularly' means that the children must attend school on every day that they are required to do so. As such, the parents of any child who is absent from school without authorisation for any length of time are likely to be considered as committing an offence under s444 of the Education Act 1996.

Head Teachers retain the ability to authorise leave in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. When considering such requests for a leave of absence, the school are obliged to act within the law. Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. If the leave is granted, head teachers are able to determine the number of school days a child can be absent for.

It is for the Head Teacher to decide what is 'exceptional' and it is at their discretion if the circumstances warrant the leave to be granted. The school can only consider Leave of Absence requests which are made by the 'resident' parent.

Each application for a leave of absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

Where applications for leave of absence are made in advance and refused, the child will be required to be in school on the dates set out in the application. If the child is absent during that period, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence, which may result in legal action being taken against the parent(s), by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Failure to make an application for leave in advance can also result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued to the parent(s).

All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service, part of Warwickshire County Council

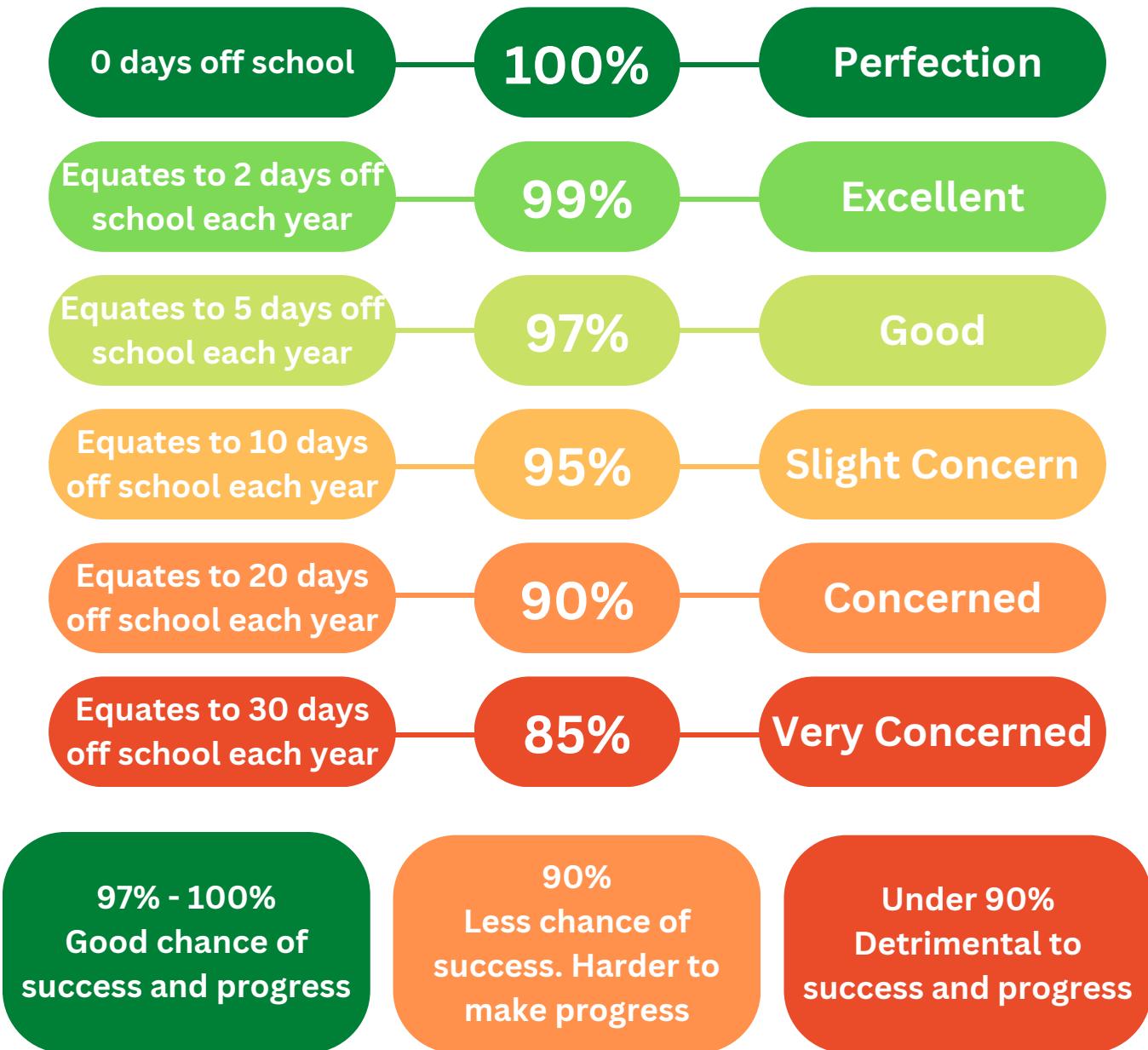
It is important to note, Fixed Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each absent child, (for example 2 children and 2 parents, means each parent will receive 2 invoices in the amount of £120 each, totalling £240 for both children, this is reduced to £60 per child if paid within 21 days).

Where a Fixed Penalty Notice is not paid within the required timeframe as set out on the notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal proceedings under S444 Education Act 1996.

Fixed Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Warwickshire County Council's Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices.



EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS



EVERY MINUTE COUNTS

LATENESS = LOST LEARNING

(FIGURES BELOW ARE CALCUALTED OVER A SCHOOL YEAR)

5 minutes late each day	3 days lost!
10 minutes late each day	6.5 days lost!
15 minutes late each day	10 days lost!
20 minutes late each day	13 days lost!
25 minutes late each day	19 days lost!

