

Your Child's School Attendance : What You Need To Know

Why Attendance Matters

- **It's the Law:** You must make sure your child goes to school regularly.
- **Learning & Progress:** Being in school helps your child learn, do well in lessons, and build important skills.
- **Friendships & Routine:** School helps children make friends, learn routines, and grow in confidence.

Your Role as a Parent/Carer

- **Daily Attendance:** Make sure your child goes to school every day unless they're too ill or have permission.
- **Be on Time:** Children should arrive by **9am** for morning registration.
- **Tell Us About Absences:**
 - Call or message the school on the first day your child is off.
 - Let us know by phone, email, note, or letter.
 - If there's a bigger issue, speak to our Attendance or Pastoral team.

If Your Child Is Absent

- **We'll Call You:** If we haven't heard from you, we'll call to check everything's okay.
- **Home Visit:** If we can't reach you, we may visit your home.
- **Unexplained Absences:** We'll follow up to make sure your child is safe and record the reason.
- **5 Days Off Without Contact:** We must report this to the **Children Missing in Education (CME)** team.

Authorised vs Unauthorised Absences

Authorised (Allowed by the Headteacher):

- **Illness:** If your child is genuinely unwell. For sickness/diarrhoea, keep them home for 48 hours.
- **Medical Appointments:** Only for the time needed — try to book outside school hours.
- **Proof Needed:** We will ask for an appointment letter or prescription.
- **Special Circumstances:** Things like a close family bereavement.

Unauthorised (Not Allowed):

- No valid reason or not approved by school.
- Examples: shopping, holidays, bad weather, sleeping in, sibling is ill.
- **Late Arrivals:** If your child arrives more than **15 minutes late**, it counts as an unauthorised absence.

Being Late

- Arrive by **9am** — but aim to be 10 minutes early (gates open from 8.45-9.00am)
- **Late but before register closes** = marked as late.
- **Late after register closes (9.15am)** = marked as absent.
- Being late often means missed learning and can affect confidence.
- If your child is late **7+ times**, we'll send a letter and may arrange a meeting.

Holidays During Term Time

- **Not Allowed:** Term-time holidays are not approved because they affect learning.
- **Only in Rare Cases:** You must apply **2 weeks ahead** and give full travel details.
- **Legal Action:** Unauthorised holidays may lead to fines.

If Attendance Becomes a Concern

10 – 18 days absent (Frequent Absence):

- We'll contact you and offer support.
- If things don't improve, we'll arrange a meeting and may start an **Early Help Assessment (EHA)**.

19 or more days absent (Persistent Absence):

- This is serious. We'll follow Birmingham's **Support First** process.
- You'll be invited to a **Formal Attendance Meeting** and asked to sign an Attendance Plan.
- We may involve health or support services.

Legal Consequences

- Not sending your child to school regularly is a **criminal offence**.
- **Penalty Notices:**
 - First time: £80 per parent (rises to £160 if unpaid).
 - Second time: £160 per parent.
 - Third time: May go straight to **Magistrates' Court**.
 - **Court Fines:** Up to £2,500 per parent, plus costs or even prison (up to 3 months).
 - **Criminal Record:** This could affect your future.

We're Here to Help

- We want to support you. Please reach out if you're struggling with attendance.
- We offer **Early Help**.

Key staff:

- Mr Jason Willetts (Headteacher) – Attendance Champion
- Mrs Victoria Tucker (Assistant Headteacher) - Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Mrs Zoe Burnett (Pastoral Manager) Designated Safeguarding Lead