Good attendance at school: valuing every day

SEPTEMBER 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

As a local cluster of schools, we encourage and support attendance through:

- Aiming for 100% attendance for all schools, although we know that, due to some exceptional circumstances, this is not always possible and will work with you promptly and help where we can, to understand barriers to attendance.
- **Sharing with you all that Headteachers are not able to authorise holidays in term time.**
- Discussing decisions on absence between schools where siblings are in more than one local school.
- Working with families to improve attendance, particularly persistent absence (attendance below 90%), which can have a significant impact on a child's progress, wellbeing and development.
- **Issuing Penalty Notices for any unauthorised absence where the pupil has been**:
  - 10 or more half-day sessions (equivalent to five school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school-week period – these do not need to be consecutive.
  - persistently late for up to 10 sessions (five days) after the register has closed.
  - persistently late before the close of the register, but the school has met with the Parent and has clearly communicated that they will categorise as unauthorised any further lateness if, and when, the threshold of 10 sessions (five days) has been met.

Penalty notices will be issued if a child's attendance crosses any of the above thresholds. If a fine is raised, then each responsible parent will be fined **£80 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £160 if paid within 28 days. Second notice within three years: £160**. Failure to pay within a set period of time will incur further penalties. Where attendance concerns continue, a **Notice to Improve** may be issued which sets out the improvements required and the timescale for achieving them before any further enforcement action is considered.

Headteachers can grant leave of absence only in exceptional cases. They are not able to authorise holidays during term time. **The DfE is clear that there is no parental/carer right for a family holiday; cost, experiences for the child weather and overlapping with the school holidays are not factors on which the decision should be made" and that exceptional reasons are 'rare'**. The Hampshire Code of Conduct says that if a Penalty Notice has previously been issued and this has not improved attendance, the case must be referred to the Attendance Legal Panel (ALP) and could lead to a Penalty Notice, or alternative intervention, including parental prosecution.

We will contact you if we have any concerns regarding your child's attendance. This link https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/ is helpful for guiding parents on minor illnesses and school. Where absences are frequent, prolonged or there are concerns regarding attendance, schools may request medical evidence. Wherever possible, routine medical or dental appointments should be arranged outside school hours.

If you have any other questions or concerns, please contact us on : adminoffice@eling.hants.sch.uk

Yours faithfully, Trina Sillence, Headteacher

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