

2nd February 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

JTMAT ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

There have been some important updates to the JTMAT Attendance and Punctuality Policy, which we would like to make all our parents aware of. Securing excellent school attendance and promoting the importance of such, is the responsibility of the whole school community. As Shobnall Primary & Nursery School are part of the JTMAT, we are expected to follow and adhere to this policy.

Parents are reminded by the Department of Education that they *“have a legal responsibility to make sure that their child receives an education at school or by education otherwise than at school. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.”*

The full policy can be viewed [here](#), but below we have highlighted some of the key aspects that we feel you should be aware of:

- Medical evidence **must** be provided for an illness absence from **school of 6 days or more**. If the school is not in receipt of this, the absence will be recorded as **unauthorised**.
- Medical evidence **must** be provided for illness absence immediately before or after a period of school holiday. If not, the absence will be recorded as **unauthorised**.
- Where there is a regular pattern to absence, medical evidence **must** be provided, or the absence is recorded as **unauthorised**.
- If reasons for absence have been falsified, the absence will be recorded as *unauthorised*.
- Parents and carers are asked to make routine medical, dental and opticians outside the school day. Parents will be asked to provide evidence of medical appointments which fall inside the school day.
- Parents will be asked to provide evidence of hospital appointments which fall inside the school day.
- Requests for leave in exceptional circumstances should be made at **least 2 weeks in advance** of the event and in writing using the Leave of Absence Request Form given in appendix E in the policy. Retrospective approval for absence cannot be granted. Parents do not have the right of appeal if a request for a leave of absence is declined, the head teacher’s decision is final.
- Leave of absence will **NOT** be granted for pupils who have already been absent from school for **6 days or more**, regardless of the reasons for previous absence.
- Leave of absence will **NOT** be granted for pupils **when the requested leave of absence will mean that they have absence amounting to 6 days or more**.
- Leave of absence will **NOT** be granted for holidays during term time regardless of circumstances.
- Where leave of absence is **NOT** authorised and parents decide to take pupils out of school despite the school’s decision, absence will be recorded as unauthorised and subject to a fixed penalty notice (fine).

- In order to carry out safeguarding responsibilities, when a pupil is absent from school for **more than 5 days** a member of school staff will be required to carry out a safe and well check on the child. This may be a home visit or a virtual visit, dependant on the reasons ascertained for absence.
- Where a pupil has been absent from school for a period of **20** consecutive school days without authorisation or has not returned within **10** days after an authorised absence a pupil can be removed from the admissions register when the school and LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil.
- **Fixed penalty notices** can be issued for a variety of reasons and thresholds. Parents should refer to Local Authority websites for further information. The Trust expects all schools to follow the local authority Penalty Notice Code of Conduct and thresholds for issuing penalty notice fines. Staffordshire County Council stipulate that fines can be issued by schools in the authority, for reasons outlined here:

TERM TIME HOLIDAY	LATENESS (AFTER REGISTER HAS CLOSED)	UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE
1 day or more	10 lates in a 12-week period – does not have to be consecutive sessions	20 sessions (10 days) in a 12-week period – does not have to be consecutive sessions

We hope that this clarifies some of the complexities around attendance. Please refer to the policy, or enquire at the school office, if there is anything you are unsure of.

Kind regards,



Mr D. Adams
Headteacher
Shobnall Primary & Nursery School