



Cuckney Church of England Primary
School
School Lane
Cuckney
Mansfield
Notts NG20 9NB

office@cuckney.notts.sch.uk

Telephone: 01623 842223

Fax: 01623 845391

Headteacher: Mrs L C Crossland



Dream, Believe, Achieve

'Nothing will be impossible with God' Luke 1:37

Thursday 10th October 2024

RE: Attendance procedures update

Dear Parents / Carers,

In recent conversations with parents, it seems that further clarification on new attendance procedures may be helpful. While we are still trying to adjust to the new requirements ourselves (we are not experts just yet!) we will try to offer some further explanation of the new procedures and try to answer your questions or queries. Much work is still ongoing this term. We have already updated our Attendance policy in the light of the new requirements and this can be found on the school website. This term we will also update our parent information leaflet and share an attendance 'toolkit' for parents, giving further updates as we attend Local Authority training.

The updated requirements are –

- The 'guidance' is statutory and came into effect on 19 August 2024
- Schools will be required to share daily attendance data with the DfE
- **A national framework will be introduced for parent fines due to unauthorised absences**
- The use of attendance codes will be revised
- There are new rules and clarifications on deleting a pupil from the admission register
- The admission register must record the name the pupil uses at the school
- There is greater emphasis on supporting pupils with health needs
- **Headteachers should not grant leave of absence for holidays or for pupils to take part in protests**
- **Schools must notify the LA of pupils who may miss 15 days because of sickness**
- Schools will be expected to inform youth offending workers of unexplained absences
- Schools will be expected to have a senior attendance champion
- Schools must use electronic registers and keep records for six years
- There will be additional expectations for part-time timetables

So, what does this mean for parents?

The underlined points above are the ones affecting parents directly, the others are for school admin staff to manage.

A national framework will be introduced for parent fines due to unauthorised absences

A national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absences in a rolling period of 10 school weeks will be established. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence, e.g. five sessions of holiday taken in term time plus five sessions of arriving late after the register closes, and the rolling period can span different terms and school years.

Where a pupil reaches the threshold, schools must consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate in the individual circumstances, or if support would be more appropriate. Schools will also be able to issue a 'Notice to Improve' before a penalty notice which gives parents a final opportunity to engage in support and improve attendance. The guidance states that schools need to make judgements on each individual case, and should not therefore have a blanket position of issuing or not issuing penalty notices when the threshold is met.

Alongside this, costs for fines will rise from £60 to £80 if paid within 21 days, and from £120 to £160 if paid in 28 days. Surplus revenue raised by fines after administration costs will also be able to be used by LAs on attendance support, rather than having to be returned to the government.

Headteachers should not grant leave of absence for holidays or for pupils to take part in protests

The DfE has clarified its position towards leave of absence for holidays, and added a new point relating to protests. The previous guidance states that it is "unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday" by headteachers. The new guidance clarifies that the DfE's view is that it generally "does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance". The DfE has also added a new point to state that leave of absence should not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

Schools must notify the LA of pupils who may miss 15 days because of sickness

All schools are legally required to share information from their registers with the Local Authority and DfE. The guidance adds a new minimum expectation, which is that the Local Authority must be provided with the name and address of all pupils who have been recorded with code I (illness) and who the school reasonably believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. This is to help the school and Local Authority agree any provision needed to ensure continuity of education for pupils who cannot attend because of health needs.

Please let me know if you require any further information, which can then be included in the parent leaflet we are updating. We will endeavour to answer as many of your questions as possible with further detail over the term and, if we don't have answers, we do have contacts at the Local Authority that we can ask for advice. Miss Challands will be attending the Attendance Network training on 12th December giving us a further opportunity to gain answers to any outstanding questions.

Further information from the full publication can be found at -
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

The school attendance policy can be found at-
<https://www.cuckneyprimaryschool.co.uk/policies/>

Should you have any questions you would like answering regarding the new attendance procedures please email Miss Challands at achallands@cuckney.notts.sch.uk and we will do our very best to get back to you with a response.

Kind regards



Lisa Crossland
Headteacher