Moorside Community Primary School

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Policy written by:	Suzanne Howard	**Date:**	September 2025
Policy reviewed by:		**Date:**	
Policy Approved by:	Governing board	**Date:**	November 2025
Last reviewed on:	July 2025	**Next review date:**	September 2026

Contents

Link to term dates

1. Aims

At Moorside Community Primary School, we believe that attendance and punctuality at school is not only a legal requirement but is fundamental to the child's development and attainment. Local Authorities, Schools, Parents and the wider community all have a role to play in improving attendance. At Moorside, we have implemented procedures designed to ensure that all our pupils attend regularly.

School Attendance Lead: Ms Lesley Dilworth
Named Governor for Attendance: Mrs Sarah Keavney

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and statutory responsibilities

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance and school attendance parental responsibility measures. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
  The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

The flow of working through attendance is outlined in Appendix 1.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
- Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
- Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
    - The importance of good attendance
    - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
    - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
    - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data.
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The Head Teacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the attendance officer to do so.
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers.
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels.

3.3 The Attendance Officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher.
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- The attendance officer is Lesley Dilworth and can be contacted via telephone on 0161 808 0182

3.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis- Both morning and afternoon sessions
- Using the correct codes
- Submitting this information to the school office
- Building strong relationships with families, listening to and understanding barriers attendance and working with families to remove them

3.5 School Administration staff

School Administration staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system and liaise with the Attendance Officer where necessary.

3.6 Parents/carers

Parents will:

- Ensure their child attends that school every day that the school is open and on time
- Inform the school of any absences straight away and each subsequent day of absence
- Provide the school with three emergency contact numbers
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Lesley Dilworth, who can be contacted on 0161 808 0182

