



14 July 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian

Mandatory school attendance for all pupils/students from September 2020

As you are aware, from September schools will open their doors to their entire cohort and we will start to return to some sort of normality.

In March when the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak was increasing, the government made clear that no parent would be penalised or sanctioned for their child's non-attendance at school. Now the circumstances have changed and it is vital for all children to return to school to minimise as far as possible the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing and wider development. Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. School attendance will therefore be mandatory again from the beginning of the autumn term.

This means from the start of term in September, the usual rules on school attendance will apply, namely that parents have a duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and schools have a duty to follow up absences which includes the issuing of sanctions, including fixed penalty notices.

Where a pupil/student is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice, we will offer them access to remote education and their absence will not be penalised. We expect there to be very few children in this category, however.

All other pupils must attend school unless a statutory reason applies (for example, the pupil has been granted a leave of absence, is unable to attend because of sickness, is absent for a necessary religious observance etc).

We understand that for some parents this will be a worrying and anxious time. If you are anxious about your child returning, and have not already discussed your concerns with school, you should contact the school office as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Mrs A Walker
Director of Inclusion and Safeguarding