



**The Priors School**  
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Head Teacher: Ricky Emms

**Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

Dear Parents and Carers,

The Priors is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to be the best that they can be. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly.

The government have updated the guidelines we have to follow in a document called Working Together to Improve School Attendance, in response to a worrying trend nationally of fewer children attending school on a regular basis. At The Priors School, we aim for all children to attend school 100% of the time, however we know this will not happen! However, we do aim to have our overall school attendance above 97.5%. **As of Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024, our school attendance was 95.9%, which although this puts us in the top 20% nationally, it is well below our own expectations.**

### **Why Regular Attendance is so important**

It is widely known that the link between a pupil's attendance and attainment is irrefutable. Early poor attendance habits follow through into secondary school and employment. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines and therefore may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school (above 95% attendance) is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

### **Understanding Types of Absence**

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing. Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority Attendance Team using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

These include:

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- absences which have never been properly explained
- absences at the start and end of the school term around school holidays
- absences which present a pattern e.g. absences around weekends
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark, this is 9.20am
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Social, economic and cultural considerations within the family and community
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed



Warwickshire  
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- excessive / repeated illness without medical evidence

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, please speak to us rather than report your child as unwell and we will work with you to resolve any issues that may be affecting attendance.

### Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absences thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. We will contact parents in the cases of persistent absenteeism.

The level of persistent absenteeism at The Priors School is higher than we would like with 11.9% of children classed as persistently absent. This puts in the 30% – 40% centile nationally.

### Punctuality

Arriving at school is also extremely important for your children's chances at school.

**We have had almost 116 hours of lost of education in this school year so far from children being late, which, I am sure you will agree, is shocking.**


**Your child must be ready for school at 8:45am, ready to come into school at 8:50am.** If you often find you are running late, please try to change your routine so that your children arrive at school on time.

If you are having difficulties with this, please do speak to us as we want to work with you to ensure all children receive the best of their time at school.

If your child misses....	That Equals...	Which is...	Over 13 years of schooling that is.....
10 minutes a Day	50 minutes a Week	1.5 Weeks per Year	Nearly <u>1/2 Year</u> of lost learning
20 minutes a Day	1 hour 40 minutes a Week	2.5 Weeks per year	Nearly <u>1 Year</u> of lost learning
30 minutes a day	1/2 a Day a Week	4 Weeks per year	Nearly <u>1.5 Years</u> of lost learning
1 hour a Day	1 day a Week	8 Weeks per year	Nearly <u>2.5 Years</u> of lost learning

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your continued support,



Ricky Emms  
Head teacher