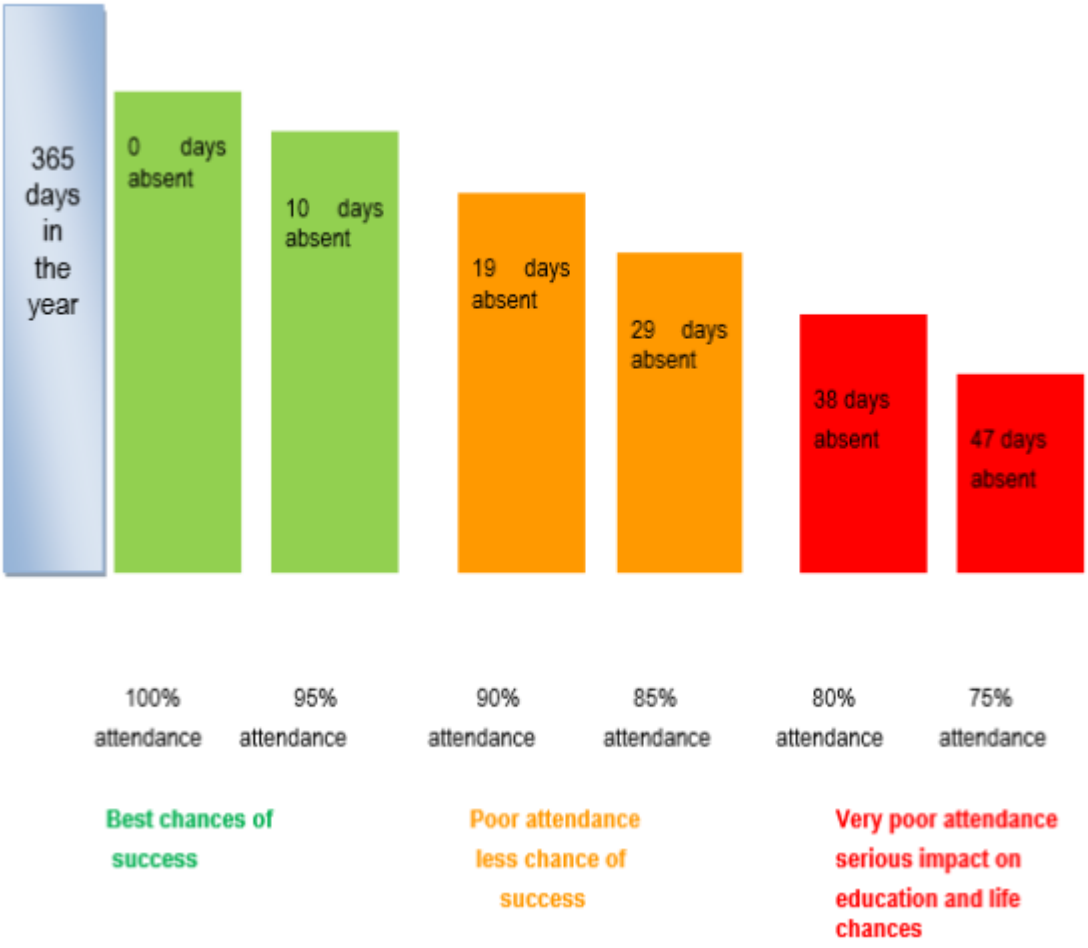
4. Introduction

At Moorside Primary it is our culture to support our families in all the ways we can. Working as a team, we aim to provide each child every opportunity to achieve their full potential. In order to do this, it is essential that all pupils attend school regularly, and on time. Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. The foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

At Moorside Primary school securing good attendance is not seen in isolation. Attendance is viewed through many lenses including curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources, including pupil premium.

To achieve our aims, it is, therefore, our duty to ensure that all parents and carers understand the importance of regular attendance, the sort of absences we will and will not authorise and the procedures if your child needs to be absent from school.

It is proven that low attendance will often have an impact on the child's progress. This can also result in your child struggling with relationships with their peers, developing low self-confidence and experiencing a disruptive pattern to their education.



5. Lateness

Punctuality is vital to the educational process. Pupils must arrive in school on time each day. If your child misses the start of the day, they can miss learning and do not spend time with their class teacher missing vital information and news for the day. This can significantly reduce achievement, regardless of academic ability. Pupils arriving late also disrupt lessons, which can be embarrassing for the child and can in turn, encourage absence.

5.1 Morning registration

Morning registration time at Moorside Primary is 8.50am doors open at 8.40am. It is very important for all the children to be on time as missing the first few minutes of any lesson can be disruptive and unsettling both for the child and for the rest of the class.

8.50 am-9.00am - Registration.

9.00am-9.15am L code as late to school before the register closes.

After 9.15am - U code as late to school after the register closes.

The following time is lost through lateness:

Minutes late per day	Equivalent of missing
5 minutes	3.4 school days a year
10 minutes	6.9 school days a year
15 minutes	10.3 school days a year
20 minutes	13.8 school days a year
30 minutes	20.7 school days a year

4.1 Arriving late procedure

If your child arrives late at school, please ensure that you sign your child in on the electronic system at the front desk. The school has a legal duty and is accountable for all children's attendance, so will require a reason why your child is late to school.

We have MPS+ Breakfast Club facility on site which is open from 7.30am. Should you wish to use this please pre-book with the front desk.

If something happens locally which could impact on the child/ren being late (e.g. snow or a traffic accident nearby) we will hold the registers open so that, although children may receive a late mark, it will not be an unauthorised late arrival at school after the register has closed.

5. Absence

We will keep an electronic attendance register and place all pupils onto this register. We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

5.1 Authorised Absences

An authorised absence, one which the school agrees, will only be granted for:

- Child illness, when notified by the parent/carer via our absence email admin@moorsideprimary.net or our absence telephone number 0161 808 0182 option 1
- Medical appointments where a medical letter or appointment card is provided.
- One day for religious observances e.g., funerals, major feast celebrations in all religions.
- Visits to prospective new schools.
- Approved sporting events.
- Accredited extra-curricular exams.
- Passport and visa application appointments.
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)
- Five consecutive days of absence when your child is absent from school due to a family bereavement or visiting a terminally ill relative.

Evidence of any travel arrangements and medical evidence will be requested in order to authorise the absence. If this is not provided, a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued.

5.2 Pupil Sickness Absence

If your child is ill and cannot come to school, you must telephone the school by 8am in the morning and leave a message on the absence line. Alternatively, please email admin@moorsideprimary.net

Please continue to telephone each day your child is absent.

Should a reason for absence not be provided, the absence will remain unauthorised until we hear from the parent/carer. It is vital that we are made aware if your child is going to be absent for safeguarding reasons.

Following 3 days of absence, a home visit or TEAMS meeting will be completed by school staff to see the child.

In line with Department for Education guidelines when a child is off school due to sickness and or diarrhoea, we ask parents to keep their child at home for a further 24 hours following the last bout of illness to aid a full recovery and prevent spreading the illness at school.

