



**KING EDWARD VI
NORTHFIELD
SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

Educational excellence for our City

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24th July 2024

Dear Parent/ Carer,

We would like to take this opportunity to update you on the Government's national drive to improve attendance and tackle persistent absence, which has led to some changes to attendance that will become compulsory for all schools from 19th August 2024. These are very important changes that will affect the way we work.

What will the new statutory changes for attendance look like from September 2024?

From September 2024, every school in England will be required to share their daily attendance registers across the education sector as part of the next stage of the government's drive to reduce pupil absence. Parental fines for unauthorised absences will be brought under a national framework to help tackle inconsistencies in their use. Guidelines state that from this time a fine to parents can be considered if a child misses five days or ten sessions (half days) of school for unauthorised absence. The threshold can be met with 'any combination of unauthorised absence', for example, four sessions in term time plus six instances of arriving late. **Please see the other 2 attachments from Birmingham City Council (July 2024) in relation to the National Framework for Penalty Notices for school absence.**

What will the new coding changes look like for attendance?

From September there will also be changes to the way schools code for attendance and absence. The Government will create additional codes to track attendance reasons more thoroughly.

Will there continue to be support for my child if they are struggling to attend school or struggling with their punctuality?

Yes, with regards to punctuality, any child who is late to school is greeted by a member of the office team. Members of staff within the pastoral team can then discuss the reasons for your child's lateness and suggest strategies to improve punctuality, including early help. In addition, if your child is struggling with punctuality, or you are struggling to help your child attend school, please get in touch with your child's Form Tutor, Head of Year or our Attendance Team to discuss ways that we can reduce barriers and or any concerns that you may have.

Will the new changes to punctuality impact my child's overall attendance if they are late to school or have unauthorised attendance?

To support our high expectations around punctuality and new Government guidelines, we are required to change the times our registers close in the morning. From September registers will close at 9.20 am. Any child arriving after these times will have to be marked with a 'U' code, which means they arrived after the register closed and are recorded as absent for the morning session, with their attendance record being negatively affected.

What research is there to show the impact of poor attendance on children and young people?

Good or better school attendance is vital to the life chances of children and young people. Being in school improves health, well-being and socialisation throughout their 5 years in secondary education. The greatest

Headteacher: Mr Neil Jones



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benefits come from children and young people attending school regularly (DFE September 2023). At Northfield School for Girls we want our children to thrive, and to be healthy and happy. For this to happen, according to the DFE (2022), young people need to be attending school, seeing their friends and learning in the classroom with specialist teachers. You can find more information about the link between absence and attainment at KS2 and KS4 from the Department for Education (2022) here: (accessed 5 Jul 2023). <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/the-link-between-absence-and-attainment-at-ks2-and-ks4>.

As a parent, I am unsure if I should send my child into school due to illness, what should I do?

The NHS and the Chief Medical Officer say it is usually appropriate for parents and carers to send their children to school with mild respiratory illnesses, including general cold symptoms like a minor cough, runny nose or sore throat. However, children should not be sent to school if they have a temperature of 38°C or above. Please check [NHS 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance](#) for further information.

In addition to respiratory illnesses, we are aware that more children may be absent from school due to symptoms of anxiety since the pandemic. Worry and mild or moderate anxiety, whilst sometimes difficult emotions, can be a normal part of growing up for many children and young people. Being in school can often help alleviate the underlying issues. A prolonged period of absence is likely to heighten a child's anxiety about attending in the future, rather than reduce it. DfE has published useful [guidance on mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance](#) and those who are experiencing persistent symptoms can be encouraged to access additional support.

If you have any additional questions relating to any attendance matters, please do not hesitate to contact our attendance team via the email attendance@nsg.kevibham.org

Thank you for your continued support

Yours Sincerely.

Mrs Colvin-Grieve
Assistant Headteacher – Pupil Support & Well-being