



Important Update: Working Together to Improve School Attendance

Dear Families,

I am writing to inform you of recent statutory changes from the Department for Education (DfE) concerning school attendance, which we as a school are required to implement. These changes are part of the DfE's updated guidance, "Working Together to Improve School Attendance," aimed at ensuring every child receives the best possible education by attending school regularly. School has no control or flexibility around these changes and these are not school decisions.

Key Updates:

Increased Penalties for Unauthorised Absences:

The Local Authority (LA) is now leading a stricter approach to school attendance. As part of this, fines for unauthorised absences have been increased. It is important to note that these fines now build-up over a period of three years rather than one. This means that repeated unauthorised absences within this 3-year period could lead to higher penalties. Below are the new fines:

- School absence fines have increased from £60 to £80, which will now rise to £160 if unpaid within 21 days, rather than £120.
- If the same parent is fined again within a three-year period, the fine stands at £160 from the start.
- A third penalty notice cannot be given in this time - instead, "alternative action" should be considered, which would likely include prosecution.
- This basically states that if you went on 3 holidays in under three years, you could face potential prosecution.

Monitoring Attendance Over 3 Years:

Attendance monitoring will now cover a 3-year period. If your child has unauthorised absences, these will be tracked over three years, rather than just one, allowing for a more wide-ranging overview of attendance patterns.

Attendance Reporting - Days Missed and Percentages:

To make it clearer to understand, we will now report your child's attendance in terms of the number of days missed as well as the percentage attendance. This change is designed to make it easier for families to understand the impact of absences on your child's education.

Supporting Regular Attendance

We understand that sometimes absences are unavoidable due to illness or other exceptional circumstances. However, regular attendance is vital to your child's success in school, and we are committed to working with you to support this. If you have any concerns or face challenges regarding your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are here to help and can offer support through various ways to ensure your child attends school as regularly as possible.

Late Arrivals

Under the new guidance students who are not in the classroom when the register is taken and arrive at school within 30mins of the register opening (which for Rosehill is at 8:45am) will be marked as Late (Code L). After this the registers are closed and students arriving after this time will be marked as Unauthorised (Code U) which will affect the students overall attendance.

Next Steps

Our school will continue to work closely with the Local Authority to monitor and promote good attendance. We encourage all families to take note of these changes and to contact Mr Hayes, Miss Abbott or Miss Charles, if you need any further information or support. However, we will have to implement the DfE directive and ensure we work with the Local Council to ensure all holidays or unauthorised absences are recorded.

Please see overleaf for our schools specific guidance on attendance at Rosehill...

Kind Regards,

Adrian Hayes

Headteacher

Rosehill Monitoring Attendance Information For Parents

Rotherham have agreed to follow a unified approach to attendance through the SAMP process, short for the School Attendance Matters Pathway. As a Rotherham School, we adhere to this guidance also.

Our shared responsibility as parents, carers and school is to ensure that pupil's attendance meets the expected standard and that effective intervention is provided where pupils' attendance falls below the government standard.

Research has shown that children's attendance is not only directly linked to their academic outcomes but also their wider social and emotional development.

- Two school days missed during each month during your school life adds up to one whole year of school lost.
- 90% attendance may look impressive, but it means your child is missing 20 days of education a year. That's the same as missing around 100 brilliant lessons with their teacher!
- Punctuality is very important too. Being 15 minutes late every day adds up to 2 weeks lost learning per year.

Contact should be made by parents on the first day of absence for any student without exception. Where absence is not reported, an 'N' code is used to indicate that a reason has not yet been provided. School follows a Graduated Response for attendance and part of this process may involve making a home visit to check on pupil wellbeing and safety.

All children's attendance figures are monitored weekly

Attendance staff meet weekly to analyse attendance patterns. Children with attendance less than 96% are identified as causing concern. Children who are regularly late are also identified as causing concern.

- If a child has more than 8 sessions of absence in a 10 week period, school will make a **Formal Attendance Phone Call** to the family.
- If a child reaches 10 sessions of absence in a 10 week period, school will send our **Rosehill Attendance Letter**.
- If the child's attendance/punctuality continues to cause concern, parents/carers are invited to attend an attendance/punctuality meeting in school where an EHA (Early Help Assessment) or a School Attendance Contract will be offered to support.
- If a child's absence remains a cause of concern after intervention by the school (which will include unauthorised absences) then, school will send the **Early Help Pathway Official Letter 1 - Notice to Improve**.
- If absence continues to decline within the same 10 week period, school must make a referral to the Local Authority - **Pathway Attendance Letter 2 - Refer to the LA**. This case will then be screened by the LA with one of the following outcomes:
 - a) Fixed Penalty Notice Issued
 - b) LA School Attendance Panel Referral (LASAP)
 - c) No enforcement