

Burford Partnership Schools

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Dear Parents and Carers,

We hope this letter finds you well. As a partnership of schools, we are committed to working together to promote good attendance and to ensure a consistent approach to attendance across all of our schools. Following discussions between the Burford Partnership Heads, we are writing to share some important information about attendance and our approach to supporting regular school attendance.

We are writing to stress the importance of your child's attendance at school and how vital it is to their learning, progress and overall wellbeing. We aim for every child to maintain an attendance rate of at least 95% throughout the academic year, and we need your support to help us achieve this important goal.

Why is attendance so important?

Every school day is important, and regular attendance is essential to your child's learning and progress. Regular attendance helps children to stay on track with their learning, develop positive habits and build confidence, resilience and a strong work ethic, all of which will benefit them throughout their education and beyond.

Even small amounts of missed time can have a significant impact. Missing just a few days each term can lead to gaps in learning, making it harder for children to catch up and progress as they should. This can have a ripple effect on their confidence and overall academic progress. For example, 19 days of absence equates to 95 hours of lost learning.

Term-time holidays

We would like to remind parents and carers that **holidays during term time will not normally be authorised**. In exceptional circumstances, requests may be considered by the Headteacher. If you wish to request time off during term time, please submit a form to the Headteacher before making any arrangements. Please be aware that permission may not be granted.

Unauthorised holidays

If the school confirms that a term-time holiday will not be authorised and you choose to take the holiday regardless, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where attendance meets the relevant threshold, the case may be referred to the Oxfordshire County Council Attendance Team, who are responsible for considering and issuing Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs). Please note that FPNs are issued by the County Attendance Team, not by the school.

We will continue to monitor attendance and work with OCC Attendance Officers where appropriate.

A Fixed Penalty Notice may be considered when there are 10 unauthorised sessions within a 10-week period. Each school day consists of two sessions, meaning a full day's absence counts as two sessions.

The first Penalty Notice is £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days, increasing to £160 if paid between days 21 and 28. A second notice within three years is £160. Continued unauthorised absence may lead to further action, including prosecution.

Unauthorised lateness

Unauthorised lateness can also contribute to the 10-session total. A child arriving at school after the registration period has closed will receive a 'U' code, which counts as an unauthorised absence for that session.

It is therefore important that children arrive at school on time and are present for the full school day.

Thank you for your continued support in ensuring that children attend school regularly, arrive on time and make the most of their education.

Yours sincerely,

The Burford Partnership of Schools
