



Five Ways Primary School

Langholm Drive
Heath Hayes
Cannock
Staffs
WS12 2EZ

Headteacher:
Telephone:
Website:
Email:

Mrs Rachel Mander B.Ed. Hons
01543 278071
www.fiveways.staffs.sch.uk
admin@fiveways.staffs.sch.uk

Friday 20th September 2024

Attendance Expectations

Dear Parents,

In line with the Government's heightened agenda that all pupils receive high quality face-to-face education, I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of our attendance expectations as we start a new academic year.

Working in full partnership with Staffordshire County Council's Education Welfare Service, Five Ways strives to maintain regular school attendance of all of our pupils. This means that an Education Welfare Officer from the Local Authority visits our school on a regular basis and reviews individual pupil attendance. As a result of these reviews, we will be communicating with parents on a regular basis if we identify any significant attendance concerns related to your child. Our aim in terms of early identification of attendance concerns is to ensure that we work in partnership with you to support your child to receive a high quality education at Five Ways.

Following guidance from the Government and our Local Authority (Staffordshire County Council), it is our school's expectation that **ALL** pupils have an attendance percentage of **97% or above**. A link to our Attendance Policy can be found here: [Five Ways School \(fiveways-primary-school.org.uk\)](http://Five Ways School (fiveways-primary-school.org.uk))

Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, the parent(s) of every child of compulsory school age is responsible for making sure that they receive a suitable education. The definition of a parent (or parents) is the adult (or adults) who have (has) a significant input to a child's life and who is known to have responsibility for that child. The Local Authority has the responsibility for pursuing statutory action against parents for failing to ensure their child receives a suitable education.

At Five Ways, we expect the following from our pupils and parents in terms of attendance:

- **School to be informed by 9.00am at the latest, via phone (Tel: 01543 278071) or email on attendance@fiveways.staffs.sch.uk if your child cannot attend stating the reason why.**
- **Medical, dental and other appointments should be made OUTSIDE of the school day if possible. Any appointments will be authorised on receipt of evidence.**
- **Leave of Absence will NOT be authorised from school without exceptional circumstances.** You may be aware that the Department of Education have made important changes to the law for families wanting to request Leave of Absence in term time. The changes made it clear that Headteachers may **NOT** grant any Leave of Absence during term time, unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. The Local



Authority and school governors support this; therefore, pupils will only be given permission to take leave in term time if there are exceptional circumstances. **Please be aware that the Local Authority has made it clear that exceptional circumstances does NOT include family weddings or reasons related to Special Educational Needs of pupils or family members.**

- **Any Leave of Absence that is NOT authorised may result in parents being subject to a Penalty Notice, issued by Staffordshire County Council.** This is in line with Staffordshire County Councils' Code of Conduct and the "Working Together to Improve School attendance" statutory guidance (effective 19th August 2024).
- **Children must arrive by 9.00am or they will be given a late mark for the morning session, after 9.15am the register will be marked as an unauthorised absence.**
- **Any pupil whose attendance falls below the expected standard, and becomes a concern, will be required to provide medical evidence for any illness related absence. If this is not received the absence will be marked as unauthorised.**

Changes to the law for taking leave of absence during term time

As a school we are obliged to inform you that you may be subject to a Penalty Notice if your child's absence from school is unauthorised. The penalties for unauthorised leave of absence in term time will be:

For a **First** offence the Penalty Notice fine would be: -

- £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days, rising to
- £160 per parent, per child if paid between 21-28 days.

For a **Second** offence within 3-years of the first penalty notice being issued, the penalty notice fine would be:

- £160 per parent, per child if paid between 28 days.

Following the second offence **every new offence within the 3-year period, will be prosecuted** under S444.1 of the Education Act 1996. I must advise you that if the prosecution takes place, the maximum fine is **£1,000 per parent, per child**. This reflects the seriousness of unauthorised absence from school.

As a school, we are committed to supporting our families. We will always endeavour to work in partnership with parents to explore what we can offer to resolve any issues that may impact on your child's right to receive a suitable education. If you are concerned that there is something that is preventing your child from attending school regularly or they are experiencing any difficulties, please do not hesitate to contact us.

It is our hope that by working closely with Staffordshire County Council's Education Welfare Service, we can ensure that all of our pupils are able to reach their full potential through regular school attendance.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs R E Mander
Headteacher

