



Fairlands Middle School

We Collaborate, Achieve & Belong

18 July 2024

Dear Parents/Carers

School attendance for all our pupils remains a priority at Fairlands Middle School. This is essential to ensure all pupils get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances.

On the 19th August 2024, new statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) will come into effect for all Schools, Trusts and Local Authorities across the country. This will be shared with parents and carers in September when we return to school.

Within this new guidance, there will be a new statutory National Framework for issuing penalty notices (fines) and this will reflect changes to the law introduced through the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024. All schools will have to follow this guidance and this will mean some changes to the way non-attendance (unauthorised) at school is managed.

Generally, the DfE does not consider a need for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. Therefore, all term time unauthorised absences (of five days or more) where parents or carers remove their child from school for the purpose of holidays, will result in a Penalty Notice issued by the school and enforced by Somerset Council.

Penalty Notices may also be actioned for 'irregular attendance'. Irregular attendance within the guidance is defined as 10 unauthorised school sessions (each school day has two sessions -AM and PM) within any rolling 10-week period.

There are a few other new operational changes in the statutory guidance including regular meetings between schools and the Local Authority to discuss all cases where pupils have 'persistent absence' from school. Persistent absence is classified as below 90%. At Fairlands Middle School our expected attendance is 97%.

If you have any concerns regarding attendance and require any additional information or support, please contact your child's Tutor or Pastoral Leader. By working together, we aim to ensure strong attendance for all pupils at Fairlands Middle School.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Paul Stephens
Deputy Headteacher

Fairlands Middle School

A: Masons Way, Cheddar, Somerset, BS27 3PG

E: office@fairlandsmiddleschool.co.uk

W: www.fairlandsmiddleschool.co.uk

T: 01934 743186