



Friday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Dear Parent/Carer,

Here at Roskear School we recognise that regular and punctual attendance is vitally important in helping children feel happy and settled at school. We want every child to feel welcomed and celebrated as part of our school community. Absence can affect friendships, confidence, and learning, whether this is for authorised (e.g. illness) or unauthorised reasons. We recognise that there are occasions when it is appropriate to authorise an absence, such as when a pupil is genuinely too ill to attend school. **Please ensure you telephone the school to report your child's absence if they are ill by 9.00am.** Most children's attendance at this school is good. I would like to thank parents for their support in getting their children to school and informing us promptly when they are absent due to illness.

I have included a diagram at the end of the letter, to try to illustrate how a few days here and there add up and can affect a child's learning. In most things in life, 90% is considered to be great, but unfortunately not when it comes to attendance! Our target is 97%. Once a child is below 90% (equivalent to a day a fortnight) a child is considered a persistent absentee. It means that over the course of one year your child has missed roughly a month of education. This can have a huge impact on their well-being and progress. It causes gaps in learning, knocks confidence and affects friendships. Any child with attendance below 90% is closely monitored. Please be aware we will be working closely with the Local Authority Education Welfare Team to ensure that no child is disadvantaged by poor attendance. Our Attendance Policy can be found on our website under policies.

You are welcome to contact the school to discuss any concerns you may have or if you feel you would like advice or support in helping your child attend more regularly. We are committed to maximising the education of all our pupils and aim to work with parents and carers to ensure this can be achieved.

The Government does not support parents taking children out of school, unless the school agrees this is appropriate under 'exceptional circumstances'. The DfE does not consider a need/desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure/recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. If you consider that your request for absence is exceptional you will need to complete the 'Leave of Absence Exceptional Circumstances' request form. Letters will not be accepted. This form should be returned to the school office at least 15 school days before the start of the absence. A response will be sent to you as soon as possible. If leave is not authorised and you nevertheless withdraw your child from school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence. There is now a national threshold of 10 unauthorised sessions (equivalent to 5 school days) within a rolling 10 school week period for when a penalty notice must be considered. Under the new rules, taking your child out of school for a one-week holiday will now mean that a penalty notice must be considered. Please note the legal information below:

If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days.

If your child is further absent from school without authorisation within any 3-year period, you will be committing a further offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices for a second offence are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £160, payable within 28 days.



Importantly, fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may also result in legal action. If you are prosecuted and attend court because your child has not been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.

Absence not authorised by the school may also result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Again, Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.

Money raised from fines is only used by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.

'Parent' as set out in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, defines parent to include: natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person or body who has parental responsibility for a child (as defined by the Children Act 1989) and; any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child. Having care of a child means a person with whom a child lives and who looks after a child, irrespective of what their relationship is with said child.

Yours faithfully,

**Miss N. Furnish**  
**Headteacher**



There are 175 non-school days in a year and 190 school days each year.

|                          |  |   |  |   |  |                                       |
|--------------------------|--|---|--|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| Absence in terms of days | 190 school days in each year   | 7 days absence<br>183 days in school  | 10 days absence<br>180 days in school  | 19 days absence<br>171 days in school and the equivalent of a month not in school that year   | 28 days absence<br>162 days in school  | 47 days absence<br>143 days in school |
|                          | 190 days for your child's education  |   |  |   | If it 85% each year, your child is missing the equivalent of a year of education over their time at primary school |                                       |
| percentage               | 100%   | 96%   | 95%  | 90%   | 85%  | 75%                                   |
|                          | <p><b>Good</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Best chance of success</li> <li>-Gets your child off to a flying start</li> <li>-Helps their confidence, social development as well as their academic progress</li> <li>-Over 97% is considered excellent attendance</li> </ul> | <p><b>Some Concern</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Harder for your child to make progress</li> <li>-School starts tracking your child's attendance closely, Medical evidence may be required to authorise further absences linked to illness</li> </ul> | <p><b>Worrying</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Your child is now classified as a 'persistent absentee'</li> <li>- Education Welfare Officer involvement is likely</li> </ul> | <p><b>Serious Concern</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Having a significant impact on your child's education and well-being</li> <li>-Legal Action may be taken</li> </ul> |  |                                       |