



Iford and Kingston CE Primary School

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Executive Headteacher
Mr Stewart James, BA (Hons), QTS

Head of School
Mr Matt Dean, BA (Hons), PGCE, QTS, NPQH

15th October 2025

Dear Families,

The Importance of Good Attendance and Punctuality

I am writing to remind all families of the importance of regular school attendance and punctuality, and to share guidance from East Sussex County Council.

At Iford and Kingston, we are committed to ensuring every child receives the best possible education. Regular attendance is vital - not only for academic progress but also for social development, emotional wellbeing, and safeguarding.

Why Attendance Matters

Children who attend school regularly are more likely to:

- Achieve better academic outcomes
- Build strong friendships and social skills
- Develop good habits for future education and employment

East Sussex County Council sets a clear expectation that children should attend school **100% of the time**, unless absence is unavoidable due to illness or exceptional circumstances.

Legal Responsibilities

As a parent or carer, you have a legal duty to ensure your child attends school regularly and on time. If your child is absent, you must:

- Contact the school on the first day of absence and each consecutive day
- Provide a clear reason for the absence
- Avoid term-time holidays (these are rarely authorised)

We understand that children may occasionally be unwell or have unavoidable absences. However, frequent or prolonged absences - and regular lateness - can have a significant impact on a child's progress and confidence.

You need to complete an East Sussex Withdrawal from Learning Form for any occasion when your child will not be in school, including medical appointments. You will find a copy of the form included in this letter, and you can collect the form from Jo in the school office.

Our school target for attendance is 97%, and we are working hard to support all families in achieving this. Even Minnie is getting involved! She will be spending some time with whichever class has the best overall attendance each week, as a way of encouraging and celebrating good attendance.



A few reminders and some clarification around attendance and punctuality:

School Day Timings:

- **Morning gate open:** 8:30am – **8:40am**
- **Afternoon gate open:** 3:15pm – 3:30pm

Please ensure your child arrives during the morning gate window so they can start their day calmly and ready to learn. If you arrive after 8:40am you will need to take your child to the school office where they will be signed in.

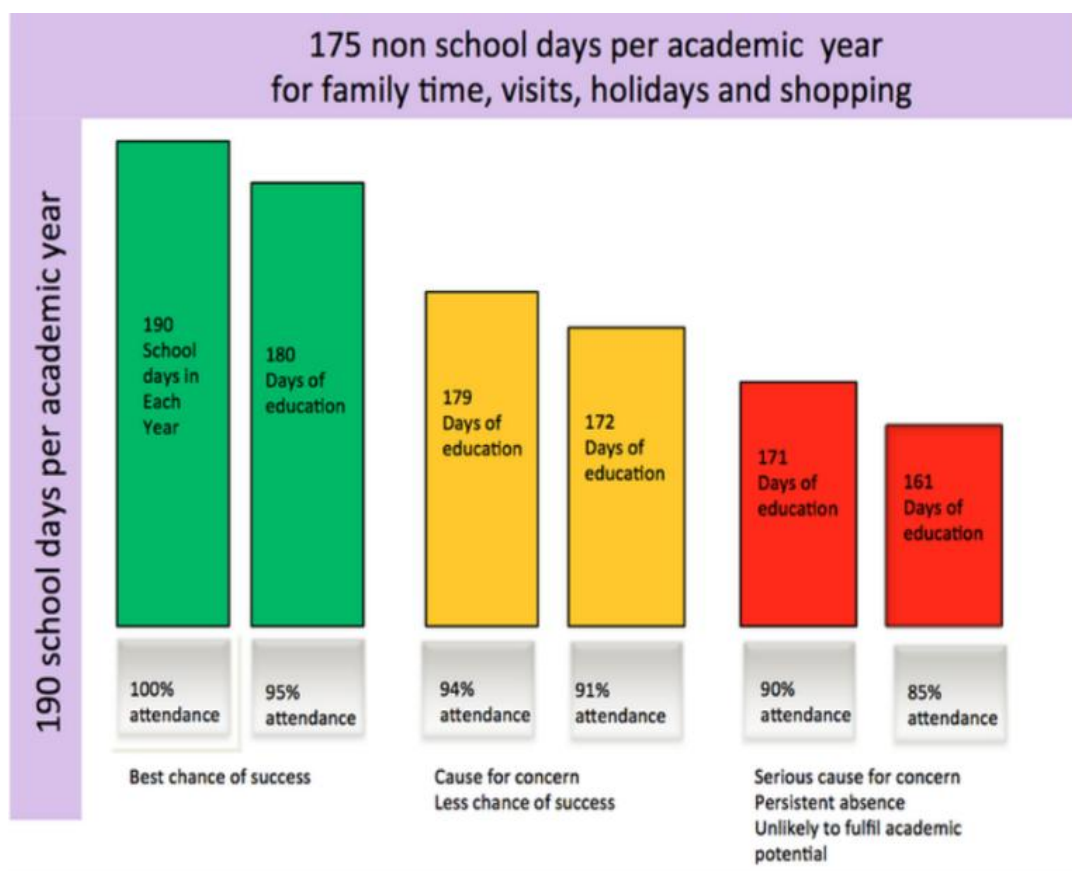
Daily Attendance Tracking:

Step	Time	Action	Responsibility
1	8:40am	• Playground gate closes	Head of School/ Member of staff on duty
2	8:40am	• Children are greeted at their classroom door	Class Teachers
3	8:40am onwards	• Any children arriving after this time come in via school office – family sign children in	Families School Secretary
4	By 9:00am	• Registers taken in class	Class Teachers
5	9:15am	• Registers close • Pupils arriving after this time are marked as /U/ - unauthorised absence for that session	School Secretary
6	9:15am	• Absentee Report from Arbor shared with all staff	School Secretary
7	9:30am onwards	• Phone calls home to any families we have not heard from who are absent • Incidents/ actions added to CPOMS	School Secretary
8	By 4:00pm	• Friendly phone call home or email to check in	Class Teachers

If a child is absent without prior notification, we will contact you to confirm the reason. Persistent lateness or unexplained absences will be followed up.

