



Aston Rowant C+E Primary School
School Lane, Aston Rowant, Oxon OX49 5SU
01844 351671 office@aston-rowant.oxon.sch.uk
Headteacher: Mrs Helen France



8th May 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Attendance and Term-Time Holidays

We are writing to you as we have seen a significant increase in requests for term-time holidays, alongside a concerning number of absences being reported as illness where pupils have later been identified as being on holiday.

Regular school attendance is essential for children to thrive academically, socially and emotionally. For this reason, we are reminding parents of our expectations and the legal framework surrounding school attendance.

The Importance of Attendance

Attending school every day is vital for your child's education and wellbeing. Absence from school:

- * Disrupts a child's learning and progress
- * Makes it harder for teachers to cover missed learning without affecting planned lessons
- * Impacts other pupils in the class when lessons have to be repeated or adapted
- * Can lead to gaps in understanding that are difficult to close

All pupils benefit when lessons run as planned and learning is continuous.

Term-Time Holidays and Illness

Holidays taken during term time will not be authorised except in exceptional circumstances, which are rare and must be approved in advance by the Headteacher.

It is important to note that:

- * Claiming illness when a child is actually on holiday is recorded as unauthorised absence
- * Providing incorrect information about the reason for absence is a serious matter and raises safeguarding concerns
- * Such absences will be referred to the Local Authority Attendance Team

Legal Responsibility and Fines

In line with Oxfordshire County Council guidance, the school will request the issue of a Penalty Notice (fine) where a pupil accrues unauthorised absence, including term-time holidays.

This includes:

- * Five or more days (10 sessions) of unauthorised absence, whether taken consecutively or as a pattern over a period of time
- * Absence taken in single days or short blocks attached to weekends, INSET days or school holidays
- * Repeated unauthorised absence, even where individual absences appear minimal

We are seeing an increase in patterns of absence that significantly disrupt pupils' learning, and these will now be addressed more robustly. The decision to request a Penalty Notice is not taken lightly. However, where unauthorised absence continues or develops into a pattern, the school will take formal action to reinforce the seriousness of missed learning and to support improved attendance.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I take just one or two days off without consequences?

Any unauthorised absence, even a single day, disrupts learning. Where short absences begin to form a pattern (for example, attached to weekends or school holidays or the same day or week year on year), these will be monitored and may contribute towards formal action.

What if my child is genuinely unwell?

We fully understand that children do become ill. However, illness should be genuine and unavoidable. Where patterns of absence cause concern, we may ask for further information and will work with families to ensure children are supported back into school.

GRATITUDE RESILIENCE OUTREACH WONDER TRUST HARMONY

Growing together, rooted in God, enjoying fullness of life. (Colossians 2:1-7)



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Does the school really issue fines?

The school works with Oxfordshire County Council and will request a Penalty Notice where the legal threshold for unauthorised absence is met. This is part of our responsibility to promote regular attendance and is applied fairly and consistently.

Why is the school taking a firmer approach?

Regular attendance gives children the best chance to succeed. Missed learning affects not only the individual child but also teachers' ability to deliver lessons effectively and the learning of other pupils in the class.

Positive Attendance and Rewards

Alongside these measures, we are committed to recognising and rewarding good and improving attendance. We will be continuing to celebrate pupils who attend regularly and make sustained efforts to be in school every day.

Working Together

Our priority is always the best interests of the children in our care. Regular attendance gives pupils the strongest chance of success and ensures they fully benefit from all that school has to offer.

We ask for your cooperation and support in ensuring that:

- * Holidays are taken outside of term time
- * Absence due to illness is genuine and communicated honestly
- * Any concerns affecting attendance are discussed with us early

Thank you for your understanding and continued support.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Helen France
Headteacher

Mr Tom Sowerby
Chair of Governors

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