

Dear Parents/Carers,

The government have launched a national attendance communications campaign called 'Moments Matter, Attendance Counts'. It is aimed at parents and carers and its purpose is to highlight the importance of regular school attendance in your child's educational journey. The campaign aims to primarily reach parents/carers whose children are taking preventable odd days of absence or "avoidable absence" linked to coughs, colds and mild anxiety, rather than those who face greater barriers to attendance such as pupils with long-term medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities.

At Tudor Court, our attendance target for each child is 96%. We regularly monitor our children's attendance and will inform parents when their child's attendance is a cause for concern. Attendance that is at 90% or below is classed as persistent absenteeism with attendance at or below 50% being classed as severe Absenteeism. Procedures are followed in line with the school policy and meetings are held to discuss attendance concerns. This will continue to be the case.

Schools have been sent updated guidance on addressing concerns around poor attendance, which came into effect on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024. You may have seen in the news recently that this updated guidance includes a new national framework that schools **must** follow. Whilst this information is not relevant for many parents whose that's attendance is good, I felt it was important to share the changes in what actions schools will now need to be doing.

The new framework issued to schools includes the following:

*All state funded schools must consider whether a penalty notice for absence is appropriate in each individual case where one of their pupils reaches the national threshold for considering a penalty notice. Schools should not have a blanket position of issuing or not issuing penalty notices and should make judgements on each individual case. The threshold is 10 sessions of **unauthorised** absence in a rolling period of **10 school weeks**. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of **unauthorised** absence. These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of **unauthorised** absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term). Each school day comprises of 2 sessions; am and pm.*

In addition to this, any leave for holidays will not only be unauthorised, as has always been the case, but will also result in parents being issued with a penalty notice (fine). Most local schools already issue fines for taking children out of school in term time but this is something that is new for our school this academic year. Penalty notices for term time holiday are issued to each parent for each child. This means that if Penalty Notices were issued for three siblings, they would be issued to both parents, equaling to six Penalty Notices in total. **Please note that whilst the school is responsible for preparing the paperwork, it is the Local Authority who issue and process the fines. The school doesn't benefit in any way from the fines issued and has no choice but to follow the new guidance.**

Research reliably shows that consistent attendance positively impacts academic performance, social development, and future success. As partners in your child's attendance, we want to work together to ensure they do not miss out on valuable learning experiences.

As a parent, it can be difficult to know when to send your child into school if they are feeling unwell or mildly anxious, but finding solutions is a team effort between schools, parents and children. There is support and information available to help you make the best decision for your child. If your child is unwell we would still not expect you to send them into school, however in some instances the school may request medical evidence.

The following strategies are taken direct from the campaign guidance to help improve your child's attendance:

- **Establish a routine:** Set a consistent daily routine that includes ample time for sleep, meals, and preparation for the school day.
- **Open Communication:** Keep the lines of communication open with your child about their experiences at school. Address any concerns or issues they may be facing that could contribute to absenteeism.
- **Highlight the Value of Education:** Reinforce the importance of education and how it shapes their future. Discuss their goals and aspirations, emphasising how attendance plays a crucial role in achieving them.
- **Celebrate Achievements:** Acknowledge your child's achievements, both big and small. Positive reinforcement can motivate them to attend school regularly.
- **Stay informed:** Be aware of school events, projects, and activities. Engaging with the school community can foster a sense of belonging and enthusiasm for learning.

Remember, every day of school missed is a missed opportunity for learning and growth. We appreciate your commitment to your child's education and look forward to working together to ensure they have the best possible experience.

Please refer to the '[Is my child too ill for school?](#)' prompt sheet to ascertain if your child can be in school

Our school attendance policy has been updated in light of these changes and will be available to view on our website by the end of the month. Should you wish to discuss the contents of this letter or concerns around your own child's attendance, please do make an appointment to see Mrs Corby in the first instance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Phil Kyriacou', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Phil Kyriacou  
**Head Teacher**

# Attendance: the top facts to know & share

**MOMENTS  
MATTER.**  
ATTENDANCE  
COUNTS.

## The link between attendance and attainment is clear:

- In 2018/2019, **Just 40% of persistently absent (PA) children in KS2 achieved expected KS2 standards**, compared with 84% of pupils who were regular attenders.
- And **36% of PA children in KS4 got 9 to 4 in their English and Maths GCSEs**, also compared with 84% of regular attenders.

## And it's never too late to benefit from good attendance:

- **More than half (54%)** of pupils who were **PA in Year 10 and then rarely absent in Year 11, passed at least 5 GCSEs**, compared to 36% of pupils who were persistently absent in both years.

## But attendance is important for more than just attainment:

- Regular school attendance can facilitate **positive peer relationships**, which is a **protective factor for mental health and wellbeing**.