



Dunkirk Primary and Nursery School

Highfields Campus
Marlborough Street
Dunkirk, Nottingham
NG7 2LE

Abbey Campus
Lenton Boulevard
Lenton, Nottingham
NG7 2ET

Tel: 0115 9153273

Email: admin@dunkirk.nottingham.sch.uk

Website: www.dunkirkprimary.com

11th October 2023

Dear parents/carers,

Attendance Matters Autumn 1

Welcome to our first attendance newsletter for this academic year. I wanted to start off with making sure everyone is really clear about the impact of your child missing any school. Every day really matters at school. The children are working at such pace with their learning and developing their curriculum understanding that if they miss lots of days off school then they WILL fall behind. We have new guidance which asks us to check, check and check again. Please have a read.

There are 190 school days in a year, which leaves 175 days to spend on family time, visits, treats, holidays, shopping and other appointments.

No absence	10 days illness absence	12 days absence	19 days absence	29 days absence	38 days absence
100%	95%	94%	90%	85%	80%
Good attendance <i>This level of attendance gives your child the best chance at school.</i>		Worrying <i>Attendance below 95% will make it harder for your child to make good progress</i>		Serious Concern <i>Your child will find it very difficult to make the progress they are capable of.</i>	

Every Day Counts

Attendance of 90% doesn't sound too bad but if this continues the implications are serious:

If your child's attendance is...	that means they are missing...	that equals...	which is...	and over 13 years of school that is...
90%	1 day a fortnight	20 days per year	4 weeks a year	Nearly 1.5 years

80%	1 day a week	40 days a year	8 weeks a year	Over 2.5 years
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Head Teacher: Mrs H Hollis BA (Hons)





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I know that we have so many parents/carers who bring their child to school every day and are on time. I want to say a huge 'Thank You' to all those families. You are doing a great job and please keep it going.

However, we have some families where the children are absent or late a lot! If everyone could read below, just so we are all aware of what school has to do to reduce children's absence and make sure they are in school every day.

NO HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME!

I am aware that some of our children have families overseas or across the UK. Visits to these families need to be in holiday periods only and NOT in term time. I cannot approve weeks added on to any school holidays either. *Your child needs to be in school.*

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL WILL FINE PARENTS/CARERS

The Local Authority WILL FINE parents who take their child on holiday in term time. There are too many of these extended holiday visits. Therefore, I notify the Local Authority if parents go for a family emergency in term time, as these are often for weeks and actually become 'holidays'. We will ask for specific proof of the 'emergency' every time and check. Not having seen grandma for a few years or 'I have legal things to sort out' is not a good enough reason to go in term time and not wait for the holidays. *Your child really needs to be in school.*

PLENTY OF SCHOOL HOLIDAYS SO NO EXCUSES

I'm really sorry but it is just not acceptable anymore to be off school for a holiday in term time, or for a birthday, get a relative from the airport or to go shopping etc. We have so many school holidays that families can wait for to do all those nice things. I know it is cheaper to travel in term time but your child is missing out on their education and as a parent carer, you need to put your child's learning at school first and not a holiday! *Your child really needs to be in school.*

WE HAVE TO QUESTION AND QUESTION AND QUESTION AGAIN!

Mrs Pamela Mahjouri is the School Attendance Officer.





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Her job is:

1. **To make sure children are in school**
2. **to increase our attendance percentage every day**
3. **to make sure we know where our children are, if they are not in school (for safeguarding purposes).**

To support Dunkirk children being in school and to get the best education, Mrs Mahjouri **have to ask you lots of questions** about any absence. She will have to ask you to:

- show us appointments official letters / messages if there is an appointment to attend
- check flight times if you say you couldn't get a flight home to make sure
- give a reason why another adult cannot look after your child if you say you need to attend your own appointment/meeting

and sometimes she will have to come round to your door to check you are up and awake so you get your child to school on time. That is her job. Governors will check that these actions are being carried out.

I know all these questions sound extreme but attendance/safeguarding is THAT IMPORTANT. Mrs Mahjouri is not being horrible or rude to any of our Dunkirk community but actually is doing her job (as any unauthorised time off school is linked to safeguarding concerns). Low attendance can even trigger social care referrals now days- it is taken that seriously!

It is a legal requirement for parents to ensure their child attends school.

If **your** child is not genuinely 'very' ill and is absent from school, **you** are breaking the law!

So...let's work 'Dunkirk together' to improve our whole school attendance and ensure every child get the same learning opportunities by being in school every day and getting 95-100% attendance.

Yours sincerely,

Heidi Hollis

Head Teacher (who really wants to **improve attendance!**)