St. Nicholas and St. Laurence
CE Primary School

3 November 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

School target for attendance by end of academic year: 97%

Attendance Information for Parents

It is essential that children and young people form good habits of regular attendance at school from an early age and that good attendance is maintained throughout their school career. St Nicholas and St Laurence Primary are committed to working with parents and families to ensure that there is a consistent approach to school attendance. It is a legal requirement that all children should attend their educational provision and it is the parent/carer's responsibility to ensure that their children attend school.

St Nicholas and St Laurence Primary will do the following:

- St Nicholas and St Laurence Primary will monitor the attendance of our pupils and work closely with Dorset Council's School Attendance Service to support children and young people whose attendance levels are causing concern.

- We monitor any attendance below 95%.

- If St Nicholas and St Laurence Primary are concerned about a child's attendance, we will write to the parent/carer to explain our concerns. The school will then monitor the child's attendance expecting to see an improvement. The Dorset Council (DCC) School Attendance Service will be made aware of the school's concerns. If no improvement is made, the family will be invited to attend an Attendance Panel with a representative from the Local Authority present.

- Whilst we understand that children do become ill on occasions, children who lose a lot of time at school can suffer in the long term from significant gaps in their learning. If a child's health continues to affect their education, schools are obliged to make a referral to School Health to ensure that appropriate medical advice and support is provided.

- If a child is ill, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure that they inform the school each day of illness before 8.30am. St Nicholas and St Laurence Primary operates a system, which means we will contact you to ask why your child is not in school and when they are expected to return, if we have not heard from you.

- If your child is not in school, you are required to report your child absent before 8.30am. If you do not do this the school will be in contact with you to enquire as to where your child is and why they are not in school.

No leave of absence will be granted during term time, except in exceptional circumstances. Should you wish to take your child out of school for any leave of absence, holidays or otherwise, requests will not be routinely granted. It is essential that any requests for leave of absence are discussed with the Head Teacher prior to the request being made, and that forms are completed to request the absence.

There is a national framework for penalty notices related to unauthorised school absence that all schools and academies have to follow. Under the **new national framework**, all schools will be required to consider a fine when a child has missed 10 or more sessions (5 days) for unauthorised reasons. The fine for school absences across the country will be £80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days. In the case of repeated fines, if a parent/carer receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160.

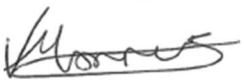
Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered. (Refer attached poster for more information)

Finally, it is important that pupils are in school on time. Time keeping is not only important in obtaining maximum benefit from education it is also a key skill for adult life. Lateness is monitored by the school and contributes to absence rates.

St Nicholas and St Laurence Primary is committed to ensuring that every learner has the opportunity to thrive and achieve, and recognises that good attendance is central to this.

Attached is our attendance policy for additional information on the process that we follow. Thank you for your support in helping our children to attend and thrive at school.

Yours sincerely,



Victoria Morris
Head Teacher

ATTENDANCE

WHAT THE NEW RULES MEAN FOR ME

1

I'm a single parent of one child and we want to go on holiday for a week.

Your holiday will not be authorised and you must talk to the school before you book anything.
Because your child will miss 5 school days you will be given a penalty notice fine.
The fine is £160 but if you pay it in 21 days it will be reduced to £80.

£160



2

FOR EVERY CHILD A PENALTY IS GIVEN.



+ £160 + £160 + £160 + £160

4 children & 1 parent = £640

Reduced to £320 if paid in 21 days

5

IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE

10 IN 10

If your child is absent for 10 or more sessions in 10 weeks and their absences are unauthorised. The school will consider prosecution.

1 Day = 2 Sessions

3

FOR A FAMILY OF TWO PARENTS



+ £160 + £160 + £160 + £160

4 children & 2 parents = £1280

Reduced to £640 if paid in 21 days

4

If in any period of not more than 3 years, your child has a 2nd and 3rd leave of absence or pattern of irregular attendance...

2ND TIME

2 parents and
1 child = £320
2 children = 640
3 children = 960
4 children = 1280

No discount for early payment



3RD TIME

A penalty notice fine will not be given. Instead, your case will be taken to court.
A magistrate can fine each parent £2500 for each child

1 parent & 4 children = £10,000
2 parents & 4 children = £20,000