

Legal matters

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Persistent Absence

If a child's attendance level falls below 85% in any term without good reason, a referral to the Senior Attendance Officer will be made by the school. This could result in you receiving a Penalty Notice (to pay a fine), or being prosecuted.

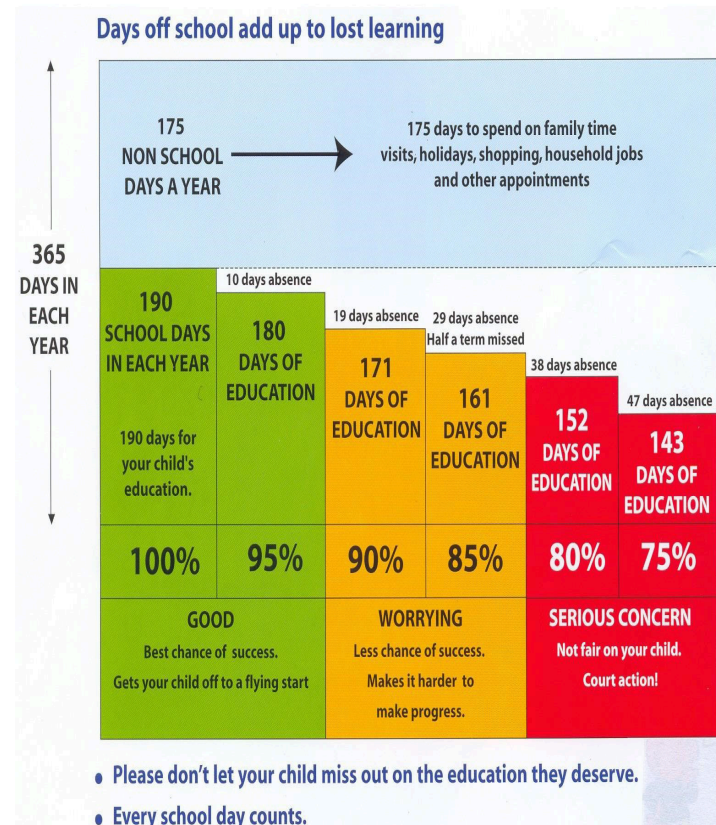
Persistent Lateness

If a child is persistently late, a referral may also be made to the Senior Attendance Officer.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable. Again, this decision is made on a case by case basis and with reference to previous attendance / absence records. Examples of unauthorised absence could include:

- ✦ Birthdays
- ✦ Forgetting school term dates
- ✦ Oversleeping
- ✦ A family member being ill or visiting family
- ✦ Day trips or family outings
- ✦ Problems with uniform/clothing
- ✦ Unapproved Holidays
- ✦ Waiting on a delivery
- ✦ Going shopping or for a haircut

Example of Lost Learning



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HALFWAY NURSERY INFANT SCHOOL

Caring, Sharing, Learning for Life!



Attendance and Lateness

Help us to help your child

A Useful Guide to Attendance and Punctuality for Parents / Carers

Attendance - It Matters!

What we ask you to do

Attending school on a regular basis is the key to your child doing well at school and will set them up with good habits for later life and the working world. It will also give your child the opportunity to:

- ✓ Make lots of friends and feel included
- ✓ Learn new things and develop many skills
- ✓ Increase his/her confidence and self esteem
- ✓ Improve his/her social skills
- ✓ Achieve his/her potential and fulfil aspirations

95% AND ABOVE IS GOOD ATTENDANCE.

ANY FIGURE BELOW THIS REQUIRES SOME IMPROVEMENT.

How we can help

We will:

- Provide a positive, welcoming environment so that your child will want to come to school
- Promote good attendance and punctuality, through reward schemes, special assemblies, etc
- Create an ethos in which good attendance is the norm
- Keep parents informed about their child's attendance/ punctuality.

Please make sure that your child attends school every day unless:

- Your child is genuinely ill (we will need a doctor's note or prescription for absences of a week or more)
- A close family member has passed away
- Your child has an urgent medical or dental appointment
- For religious observance

THESE ARE THE ONLY ABSENCES THAT SCHOOL WILL AUTHORISE

Absences and Appointments

Please contact the School Office before 9 am to explain your child's absence.

If your child has an urgent medical or dental appointment please inform the School Office as soon as possible, and get an absence pass. Please bring confirmation of appointments, eg Hospital letter.

Late Arrival

School starts at 8.55 am. If your child arrives between then and 9.15am, a late mark will be recorded. If your child arrives after 9.15 am, this is recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Any child arriving after 8.55 am must be signed in at the School Office. Please do not attempt to take your child into the classroom as you will be interrupting the lesson and, as the register may already have been taken, your child may not be marked as present at school, causing danger in the event of fire or other emergency.

Term Time Holidays

Family holidays should take place during the school holiday dates. These are published a year in advance.

The Department for Education (DfE) has issued amendments to the regulations concerning school attendance and taking of holidays during school term times. The full details of these amendments can be found on the DfE website – www.education.gov.uk. All schools must comply with these regulations.

Headteachers cannot now authorise any leave of absence, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Any absences without this agreement will be classed as unauthorised and will be recorded on students' records. If holidays are taken which have not been authorised, parents may be fined. Any unauthorised holidays/term time leave taken which spans 5 or more consecutive days will be subject to a fixed penalty notice of £60 if paid before 21 days, and £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days. This is in line with Sheffield Local Authority's policy on term time leave. Please remember that all holiday/term time leave requests need to be made in writing using our leave of absence request form, available from the school office or from our website. These must be submitted 20 days before the start of the planned holiday.

Exceptional circumstances are defined by DfE as 'unique or one-off events'. They might include family emergencies, a sudden change in circumstances or a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Visits from family members and opportunities for discounted holidays are not allowable as exceptional circumstances, which the absence is sought.