

Authorised absences

Absences which are unavoidable or for which the headteacher has given consent are known as 'authorised absences' and will be recorded as such. These may occur when a child is ill or where, for example, on the rare occasion where there is a particular problem which may necessitate your child being absent. Please let us know about such situations and we will deal with them sympathetically.

Unauthorised absences

Any absence which is avoidable or is taken without the consent of the headteacher will be recorded as 'unauthorised absence'.

Examples of 'unauthorised absence' include:

- Going for a family 'day out'
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Because it is your child's birthday
- Going shopping or for a hair cut
- Waiting in for a delivery
- Holidays taken during term time without the approval of the headteacher

Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances may be requested by filling in a form from the school office with a letter of explanation attached. Any application will be considered by governors taking into account the pupil's attendance record, family circumstances and timing with regard to assessments and examinations but no holiday will be authorised.

- Any absence where there is no explanation given or where the explanation given is considered unsatisfactory by the headteacher.

All absences are monitored by the Local Authority's education welfare officer and legal action may be taken where absence is irregular, unauthorised and below 85%

"every lesson in school matters and children who have time off often find it difficult to catch up and do well at school"

DCSF 2006

Legal Note

Parents have a legal duty (under Section 7, Education Act 1996) to ensure that their child who is registered at a school attends that school regularly. If the child fails to do so and the absences are unauthorised, the parent is committing an offence and may either be issued with a penalty notice or prosecuted.

We value your support in helping us to maintain high standards. We recognise that parents/carers have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication to address the concerns about attendance.

"Every day counts....."

Information for Parents/Carers on School Attendance



Essex County Council

HOLLY TREES PRIMARY SCHOOL

Vaughan Williams Way,

Warley, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 5RY.

Tel: 01277 212296/220997

Fax: 01277 223838

www.hollytreesprimaryschool.co.uk

Headteacher: Mrs. P. Masters

Learning Support

Supervisor: Hilda Mehmet

We will:

- Follow up any unexplained absences by telephone calls and letters as soon as possible
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality
- Acknowledge good attendance
- Publish your child's attendance level in his/her three times a year.
- Contact you if we have concerns about your child's attendance
- Seek the advice and support of the education welfare officer, who visits the school to review and monitor pupil attendance, if we continue to have concerns

Punctuality

- Morning registration is at 8.55am—this is when your child must be in their classroom so he/she needs to be coming through the school gate by 8.50am at the latest
- It is important to be on time as the first few minutes of the school day are often used to give out instructions or organise school work for the rest of the day
- Pupils who arrive after the register has closed at 9.15am will be marked as having an **unauthorised absence** in accordance with DCSF guidance
- We will let you know if we have concerns about your child's punctuality

The impact of good attendance

We aim to ensure all pupils' attendance is as good as possible.

Although 90% attendance may appear to be 'high', this still means that a pupil is absent from lessons for the equivalent of one half day every week.

Also, a pupil whose attendance rate is only 90% will have missed the equivalent of 4 whole weeks of lessons in the school year.

If this pupil continues to attend for only 90% of the time, then over 5 years, he/she will have missed the equivalent to half a year's schooling.

Facts from the Authority

90% attendance = ½ day missed **every week!**

90% attendance = 1 day missed every other week!

90% attendance = **4 whole weeks** of lessons **missed!**

90% attendance over 5 years of **school = ½ a school year missed!**

Research suggests that 17 missed school days a year at primary school = **GCSE grade DROP** in achievement. (DfE)

Good attendance is important because:

- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines and school work easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders have an easier transfer to their next school

As a parent you can help us by:

- Telephoning the school on the first morning of an absence with the reason
- Arranging dental and medical appointments out of school hours or during school holidays if possible
- Keeping the school informed by telephone or letter if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness

As a school we aim to:

- Achieve an average level of attendance for the school of at least 96%
- Maintain parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of regular attendance