

Monkton Church of England Primary School



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Executive Headteacher: Mr P McCarthy

Head of School: Mr C Marston

12th September 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,

As we start a new academic year, we would like to share our school attendance aims with you and advise you of some of the changes to the DfE statutory guidance.

The Federation of Minster and Monkton Church of England Primary Schools is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all of our pupils. Regular attendance is vital if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities available to them. Research shows that pupils who have high school attendance considerably increase their chances of gaining better outcomes. As well as academic achievement, good attendance promotes the development of friendships and reduces anxiety around falling behind in class. We promote 100% attendance and punctuality for all our pupils.

At Monkton we have a positive, whole school approach and encourage good attendance by providing a safe, calm environment for children to learn, and delivering a curriculum that is fun and engaging. We aspire to high standards of attendance and monitor rigorously to identify patterns of absence. When monitoring, particular attention is paid to persistent absentees, whose attendance is 90% or below. In these instances, a letter will be sent advising the parents/carers of this and offering support. Support may be given by regular communication and meetings, working collaboratively with parents, to discuss attendance and engagement at school and providing access to wider support services to resolve any barriers to attendance.

The DfE statutory guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' has been revised with effect from August 2024. It reflects changes to the law on recording school attendance, including a revised set of codes, and granting leaves of absence. For example, schools are no longer able to authorise a term-time holiday under any circumstances. Furthermore, it includes the new National Framework for issuing penalty notices, with the threshold for a penalty notice being 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks.

The Federation's Attendance Policy has been updated accordingly and is available to view on the school website: <https://monkton.kent.sch.uk/our-school/key-information/policies>

We understand that pupils may be absent from school on occasion due to being unwell, and we support this fully for their well-being and that of their classmates. However, sometimes it can be a difficult to determine when a child is too ill for school. The NHS information 'Is My Child Too Ill for School?' can be found on our school website: <https://monkton.kent.sch.uk/parents/Illness-etc> and provides a useful guide.



Some children may face greater barriers, and find attending school more challenging, than others and feelings of anxiety may result in school avoidance. However, avoiding school is unlikely to help. We understand this and are keen to work in partnership with families to find supportive routes to improve attendance.

We know that a positive approach to attendance can have a significant impact and we ask you to support your child's attendance by:

- Being positive and enthusiastic about school
- Helping your child develop a good term-time routine
- Encouraging your child to get to school on time
- Supporting your child by attending school events

If you have any concerns about your child's attendance, or wish to discuss anything raised in this letter, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Kind regards,

Helen Ling

School Business Manager/Attendance Officer