



Dear parent,

We are taking this opportunity to write to you as a collaborative group of schools across Farnworth to emphasise the importance of good attendance at school. Head teachers in Farnworth recognise that parents and carers are the biggest single influence on pupil attendance. We appreciate the strong partnership that many of you have with your child's school and warmly welcome the support you offer in ensuring good school attendance rates across Farnworth schools.

We cannot, however, emphasise enough the importance of attendance at school right from a child's earliest days in our reception classes through to the time they leave secondary school. Establishing good attendance habits from day one is of vital importance

- A pupil that achieves 90% attendance per year loses on average 100 lessons or 4 weeks of school.
- A pupil that achieves 90% attendance over their school life loses a whole year of school through absence.

OFSTED often say that if pupils are not in school they cannot learn. It is highly likely that pupils who attend school for 95% of the time or more, will obtain higher qualifications than those that attend for less than 95%. Primary school education lays the foundation blocks for all future learning and so high levels of attendance are vitally important.

In law there are some acceptable reasons for absence and these include sickness and observance of religious days. We do understand that pupils get sick, but regular absence from school is a significant problem which can have serious consequences for your child and his/her future opportunities. We ask therefore that if a pupil is unwell you stay in contact with the school regarding the absence and ensure your child returns to school as soon as they are able to do so.

Absence for any other reason, including family holidays in term time is not considered acceptable unless there are exceptional circumstances. As head teachers we have no legal obligation to sanction unacceptable absence and this includes holidays in term time. Additionally we need to point out that children who arrive late and miss registration are considered to be failing to attend school regularly.

The local authority has options it can take against parents and carers who fail in their legal duty to send their child to school. However, whilst these legal sanctions exist we as head teachers are committed to working with you to support the highest levels of attendance and the best possible education for all our children across Farnworth.

Please support us by ensuring your child is in school and achieves the highest possible level of attendance, thus giving your child the best possible opportunities for the future.

Yours sincerely,

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<i>L. Cooper</i>	Lesley Cooper – Head teacher Kearsley West
<i>S.A. Leighton</i>	Sally Leighton – Head teacher St James' Farnworth
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