



Dear Prior Weston families,

We are now half way through the school year and are looking forward to the brighter days that are to come.

Hopefully we are leaving the winter colds and fevers behind. We have seen an impact on our attendance over the past half term and now need to work with families to improve it.

The focus of this newsletter will be attendance and punctuality, their importance and their impact.

By working together we can make improvements.

School attendance team
Bev & Touvonna

Attendance Matters – A Message for All Families

Following on from our focus on attendance last term, we want to be absolutely clear about expectations at Prior Weston. As we shared previously, “*every day counts, and every lesson missed is a chance lost*” — and this is not just a slogan. It is a reality that affects children’s learning, progress, wellbeing, and long term outcomes.

Our attendance last year was **88.9%**, significantly below the national average of **95.5%**. This is why we are now a **focus school for the local authority**, and why improving attendance is a priority for every family.

This year, we must work together to reach our target of **93%** or above. Within the first few weeks of the autumn term we reached our target. However, since then it has been declining. It is currently **91.6%**

What Absence Cannot Be Authorised

Schools are only permitted to authorise absence in very limited circumstances. The following **cannot** be authorised under any circumstances:



Holidays during term time

This includes trips abroad, family celebrations, weddings, cheaper travel opportunities, or visiting relatives. Term time holidays are not allowed and will be recorded as **unauthorised absence**.



Absence due to tiredness or oversleeping

Morning routines must be managed at home. Oversleeping is not a valid reason for absence.



Absence because a parent is unwell

If a parent is unwell, children are still expected to attend school unless *they* are unwell.



Absence for birthdays, special treats, or family days out

These must take place outside school hours.



Absence due to minor ailments

Mild colds, headaches, tummy aches, or feeling “a bit under the weather” are not reasons to stay home. The guidance included shows many conditions — such as head lice, tonsillitis, threadworms, and hand, foot and mouth — do **not** require time off school.

If you are unsure, please call the office before keeping your child at home.

Should I keep my child off school?

Yes

Until...

Chickenpox	at least 5 days from the onset of the rash and until all blisters have crusted over
Diarrhoea and Vomiting	48 hours after their last episode
Cold and Flu-like illness (including COVID-19)	they no longer have a high temperature and feel well enough to attend. Follow the national guidance if they've tested positive for COVID-19.
Impetigo	their sores have crusted and healed, or 48 hours after they started antibiotics
Measles	4 days after the rash first appeared
Mumps	5 days after the swelling started
Scabies	they've had their first treatment
Scarlet Fever	24 hours after they started taking antibiotics
Whooping Cough	48 hours after they started taking antibiotics

No

but make sure you let their school or nursery know about...

Hand, foot and mouth	Glandular fever
Head lice	Tonsillitis
Threadworms	Slapped cheek



SCAN ME

Advice and guidance

To find out more, search for health protection in schools or scan the QR code or visit <https://qrco.de/minfec>.

The Impact of Unauthorised Absence

The data is clear:

- Missing **one day every two weeks** = nearly **20 days** lost per year
- Missing **one day per week** = **8 weeks** lost per year
- Missing **two days per week** = **16 weeks** lost per year

As we shared in a previous newsletter “attendance that drops to 90% means a child misses the equivalent of half a year of school by the time they leave primary.”

Unauthorised absence has a direct impact on:

- Reading, writing, and maths progress
- Confidence and social development
- Behaviour and emotional wellbeing
- Long-term outcomes in secondary school

Children simply cannot make the progress they deserve if they are not in school consistently.

Do you know what good attendance is?



When Absence Can Be Authorised

We can authorise absence **only** for:

- Genuine illness (following NHS guidance)
- Medical appointments that **cannot** be scheduled outside school hours
- Exceptional circumstances (rare, and must be requested in advance. We may request to see evidence such as travel tickets)

Evidence may be requested for repeated illness or medical absence.

Punctuality – A Non-Negotiable Expectation

Your newsletter included a powerful reminder that “*just a little bit late doesn't seem much but...*” lateness adds up quickly:

- **10 minutes late each day = nearly 1.5 weeks lost per year**
- **30 minutes late each day = 4 weeks lost per year**

Arriving late also means children:

- Miss the start of lessons
- Enter the classroom feeling unsettled
- Miss key instructions
- Disrupt the learning of others

Classrooms are open from **8:45 –9:00** to enable children to start the day promptly.

All children must be in school **by 9:10 am** ready to learn.

What sort of start is your child getting?

Just a little bit late doesn't seem much but.....

Just a little bit late doesn't seem much but.....

