



READY TO LEARN

ATTENDANCE



Getting the most out of school, A
short guide for parents and carers.

Your responsibilities

As a parent you have a **legal duty** to make sure your children are educated. Children are of statutory school age between the ages of 5 and 16. More precisely this runs from the term after a child's 5th birthday until the last Friday in June in the school year in which they turn 16.

Keeping registers

Schools must take an attendance register twice a day. Any absences will be recorded with a specific code depending on the type of absence. Absences fall into two main categories; authorised or unauthorised. Only the school, can authorise absence. If you want leave of absence for your child you must ask for permission in advance. Permission cannot be granted retrospectively. The school doors open at 8.30am, the morning session starts at 8.45am and children are expected to be in school for the beginning of this session. The register is taken and children arriving after the register is closed at 9am will be marked as late, children arriving after 9.30am will be deemed 'late after registers closes' and an absence for the morning session recorded.



Leave during term time

The Headteacher can only authorise leave during term time in exceptional circumstances. Headteachers within the Dorchester Pyramid area **do not** authorise family holidays within term time. It is highly unlikely that a request for a family holiday during term time will be authorised, unless you can show that there are **exceptional circumstances** in your case. Put your request in writing to the Headteacher as early as possible.



Illness

If your child is ill (high temperature/ vomiting/diarrhoea/chicken pox/scarlet fever etc.); mild illness such as coughs and colds are allowed in school, if you are unsure if your child should be kept off please call the school office to clarify. Please ring the school office to report your child's absence on the first and subsequent days of absence. If you do not inform us or give an explanation for their absence, it will be marked as an unauthorised absence. We may ask for medical evidence if the absence is long-term or repeated and therefore ask for proof that your child is genuinely unwell and unable to attend school. **Please keep copies of any appointment letters or medical reports.**

Children who are reluctant to go to school/difficulties at home

Often a problem at school or at home can lead to a child being reluctant to go to school or completely refusing to go. It is important to keep talking both to us and to your child, positive role modelling is essential at this stage to encourage perseverance.

Things like family breakdown, bereavement, illness, housing problems, or being a young carer can affect your child and this may disrupt their time in school. Please speak to us in confidence; we may be able to provide additional pastoral support for your child and support for the whole family to assist in the time of difficulty.

It is crucial during these times that we work closely with children and families to ensure that the child stays engaged with learning and with school.



Appointments

Where possible book appointments for the doctors, dentist etc. out of school time. If an appointment is made during school time please ensure your child attends school before and after the appointment. (Remembering, if you want leave of absence for your child you must ask for permission in advance).

Legal duty and responsibility

If your child is registered at school, you are **legally responsible** for making sure they attend regularly. 85% attendance results in half a term absence over a year. 90% attendance results in one day absence every two weeks or 4 weeks over a school year.



Procedure for children with attendance less than 95%.

If your child's attendance is less than 95% without adequate explanation you will receive a letter outlining the concerns and be invited in, to discuss ways the school can support to improve. Attendance will be monitored and if attendance fails to improve over a six week period, you will be invited to a review meeting and further support offered. In the unlikely event that attendance does not improve, we will refer to the local authority for support.

Top tips for improving attendance and punctuality

Before School:

Get up when the alarm goes off, allow enough time to get ready so you are not rushing.

Avoid letting your child watch the TV before they are ready for school, you could use it as a reward when they have eaten a healthy breakfast, got washed and dressed.



Let your child know who will be collecting them in the afternoon or that you will be waiting to collect them off the bus.

You know your child best, only keep them off school if they are really unwell. Coughs and colds are allowed in school.

After School:



Get home learning and reading done as early as possible.

Keep school uniform for school only.

Encourage children to get their bags ready for the next day.

Have a bedtime routine in place to ensure your child is not too tired in the morning. Set the alarm clock.

At all times:

Model a good work ethic; for example when you are not feeling 100% tell your child that although you are not feeling great you are going to go to work and hope you are feeling better later.



Talk positively about school.

If you have any concerns about any of the topics covered in this guide please speak to: your child's Class Teacher, Suzanne Garner, Head Teacher (or Claudia Carter (Parent Support Advisor).