



January 2018

Attendance Update

Good attendance is a vital factor in determining how well pupils progress academically and whether they achieve their full potential in all areas of school life, both in lessons and in extra-curricular activities. It also impacts on their welfare and happiness at school.

The Department of Education classifies children with an attendance below 90% as persistent absentees, in line with the Government's commitment to reduce absences. **In real terms this means that, for example from September to October half term, if your child had an absence of 4 days or more, they fall into this category of being a persistent absentee** (as shown in the table below).

Term	Cumulative days absence = 10% absence
First Half Autumn Term	3.5 days
Full Autumn Term	7 days
Full Autumn Term to February Half Term	10 days
Full Autumn and Spring Terms	12.5 days
September to end of May	15.5 days
Full Academic Year	19 days

As a school we monitor the children's attendance weekly and **are obliged** to report any child in this category of persistent absentee to the Missing Education and Child Employment Service on a termly basis. This is then reviewed by them and where appropriate parents will be called to attend a meeting with an officer from this service.

Whilst we would not want you to bring your child to us when they are genuinely ill, **we would request that, wherever possible, doctors and dentist appointments are booked outside of school hours**, as although these absences are authorised, they do count within the 90% attendance threshold.

We would also remind you that **requests for holidays/leave of absence will not be authorised** unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'. The definition of 'exceptional circumstance' is *rare, significant, unavoidable and short*. **A child who has two weeks out of school for a holiday will miss 50 hours of education**. The Local Authority fine for an absence taken that has not been authorised is up to £120 per parent per child (up to £480 for a family with 2 adults and 2 children).

If your child's attendance drops below 90% and/or where absence for sickness is prolonged or irregular, we will contact you to discuss the reasons for absence and what support we can offer. We will ask for medical evidence to be provided regarding absence. This is in no way a reflection upon your judgement as a parent or carer. We understand that being unwell and absent from school is sometimes unavoidable. The follow-up procedures are an automatic part of the school's statutory duties of care for the welfare and progress of pupils.

Decisions are not made arbitrarily, but in line with County and Government guidelines and statutory procedures.

If you have any concerns regarding this, or wish to discuss any health issues relating to your child, please come into the school office to make an appointment with Mr James.