He/She is only missing just....	That equals....	Which is.....
10 minutes per day	50 minutes per week	Nearly 1.5 weeks per year
20 minutes per day	1 hour 40 mins per week	Over 2.5 Weeks per year
Half an hour per day	Half a day per week	4 Weeks per year
1 hour per day	1 day per week	8 Weeks per year

Does your child have a chance of being successful?

1 or 2 days a week doesn't seem much but.....

If your child misses....	That equals....	Which is.....
1 day per fortnight	20 Days per year	4 weeks per year
1 day per week	40 Days	8 weeks
2 days per week	80 Days	16 weeks per year
3 days per week	120 Days per year	24 weeks per year

How we monitor attendance at Prior Weston

Each day the attendance team monitor class registers for reported and unauthorised absences. All absences need a reason. If you have not contacted the school to inform us why your child is absent we will call to speak with someone from the family.

The **expected percentage is 96% attendance**. If a child's attendance falls below this a letter to inform families of this is sent.

If attendance continues to decline a letter for improvement will be sent. Further decline will prompt a meeting and possible referral to an attendance mentor from the local authority .

A child with attendance below 90% is classed as persistently absent (PA). These children are monitored by the local authority and the DfE.

How Families Can Support Good Attendance

Here are practical steps that make a real difference:

1. Prioritise school days

Treat school as non-negotiable — just like work.

2. Keep routines consistent

Bedtimes, wake-ups, and morning routines should be the same every day.

3. Plan ahead

Book travel, appointments, and family events outside term time.

4. Communicate early

If you are struggling with routines, anxiety, or barriers to attendance, let us know immediately. We can help — but only if we know.

5. Send children in unless they are genuinely unwell

If they become too unwell during the day, we will contact you.

Working Together – Our Shared Responsibility

Improving attendance is not optional — it is essential. It is also a legal requirement for all parents. Our attendance team — **Touvonna, Bev, and Fiona** — will continue monitoring attendance closely and contacting families where patterns of absence or lateness cause concern.

We want every child at Prior Weston to thrive. The most powerful way to support your child's success is simple:

Bring them to school every day, on time.

If you would like support, advice, or a conversation about your child's attendance, please speak to us. We are here to help — but we must work together.

Dates for your Diary

March 2026	
Thursday 5th March	World Book Day - Parade from 2:45pm - 3:15pm
Wednesday 11th March	Year 1 Bright Sparks Concert @ Royal Festival Hall
Friday 20th March	Red Nose Day
Thursday 26th March	Music Masters Spring M Fest
Monday 30th March - Friday 10th April	Easter Break
April 2026	
Monday 13th April	Welcome Back
Wed 22nd - Friday 29th April	Year 4 Condoover Residential Trip
May 2026	
Friday 15th May	Parliament class assembly @ 9.15am
Friday 22nd May	Kew class assembly @ 9.15am
Monday 25th– Friday 29th May	Half term
July 2026	
Friday 17th July	End of summer term 2pm finish

All term dates up to 2029/2030 can be found on the Islington Council website
<https://www.islington.gov.uk/children-and-families/schools/term-and-holiday-dates>

Please check when booking ahead that holidays are not in term time. This is an unauthorised absence and may result in a fine.

School academic year 2026/ 2027

Autumn Term (73 days)

Wednesday 2 September 2026 to Friday 23 October 2026

- **Half term: Monday 26 October 2026 to Friday 30 October 2026**

Monday 2 November 2026 to Friday 18 December 2026

- **Winter holiday: Monday 21 December 2026 to Friday 1 January 2027**

Public holidays

- Christmas Day: Friday 25 December 2026
- Boxing Day: Monday 28 December 2026

New Year's Day: Friday 1 January 2027

Spring Term (54 days)

Monday 4 January 2027 to Friday 12 February 2027

- **Half term: Monday 15 February 2027 to Friday 19 February 2027**

Monday 22 February 2027 to Thursday 25 March 2027

- **Spring holiday: Friday 26 March 2027 to Friday 9 April 2027**

Public holidays

- Good Friday: Friday 26 March 2027

Easter Monday: Monday 29 March 2027

Summer Term (68 days)

Monday 12 April 2027 to Friday 28 May 2027

- **Half term: Monday 31 May 2027 to Friday 4 June 2027**

Monday 7 June 2027 to **Thursday 22 July 2027**

Secondary Transition Day: Thursday 1 July 2027

Public holidays

- May Day bank holiday: Monday 3 May 2027
- Spring bank holiday: Monday 31 May 2027
- August bank holiday: Monday 30 August 2027

Total number of days: 195

Inset days: Five days (to be decided from the 195 days by headteachers with their governing bodies)