



Hillsborough Primary School

A Member of Inova Multi Academy Trust

Parkside Road, Sheffield, S6 2AA

Tel: 0114 2347898 Fax: 0114 285 2006

E-mail: enquiries@hillsborough.sheffield.sch.uk

Trust Success Partner: Mr S Burnside Headteacher: Mrs N Wileman
Assistant Headteachers: Ms T Minnis, Mrs J King and Ms Kay

14th May 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

I just want to start my letter by saying a big thank you for all your support around our drive to improve attendance. We have certainly seen some positive steps by individuals and families being taken and this is making such a difference to the children's progress in school. There have been so many new initiatives that we have introduced that we felt it was important to provide an update of changes on the horizon and areas of concern that we still have in ensuring all children are in school, every day, on time.

To address the issue of attendance more effectively, we have already implemented some changes in our attendance procedures. One update is the appointment of Mr. Kenyon as our new Attendance/Education Welfare Officer who is working closely with families to improve attendance. He has already made changes to the signing in procedures in the reception for late pupils, as well as modified our absence reporting telephone message to ensure better reporting and record-keeping. He is also reviewing our attendance rewards programme with our attendance ambassadors to recognise and celebrate those who demonstrate outstanding attendance and punctuality, and we will continue to run punctuality weeks with prizes available for each class, aiming to encourage a school-wide ethos of punctuality.

Additionally, the Trust have invested in A Star attendance management system; an innovative software that will streamline attendance tracking, monitoring and reporting, ensuring a more effective process for all involved. Parents will receive weekly text messages regarding their child's attendance, which we hope will give you a clearer picture of your child's attendance that week and then the system generates letters to parents on a regular basis when triggers have been hit. The system takes its information from our MIS system overnight and will send letters automatically the next morning. This will begin to be used from Monday 2nd June and we hope it will support you in knowing the information and process surrounding your child's absence.

We wish to draw your attention to the issue regarding punctuality at our school. In recent weeks, we have observed that a significant number of children are arriving late. Our registers are open between 8:40am and 8:50 am, during which time all children must be in class to receive their present mark. Those arriving between 8:50 am and 9:10 am will need to sign in at the main office and will receive a late mark (L). This procedure differs from our policy last year, as prompted by new guidance issued by the Government in August 2024. If children arrive after 9:10 am, they will be marked with a U code for unauthorised absence, which adversely impacts their overall attendance percentage. A U code can have serious implications, including potential involvement from the Local Authority for persistent absence, which ultimately affects your child's educational path. Arriving later than 8.50am means children miss essential learning opportunities in key curriculum areas which can significantly impede their academic progress, putting them at risk of falling behind their friends. Regular attendance not only provides access to essential lessons that help children to achieve expected outcomes but importantly, fosters friendships and social skills that are vital for personal growth.

We fully appreciate that these recent changes may impact different families in various ways. For those of you who feel these adjustments may not directly affect your situation, we kindly ask you to remain supportive and engaged. If your child expresses anxiety about attending school, we urge you to speak with their teacher or contact Mr Kenyon or Miss Kay within school. They are available to discuss the challenges and explore what support can be provided to help encourage regular attendance.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership and support for your child's education.

Yours Sincerely

Nicola Wileman, Headteacher