Please click on the link below to look at Public Health Agency advice for when to keep your child off school.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/626669cb8fa8f523b7221b98/UKHSA-should-I-keep-my_child_off_school_guidance-A3-poster.pdf

5.3 Pupil Medical Appointments

If your child is going to be absent for a medical appointment, even if it is only for a short period of time, please inform the school by phoning the absence line or via the absence email. When your child returns to school, please ensure a copy of the medical appointment letter (when possible) is given to the front desk.

When you collect your child for their medical appointment, please sign them out on the electronic system at the front desk and sign them back in when they return.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

If your child has an appointment in the morning please bring them to school after their appointment. This ensures that the interruption to lessons for all children is at a minimum.

5.4 Unauthorised absences

An unauthorised absence includes:

- Holidays in term time/social days out/visiting family and friends.
- Weddings, birthdays and other special occasions.
- Your child is staying at home because the parent/carer is ill.
- Absence without a reason provided by the parent/carer.
- More than one day for religious observance.
- More than 5 consecutive days for bereavement or illness of a family member.

Should a child be absent from school for 20 consecutive unauthorised school days due to being on holiday/out of the country, the child may be removed from the school roll and the local authority will be informed that the child is no longer in education. The school will no longer be responsible for the child, and it is the parents' responsibility to apply through the Salford Council for a new school place. A school place may not be available at Moorside Primary due to some year groups being at capacity.

Should you wish to send your child to an alternative school or to educate your child from home (EHE), it is the parents' responsibility to ensure that a new school place is sought for their child and the child must continue to attend at Moorside Primary until they start at their new school or home education has been approved by the Local Authority.
Failure to do this may result in an Attendance Warning Letter being sent and should there be no improvement an Attendance Interview may be necessary, that may then escalate to a PACE meeting with the Legal Interventions officer at the Local Authority.

All such absences need to be avoided in the interest of ensuring that your child develops a good habit of attending school regularly, allowing them to fulfil their potential academically, socially and emotionally.

5.5 Holidays during term-time

With effect from September 2013 the Secretary of State for Education has removed the discretion of Head Teachers to grant holidays during term time.

The Attendance Policy has been updated to reflect the new arrangements:

Salford's Term Time Holiday Guidance can be found below:

Term-time holiday guidance•Salford City Council

5.6 Pupils on part time timetables or 'Build Up Time Tables'

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package.

A part-time timetable is only put in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Part time timetables are undertaken with agreement form parents and have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full time. Formal arrangements are put in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents. In agreeing to a part time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must treat absence as authorised.

5.7 Pupils with medical needs or special educational needs and disabilities

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils is the same as they are for any other pupil.

Moorside Primary works with families to put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education. This includes:

- Making reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability
- Putting in place an individual healthcare plan where needed
- Considering whether additional support from external partners (including the local authority or health services) would be appropriate
- Making referrals in a timely manner and working together with those services to deliver any subsequent support
- Working with families to help support routines where school transport is regularly being missed
- Working with other partners to encourage the scheduling of additional support interventions or medical appointments outside of the main school day

6. Child Missing in Education

6.1 Child Missing in Education

If you do not contact the school to inform us of the absence of your child, we will contact you from 8:30am. If we are unable to make contact with you, we will follow our Child Missing in Education Procedure which can be found in **Appendix 1**.

7. Attendance monitoring and procedures

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DFE on request.
The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional,

and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement and share this with the governing board.

7.1 Reducing persistent absence

We are committed to supporting your child effectively to ensure that they get the very best education possible and therefore the best life chances. All challenges made concerning persistent absences will be handled sensitively and in confidence.

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on parents to ensure that their child of compulsory school age receives a suitable education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Attendance is inputted and updated daily.

Step 1- The class teacher will phone the parent when the child's absence dips to around 96% and if the absence has impacted their knowledge lessons. The teacher may need to plan for the gaps to be closed in partnership with the parent.

Step 2- The Attendance Officer will contact the parent if the child's absence dips to around 94% and absence is impacting the child's progress. A personalised homework plan may need to be put into place.

Step 3- An attendance letter will be sent out to remind parents of their legal obligation to ensure that their child attends school when the attendance is around 90%. Partnership with school is crucial at this point.

Step 4- Should no improvement be made, a meeting will be held with the parent and the Attendance Lead and the Local Authority Education Attendance Officer.