Fortnightly Attendance Tracking:

Attendance %	Stage	Action
Above 97%	N/A	We celebrate individual improvements and effort, so children who have worked hard to improve their attendance or overcome challenges will also be recognised. Our aim is to encourage every child to feel proud of their progress and to understand the value of being present and engaged in school life.
95% – 97%	Stage 1	Fortnightly monitoring. If attendance does not improve or drops below 95%, it will be escalated to Stage 2.
90% – 95%	Stage 2	A warning letter will be sent home. Attendance is closely monitored. If there is no improvement within two weeks, a meeting will be arranged. If necessary, attendance will be escalated to Stage 3
Below 90%	Stage 3	Your child is now classed as a <i>Persistent Absentee</i> . You will be invited to a meeting with the Head of School. A second warning letter will be issued with a target for improvement. If your child misses 10 sessions within 10 weeks, a fine may be issued. The Head of School may also refer the case to the East Sussex Attendance Lead.



Attendance in Numbers:

Attendance %	Attendance in Days	Absence in Days	Hours of Lost Learning
100%	190	0	0
97%	184	6	30
95%	180.5	9.5	47.5
90%	171	19	95
80%	152	38	190

Every Minute Counts

Lateness = Lost Learning (the figures below are calculated over a school year)

5 minutes late each day = 3 days lost!

10 minutes late each day = 6.5 days lost!

15 minutes late each day = 10 days lost!

20 minutes late each day = 13 days lost!

30 minutes late each day = 19 days lost!

Penalty Notice:

Please see guidance below from East Sussex.

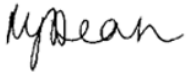
Please note that if a Penalty Notice is issued it will be to each parent for each child taken out of school.
The following also applies:

- A limit of no more than 2 penalty notices will be issued to the same parent for the same pupil within a 3-year rolling period will apply from 19 August 2024.
- The first penalty notice issued to the parent for that pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first notice, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
- A third penalty notice will not be issued within a 3-year period. Therefore, in cases where the threshold is met for a third (or subsequent) times within those 3 years, a penalty notice cannot be issued, and alternative action will be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.
- If the penalty notice remains unpaid, this will result in legal action.
- Once a Penalty Notice has been issued there is no right of appeal.

Let's Work Together

We all want the best for your child. By working together, we can ensure they attend school regularly, feel safe and supported, and make the most of every learning opportunity.

If you have any questions or need support, please don't hesitate to contact us.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mr Dean". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mr Matt Dean

**Head of School
Iford and Kingston C of E Primary School**

**Head of Teaching and Learning
Skylark Federation**

Withdrawal from Learning Application: For Exceptional Circumstances

Did you know that across the year there are just 190 school days? That means there are already 175 days set aside for weekends, holidays, family visits and rewarding days out. We believe every school day counts to give your child the greatest opportunity of attaining a good education and to support a happy and healthy future.

With 175 days already marked out as 'non-school-days', you should have an exceptional reason to withdraw your child from school. The following are not considered to be exceptional circumstances and are likely to be rejected and unauthorised:

- Trips to visit family/friends
- Your child's birthday
- Cheaper family holidays
- Tickets to sports/culture events

100% is recognised as an expected level of school attendance. Five days of school equates to 25 hours of learning, catching up with extra work out of school is unrealistic.

The vast majority of headteachers do not authorise any absence in term time, in fact, many schools refused 100% of requests last year. We strongly recommend you discuss your absence request with the school in the first instance.

Think twice about whether you want to proceed. Your child has the right to a full-time education and the opportunities that this can bring. We hope that you will work in partnership with us to make sure that your child attends school every day, allowing them access to the education they deserve.

To be completed by parent/carer:

Child's Name: Year Group/Class

Date of withdrawal from learning:

Date of return to learning:

Total number of learning days missed:

Reason for absence:

.....

.....

Declaration:

By completing and submitting this form I understand that if the request is unauthorised the Legal Interventions Team at East Sussex County Council will be notified of the absence taken and a legal intervention may be instigated in the form of a Penalty Notice. I also understand that if a Penalty Notice is issued it will be to each parent for each child taken out of school. I also acknowledge the following:

- A limit of no more than 2 penalty notices will be issued to the same parent for the same pupil within a 3-year rolling period will apply from 19 August 2024.*
- The first penalty notice issued to the parent for that pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days.*
- Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first notice, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.*
- A third penalty notice will not be issued within a 3-year period. Therefore, in cases where the threshold is met for a third (or subsequent) times within those 3 years, a penalty notice cannot be issued, and alternative action will be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.*
- I understand that if I do not pay the penalty notice this will result in legal action.*

Name of Parent/Carer: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Home Address: _____

Head teacher decision:

Name of child: Class/Year Group.....

Date decision form sent home:

☐

Authorised: Your request has been authorised for the following dates:

...../.... /..... to/..... /.....

☐

Unauthorised: Your request has been unauthorised for the following dates:

...../..... /..... to/...../.....

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A Penalty Notice WILL / WILL NOT be requested (delete as appropriate)

Head teacher signature

Date: