

A Parent's Guide to Regular School Attendance

1) When does my child need to be in school? Your child should be at school every day and in good time for the register which is taken between 8.45 and 9am. The term time calendar can be found on the home page of our website.

2) What happens if my child is late? If your child arrives after the gates have closed at 8.50am but before the registers close at 9am they will need to enter via the main reception to receive their mark. Should they arrive after 9am they will be marked on the register as late (L). Persistent late arrival for school will be followed up by a letter/meeting with those concerned and an action plan created with strategies suggested to help improve the matter. Unacceptable reasons for lateness include:

- Oversleeping
- Tiredness
- Alarm clock failure
- Clothes in washing machine/tumble drier
- Lost shoes, coat etc.
- Taking a sibling (younger or older) to another school
- Taking a pet to the vet
- Medical appointment for a family member

3) Do I need to contact the school every day that my child is absent? We would expect parents to telephone the school on the first day of absence, preferably by no later than 9am – **absence line 01268 761252**. If you do not phone us, we will endeavour to contact you by 9.30am. At this point we will ask for an indication of when you expect your child to be well enough to return and then keep us updated if this changes. Please note that for episodes of sickness and diarrhoea pupils are not to return before **48 hours** after the last incident, and we can offer advice on absences for common childhood ailments including chicken pox, hand, foot and mouth etc. If we do not receive an explanation or the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not authorise the absence.

Messages relating to absence or other matters must not be relayed via transport staff or other students.

4) What reasons will the school accept for absence?

- Where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend or where medical evidence has been provided or where a previously diagnosed known medical condition exists. If a student's attendance drops below 95% parents/carers will be informed that the school will no longer continue to authorise any absence due to illness without medical evidence.
- Where the pupil has a medical appointment supported by an appointment card/letter, however, parents are encouraged to make these for out of school hours wherever possible. Pupils should be returned to school following a morning appointment or collected for an afternoon appointment, the school will not

authorise a full days absence for a local appointment except under exceptional circumstances.

- A pupil has been granted leave due to exceptional circumstances. In authorising such an absence the school will look at individual circumstances and previous attendance will be taken into consideration.
- The Local Authority provided transport for the pupil fails to arrive.
- Where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, e.g. extreme weather conditions.
- The absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body that the pupil's parents belong.
- Other exceptional circumstances, e.g. a family bereavement, and for a very limited period.

5) What is unacceptable? Except in the circumstances listed above, absences will be unauthorised. Some examples of unauthorised absences would be:

- No explanation has been given by the parent/carer.
- The school is not satisfied with the explanation.
- Minor ailments e.g. headache, light cold, ingrown toenail, period pains, nausea.
- Penicillin/antibiotics – this can be managed in school after initial doses have been administered (usually after 48 hours).
- The pupil is staying at home to mind a relative or pet.
- A shopping trip or haircut.
- A birthday.
- Family holiday.
- Being unable to participate in a school activity e.g. school trip or activity day.
- Meeting relatives from or taking relatives to the airport.
- Moving house.

6) My child is trying to avoid coming to school, what should I do? Contact the Family Inclusion Team/Home: School Liaison immediately and discuss your concerns openly. It is important that we work out the reason for your child's reluctance to attend so that we can work together to tackle the problem.