



## Audlem St. James' C of E Primary School

*'Let your light shine' Matthew 5:16*



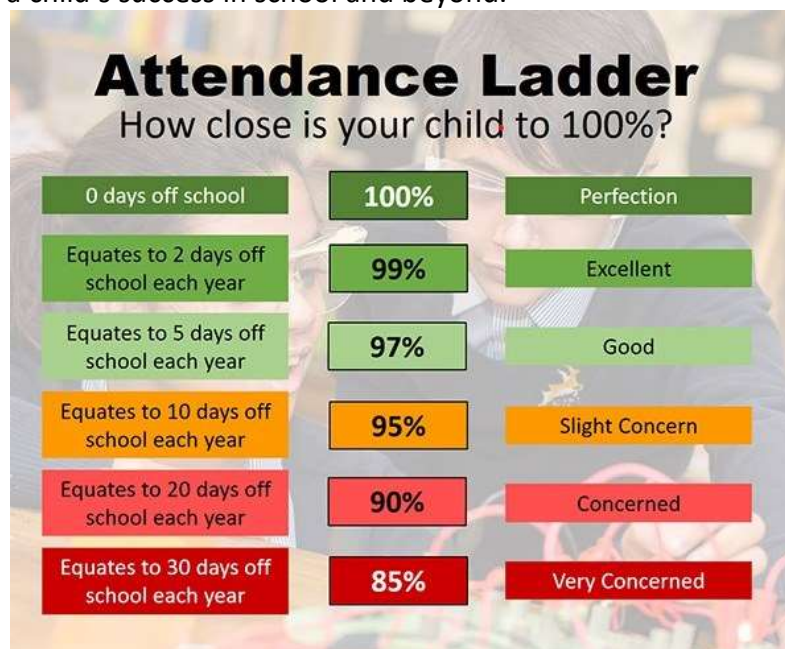
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**Dear Parents and Carers,**

I hope you have had a lovely break over the Easter holidays. We look forward to your continued support in helping your child/children attend school regularly and on time, to help secure the best outcomes for their schooling and their future.

At Audlem School, we believe that good attendance and punctuality are important in helping pupils achieve the best that they can be. As a school we expect all pupils to aim to achieve at least 97% attendance as days off school soon add up and missing lessons makes it hard to catch up. Regular school attendance is one of the most important factors contributing to a child's success in school and beyond.



As a parent/carer you have an important role in supporting us to ensure school attendance is a priority. We ask that you only keep your child off school when they are genuinely too ill

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to attend. Please book medical appointments and holidays outside of school time, whenever possible, and talk to us if you're having difficulties with attendance.

**Here's why:**

- 1. Academic Achievement:** Consistent attendance helps pupils keep up with lessons, engage in classroom discussions, and complete assignments on time. This directly correlates to higher grades and better academic outcomes.
- 2. Building Relationships:** School is not just about textbooks and tests; it is also a place for building friendships and social skills. Attending school regularly allows your child to connect with peers, learn from their experiences, and develop crucial interpersonal skills.
- 3. Confidence Boost:** Success breeds confidence. When your child attends school regularly and excels in their studies, their self-esteem soars, setting the stage for a confident and successful future.
- 4. Future Opportunities:** Good attendance records are often considered by colleges and employers when evaluating applicants. A history of strong attendance signals responsibility and commitment, opening doors to future opportunities.

**Punctuality in School.**

School begins in classes at 8.40am and pupils are expected to be in school for registration by 08:45am. The school gates will be locked at 08:50am and pupils arriving after this time will be given a late mark. In addition, pupils arriving to school after 09:05 will be coded as 'U' which is an unauthorised absence.

