

UNDERWOOD WEST ACADEMY

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SUMMER ATTENDANCE NEWSLETTER

JB/JG

Summer term 2024

Dear Parents

Welcome to the Summer Term Attendance Newsletter at Underwood West Academy.

Our whole school attendance is 93.6%. A BIG THANK YOU to all parents and carers for your continued support.

WOW and a huge WELL DONE to the 29 children who have 100% attendance and to the 242 children who have 95% and above attendance for this academic year. Evidence shows that children who attend school on a regular basis can be more successful in school and in life.

Here at Underwood West we value good attendance and punctuality. Classroom doors open at 8.45 and your child needs to be in class at this time to get their mark in the register. If your child is arriving late and the class doors have closed please sign them in at the office, this ensures we do not phone you or send you a text message in error if they have not been added to the register.

If your child is going to be absent from school please let us know as soon as possible.



Telephone school – 01270 260580 – leave a message on option 1, the office is usually busy in the morning so this is the best option. Please leave a clear reason why your child is absent, If you say they are unwell the absence will not be authorised.

E-mail Mrs Gill on - jgill@underwoodwest.cheshire.sch.uk (use only when you have no credit to leave a message)

Send a message to the office with a family member or a friend.

If you need to speak to someone regarding your child's absence in private please ask Mrs Gill for assistance.

Authorised absence: When can my child be absent from school?



If your child is absent from school this will be marked as authorised or unauthorised. Authorised absences are as follows:

- Illness – if more than 3 days absence proof of medication is required
- Medical or dental appointments – proof required
- Religious observances
- Family bereavement – immediate family members
- Leave in term time authorised by the Principal

Wherever possible, parents should try to make appointments during school holidays or after school hours.

All children of compulsory school age 5-16 must receive a suitable full-time education. As a parent, you are responsible for ensuring that this happens. You are legally responsible for ensuring that your child attends school regularly. If you fail to do this legal action can be taken against you by the Local Authority. It is a legal offence to fail to ensure your child attends school regularly.



Unauthorised absence: When my child cannot be absent form school



Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider essential or reasonable. For example:

- Leave of absence during term time (holidays) that do not meet the criteria for authorisation
- Forgetting school term dates (holiday dates are in the office, on the Website and newsletter)
- Oversleeping (bring your child in when you get up)
- Unexplained absences (not letting school know)
- Day trips or holidays not authorised
- Buying new uniform or shoes
- Birthdays
- Snow (when school stays open)
- Eye test (can be made after school or in the holidays)
- Leaving a message without saying the reason why your child is absent
- If your child has been absent for 3 days or more without a valid reason or proof of medication

LEAVE OF ABSENCE IN TERM TIME

Leave of absence, including taking holidays, in term time, means that pupils miss important school time. It can be difficult to catch up on their work when they return to school.

Parents and carers should ensure that family holidays and any term time leave are arranged outside of school term dates. Please look at our holiday dates on the website and newsletter before booking your holiday or call into the office for a paper copy. An application for leave of absence may be declined if you have not checked the holiday dates in advance.

A form must be completed if you need to request leave of absence in term time. Application forms are available from Mrs Gill in the office. If you take leave without informing school we will chase this up as an unauthorised absence and possibly contact the police if we do not know where your child is as this is a safeguarding matter.

Am I entitled to take my child out of school for a family holiday?

- Parents are not entitled to take their children out of school for a family holiday. Due to new legislation only exceptional circumstances will be considered by the Principal. These changes give parents **no entitlement to take their child out of school for a holiday in term time**. Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends school on a regular basis. The Education Act 1996 makes it a criminal offence for a parent to 'fail to secure their child's regular attendance at the school'

If we decide to take a holiday during term time what should we do?

- The parent/carer with whom the child lives with must apply in writing to the Attendance Team.
- The letter or application must explain the exceptional circumstances surrounding the request for the leave of absence.

What will school do then?

- The Principal will decide whether the exceptional circumstance ruling applies, if not the application will be declined. You will receive a written response from the Attendance Team to let you know.
- Any unauthorised leave of absence in term time may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued by school.
- If you still decide to go ahead with the holiday after it has been declined the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

What will happen if the leave is unauthorised?

- The school will decide if a Fixed Penalty Notice should be issued. You will receive a letter from the Attendance Team advising that the matter has been referred to our Education Welfare Service.

If school decide to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice

- A Fixed Penalty Notice will be sent to you, with a covering letter; the Notice gives you the opportunity to pay a penalty fine instead of being prosecuted in the criminal courts.

Timeline	One child	Two children
Paid within 21 days	£80 per parent	£80 per child = £160 per parent
After 21 days & before 28 days	£160 per parent	£160 per child = £320 per parent
After 28 days	You will be summoned to appear before the Magistrates Court on the grounds you have failed to secure your child's regular attendance	The same as one child.

Payments will not be accepted after the 28th day and payments cannot be paid in part or by instalments.

REWARDS FOR GOOD ATTENDANCE



All parents should promote good attendance and work in partnership with school to overcome any attendance problems.

Good attendance and punctuality are vital for success at school and to establish positive life habits that are necessary for future success. Through regular attendance, pupils:

- Can build friendships and develop social groups.
- Develop life skills.
- Engage in essential learning and other school events.
- Achieve their full potential.
- Minimise the risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour.
- Are safe.

At Underwood West we will:

- Reward the two classes with the best attendance of the week.
- Reward the best class of every half term with a certificate and a non - uniform day.
- Present the class with the best attendance for the term a certificate and a small prize.
- Present every child with 96% and above attendance win a certificate for every half term they achieve this.
- In July– an end of year picnic takes place– date to be confirmed when the pupils have been chosen with excellent attendance.
- In June / July – End of year awards!



Thank you for your continued support.

Mrs J Gill Mrs J Bateman
Attendance Team