

September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

At Millfields Community Primary School, we believe that regular attendance is essential for children to make good progress, build strong friendships, and get the most out of their time at school.

We want to gently remind all families of the importance of daily attendance and punctuality, as we are required to follow national attendance expectations. Recently, we have received a high number of holiday requests. Unfortunately, under Local Authority and government guidance, we are unable to authorise these.

Below, we have outlined the official guidance to help clarify how these decisions are made. This is monitored by Ofsted when they inspect schools.

Holidays During Term Time

Parents and carers should avoid booking holidays during term time wherever possible. In line with government guidelines, a leave of absence will only be authorised under exceptional circumstances.

Submitting a request does not mean absence is automatically granted, as each case is considered individually. The following types of absence cannot be authorised:

- * Family holidays during term time (including cheaper term-time bookings).
- * Extended weekends, short breaks, or days out (e.g., theme parks, leisure activities).
- * Birthday celebrations or visiting friends/relatives without exceptional reasons.
- * Parental work commitments.
- * Routine appointments or shopping trips that can be arranged outside school hours.
- * Looking after siblings or other family members.
- * Absence due to tiredness or a child not wanting to attend.

Weddings and Family Events

We fully appreciate that family celebrations like weddings are very special. Absence requests for these events are considered on an individual basis:

- * Attendance is not automatically authorised; we review the child's relationship to the people involved, the necessity of their presence, and the time requested.
- * Additional days requested for travel or extended breaks before or after an event will be evaluated separately and are generally not authorised unless exceptional circumstances apply.



When Absence May Be Authorised

Absence may be approved on a case-by-case basis for genuine emergencies or exceptional situations. If your child is unwell, please follow our standard procedure for reporting illness.

Important Information Regarding Unauthorised Absence

- * Absences and Fines: Unapproved time off is recorded as an unauthorised absence. Taking a child out of school for 5 days (10 half-day sessions) within a 10-week window triggers a referral to the council for a fine. Fines apply per parent, per child.
- * The first fine is £80 if paid within 21 days (rising to £160 within 28 days). A second offense within three years is charged at £160. Further repeated offenses can lead to court prosecution and fines up to £2,500.
- * Risk of Losing a School Place: If a child is away for an extended period without a valid reason or communication, the school is legally required to remove them from the roll. If this occurs, you will need to re-apply for a space through the council upon your return. Please be aware that the place may be filled in the meantime, and a spot is not guaranteed.
- * Safeguarding and CME Checks: If a child is absent without a clear explanation, we must follow strict safety procedures. The school and local authority will initiate a Children Missing Education (CME) investigation to ensure the child is safe and accounted for.

Why Attendance Matters

Every single school day counts. Even minor absences quickly add up over the academic year, affecting learning, progress, and social connections.

We realise this may appear firm, but these are not our rules. These expectations come from the government.

We greatly appreciate your partnership in prioritising attendance and scheduling holidays, appointments, and routine activities outside of school hours. Thank you for your continued support in giving our pupils the best possible foundation for their education.

Warm regards,

Robin Warren
Executive Head

Anna Shamji
Head of School