



Dear Parents, Carers and Families,

Re: New Attendance Legislation and Attendance Expectations

We wanted to take a moment and update you on the requirements around school attendance following the revised statutory guidance '*Working together to improve school attendance*' that was published in August 2024 which can be found here [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#). We are keen to seek your support, cooperation as we comply with the regulatory framework.

On the Isles of Scilly, we're ambitious about children achieving socially, emotionally and academically. Being in school and having the best attendance possible underpins all the many benefits of school for your child, such as their learning, wellbeing and wider development.

All parents in England are legally responsible for making sure that children receive a suitable full-time education and ensure that children attend regularly. Children are expected to attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

There are some important changes that parents need to be aware of regarding school attendance that were published in the revised statutory guidance '*Working together to improve school attendance*' that was published in August 2024. If your child is absent from school without permission or a valid reason, it is important that you as parents understand that you are likely to be breaking the law. When this happens, your child's school will speak to you to understand the reasons. As parents you must request a leave of absence from school in advance if your child needs to be absent from school and gain permission from the Headteacher of the school.

The Five Islands Academy has an updated 'absence request form' reflecting the changes to legislation. This is available on the Five Islands Academy's website.

It is our intention to support children and families to overcome barriers that could result in poor school attendance and need to inform you that we must comply with The New National Threshold for issuing penalty notices which could result in a penalty fine being issued for unauthorised absences including holidays taken during term.

The new National Threshold is 10 unauthorised sessions (1 session = half a day) within a 10-school week period, for which a penalty notice can be considered. As per the guidance, the Headteacher will only authorise holidays during term time in exceptional circumstances.

We recognise that for some children, attending school every day can be harder than for others. This is why the Five Islands Academy, Children's Services and other partners, are committed to working together with families to solve problems and support your child's school attendance. The Council's website is in the process of being updated with information and further guidance on how we will work together to support attendance.



**FIVE ISLANDS ACADEMY
AND**

THE COUNCIL OF THE ISLES OF SCILLY

Five Islands Academy: enquiries@fiveislands.org

Council of the Isles of Scilly familyscilly@scilly.gov.uk

Further information and support for parents and carers is available at:

<https://assets.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wpuploads/2024/07/aaa-guide-for-parents-on-school-attendance-19th-Aug-version.pdf>

We know all parents want to ensure their children are in school, receiving their education, and we are really keen to support families in ensuring the children get the best out of their education.

Anne Coyle

Kelley Butcher

Anne Coyle

Kelley Butcher

Director of Children's Services

CEO Leading Edge Academies Partnership