



ATTENDANCE MATTERS

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential

We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils/students and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Parents and pupils play a part in making our schools so successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all.

It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

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

DFE

Please notify us if your child is absent from school with details of the reason for the absence before 9.00am, otherwise their absence will be marked as unauthorised.

We have a dedicated Absence Line and Absence Email to assist in this process:

Absence line: 01425 476770

Absence email: absence@ringwood-junior.hants.sch.uk

Good Attendance is Important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, and higher education, employment or training

Promoting Good Attendance

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child. The Home/School Agreement contains details of how we will work with parents and our expectations of what parents will need to do to ensure their child achieves good attendance.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Provide information on all matters related to attendance in our school newsletter and on our school website.
- Monitor attendance through the school office and at year team meetings looking for patterns of absence. We will contact you should we have concerns.
- Report to you on a termly basis your child's attendance and punctuality rate.
- Celebrate good attendance rates with weekly certificates and promote gold standard attendance.
- At the end of each term, award attendance certificates for 100% attendance and most improved attendance .

ABSENCE

From September 2015 all schools were required to work with Hampshire County Council to take legal action and issue Penalty Notices if:

- A child has unauthorised absence for 10 or more sessions (a session is a morning or afternoon, coded G or O) in 100 sessions
- A child is continually late to school after the register closes at 9.00 and this lateness is unauthorised (coded U) for 10 or more sessions in 100 sessions
- A child has any unauthorised absence during formal examinations, assessment or testing

Please also be aware, HCC advised that from April 2019 schools can issue a Penalty Notice if a child is persistently late before the register closes (coded L) for 10 sessions in the last 100 sessions.

In Education law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age at the school at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the school.

Illness and Appointments

The school should be notified by parents/carers of all illness by 9.00am and appointments in advance whenever possible

If you are unable to schedule medical or dental appointments outside of school hours, please send a copy of the appointment letter or card to the office. If you are unable to do so please send a note detailing date, time and expected length of absence from school.

It is expected that children will be in school before their appointment and will be returned to school afterwards.

Arrangements should be made to ensure that the other sibling is either dropped off or collected from school at the usual time.

Please be aware that the absence or illness of a pupil is not expected to affect the education of their siblings.

Requests for Leave of Absence

From 6th April 2017, further to a Supreme Court judgement, schools are expected to follow the Hampshire County Council Code of Conduct for legal intervention relating to term time absence and not to authorise pupil absence unless the reason for absence is **exceptional**. A Headteacher has discretion to decide whether the reason for absence is exceptional and can be authorised.

The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant or unavoidable which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. **There are no rules on this** as circumstances vary from school to school and family to family. There is however, **no legal entitlement** for time off in school time to go on holiday **and in the majority of cases holiday will not be authorised**. Parents/Carers wishing to apply for leave of absence need to fill in a Request for Absence Form (available from the school office or the folder in the porch) in advance and before they make any travel arrangements. The Request for Absence form serves as a Penalty Notice Warning.

If term time leave is taken without authorisation from the school, the absence will **be unauthorised** and if the number of sessions absent hits the thresholds set down in Hampshire's Code of Conduct (10 school sessions - which is 5 school days, in 100 sessions - which is 10 school weeks) parent/carers will be issued with a fixed-penalty fine, or other legal action in accordance with the Code. Please note **each** parent/carer can be issued a separate Penalty Notice for **each** child.

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children out during school time and especially not at the start of a new school year.

We understand that there may, on rare occasions, be unavoidable cause for absence e.g. illness of a close relative. Although it is important that children's education suffers as little as possible, these requests will be viewed with compassion. Please liaise directly with the Headteacher or Attendance Officer by letter or by completing the absence form in the usual way and giving as much detail as possible.

LATE ARRIVALS

- 08.10 Main gate and playground gate unlocked.
- 08.20 Side gate by Year 6 for entry to classrooms is unlocked – Children to filter into class to prepare for the start of the day and registration.
- 08.20 – 08.30 Registration and early morning learning activities.
- 08.30 Side gate and playground gate locked.

Pupils arriving after the gate is closed must report to the school office to sign in.

Those children arriving after school commences will be recorded as: 'Late — before the register closes.'

Those arriving after 8.45am will be marked as: 'Late — after the register closes' and are recorded as an 'Unauthorised Absence'.

'Lates' are monitored by both the Head teacher and the Governing Body. Persistent lateness to school is treated seriously and families will be contacted personally if this continues. All late children **must report to the office** to sign in and to book a dinner if required. This is a safety protocol.

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of other pupils. On-going and repeated lateness is considered as **unauthorised absence and will be subject to legal action.**

LEGAL ACTION

Legal Measures will be taken to tackle persistent absence or lateness of 10 or more unauthorised sessions and parents are complicit in the child's absence.

Legal Measures will be taken for unauthorised holiday absence of 10 or more sessions.

For more information and guidance please refer to the school website for the Attendance Policy and links to the national guidance for Parental responsibility.