

THE
COMPASS
PARTNERSHIP OF SCHOOLS

Every Day Counts

An attendance guide for parents and carers

2018



Everyday Counts

Research tells us that good attendance is key to success both educationally and beyond. For this reason we aim for 100% attendance. Each year the government set national targets for attendance this year that target is 96%.

We know that attending school regularly gives your child not just the best start to their school life, but also creates the foundations and habits that are needed as children move into the world beyond school.

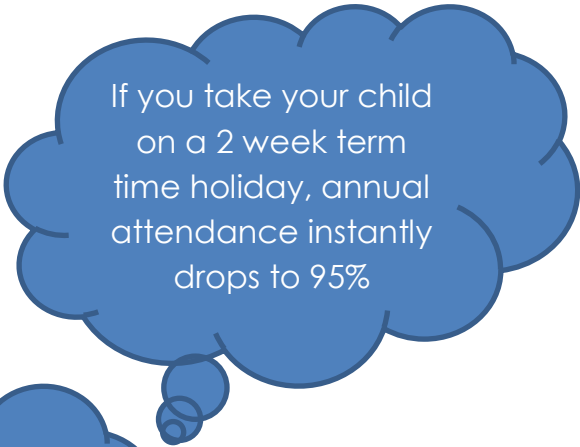
Attending school every day means:

- Learning new skills
- Making Friends
- Building lasting relationships
- Having fun
- Developing confidence

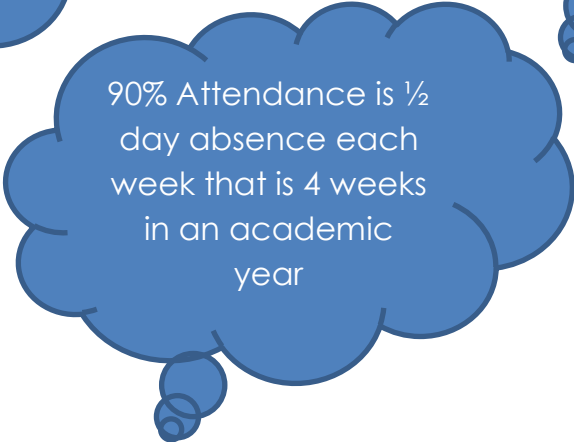
Did you know?



90% Attendance is equivalent to missing over 100 hour long lessons




If you take your child on a 2 week term time holiday, annual attendance instantly drops to 95%



90% Attendance is $\frac{1}{2}$ day absence each week that is 4 weeks in an academic year



90% Attendance is half a year absence over 5 years!!



A child who is absent for one day per fortnight will have missed one year of school (190 days) by the time they leave secondary education.

Holidays

There are 190 statutory school days. That means there are 175 days available for holidays!

The law states that you must request permission for your child to miss school. Leave during term time will only be considered where the Headteacher feels there are exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances do not include holidays, birthdays or other special occasions.

Any leave without the agreement of the school will be classed as unauthorised.

Ensure you arrange family holidays to coincide with school holidays.

Reducing illness days

If your child is saying they do not feel well and you are unsure about whether this warrants a day off, please send them to school. If they are truly ill, we will call you.

Use common sense in deciding whether or not your child is too ill to come to school. Ask yourself:

- Is my child well enough to take part in the school day activities?
- Does my child have a condition that is contagious?
- Would I take a day off work if I had this condition?

Medical Appointments

Please arrange all non urgent medical or dental appointments outside of the school day. In circumstances where you can not rearrange medical appointments outside of term time, please book them for after 2pm. Your child will then receive both their morning and afternoon attendance mark.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Every half day absence has to be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. It is for this reason that information with regard for the reasons for absence is always requested.

Department for Education Guidance States:

'If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record absence as unauthorised if not satisfied with the authenticity of the illness, but should advise parents of their intentions.'

Medical evidence can take the form of:

- Prescriptions
- Appointment cards
- Doctors note

Unauthorised absence can lead to parents being issued with penalty notices or legal proceedings

Procedures for first day absence

It is your duty to contact school to inform them by phone or in writing of any absence. Please ensure you provide all necessary information to enable the school to code the absence correctly. Simply saying your child is sick or ill is will not be accepted.