Step 5- Should attendance not increase then referrals to the Local Authority may be made, and possible legal action taken

Where absence is becoming persistent Moorside Primary is committed to building strong relationships and supporting pupils and families in coming to school. We will support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance. Where barriers are outside of the school's control, all partners will work together to support pupils and parents to access any support they may need voluntarily.

This includes:

- Meeting with pupils and parents at risk of persistent or severe absence to understand barriers to being in school and agreeing actions or interventions to address them.
- Making referrals to services and organisations that can provide support.

These actions are regularly discussed and reviewed together with pupils and families.

7.2 Legal sanctions

7.2.1 Fixed Penalty Notice

Where voluntary support has not been effective and has not been engaged with the school can refer to the local authority for a Penalty Notice to be issued in line with current guidance.

Pay a school attendance fine•Salford City Council

7.2.2 Notice to Improve Letter

Should the absence of a child persist without medical evidence being provided, the absences will become unauthorised. This may result in a Notice to Improve Letter which could lead to a Penalty Notice should there be no improvement.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Headteacher and Attendance Officer. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links to other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Interim Behaviour policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy

10. Rewards

- Half termly (for the half term not YTD) Certificates for over 96%
- Termly (for the term not YTD) £20 voucher raffle for 96% and above children (1 per phase) Pencils/rubbers/rulers etc. for all other children over 96%
- £50 supermarket voucher, parent raffle prize for 96% and above children
- Yearly £25, £15 & £10 prize draw per phase for 96% plus for the year

Appendix 1

All partners should work together to:

EXPECT

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

MONITOR

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

FACILITATE SUPPORT

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

FORMALISE SUPPORT

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.

ENFORCE

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Appendix 2

Moorside Primary School Child Missing Education Process

1. Day 1- Child isn't present at school and the parent/carer hasn't informed us why. We call the first contact on ARBOR and await a response. Code as a O on the register. If school does not get a response from their contact in the morning a follow up call will be made in the afternoon to all contacts. Should the child be working with Children's Services or is a Cared for Child all ARBOR contacts would be called to obtain a reason for absence. We would also inform the Social Worker of the child's absence.
2. Day 2- Child is absent again without reason and school has had no response to the message left the previous day. We now contact all contacts on ARBOR to see if we can get a reason as to why the child is absent. Contact by email and SEESAW will also be made.
3. Day 3- No response has been received. Continue to leave messages and SEESAW/emails to ARBOR contacts and should there be no response by the afternoon a home visit would be completed by two members of school staff. If there was no response from the home visit we could request a welfare check from the Police.
4. Day 4-10- Continue to try and make contact with the family. Complete a CME referral to LA.

Children missing education•Salford City Council

5. Day 20- Following the referral to the LA and, once approved by the LA, your child will be removed from the school role and flagged on ARBOR.

Appendix 3

Fixed Penalty Notice Letter

Moorside Primary School

Head Learner: Ms S Howard
Holdsworth Street, Swinton, M27 0LN
Tel: 0161 808 0182
E-mail: moorside.primaryschool@salford.gov.uk
Website: www.moorsideprimary.net

Dear XXXX

We have growing concerns that CHILDS NAME has been absent from school for a number of sessions between the dates to.

To date no acceptable reason has been given for these absences, therefore they have been marked by the school as unauthorised in the register. A copy of your child's registration certificate has been included with this letter.

The following support has been offered to you/will be offered to you and your child with the aim of improving attendance:

- xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

- xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

If you feel that you require further support to improve your child's attendance, please contact XXXXXX to discuss further.

Due to the number of unauthorised absences, we need to formally warn you that should there be any further unauthorised absences within the next 20 school days, a Penalty Notice fine may be imposed.

Please note: Unauthorised lateness equates to one session of unauthorised absence; this will be shown as U code on your child's registration certificate.

The Penalty Notice fine will not exceed £160 if paid within 28 days. If the penalty is still not paid within 28 days you will be prosecuted under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. You will be prosecuted for failing to ensure that your child[ren] attend[s] school on a regular basis, i.e., not for the non-payment of the penalty.

It is your parental duty under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure your child is in receipt of efficient, full-time education. The benefits of good attendance at school include improved wellbeing, educational outcomes and a positive impact on their wider life chances.

Should you disagree with this information or have any further enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact us. notice fine may be issued.

Yours sincerely

Ms Howard
Head Learner