

Attendance

This is a good school and your child plays his or her part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all pupils to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason is unavoidable.

Why is regular attendance important?

Any absence, even one day, affects the pattern of your child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may also affect the learning of others in the same class.

Lateness also affects children's attendance and can also result in legal proceedings. Late arrival not only causes distress for the child going into class late but also causes disruption for the teacher and the rest of the class as often lessons have started.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and allowing absence from school, without good reason, creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution. We fully support the Local Authority policy on fixed penalties for absence and will refer persistent non-attenders to the Enforcement Team for legal proceedings.

New Government Attendance levels.

Parents need to be aware that the Government have altered the levels of attendance expected from pupils in schools in England. The figure is now set at **96%** and a pupil will now be classed as a persistent Absentee if their attendance drops below **90%** (**20 days** off school in the year). At this point, prosecutions by the Local Authority will begin.

98% attendance = less than 4 days absent from school

95% attendance = less than 10 days absent from school

90% attendance = less than 4 weeks absent from school

85% attendance = 5 ½ weeks absent from school

80% attendance = 7 ½ weeks absent from school

An application must be made in advance of any leave of absence in term time and this includes holidays. In the case of a holiday application in particular, applications should be made prior to any holiday booking and, ideally well in advance of the proposed leave in order to allow the head teacher to consider the reasons for the application and to provide parents with a response prior to the booking. Should you wish to request a leave of absence during term time, you should be aware that head teachers are only able to grant such leave in exceptional circumstances. If a leave of absence request is not authorised and the unauthorised absences on your child's record amount to seven school days or more in a twelve school week period, you may

be liable to incur a fixed penalty notice / notices. Fixed penalty notices are issued on a 'per parent 'per child' basis by the Local Authority.

As the link between excellent attendance and excellent results has been proven by research, it is vital that parents encourage full attendance.

Reluctant to attend?

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes a child may be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with attendance are best sorted between the school, parents and the child. It is never a good idea to give in to pressure from your child or cover up their absence to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse. All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible so, as soon as you realise there may be a problem, you need to contact the Headteacher or Attendance Officer.

Recognising excellence

Pupils are rewarded weekly and half termly for 100% attendance. Also the class with the highest attendance for the year is awarded with a class party.

New regulations for taking holidays in term time

(September 2013)

The Department for Education have recently made amendments to the regulations around holidays in term-time.

Previously Head Teachers have been allowed to grant leave of absence during term time of up to 10 school days if the leave of absence application met the criteria set out by the Department for Education.

From 1st September 2013 this is no longer the case. Schools may not grant any leave of absence during term-time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Taking family holidays are not considered to be exceptional circumstances.

Absence during term time means that pupils miss out on valuable learning time. Any request for leave during exam periods will not be authorised as this is the most important time in a child's education.

If you take your child out of school without the school's permission this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence which also affects your child's overall attendance figures for the year and may result in each person with parental responsibility being issued with a fixed penalty fine for each child taken out of school.

