



Monday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026

## Attendance

Dear Parents,

I am writing to address the issue of attendance at The Duchy of Lancaster. Our attendance figures have been below the national average and lower than those of similar schools during this and the previous academic year. This indicates that there is room for improvement, and with a joint effort between families and the school, we can make a significant positive difference to the education and enjoyment of our pupils.

To support this improvement, we are adapting our attendance systems. Any child arriving later than 8:55am must be signed in by an adult, with a reason provided for their lateness. Additionally, for children absent for the day, if no reason for absence has been given by 9:45am, or if the reason provided is vague or unconventional, we will contact the family by phone. All emergency contacts on record will be called in priority order if we do not receive an answer. At 10am, either myself or Miss Clucas will decide if a home visit is necessary to check on the child's welfare. Some families may also receive a call around 2:45pm to check on the child's wellbeing and to discuss plans for the following day. Please note, if the school has not been informed of the reason for absence, or if the information provided is unclear, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. It is important that the school is notified every day of absence, even if contact has been made the day before.

We ask that appointments which can be arranged outside of school hours should be booked accordingly. When appointments during school time are unavoidable, children should be out of school for the minimum possible duration. Absences related to appointments for other family members will be marked as unauthorised, as will appointments which could have been scheduled outside school hours or if the absence is longer than reasonably necessary.

Our aim is for every child to have a successful and enjoyable experience at school. We have designed a curriculum where each lesson builds on the previous one. Missing lessons can make it difficult for children to keep up with their peers, which in turn can make school less enjoyable and more challenging. This can create a negative cycle where pupils fall further behind due to absence, find school harder, and consequently miss more lessons. To help break this cycle, we offer the option for children to complete work that we will send home for children who have missed school due to illness or appointments. Supporting your child with this work is optional, but it can make a real difference to their progress and enjoyment.

For children whose attendance falls below 97% but remains above 90%, we will arrange check-ins with class teachers to discuss how we can support improving attendance. If attendance falls below 90%, you will be invited to a support meeting to explore the reasons for low attendance and ways we can assist you and your child.



The Trinity Partnership

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[duchy.demat.org.uk](http://duchy.demat.org.uk)

We will also talk directly with children about the importance of regular attendance and what they miss when they are absent.

All these strategies align with the latest guidance and recommendations from the Department for Education. Please be aware that if a child accumulates the equivalent of five days of unauthorised absence within a rolling ten-week period, this meets the threshold for legal intervention by the Local Authority. This often results in a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) as an alternative to legal proceedings, as attendance at school is a legal requirement.

Thank you for your ongoing support in working with us to improve attendance. Together, we can ensure every child has the best possible opportunity to thrive at The Duchy of Lancaster.

Yours sincerely,

Damon Finney

Headteacher