



# Hillsborough Primary School

A Member of Tupton School Academy Trust  
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5<sup>th</sup> September 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are concerned that a significant number of our pupils have been absent since school returned on September 3<sup>rd</sup>. Our whole school attendance last week was 90%. I wrote to you in the summer term to share the changes to the management of attendance and wanted to remind you of the key changes. The Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance is now statutory (as of 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024).

The Department for Education has introduced the guidance to ensure consistent approaches across local authorities.

These changes have been broken down into 4 categories.

## 1) A new National Framework for Attendance Penalty Notices

Any attendance penalty notices issued after the 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024 will be issued in line with the new regulations. The new Penalty Notice regulations are:

- Each parent will be issued a separate penalty notice, for each child who is absent.  
For example, 2 parents and 3 children, each parent will receive 3 penalty notices for £160 each, with a family total of £960 in fines.
- The fine amount will be £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.
- This will be considered your first offence.
- The next time an offence occurs, within 3 years of the date the first penalty notice is issued, the fine amount will be £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days, with no reduction.
- The third time an offence occurs this will be presented to Magistrate's court with no penalty notice issued.

This will include Term Time Leave fines, and Irregular Attendance. Term time leave does not just include holidays. Where a child is absent and it is believed they are absent due to term time leave, we will carry out a home visit to see your child/ren on or before their 3<sup>rd</sup> school day of absence. **It is vital that you inform school of any absences due to holiday PRIOR TO DEPARTURE. If we cannot locate your child, a safeguarding concern may be raised.**

Irregular attendance - Where a child has unauthorised absences of 10 sessions or more in any 10-week period, we will consider escalation to prosecution. Sessions refer to each half a school day, Hillsborough has 2 sessions each day. We will always consider the reasons for any absence, the support already offered, and the engagement of parents/carers and children. These 10 sessions could be made up of term time leave, unauthorised late marks, or unauthorised absence.

It is therefore important to notify school every day that your child is absent, providing a reason, and where appropriate evidence of medical appointments or prescribed medication. Schools will consider NHS guidance [Health protection in children and young people settings, including education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/health-protection-in-children-and-young-people-settings-including-education) and [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/health/its-my-child-too-ill-for-school/) when making their decision whether to authorise

absence due to illness. We no longer follow a 48 hour rule for sickness, children can return to school 24 hours after the last time they were sick.

We will visit all pupils on their 3<sup>rd</sup> day of absence in line with our school policy.

## **2) Updates to the Working Together to Improve Attendance Guidance**

The Department for Education have updated the [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) and this is available on the DFE website and school website. This clarifies the expectations for parents, schools and the Local Authority to promote the importance of regular attendance at school, and to provide ideas for support and interventions when a young person is not attending school on a regular basis.

## **3) Regulation changes to modernise school attendance and admission registers.**

The predominant change is around the use of attendance coding for schools to use on their attendance register. This may mean that you see different marks on your child's attendance certificate, including sub codes for example C2 for a reduced timetable, or Y4 for school closed due to weather conditions. The H code for authorised term time leave (holiday) has been removed, therefore I can no longer authorise term time leave, unless there are exceptional circumstances covered by the C code and I must request an attendance penalty notice if there are 5 or more days of unauthorised absence. Another change to these regulations is that parents/carers must accept the school place offered prior to their child going on school roll. Therefore, if you have been offered a school place that was not one of your preferences you must either accept the school place or notify the Local Authority how you intent to educate your child.

## **4) Regulations will come into force on the 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024 to mandate attendance data sharing by all state funded schools.**

This means that your child's attendance data will be shared with the Department for Education and the Local Authority every day. This will be live data. This will allow the DFE to provide us with the tools to monitor and see improvement in attendance, and will allow the Local Authority to provide advice, support, and Early Help services. It will also allow tracking of attendance trends for example a child reported as ill the same week each year, or a certain year group or cohort with patterns of absence.

With all of these changes the priority is supporting a young person to access school every day, ensuring they have the reasonable adjustments, interventions and early help to engage in their learning.

If your child is finding attending school difficult, is feeling anxious about attending school, or needs help to access their education please come to the school office and ask to speak to Miss Bateman, Miss Johnson or Mrs Kay who will try to identify ways we can support you and your child.

Every school day matters. If you have any queries, questions or concerns please email [Sheffieldinclusion&attendance@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:Sheffieldinclusion&attendance@sheffield.gov.uk) , visit the website [School attendance matters | Sheffield City Council](#) or find us on the Sheffield Local Directory [School Attendance | Sheffield \(sheffielddirectory.org.uk\)](#)

Yours sincerely,



Nicola Wileman  
Headteacher