

# School Attendance Update

## September 2024

Important - please read!

04.10.24

Dear Parent/Carer,

This is an important update about school attendance for the 2024/25 academic year.

Roberts Primary School continues to work in partnership with parents and the Local Authority to improve school attendance.

**A big thank you to the majority of parents who make sure their children attend school regularly, particularly during the current cost of living crisis impacting families.**

Your efforts, working in partnership with the school, will ensure that your child will have the best chance to achieve their academic potential and have real opportunity in further education and the world of work. It will also enable your child to:

- access the lessons needed to achieve their expected grades
- maintain friendships and develop new ones
- have access to social and sporting events offered by the school
- explore potential careers
- develop work habits such as good punctuality which are essential to thrive in the world of employment

**How does your child compare?**

| Attendance during one school year | equals this number of days absent | which is approximately this many weeks absent | which means this number of lessons missed |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| 95%                               | 9 days                            | 2 weeks                                       | 50 lessons                                |
| 90%                               | 19 days                           | 4 weeks                                       | 100 lessons                               |
| 85%                               | 29 days                           | 6 weeks                                       | 150 lessons                               |

*Lighting the Way to Success*





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You may be aware of the changes to the law related to school attendance, in particular the new national penalty notice framework which came into force on the 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024. Penalty notice amounts have increased and there is now an escalation process for repeated offences.

The Government has brought in the changes due to concerns about the decline in attendance linking to a deteriorating attainment and progress levels for children over the last few years.

If you are worried about your child/children's attendance the first port of call is to discuss your concerns with the school directly. The school has specialist staff who may be able to help, and all schools work closely with health and council teams who may also be able to help if needed.

*It may be tempting to book a family holiday in term time to save on costs during the cost of living crisis. **However, family holidays in term time are not allowed in law and are very unlikely to be authorised.** Taking children on leave without applying for authorisation may mean the school has to report your child as 'missing' to the local authority and holidays cannot be authorised retrospectively in law. Adding even more absence to the time children have already missed only means that the children miss even more lessons that will not be repeated.*

Family emergencies also need careful consideration. It is not always appropriate or in the best interests of the child to miss school for emergencies which are being dealt with by adult family members. Notifying the school of leave due to a family emergency does not mean it will be authorised.

***Please note that where parents fail to ensure their child attends school regularly, legal action, including penalty notices, may be considered. New regulations also mean that children on extended periods of leave may lose their school place where there is no evidence of a timely return to school or the date provided is too far away.***

We hope this information is helpful.

Kind regards,

Mr Carl Watkins

Headteacher

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