

Why is attendance at school so important?

Being around teachers and friends in a school environment is the best way for pupils to learn and reach their potential. Time in school also keeps children safe and provides access to extra-curricular opportunities and pastoral care.

That's why school attendance is so important and why the Government is committed to tackling the issues that might cause some children to miss school unnecessarily.

How does attendance affect outcomes for

pupils? Being in school is important to your child's achievement, wellbeing, and wider development. Evidence shows that the children with the highest attendance throughout their time in school gain the best GCSE and A Level results.

Research found that pupils who performed better both at the end of primary and secondary school missed fewer days than those who didn't perform as well.

Similarly, in the same year children who didn't achieve grades 4 to 9 in English and maths missed 10 or more days on average over the key stage than those who achieved grade 5 to 9 in both English and maths.

What are the risks of missing a day of school? Every moment in school counts, and days missed add up quickly. The higher a child's attendance rate, the more they are likely to learn, and the better they are likely to perform in exams and formal assessments.

Data from 2019 shows that 84% of Key Stage 2 pupils who had 100% attendance achieved the expected standard, compared to 40% of pupils who were persistently absent across the key stage.

Can my child ever be absent? When a child is absent from school this will either be classified as 'authorised' or 'unauthorised.'

The Headteacher decides which absences will be authorised.

Valid reasons (with supporting evidence) can be:

- ✓ Medical appointments
- ✓ Family bereavement
- ✓ Illness (evidence such as medical appointments can be requested by school)

What are unauthorised absences?

These include:

- forgetting or be confused about term dates
- oversleeping
- child is tired
- child's birthday so having a family treat
- missing transport
- family holidays
- persistent illness without medical evidence
- parent being ill and not able to bring the child to school
- car breaking down

I can only get annual leave in term time, can I take my child out of school? The Department of Education (DfE) does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. It is very unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday, days out for birthdays or general days out.

What should I do if my child is too ill to attend school?

- ✓ Contact the school by telephone (not School Gateway app) to inform the school, explaining your child symptoms and how long you expect them to be off.
- ✓ Check the guidance for 'keeping my child off school' to see if they are allowed to attend.

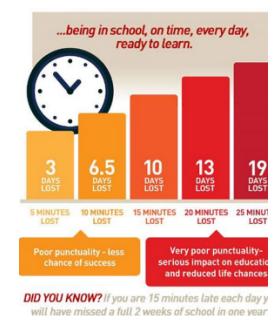
- ✓ If your child is a little 'under the weather' send them to school and complete a medicine form so that we can administer Calpol.
- ✓ Phone school every day that your child is off otherwise it will be marked as unauthorised.
- ✓ If your child is off for more than 3 days, please provide the school with medical evidence e.g. appointment text, otherwise any further illness may be unauthorised.

If my child is late, will it be authorised? Good attendance doesn't just involve being present in school, it also involves arriving at school on time. You are responsible for making sure that your child arrives at school on time.

If your child arrives at school after 8.45am they will receive a late mark. This is an **authorised absence**.

How much school can my child miss?

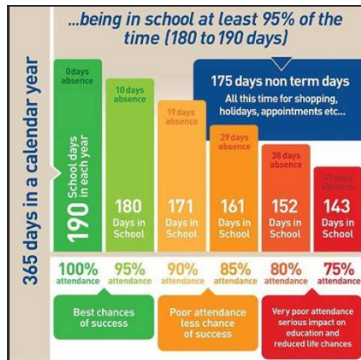
You should aim for your child to miss no days.



My child has 90% attendance, that sounds high, why are school making contact with me?

90% may sound good if, for example, they were results in a test. However, in terms of attendance, 90% is considered poor attendance and that the child is classed as persistently absent.

If your child misses 10% of their education, this is the equivalent to 19 days of learning, almost 4 weeks of an academic year.



What will happen if my child's attendance is considered low by the school?

- Parents can check their child's attendance by logging onto the School Gateway App. This will indicate their child's % in school and show any authorised and non-authorised attendance.
- Where a pattern of missing days, lateness or punctuality is noted during regular monitoring by the Senior Leader responsible for attendance, parents will be contact by telephone.
- If the attendance does not improve, parents will be invited to attend an attendance meeting.
- This may then be followed up by letter.
- If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.
- A penalty notice may be issued.

What should if I do if I am struggling to get my child in to school? Please come and speak to any member of

staff. The school wants to help you and there are lots of things that we can put into place to help.

What does the school do to support high levels of attendance?

- Developing good relationships with our children and parents.
- Daily, weekly and termly monitoring of attendance to ensure that action is taken swiftly to support pupils and their families.
- Contact parents promptly so that they are aware and can support pupils.
- Attendance policy with clear stages of action.
- School staff who understand the importance of attendance and model this themselves.
- Senior Leadership Team presence around school – on gates in the morning who are welcoming and positive with children.
- Rapid response to non-attendance e.g. Teacher / TA calling child if appropriate, PSA completing home visits, 'wake up text' system for parents of low attenders.
- Regular communication with parents – attendance % on the school gateway app, parent consultation meetings.
- PSA to offer parenting classes or advice about establishing morning routines.
- Newsletters offer helpful tips e.g. setting alarm on phone.
- 'New 2 you' – 2nd hand uniform stock and offers costumes for dress up days where this may be a barrier.
- Providing the pupils with an exciting curriculum that gives them a purpose to be in school every day
- Providing strategies for low attendees such as a special responsibility e.g. taking registers round every morning.
- Rewards for attendance and punctuality penalised.

- Providing a safe and happy school environment, where pupils build social connections and enjoy their learning.
- Administrating non-prescribed medication e.g. Calpol in line with the First Aid policy.
- Providing a breakfast club and early drop off opportunities to support parents.



Attendance Advice For Parents of Harnham Infant School September 2024

Please call school before 8.40am if your child is going to be absent

01722 327338