

## Persistent Absenteeism

The table below explains how many days' absence make your child's attendance fall below 90% over the course of a school year, time off school means very quickly that children are missing more than 10% of their schooling and this can really impact the progress they make.

Half Terms:	Number of Days off School:
Sept until Oct half term	3.5
Sept until Christmas	7
Sept until Feb half term	10
Sept until Easter	12.5
Sept until May half term	15.5
Sept until July	19

## Lateness

Don't underestimate the importance of 100 percent attendance. Even one day missed can have an effect on learning:

- 98% attendance means 4 school days missed
- 95% attendance means 10 school days missed
- 90% attendance means 19 school days missed
- 80% attendance means 38 school days missed
- 5 minutes late each day means 3 school days missed

- Make sure your child understands that you do not approve of absence from school
- Support our school in our efforts to control inappropriate behaviour
- Inform us on the first day of your child's absence, and keep us updated throughout the absence period
- Provide us with more than one emergency contact for your child, to ensure that if we receive no response from one number, we can try the others that you have provided
- Cooperate with our school to make sure your child overcomes any attendance problems
- Discuss planned absences with the Headteacher and apply for permission well in advance
- Only take your child out of school during term time where the absence has been authorised

Good attendance doesn't just involve being present in school - it also involves punctuality. You also have a responsibility to ensure that your child arrives to school on time and stays in school during the day.

- The school day starts at 8.40am when children can begin to come into school.
- Registers are taken at 8.50am
- At 9.20am the registers will be closed.

In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site 'U', but this will not count as a present mark, and it will mean that they have an unauthorised absence.

## How can I help?

You can help by;

Encouraging good attendance by  
Making sure your child goes to school regularly  
Talking to school if there are any issues or concerns

# Highfields Primary School

## School Attendance: What Parents Need to Know



## Why is good attendance important?

Good attendance and punctuality are vital for success at school, and to establish positive life habits that are necessary for future success. Through regular attendance, pupils can:

- Build friendships and develop social groups.
- Develop life skills.
- Engage in essential learning and other school social events.
- Achieve to their full potential.

All parents should promote good attendance and work in partnership with their child's school to provide a cohesive approach



If you'd like further information regarding attendance at our school, please see our Attendance Policy on the school's website.



## What does the law say?

All children of compulsory school age – between 5-16 – must receive a suitable full-time education. Once you have registered your child at a school, you are also legally responsible for ensuring that your child attends school regularly by the LA. It is a legal offence to fail to ensure your child attends school regularly.

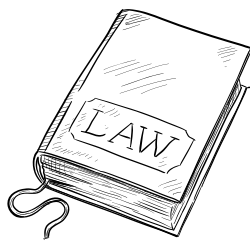
There is now a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England, of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence (G, O and/or U coded within the school's registers). The 10-school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.

Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days (for the first offence).

A second Penalty Notice issued within a three-year period will result in a fine of £160 per parent, per child.

If a third offence is committed the matter may be referred to the local authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates' Court.

If prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, each parent may receive a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.



## Can my child ever be absent?

When a pupil is absent from school, this will be classified as either 'authorised' or 'unauthorised'.

The Governing Board and Headteacher decide which absences are granted as authorised. Authorised absences are only permitted for valid reasons such as:

- Illness
- Medical or dental appointments
- Religious observances
- Family bereavement

Wherever possible, parents should always try to arrange medical and dental appointments during school holidays or after school hours.

## What are 'Unauthorised Absences'?

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider essential or reasonable. Unauthorised absences can include:

- Forgetting school term dates.
- Oversleeping.
- Absences which have not been explained.
- Arriving at school after the register has closed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.
- Keeping pupils off school unnecessarily or without explanation.
- Day trips or family outings.
- Problems with uniform/clothing.
- Birthdays and holidays.
- Withdrawing children from workshops and school trips.

## Holidays During Term Time

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 set out the statutory requirements for schools. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed. The amendments specify that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances" and they do not have any discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence each academic year.

It is a rule of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the Headteacher, irrespective of the child's overall attendance.

Exceptional circumstances do not involve cheaper costs, family availability or weather conditions.

You can be fined if you take your child on holiday during term time without permission from the Headteacher.

## Requesting Absences

The authorisation of planned absences is at the discretion of the Headteacher. All absences, including for holidays, must be requested as far in advance as possible – the minimum notice period is 2 weeks.

If you think your child needs to be taken out of school, you should discuss the reasons with the Headteacher as soon as possible providing supporting evidence.