**School Absence.. Is my child too ill to attend?**

It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school, this handy NHS guide will help: [Is my child too ill for school?](#) Any medical absence of more than 5 days (10 sessions) per academic year will need to be supported with medical evidence. This does not have to be a doctor's note but can take the form of either a dated GP/nurse appointment card, a compliments slip signed and dated by the GP/ nurse, a prescription or proof of prescribed medication relating to the current illness. If no medical evidence is received, then the absence will be coded as unauthorised (O). Under the new national framework, all schools will be required to consider a fine when a child has missed 5 days (10 sessions) for unauthorised reasons. The fine for school absences across the country is £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days, or £160 per parent per child if paid within 28 days. Non-payment of the Penalty Notice may result in prosecution in the Magistrates court and [legal action](#).

### **Absence Reporting**

If you are sure that your child needs to stay at home, please contact the school **before 08:30am** on the morning of each day of your child's absence by emailing [admin@stjamesaudlem.cheshire.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stjamesaudlem.cheshire.sch.uk) or phone on (01270) 906283. You should explain the full reason for the absence, providing us with your child's full name and year group. *Please avoid simply saying they are 'unwell' or 'poorly' as we have to be specific in our reporting.* You may not receive a reply of acknowledgement but we will have your message.

Please contact us every day they are absent, unless otherwise agreed. If you need to discuss your child's absence or have any concerns about their attendance, please contact school and we will advise you accordingly.

### **My Child is Struggling to attend, what can I do...**

If your child is struggling to attend school, we ask you do not keep them off school. We ask you to encourage your child to attend and that you contact us to discuss any concerns. Whether your child is struggling to attend because of an issue in school or at home, the first thing to do is to contact us so we can support your child in attending school. Some children can become anxious and worried about going to school, particularly around the start of the new year or joining a new class. It is normal for children to feel a little anxious sometimes. Avoiding school can make a child's anxiety about going to school worse. It's good to talk about any worries they may have such as bullying, friendship concerns, school work or sensory problems. If your child's anxiety continues and is affecting their everyday life it might be good to talk to your GP. There is also useful advice from the NHS on <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/children-and-young-adults/advice-for-parents/anxiety-in-children/> or at <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/school-anxiety-and-refusal/>. These sites will help you to work through likely reasons together with your child, what to do and how to make sure that you get the right support if there are more serious issues.

### **Unauthorised Absences and holidays**

#### **Penalty Notice (PN)**

Parents and Carers should be aware that Audlem St James School may contact the Local Authority if a pupil has 10 or more unauthorised absences in any one term, - in a rolling 10 week period- with a view to issuing a Penalty Notice ('PN'). As a school we are not permitted to authorise term-time holidays and we urge you to book holidays outside of term-time.

## **Penalty Notice Guidance**

### **PENALTY NOTICE AND PROSECUTION**

Penalty Notices may be issued for term time leave: Penalty Notice fines may be issued for term time leave of 5 or more days (10 sessions) in a 10- week period.

10 Sessions of Unauthorised absence in a rolling 10 week period: Penalty Notices may be considered when there have been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period. However, school retain the discretion to request a Penalty Notice before the threshold is met. For example, where parents/carers are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below the threshold. Per Parent/Per Child Penalty Notice fines will continue to be issued per parent/carer per child. For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent/carer receiving 3 separate fines.

#### **First Offence**

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or irregular school attendance the fine will be charged at £160 per parent/carer, per child if paid within 28 days of the issue, reducing to £80 per parent/carer, per child if paid within 21 days.(Unpaid penalty notices may result in a parental prosecution)

#### **Second Offence**

Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent/carer for the same pupil within 3 years of the first penalty notice, for either term time leave or irregular attendance the second penalty notice will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. (Unpaid penalty notices may result in a parental prosecution)

#### **Third Offence**

On the third time that an offence is committed within 3 years of the first penalty notice for either a term time leave or irregular attendance a penalty notice will not be issued. The Local Authority will decide on appropriate next steps which may include: \*Prosecution under s444 (1) or (1a) of the Education Act 1996 which may result in a fine of up to £1000 or £2500 respectively. \*Referral to other agencies

**Your Sincerely**  
**Andy Perry**  
**Headteacher**