

July 2024

Dear NCS Families

Attendance Update- July 2024

Attendance is always a priority at Nicholas Chamberlaine School. As parents/carers you have the legal responsibility for ensuring your child attends regularly. Today I write to inform you that from September we will be making some changes in line with the Government policy updates that come into force on 19th August 2024. This will give you all the information you need to stay on top of changes to the law around attendance.

The government has taken some serious steps to improve attendance in all schools across the country. Please read these so you have a full understanding of how we will be processing and dealing with non attendance and lateness from September and how it will affect you.

What the changes mean for families;

Fines for 5 days of absence.

We will be obliged to consider penalty notices for parents of any pupil that misses 5 days in any 10 week period. This means 10 school sessions (1 session is a morning or afternoon). These days are not consecutive so it can be spread across any 10 week period throughout the school year.

Increase in fines

We have a duty to consider a penalty notice fine **FOR BOTH PARENTS OF EVERY PUPIL** who has 10 sessions (5 school days) of unauthorised absence in any 10 week period.

The first penalty notice issued to each parent will be £160 if paid within 28 days (reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days).

A second penalty notice within a 3 year period would be charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3 year period - **this will mean more serious intervention which could include prosecution via a Magistrates court in which case parents could be liable for a fine of up to £2,500, and/or a community order or imprisonment of up to 3 months.**

Lateness

It is important to know that our registers close at 9.10am so if your child arrives after this (s)he is registered as absent. This means that lateness will also contribute towards the 5 days of absence and will amount towards the penalty fines.



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A member of the Griffin Schools Trust 2013



Executive Head: A Ramsay
Head of School: P Gilbride

Medical Appointments and Evidence

Any absences due to medical appointments will require appropriate evidence to be authorised. This includes, but is not limited to, a note from a doctor, medical appointment card, or any other relevant documentation. We understand that medical issues can arise unexpectedly, however, it is essential to provide evidence to ensure that the absence is appropriately recorded and justified.

Scheduling Medical Appointments

Wherever possible, we kindly request that you schedule medical appointments outside of school hours. We understand that this may not always be feasible, but minimising disruptions to your child's education is a priority. If an appointment during school hours is unavoidable, please ensure that your child returns to school promptly afterwards along with evidence of the appointment if this hasn't already been shared with school.

Special Circumstances

We acknowledge that there may be special circumstances that require absences to be authorised without the standard evidence. These situations will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will be at the discretion of the Head.

Our culture and approach to attendance does not change. We will always look to work with you to improve attendance (We care, we listen, we support but we do not tolerate) and our new tracking system helps us to forensically monitor everyone's attendance very closely. Making improvements easy to see and celebrate, but equally, we can easily see declines and act quickly. We do however need your support with this. Attendance is everyone's responsibility but the legal responsibility lies with parents and carers to ensure learning is not lost unnecessarily.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Gilbride', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Peter Gilbride
Head of School