

Absence due to Exceptional Circumstances in Term Time – New regulations from September 2017

In accordance with new statutory guidelines we have revised our policy regarding attendance and absences from school in term time.

From September 2017, the Local Authority will consider the issue of penalty notices, at the request of the Headteacher, for a period of unauthorised absence regardless of a child's 'wider school attendance'.

As a parent you can only apply for an absence in term time if there are **exceptional circumstances**. The application **MUST** be made in writing, explaining the reasons for the absence, length of absence, and who will be with the child during their absence, to the Headteacher, at least 2 weeks before the event, for a decision to be made and notification of that decision given. Forms can be found in the main entrance, and on the school website.

Please note that in some circumstances unauthorised absences for holidays may result in a fixed penalty notice (a fine).

The current fixed penalty if paid within 21 days of being issued is £60 per parent; per child.

Days absent from school can have a significant impact on your child's learning

If your child has achieved 97% attendance they will have missed just over a week, or 5 days of education.

The chart below shows the effect of education lost through absences.

Percentage	Weeks absent from school
95%	2
90%	4
85%	5.5
80%	7.5
75%	9.5

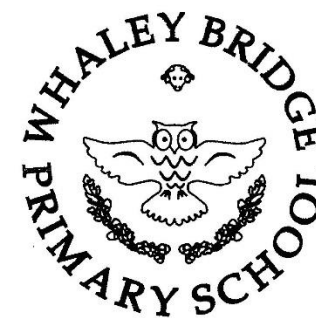
If you have any questions or queries about school attendance please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Walton or the School Office.

We fully appreciate that children cannot avoid being ill from time to time and that sometimes prolonged absences due to illness cannot be avoided.

In these circumstances there is no question that these absences are authorised.

However, please remember that 100% attendance means exactly that – a child is in school 100% of the allotted classroom time.

WHALEY BRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL



Attendance Information 2018-2019

Regular attendance at school is extremely important if your child is to make progress and parents are responsible for getting their children to school every day on time.

If your child is ill and absent from school then you as parents are asked to take the following action:

Reporting Absence

The most direct way to inform the school is by text (day or night) on 07786207779. Otherwise you can telephone the school office on 01663 732354 by 9.00am where you can speak to a member of staff or leave a message on the school answerphone.

Please leave the following details:

- Your child's name
- Their class name
- Reason for absence
- Expected date of return or please text or phone daily until your child is ready to return if that is uncertain.

Punctuality

The school day starts promptly at 8:55am and there are members of staff on the playground from 8.50am. If your child is likely to arrive at school after 9.15am please let us know.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

Authorised absences cover:

- Illness - on occasion school may ask for a doctor's note to confirm this.
- Dental/medical appointments (However, it is preferable that these appointments are made after school, or in the holidays where possible).
- A day of religious observance.
- Family bereavement.
- Absence due to 'special circumstances' if approved by the Headteacher and within the guidelines of the local authority.

Unauthorised absences cover:

- Unauthorised Family Holidays in term time.
- Birthdays.
- Absences taken without prior approval.
- Late arrival after the register has closed (9.15am). Unauthorised absences are classed as truancy; where the school has not given permission for the pupil to be absent.
- Unauthorised absences can also be referred to the Education Welfare Service.

Persistent Absence

'Persistent absence' refers to absence of more than 10% during any given school year or actual attendance of less than 90%.

It does not matter whether an absence is authorised due to holidays taken in term time, illness, medical appointments, or is unauthorised for any reason. Ofsted look very closely at persistent absence figures when making judgments about schools as the outcomes for pupils can be significantly affected by low attendance.

At Whaley Bridge Primary School we are very proud of the children's high levels of attendance and it is clear that there is a link between excellent academic progress and excellent attendance at school.

We aim for attendance figures of 97%. The National Average is 96.1% Last year we achieved attendance of 96.45%.