



Meadowhead Community Infant School and Nursery

## Attendance and Punctuality

A parent's guide



# Attendance Matters



## What the law says...

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. If your child is of compulsory school age is registered at a school it is essential that they attend regularly. There is a strong link between absence and attainment. Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling. Regular absence seriously affects a child's learning. Good attendance and punctuality will increase the chances of a child achieving their full potential in school.

### At Meadowhead we will:

- work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctuality.
- acknowledge the efforts of pupils and parents who ensure good attendance and punctuality.
- challenge the behaviour of those pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.
- maintain an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to assist in improving attendance and punctuality.
- maintain an effective and efficient system of gathering, monitoring and analysing attendance related data.
- continue to ensure that good attendance and punctuality is a priority for pupils, parents, staff and governors.

### Parents have a responsibility to:

- ensure that their child is educated.
- ensure that their child attends school every day that school is open.
- ensure that their child attends school on time every day that school is open.
- notify school if their child is unwell and unable to attend school.

### Schools have a responsibility to:

- keep an attendance register at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions.
- Inform the Inclusion Support Team of pupils who are persistently absent, have a high level of unauthorised absences or who have been absent for longer than 2 weeks without reason.
- work collaboratively with parents, pupils, governors and other agencies to promote good attendance and punctuality.

## The key reasons for attending school...

Going to school should be interesting. Not only will you learn subjects but you will also learn new skills, including social skills. The skills and knowledge that you learn at school will help you now and in later life as you start work. Good attendance shows potential employers that you are reliable. Some other key reasons for attending school regularly are:

- To build confidence and self-esteem.
- To have fun and learn new skills - every day is a school day!
- To make new friends.
- To have the best possible start in life.
- To develop awareness of other cultures.

## How parents can help...

Achieving good attendance and punctuality is everybody's responsibility.

Parents have a responsibility to:

- Ensure their child is educated.
- Ensure their child attends school every day that it is open.
- Establish a good routine in the mornings and evenings so your child is ready for the school day ahead.
- Ensure their child attends school on time every day that it is open— doors open at 8.40am and register is taken at 8.50am. After this time your child is late.
- Arrange regular medical appointments for outside school hours.
- Ensure you contact school every day that your child is absent.
- Take family holidays outside of term time.
- Talk to your child about school and take an interest in their school work.
- Praise and reward your child's achievements at school

## Family holidays...

There is no doubt the price of a holiday in school holiday time can be much higher than in term-time, the attraction to take a holiday in term-time can be tempting.

So, what can happen if you do this?

The rules about term-time holidays changed in 2013, there is no entitlement for holidays. In England it is only the Headteacher that can authorise a holiday in term-time, and only when there are exceptional circumstances.

The absence will be marked as unauthorised (code G) with the Head Teacher requesting to the Local Authority (LA) for a fine (penalty notice) to be issued. The fine is £80 per parent per child (each LA has a code of conduct that stipulates their position, so check with your LA). If you have previously been fined for a holiday during term time you are at risk of prosecution, which has a much higher penalty. The fine doubles to £160 if you don't pay within 21 days of the fine being issued. If you fail to pay within 28 days you could be taken to court under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Some points to consider if you go ahead with the holiday:

- The impact of absence on your child's educational progress.
- Miss time with school friends.
- Your child could miss out on co-curricular activities and clubs.
- You must make a request for absence to the Headteacher by completing a form available from the office.

In each academic year there are only 190 statutory school days—this allows plenty of time for holidays to be arranged outside of term time.

## Every school day counts...

School is the best environment for the vast majority of pupils to learn in.

Being surrounded by teachers and friends in school helps keep children safe, and supports them to reach their potential. Being in school is important to your child’s academic achievement, wellbeing, and wider development.

There is evidence to suggest that regular school attendance is a key mechanism to support children and young people's educational, economic and social outcomes.

Schools can facilitate positive peer relationships, which contributes to better mental health and wellbeing. Attendance at school is crucial to prepare young people for successful transition to adulthood.

At Meadowhead Infants we have a first day response system.

- If you think your child is too ill for school you must contact school and leave a message on the absence line or send a message. Please refer to the ‘advice for children’s illnesses’ section for more information regarding NHS advice on absences for children’s illnesses.
- You will receive a message or phone call if you do not let us know the reason for absence.
- If your child has significantly low attendance, you may receive a home visit from staff at school.
- If your child’s attendance continues to fall, you will receive letters and/or notification to meet with the Headteacher. If there is no improvement made, a referral will be made to the Local Authority’s Inclusion Support Team.



0 days of school	100%	Perfection
Equates to 2 days off school each year	99%	Excellent
Equates to 5 days off school each year	97%	Good
Equates to 10 days off school each year	95%	Slight Concern
Equates to 20 days off school each year	90%	Concerned
Equates to 30 days off school each year	85%	Very Concerned

## Every school minute counts...



Good punctuality at school is essential for students to achieve their full educational potential. It is also vital for students to form good habits for later life.