A child being absent from school without reason is not just an attendance issue, it is also a safeguarding one. If your child does not attend school and no reason has provided you will:

- Receive a text requesting you contact school to inform them why your child is absent
- If we have not heard from you, we will attempt to call you
- If we are unable to reach you, we will use other known contacts to establish your child is safe
- If we still have not received a reason for absence by the start of the second day, of absence we will undertake a home visit
- If we are still unable to make contact, we may contact the police and ask them to undertake a welfare check, or make a referral to social care

Persistent absentees

If a child's attendance drops to 90%, they are deemed to be a persistent absentee. Persistent absentees are automatically made known to the local authority. Persistent absentees are very closely monitored to see if further action is required. Further action may include penalty notices or prosecutions

Medical evidence

In cases of recurring absences or attendance below 96% you will need to bring in either an appointment card to show that your child's illness has been assessed by your GP or any medication that has been prescribed for your child. Please note that unless medical evidence is provided recurring/frequent absences are treated as unauthorised.

The school has the right to request medical evidence if at any point that the validity of absence is in question.

Medication

Your child should come back to school as soon as he/she is feeling better. If medication can not be given outside of the school day due to medical advice, you will need to bring the medication to school and complete a form allowing a member of staff to administer the medication.

The school will not authorise absences for:

- A child being tired
- Day trips
- Holidays
- Birthdays
- Visiting relatives
- Collecting relatives from an airport
- Shopping
- Parent has to look after siblings who are ill
- Parent illness
- Parent unable to bring their child to school as they are away and their child is staying with a friend or relative who is unable to bring your child to school
- Parent unable to collect their child on time
- Non urgent medical or dental appointments
- Non urgent medical or dental appointments
- Unexceptional special occasions, e.g. birthdays
- Exceptional leave of absence longer than the duration originally authorised by the Headteacher
- Exceptional leave of absence where prior permission was not sought or where permission was refused

Please note that this list is not exhaustive.

If your child is trying to avoid coming to school, please contact school immediately to discuss your concern. Learning to deal with peers and relationship difficulties is an important skill that will carry your child into adult life. We are here to support children with all aspects of their learning.

How you can help

- Aim for your child to have at least 10 hours sleep per night
- Develop good bedtime routines – remember research indicates that lights from TV's and mobile devices impact negatively on the quality of sleep
- Ensure your child gets their school bag ready the night before
- Develop good morning routines – ensure your child is washed, dressed and ready before they do anything else
- Ensure your child has breakfast
- Make all non-urgent doctors' appointments outside of school time
- Never take holidays during term time
- If your child is ill, call school as soon as possible on the first days absence and ensure you maintain regular contact with the school

Punctuality

- There is a link between poor punctuality and achievement
- Missing 10 minutes of schooling each day is the same as missing two full weeks over the year
- *6 lates = 30 minutes missed (which is the equivalent of one reading lesson)*
- Doors open at 8.45 a.m. to give your child plenty of time to settle into their classroom
- Arrive after 9.00 a.m. and your child is marked late
- Arrive after 9.30 a.m. and your child has an unauthorised absence mark
- You will be asked to provide the reason for your child's lateness
- Persistent lateness will be followed up in the same way as absence and may result in fixed penalty fines or court attendance

Arriving on time means your child

- Is greeted personally by the classroom staff
- Can say hello to their friends
- Has time to sort out their belongings (book bag, water bottle etc) ready for the day's learning ahead
- Takes part in the early morning activities— reading, handwriting, spelling and number
- Does not miss any valuable lesson input
- Feels happy, relaxed and settled, ready to start learning

Arriving after 9.00 a.m. means your child

- Doesn't have time to say hello to their friends
- Joins the lesson after it has begun, missing vital instructions
- Could start the day flustered and unsettled

Helping your child to come to school on time

- Get everything ready for school in the evening
- Have the same early bedtime routines every night
- Get up early every morning
- Eat a good breakfast
- Allow plenty of travel and parking time
- Aim to arrive at 8.45 a.m! Lessons start at 9.00 a.m.

Every minute in school counts!

Exceptional or special leave

Children may have one day's absence for each religious observance. In other emergency, exceptional or special circumstances, parents or carers must make a request to the Head teacher for short periods of leave. Leave can only be authorised at the Head teacher's discretion.

In making the decision, the Head teacher will consider:

- The child's current attendance percentage
- Previous applications and absences
- *Documents are essential to support the application*

We want all of our children to grow into well rounded, confident adults who are able to play a significant role as adults in society. Our schools have developed engaging curriculums that make learning both fun and meaningful. In order for children to make the most of the opportunities on offer they need to be attend school regularly. Whilst there are formal procedures we have to follow, our ultimate aim is to support you to ensure your child attends school every day. Please do not hesitate to contact school if you wish to discuss any matters related to attendance and punctuality further.

We have developed this document to provide parents with information on attendance and punctuality. The full attendance policy can be found on the school web site.