

As a school we aim to:

- Maintain an attendance rate of a **minimum** of 95%
- Maintain parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of regular attendance.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines and school work easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders have an easier transfer to secondary school

As a parent you can help us by:

- Ringing on the first morning of all absences with the reason and saying when the child will return
- Arranging dental and doctor's appointments out of school hours or during school breaks
- Sending in a note explaining the reason for absence on your child's return to school after an illness
- Keeping us updated by telephone or letter if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness

We shall:

- Follow up unexplained absences by phone calls and letters as soon as possible
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters, the school brochure and the Home-School agreement
- Publish our attendance rate in the school brochure and the Governing Body's Annual Report to parents
- Acknowledge and reward good attendance
- Publish your child's attendance rate on her/his annual school report
- Let you know if we have concerns regarding your child's attendance
- If we continue to have concerns make a referral to the School Attendance Officer, who visits the school regularly to review and support attendance matters

Authorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as "authorised absences". For example: if a child is ill, family bereavement, religious observance.

We realise that there are **rare** occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we shall try to deal with it sympathetically.

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are **not** permitted by law. These are known as “unauthorised absences”. Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Waiting for a delivery
- Going for a family day out
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory.
- Going shopping or for a hair cut
- Because it is your child’s birthday
- Unapproved Holidays
- Unauthorised Absences have to be reported to the Local Authority. The School Attendance Service may contact you and consider taking legal action against you if your child has unauthorised absences.
- The Local Authority updated its Code of Conduct for Fixed Penalty Notices in September 2017, which removed the limit on the number of penalty notices that can be issued in a year for unauthorised holidays taken in term time. The Local Authority can also issue warning letters.
- Please note from September 2019 **ALL** cases of holiday absence will be referred to the Local Authority for consideration of a Fixed Penalty Notice. £60 fixed penalty notice under section 444 of the Education Act 1996 (£60 per parent per child).
- We may contact you by telephone, letter or ask our School Attendance Officer to call to your home. The opportunity to discuss and sign a Parenting Contract will also be offered prior to any LA involvement.

Punctuality

- Morning registration is at 8.55am. This is the time your child must be in the line in the playground. Registration closes at 9.10am any child arriving after this time will be given a ‘Late’ mark. Afternoon registration is at 1.15pm.
- It is important to be on time as the first few minutes of the school day are often used to give out instructions or organise schoolwork for the rest of the day.
- If your child misses this short but vital session, their work for the whole day may be affected. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for your child. We take the view there are no late children, only late parents.
- Arrival after the close of registration may be marked as unauthorised absence in line with the DFE guidance.
- We will let you know if we have concerns about your child’s punctuality.
- Children who remain uncollected at the end of school time will be referred to a place of safety if not collected or the school contacted by school closing time.

Term Time Leave of Absence

We are always concerned about the amount of school time pupils miss as a result of family holidays. There is no entitlement to time off in term time.
It is our policy that:

- Requested holidays **will not** be authorised. Absence taken and not authorised could be liable for a Fixed Penalty fine.
- Avoid taking a holiday in September, as it is very unsettling for a child to miss the start of the school year. Avoid taking a holiday in SATS years (Year 2 and Year 6)

Please remember that the more time your child misses from school, the more difficult it is for them to catch up with their work. Valuable learning time is lost. A **good** understanding of the work can only take place when the pupil is in the classroom.

Leavers

If your child is leaving other than at the end of Year 6 to go to High School, parents are asked to

- Give the school full information about their plans including date of move, new address or at least the town you will be moving to, new school and start date when known, and reasons for moving. (A form is available at the school office)
- Confirm the school has your current mobile phone number
- Take our school's compliments slip so the new school can easily contact us and records be transferred
- Let us know when you move

Children Missing Education

When pupils leave and you have not given us the above information, and cannot contact you, then your child is considered to be a **Child Missing Education**. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with Children's Services (formerly Social Services) the Police and other agencies, to try to track and locate your child.

By giving us the above information, unnecessary investigations can be avoided.

Legal Note

Parents have a legal duty to ensure the regular and full time attendance at school of registered pupils (Education Act 1996). This policy is based on the law and on Best Practice guidance produced by the Department for Education and Skills and the Local Authority. The School Attendance Service aims to work with schools and families to promote good attendance and avoid legal action. However in some cases, parents are prosecuted (taken to court) or have to pay a Fixed Penalty (fine) if unauthorised absences continue.

We value your support in helping us to maintain high standards.

Review date: October 2022