Punctuality records form part of references passed onto employers or higher educational institutes

Registration starts at 8.45am and ends at 8.55am. All children arriving after this time will receive an 'L' mark. Children arriving after 9.20am will receive a 'U' mark unless evidence is provided for the reason.

Lessons begin at the very start of the school day, so if your child is late to school, even by a few minutes they are missing vital information for the lesson.

<b>Getting your child to school on time really matters</b>		
<b>If in a school year your child is late everyday</b> .....	<b>Your child would have lost approximately</b> .....	<b>Or they would have missed approximately</b> .....
<b>5 Minutes</b>	<b>3 days from school</b>	<b>16 lessons lost</b>
<b>10 Minutes</b>	<b>5 days from school</b>	<b>32 lessons lost</b>
<b>15 Minutes</b>	<b>8 days from school</b>	<b>48 lessons lost</b>
<b>20 Minutes</b>	<b>11 days from school</b>	<b>63 lessons lost</b>
<b>30 Minutes</b>	<b>16 days from school</b>	<b>95 lessons lost</b>

## Promoting good attendance...



As a school, we always encourage and support all our pupils to attend school every day and on time.

Firstly, there is our weekly 100% prize for 1 lucky pupil who has been present every day from Monday to Friday each week. The draw will take place in Friday's assembly each week.

There is our Hotspot Day reward system. The rules are:

- 10 Hotspot days will happen during each of our 3 terms. A Hotspot Day will be random and WILL NOT be announced before the day.
- At the end of each term, the children who have attended all 10 hotspot days and on time, will go into a draw, the winning family will receive a £50 voucher.
- The Hotspot day is only awarded if your child arrives at school and on time.

At the end of each term, our children with attendance of 98% or more are rewarded.

- Bronze certificates are given to children with 98% attendance.
- Silver certificates are given to children with 99% attendance.
- Gold certificates are given to children with 100% attendance



At the end of the school year our children with attendance of 96% or more are rewarded

- Bronze certificates are given to children with 96% - 97% attendance.
- Silver certificates are given to children with 98% - 99% attendance.
- Gold certificates are given to children with 100% attendance

Class attendance is a huge competitive race we have running in school, each class are awarded points for combined attendance each week. The top 3 classes with highest percentage will receive jigsaw pieces to try and complete their class photo, the class that completes it first will win a prize at the end of the term.

## **Advice for children's illnesses...**

It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school when they're unwell; these are the government's guidelines for schools about managing specific infectious diseases at GOV.UK. These say when children should be kept off school and when they shouldn't.

If you do keep your child at home, it is important to phone the school on the first day of absence, let us know that your child won't be in and give the reason.

### **Coughs and colds**

It's fine to send your child to school with a minor cough or common cold. But if they have a fever, keep them off school until the fever goes. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues and to wash their hands regularly.

### **High temperature**

If your child has a high temperature, keep them off school until it goes away. You may want to give paracetamol to help reduce the temperature. Your child can then go back to school.

### **Chickenpox**

If your child has chickenpox, keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over. This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.

### **Cold sores**

There's no need to keep your child off school if they have a cold sore. Encourage them not to touch the blister or kiss anyone while they have the cold sore, or to share things like cups and towels.

### **Conjunctivitis**

You don't need to keep your child away from school if they have conjunctivitis. Do get advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.

### **Ear infection**

If your child has an ear infection and a high temperature or severe earache, keep them off school until they're feeling better and seek medical advice.

### **Hand, foot, and mouth disease**

If your child has hand, foot and mouth disease but seems well enough to go to school, there's no need to keep them off. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly.

**Head lice and nits**

There's no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice. You can treat head lice and nits without seeing a GP.

**Impetigo**

If your child has impetigo, they'll need treatment from a GP, often with antibiotics. Keep them off school until all the sores have crusted over and healed, or for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment.

Encourage your child to wash their hands regularly and not to share things like towels and cups with other children at school.

**Ringworm**

If your child has ringworm, see your pharmacist unless it's on their scalp, in which case you should see a GP.

It's fine for your child to go to school once they have started treatment.

**Scarlet fever**

If your child has scarlet fever, they'll need treatment with antibiotics from a GP. Otherwise, they'll be infectious for 2 to 3 weeks. Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics.

**Slapped cheek syndrome (fifth disease)**

You don't need to keep your child off school if they have slapped cheek syndrome because, once the rash appears, they're no longer infectious. But let the school or teacher know if you think your child has slapped cheek syndrome.

**Sore throat**

You can still send your child to school if they have a sore throat. But if they also have a high temperature, they should stay at home and seek medical advice. A sore throat and a high temperature can be symptoms of tonsillitis.

**Threadworms**

You don't need to keep your child off school if they have threadworms. Speak to your pharmacist, who can recommend a treatment.

**Vomiting and diarrhoea**

Children with diarrhoea or vomiting should stay away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 2 days (48 hours).

If you have any questions regarding keeping your child at home with illness please speak to the Headteacher or the Office staff.