

West Huntspill Primary School

We learn, We achieve, We flourish

ATTENDANCE



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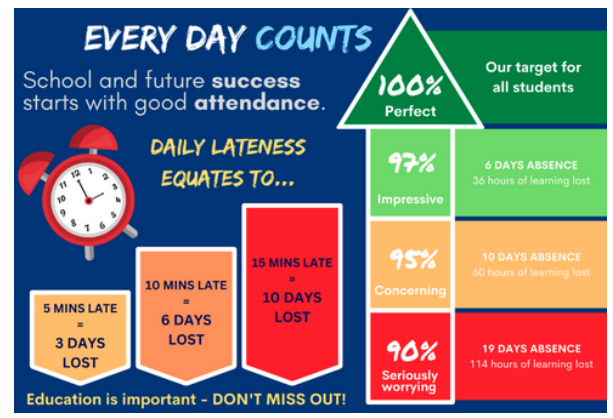
Attending every day=100% attendance

Attending 4½ days a week = 90% attendance = 4 weeks missed a year

Attending 4 days a week = 80% attendance = more than ½ a term missed per year or 2 full years missed over the course of their school career.

Attending 3½ days a week = 70% attendance = more than a quarter of the school year missed.

An average attendance of 80% or less across a child's school career adds up to missing a whole 2 years from school.



What does the law say?

By law, all children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 18) must get a suitable, full-time education. As a parent, you are responsible for making sure this happens, either by registering your child at a school or by making other arrangements which provide a suitable full-time education. Once your child is registered at a school you are responsible for making sure he or she attends regularly. If your child fails to attend regularly - even if they miss school without you knowing - the Local Authority (LA) may take legal action against you. The LA is responsible for making sure that parents fulfil their responsibilities.

Parents are responsible for making sure that their registered children regularly attend school and any alternative provision arranged for them. If you think you might need to take your child out of school, discuss the reasons with the school as soon as possible. Reasons such as family bereavement or taking part in an agreed religious observance would be acceptable for short absences. Unacceptable reasons for missing school include shopping and birthdays.

Punctuality *We learn, We achieve, We flourish*

Being on time is also vital. Arriving late at school can be very disruptive for your child, the teacher, and the other children in the class. Being late for school reduces learning time. If your child is 5 minutes late every day they will miss three days of learning each year. If your child is 10 minutes late every day they will miss 6 days of learning each year. If your child is 15 minutes late every day they will miss 9 days of learning each year.



Setting good attendance patterns from an early age, from Nursery through Primary School, will also help your child later on.

What might the impact of poor attendance be on your child?

Research has shown that children who are not in school are most vulnerable and are easily drawn into crime. Those children who play truant are more likely to offend than those that do not.. In primary schools less than 65% get good results in Maths and English in schools with an average of 15 days absence compared to around 90% in schools where the average is less than 8 days. Many parents are surprised how quickly their children accumulate 15 days absence.

What happens if your child does not attend school regularly?

Your child's school is responsible by law for reporting poor attendance to the LA. As a parent, you are committing an offence if you fail to make sure that your child attends school regularly, even if they are missing school without your knowledge.

You run the risk of being issued with a penalty notice or being taken to court. Parent fines for unauthorised absences are being brought under a national framework to help tackle inconsistencies in their use. A fine to parents will be considered if a child misses 5 days of school for unauthorised absence. Alongside this, costs for fines will be £80 if paid within 21 days and £160 if paid in 28 days. There are 365 days in a year, 175 of them are non-school days.

What about authorised absences?

There may be times when your child has to miss school because she or he is ill. This is to be expected and for the odd day off sick you should follow the school's procedures for notifying illness. Children may also have to attend a medical or dental appointment in school time. However, you should try to make routine appointments such as dental check-ups during the school holidays or after school hours. Any absence must be requested as far in advance as possible.

Most families want their children to get on well in life. Nowadays, it is more important than ever to have a good education behind you if you want to get the best opportunities in adult life. Children only get one chance at school and your child's chance of a successful future may be affected by not attending school regularly. Good attendance means being in school for 95% or more of the time.

Why is it important for children to be at school?

If children do not attend school regularly they may struggle to keep up with school work. In a busy school day it is difficult for schools to find the extra time to help a child to catch up. They need to be there all the time. Children can also miss out on the social side of school life. Poor attendance can affect children's ability to make and keep friendships; a vital part of growing up.

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