

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to the start of the new academic year, 2024-25. The start of a new academic year brings with it many opportunities to build on the previous year and in some cases to start in a new school or new class. To help pupils with their transition new pupils had the opportunity to complete a number of transition days. Pupils already at Greenbank School started their new classes during the last few weeks of the Summer Term. This has made a huge difference to the settled and positive start of term. It was a pleasure to welcome back all our pupils on Wednesday.

I met the whole school during assembly on Wednesday morning to welcome everyone and so share with the pupils the Ethos, Vision and Values of school. Staff, pupils and governors spent time during the Summer Term revisiting these principles that school follows to give every pupil the best opportunity to succeed (something we do together).

**Our Ethos:** *Learning and Succeeding Together*

**Our Vision:** *At Greenbank, we create a kind and caring environment. We are committed to growth and lifelong learning. We work to achieve success, build resilience, and embrace everyone's unique strengths. We learn and succeed together.*

**Our Values:** As identified by pupils and the School Council.



Two of the biggest changes to education over the summer related to how Ofsted inspect schools and Attendance at school. In response, school has revised its attendance procedures and will present these to the Governing Board for approval.

**Attendance:** Key Points for parents and carers to be aware of:

- If you need to take your child out of school during term time, you'll need to submit a written request to the Head Teacher and the School's Governing Board in advance of the leave being taken. Forms are available upon request from school.
- The attendance target for all pupils at school is **94 %**.



**Headteacher: Mr M. McCann**

- Attendance will be monitored daily. Where attendance falls below 94% school may contact you to discuss attendance and offer support. *If a child is not in school, they can't learn and succeed.*
- If your child is not in school, for what ever reason, you are asked to contact school by making a telephone call.
- Requests for leave during term time for a family holiday can not be authorised and will result in a fine.

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Improving regular attendance at school is a key priority, for local authorities and government alike. The Education Act 1996 makes it a criminal offence for a parent to 'fail to secure their child's regular attendance at the school'.

In 2013, the Department for Education (DFE) announced important amendments to legislation surrounding the taking of holidays in term time.

As of 1 September 2013, the legislation which previously granted Head Teachers the discretion to approve up to two weeks (ie ten school days) leave of absence during term time for the purposes of a family holiday in special circumstances has changed.

The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 (as amended) now state that a leave of absence during term time can only be approved by a Head Teacher/School Governing Body when:

- a written request is made in advance of the leave being taken and the circumstances of the requested leave are 'exceptional'

**There is no longer any provision for 'holidays' in the regulations.**

### **How to request time off for your child**

If you need to take your child out of school during term time, you'll need to submit a written request to the Head Teacher and the School's Governing Body in advance of the leave being taken. They will consider if your circumstances are 'exceptional' and let you know if your request has been approved. Please note that holidays are not normally considered exceptional.

If you take your child out of school without approval, the absence will be recorded as **unauthorised**. The National Framework for penalty notices introduces a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered.

The National threshold is met when a pupil is recorded as absent for **10 sessions** (usually equivalent to **5 school days**) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.

If the unauthorised absence is for ten school sessions (i.e. five school days) or more, the local authority may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) to **each of the child's parents or carers** at the request of the Head Teacher or School Governing Body.



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### **Taking children on holiday during term time**

Advanced notice of important changes to Fixed Penalty Notice fines with effect from 19 August 2024

With effect from the 19 August 2024, the law changes and Penalty Notices will increase. Penalty charges will be £160 if paid within 28 days reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days **per parent/carer per child.**

The National Framework for Penalty Notices introduces a new national limit of two penalty notices that can now be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling three year period. If a second Fixed Penalty Notice is issued to the same parent for the same child, within three years of the first Fixed Penalty Notice, the second Fixed Penalty Notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.

Once two Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued, if a third unauthorised leave of absence occurs within a three year period, the Local Authority is able to move to prosecution immediately.

Reference: <https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/education-and-learning/early-years-and-childcare/education-welfare-service/fixed-penalty-notices/taking-children-on-holiday-during-term-time#:~:text=If%20you%20need%20to%20take,your%20request%20has%20been%20approved.>

### **Pupil Health**

A number of pupils in school have significant allergy conditions. For a number of years Greenbank School has been a nut free environment. Whilst this is managed in school, I would ask that parents, whose children bring in a packed lunch or a snack observe this nut free status.

Pupils new to school were provided with an induction pack, that included a MEDICAL FORM. Thank you for those of you who have returned the completed form. Can I ask that if you have not returned your form to do so on Monday?

Well Done everyone for an excellent first week! Have a safe and enjoyable weekend.

Yours sincerely,

**Mr McCann**  
**Head Teacher**



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