



WOODLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Headteacher: Dr Victoria Carr, BA Hons QTS, MA, NPQH, MA, EdD.

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am pleased to share some important updates about how we are supporting good attendance at Woodlands Primary School, Hedgehogs Nursery and Sunbeams Club.

Our priority is to help every child attend school regularly, to enjoy school, and thrive in their learning. To strengthen this, we are working with an organisation called *Inclusive Attendance*. Together, we are developing approaches that not only encourage children to come to school, but also help our families overcome any barriers that might make attendance difficult.

Our Approach

We are continuing to use an **inclusive attendance** model, which means that staff, families and children all play a part in supporting attendance and engagement in learning.

To do this, we offer a **tiered system of support**:

- **Tier 1: Universal support** – strategies and encouragement available for every child.
- **Tier 2: Targeted support** – extra help through early intervention if attendance begins to decline.
- **Tier 3: Specialised support** – personalised resources for children and families with more persistent attendance difficulties.

Communication with Families

Good communication is central to our work with you. We know that the letters you have received may have caused you some distress and have resolved to meet our statutory requirements and also take a slightly different approach. Going forward, therefore, you will notice some changes in how we share attendance information:

- We will continue to monitor attendance regularly and raise any concerns promptly, it is our job to do so.
- Class teachers will speak with you more often, if they observe issues, about your child's attendance.
- In addition to the annual report, you will now receive a half-termly attendance report, helping you to track your child's attendance more closely.
- Where attendance is a concern, we will show absence as both the number of days missed and the percentage of learning time lost.

Attendance Panel Meetings

Where attendance is causing concern, you may be invited to an Attendance Panel meeting. These meetings are supportive and designed to work with you to find practical solutions to increase your child's attendance at school.

Meetings will usually be chaired by Mrs Liversey (Deputy Headteacher) and Mrs Brown (Attendance Officer), with other staff (e.g. your child's class teacher or a member of the pastoral team) joining where helpful.

Panel meetings may take place if:



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- your child is at risk of persistent absence (10+ days per year, around 3+ days per term)
- your child is already persistently absent (18+ days per year, around 6+ days per term)
- your child is severely absent (missing 50% or more of school days in a year).

Unauthorised absences and fixed penalty notices

Parents/Carers should be aware that taking children out of school during the term for a holiday is not deemed an exceptional circumstance and as such will not be authorised.

Parents/carers should be aware that the school have a duty to contact the Local Authority if a pupil has 10 or more unauthorised absences in the current term with a view to the Local Authority issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice or taking other legal action. We have to act as agents for the Local Authority in this regard and we will do all we can to support you before the situation escalates to this point.

- The first penalty notice issued to the parent for that pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first notice, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
- A third penalty notice must not be issued within a 3-year period. Therefore, in cases where the threshold is met for a third (or subsequent) times within those 3 years, a penalty notice cannot be issued and alternative action will be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions that the Local Authority could enforce.

Let's continue to work together!

By focusing on attendance in a positive way, we aim to build a strong culture where the whole school community, including parents/carers, shares responsibility for helping every child attend and succeed.

For more details, please visit our school website, where you will also find our Attendance Policy.

Kind regards,

S M Liversey

Mrs S. Liversey
Deputy Headteacher