



# Attendance

Parental attitude has a key influence on a child's school attendance and parents/carers can do much to encourage even reluctant pupils to attend.

Good school attendance habits are best started early. Children learn from those around them and you as parents/carers set the standards and expectations for your child. Showing your child the importance of attending school every day not only helps your child to settle quickly when starting school but helps them to keep and maintain friendships and enjoy the school environment.

Children are expected to attend school every day. If a child is absent from school it is either classed as an 'authorised absence' or as an 'unauthorised absence'

## Authorised Absence

If your child is too ill to attend school.

If you have asked for your child to be absent from school and it has been agreed. If you have asked for your child to be absent from school, in general it will only be agreed if there is a genuine family emergency.

## Unauthorised Absences

Family holidays.

Days where children have been absent from school and the school has not been told why.

If your child's attendance falls below 90% all further absence, including illness, can be unauthorised.

## Hampshire's Attendance Rules

- If your child has five or more **unauthorised absences** in any period of 100 days then each parent (or people with parental responsibility) will be fined £60 per child who has not attended.
- If your child has 1 or more **unauthorised absence** during any period of formal testing then each parent (or people with parental responsibility) will be fined £60 per child. Formal testing periods are times such as the week of the Year 1 Phonics Test or the Year 6 SATs weeks.
- If your child is late 10 times in any 100 day period then each parent (or people with parental responsibility) will be fined £60 per child who arrived late. You are officially late if you arrive more than 20 minutes after the register closes. For Bordon Junior School children, that is 9:15am for Bordon Infant School children, that is 9:20am.
- If your child is absent from school for three days and the school has been unable to make contact with you, your child will be officially logged with Hampshire as missing in education. If your child has been absent for ten days with no contact your child will be referred to Social Services.

You will only be fined once. If you have already received a fine, even if it was in a previous academic year, then Hampshire will take parents to court. Court sanctions can include a fine up to £2,500, community service or in extreme or repeat cases prison.

## School Position

As a school we know the children who have the highest attendance do the best academically and socially at school. We do not wish to have any parent fined or taken to court and we will work with parents who are concerned over their child's attendance. We do believe that every day of education is important and we have worked with the other local schools to ensure we are all applying these new rules in the same way.

You will not be fined for one **unauthorised absence** (unless it is in a formal testing week). You have to have five or more days.

If you are coming close to the threshold then wherever possible we will talk to you about it and do what we can to support you.

Taking children out for medical appointments will not generally be classed as **unauthorised absence**. Please bring in your Hospital appointment letter as confirmation of your child's appointment. Routine dental appointments will not however be considered valid reasons for absence as these can be booked outside of school time.

If you have a specific situation that requires your child to be absent from school that is not normal illness, then please come and talk to us.

## **Why is high attendance important to my child's education?**

As a parent/carer you want the best for your children. Having a good education is an important factor in opening up more opportunities in adult life. Did you know that:

- a child who is absent a day of school per week misses an equivalent of two years of their school life
- 90% of young people with absence rates below 85% fail to achieve five or more good grades of GCSE and around one third achieve no GCSEs at all
- poor examination results limit young people's options and poor attendance suggests to colleges and employers that these students are unreliable
- poor school attendance is also closely associated with crime, a quarter of school age offenders have truanted repeatedly
- at least 1 million children take at least one half day off a year without permission
- 7.5 million school days are missed each year through unauthorised absence

GCSEs may seem a long way off for you and your child but all absence at any stage leads to gaps in your child's learning. This in turn can:

- mean that they fall behind in work
- affect their motivation
- affect their enjoyment of learning
- lead to poor behaviour
- affect their desire to attend school regularly
- affect their confidence in school
- mean they miss out on the social life of school and extra curricular opportunities and experiences
- affect their ability to have or keep friendships.

## **Family holidays/school holidays**

Children have 13 weeks annual holiday from school and [school holiday dates are published well in advance](#) online. As such, all parents/carers are expected wherever possible to plan and take their family holidays at this time so as not to disrupt their children's education. Education law states that parents do not have a right to take their child out of school for a holiday during term time. Only in exceptional circumstances may a headteacher grant permission for leave; and it is the headteachers decision on whether the absence is exceptional and how many days to approve.

**Parents/carers who take their child out of school without the absence being agreed and authorised in writing by the school can be issued with a penalty fine.**

## **What do I do if my child is unwell?**

If your child is sick or is absent for other unforeseen reasons, you must notify the school by telephone on the first day of absence and follow this up with a note once the child returns to school. You should let the school know:

- the nature of the illness (although you may wish to talk confidentially about this)
- whether your child has seen their GP, or whether an appointment has been made for some other specialist service
- how long you expect your child to be absent from school
- the prognosis for the child's recovery.

The school's headteacher will decide whether or not to authorise the absence, depending upon the reason given.

A copy of the schools attendance policy can be found on the school website or can be requested from the school office.

Further information can be found at

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/hias/learning-behaviour-attendance/attendance-guidance-for-parents.htm>

A copy of Hampshire's attendance code of conduct can be found at

[http://www3.hants.gov.uk/code\\_of\\_conduct\\_-\\_issuing\\_penalty\\_notices\\_for\\_unauthorised\\_absence\\_from\\_schools.pdf](http://www3.hants.gov.uk/code_of_conduct_-_issuing_penalty_notices_for_unauthorised_absence_from_schools.pdf)