



Attendance Matters

This leaflet gives you information about the following issues

The importance of attendance
Notifying school of an absence
How absences are monitored

It also gives answers to some questions we have been asked.

Please help us to help your child recognise the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

The importance of good attendance

Good attendance at school means:

- a better chance of being successful in life
- it is easier to make and keep friends
- not missing important learning experiences
- not setting bad behaviour/poor attendance patterns

Notifying school of a child's absence

There are two ways of notifying school of an absence.

1. If the absence is for planned appointments (doctors, dentist, etc) then please let us know in advance.
2. If a child cannot attend, or will be late, due to sudden illness or problem the school should be notified by telephone or message by 9am. If a message has not been received and the child is not in school parents/carers will be contacted. This is to ensure that your child is safe. Failure to notify the school of an absence will result in the child's non-attendance being recorded as *unauthorised absence*.

Due to changes in regulations schools can no longer authorise holidays during term time.

The amendments make clear that Head teachers **may not** grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are 'exceptional' circumstances.

Monitoring Attendance

The school is required, by law, to monitor record and report attendance levels. Overall school attendance and individual pupil attendance levels are monitored on a half-termly basis by school.

When children have consistently poor attendance records an explanation will be sought for every absence. Unless there is good cause for poor attendance, (e.g. medical condition, viral infections in the school) we will contact parents to discuss our concerns. In the first instance parents will receive a letter outlining the child's attendance record and the potential consequences of continued absences, which might include legal action in the form of a Fixed Penalty Notice. Should the pattern continue, even if the reason for absence is holidays, school will contact Children's services.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE

Isn't attendance more important at secondary school?

No. Your child will be unable to cope with Secondary School lessons if they miss out at Primary School. It is extremely difficult for children to catch up on missed learning.

What are the allowed reasons for authorised absence?

Although each case is considered individually the agreed list of allowable reasons for absence include:

- sickness
- unavoidable school time medical/dental appointments
- exceptional family circumstances
- religious observance

What could happen if my child has excessive amounts of authorised and/or unauthorised absence?

(i) Action Plan agreed.

(ii) The situation would be referred to Children's Services for investigation.

What is the difference between authorised and unauthorised absence?

Authorised means that school agrees that there is a justifiable reason for absence. Unauthorised means there is no known justifiable reason for the absence and is seen as parentally condoned absence.

Where can I find out more about my rights and responsibilities?

From the School Attendance Policy or try:

www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/parents