PRIESTMEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL
Moving Onwards and Upwards Together
A part of The Pegasus Partnership Trust

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7th September 2026

PRIESTMEAD ATTENDANCE LETTER

Dear Parents/Carers,

This is an important update on school attendance for the 2026/27 academic year.

The DfE is introducing new measures to improve attendance, including tackling persistent absence. Parents are urged to support their children in returning to school regularly. More information can be found here.

At Priestmead, we work with parents and the Local Authority to achieve high attendance. Thank you to the majority who ensure their children attend consistently. We expects 97%+ attendance for all pupils.

If attendance falls below 93% without a valid reason, our monitoring process will begin (see Appendix A).

What reasons does the school **ACCEPT** for absence	What is an **UNACCEPTABLE** reason for absence?
• Genuine illness • Urgent medical/dental appointments (proof required) • School entry exams or interviews • One day of religious observance (LA guidance) • Family bereavement (overseas travel requires prior permission)	• Tiredness • Day trips or holidays in the UK or abroad • Birthdays • Visiting relatives abroad • Collecting relatives from an airport • Shopping • Childcare issues • Parent illness • Parent/carer is away or has an appointment

In the event of your child being absent from school it is essential that you, the parent/carer, inform the school office of the reasons for absence between 7:30am – 8:45am.

Punctuality

- Gates open at 8:30am and close at 8:45am.
- Children arriving late must sign in at the office.
- 8+ late arrivals in 10 weeks may result in an Education Penalty Notice.

Data Sharing

Please note, all schools must now share attendance information with the DfE and Local Authority. This is to help identify and support children who may need extra help. In some cases, information may also be shared with other services (such as health or police) if it is in the best interests of the child.

Good attendance is essential for learning and building positive habits. Thank you for your continued support. Our full Attendance Policy is available on the school website.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Creamer
Associate Headteacher

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APPENDIX A
Attendance Monitoring Process

The school attendance officer will log instances of absence and lateness and discuss weekly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Attendance Lead. Where absence and lateness persist, the following will be initiated:

Stage 1: Where there are concerns about attendance and punctuality the attendance office will make verbal contact with you to discuss your child's absence and punctuality.

Stage 2: If the concern persists the academy will write to the parents/carers or arrange a meeting.

- **Attendance**

1. Persistent Absence Letter of Concern for attendance between 90 – 93%
2. Persistent Absence Second Warning Letter & Medical Verification Letter for attendance below 90%
3. Meeting with the Deputy Headteacher to discuss concerns
4. Persistent Absence Third Warning Letter for continued attendance below 90%

Please note there is a risk of an Education Penalty Notice (EPN) for children with 10 or more unauthorised sessions within a 10-week period.

- **Punctuality**

1. Persistent Lateness – Letter of Concern for 3 or more lates
2. Persistent Lateness – Second Warning Letter for continued lateness. There is a risk of an Education Penalty Notice (EPN) if this continues.
3. Meeting with the Deputy Headteacher to discuss concerns

Stage 3: If the concerns persist the school will arrange a meeting between the parent/carer, Academy representative and the Lead Officer for Children Missing in Education at Harrow Council.

Stage 4: If the concerns persist, the Academy will make a formal referral to the Local Authority Educational Welfare Service to deal with the on-going issues. Should concerns persist the Lead Officer for Children Missing in Education will agree action (as above) and where necessary meet with the parents/carers. Please note that ultimately the Local Authority can take legal action.

APPENDIX B
Absence During Term Time

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 explanatory note states:

Regulation 7 of the 2006 Regulations is amended to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil; except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that they are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Leave of absence taken without authorisation may be referred to the Education Welfare Service. This may result in prosecution proceedings, or a Fixed Penalty Notice. If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, a separate notice would be issued to each parent for each child.

Educational Penalty Notice Update

Unauthorised absences can lead to an Educational Penalty Notice (fine). As of August 2024, the fines will be as followed:

- **1st offence** - each parent will receive a fine of £80, rising to £160 if you do not pay within 21 days.
- **2nd offence** - in a rolling 3-year period this will be increased to £160 for each parent. If you do not pay the fine in 28 days you may be taken to court for keeping your child out of school.
- **3rd offence** - within the 3 years you will not be fined but may be taken to court and could lead to prosecution.

If the penalty notice is not paid, each parent/carer may be liable to prosecution at the Magistrates Court, and if proved, each notice may receive a criminal conviction and/or a fine to the maximum of £2500 per parent.

Please note a parent will only receive up to 2 fines for the same child in a 3-year period. This will be transferred from one school to another in the event you have moved schools or transferred to secondary school.

Application for term-time leave of absence must be made in advance by the parent/carer - 'APPLICATION FOR CHILD LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM ACADEMY FOR TERM TIME ABSENCE'. A hard copy form can be obtained from the school office.

Leave of absence will only be granted where the Academy Lead considers it is due to **'exceptional circumstances'**. Parents/carers will be informed with 7 days as to whether the request has been authorised or unauthorised.

There are approximately 190 school days (380 sessions) a year which your child is expected to attend. The Pegasus Partnership Trust expectation is at least 97% attendance.

If you choose one of our academies you choose to abide by this policy.

There are also approximately 76 days (152 sessions) of school holidays. This is over 13 school weeks. Please ensure that your holidays are taken during this period.