



## Attendance Guide for Parents - January 2019

---

### **Why is attendance important?**

At primary level, the pace of development in children is so fast that just a handful of days missed can cause disruption to a child's learning journey. We will always help your child to catch up on missed work where possible but continued absence may affect your child's ability to exceed their potential.

### **When does my child need to be in school?**

We open our gates at 8.37am and all children should aim to be in the classroom shortly after this point. Children are marked late if they arrive after 8.50am.

### **What happens if my child is late?**

All children arriving after 8.50am should report to the main entrance – our single point of entry. From 8.50 – 9.10am a member of our Family Support Team will be conducting 'late gate'. Names will be recorded of late arrivals and processed to ensure they receive their attendance mark for the morning. You may be required to sign to confirm your child's late arrival to school.

In fortnightly meetings, nominated staff track persistent lateness and this may be followed up by an attendance contract or late surgery meeting in school.

### **What happens if my child needs to be absent from school?**

We do understand that all children get sick from time to time but we ask that you think carefully before keeping your child from school. If your child will be absent from school, in the event of sickness for example, we would expect you to telephone our attendance line (option 1) or via Schoolcomms by 8.50am to notify us of the absence.

Please note that you will need to telephone into school on each day of absence – even if the absence is continuous. Please also note that on your child's return to school, you will need to bring to the office medical evidence relating to their absence wherever possible.

If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not authorise the absence.

If we are concerned about aspects of your child's attendance or punctuality we will contact you to discuss the best way forward. An accumulation of unauthorised absences will lead to a referral to the Local Authority.

### **What are authorised and unauthorised absences?**

Authorised absences are absences which the school seeks to allow. This can include:

- Sickness / illness with medical evidence
- Emergency dental / medical appointment (please make routine appointments after school hours)
- Day of religious observance

Except in the case of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss school well in advance, giving full details.

Unauthorised absence refers to absences which the school does not allow. This can include:

- Family holidays
- Day trips
- Your child missing school for their birthday

**Our School Values are: Inclusion, Perseverance, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility and Collaboration.**

- Shopping

**What is the schools view on holidays during term time?**

Parents are not allowed to withdraw their child/children from school during term time for family holidays.

All leave of absence during term time must be requested using our 'exceptional circumstances' form and parents/carers should detail the exceptional circumstances on which their request is based upon.

A member of school staff will contact the parents to advise them of the outcome of their request. Please note that if the outcome is that the absence will not be authorised, the school may make a referral to the Local Authority who may take legal action against you for failing to secure the regular attendance of your child in school.

**How can I encourage my child to come to school every day?**

Seek to establish basic routines to sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped.

Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education and school.

**My child is trying to avoid coming to school. What should I do?**

Contact our Family Liaison Officers immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – difficulties with school work, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties.

It is really important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem early before the situation progresses.