

# LONDON MEED PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bravery.....Community.....Curiosity.....Resilience.....Respect

14<sup>th</sup> November 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to highlight the significant issue we, as a school community, are facing in regards to attendance. Currently our whole school attendance rate is 95.3 %, which is a drop from the preceding year.

Our current situation places us with a concerning attendance rate. The whole school community: governors, SLT and teaching staff, support staff, Local Authority and parents would really like to see this attendance rate flourish. The government also deems this to be below an acceptable figure. A child should attend school every day and attendance over 96% is considered to be good attendance. If attendance drops to 90% or lower, the government classifies the child as having persistent absence (PA), and if attendance is 50% or less, the child is classified as severely absent (SA). A child with 89% attendance at the end of an academic year will have missed 21 days of school (which is over four school weeks of learning missed).

I wanted to highlight through the table below the impact of poor attendance to show the amount of lost learning it equates to. When a child does not attend school, they miss out on significant hours of learning opportunities (broadly calculated as five hours for every two sessions missed) which are unlikely to be covered again. Imagine missing 4 weeks of daily phonics or Week 1 of 'Fractions', for instance, that child will forever be on the back foot or playing catch up, and places them at a significant risk of falling behind their peers:

Descriptor	Threshold attendance	Actual attendance	Whole days of absence	Learning Hours Lost
<b>Excellent</b>	100%	190 days	0	0
	99%	188 days	2	10
<b>Good</b>	98%	186 days	4	20
	97%	184 days	6	30
	96%	182.5 days	7.5	37.5
<b>Cause for Concern</b>	95%	180.5 days	9.5	47.5
	94%	179 days	11	55
	93%	177 days	13	65
	92%	175 days	15	75
	91%	173 days	17	85
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	90%	171 days	19	95
	89%	169 days	21	105
	88%	167 days	23	115
	87%	165 days	25	125
<b>Serious cause for concern</b>	86%	163 days	27	135
<b>Critical</b>	85%	161.5 days	28.5	142.5
	84%	159.5 days	30.5	152.5
	83%	158 days	32	160
	82%	156 days	34	170
	81%	154 days	36	180
	80%	152 days	38	190

While some of the absence may be due to illness, it is imperative that we all work together to improve the life chances of our children through school attendance. Our aim is to support you so that your child can be at school as much as possible.

Head teacher Miss Fiona Dowley

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For those children whose attendance falls below 91%, their parents will be invited in to discuss their attendance and ways in which we can support to improve this.

We will obviously take into consideration pupils with long term diagnosed medical conditions/disabilities.

I would also like to notify you that the school will be issuing fixed penalty notices for persistent unauthorised absences where appropriate. The school would look on this as a last resort, as we would much prefer to work together with families to ensure children maintain good attendance and benefit from the opportunities offered to them at school. We do understand the cost-of-living crisis is impacting families who are keen to get away on an affordable holiday, however, we cannot condone absences of this type.

I appreciate this may come across negatively to some families. However, we collectively have a responsibility to ensure strong attendance across the school. I know that working together we will be able to improve the attendance of our children so that they can meet their full potential.

Many thanks

Fi Dowley

Head teacher



**Head teacher Miss Fiona Dowley**  
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