

Attendance Policy

St. Michael's C.E. Infant School

Newdigate C.E. Infant School

November 2022



Children need to attend school regularly if they are to access the learning on offer at our schools, achieve well and flourish in

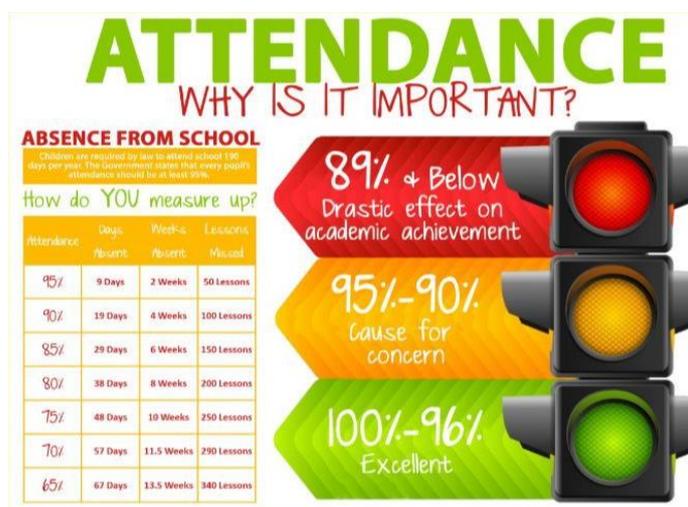
their later life.

Research shows a clear link between poor attendance, poor academic achievement and poor life chances. Learning to be organised enough to be on time, to be resilient enough to attend and be committed enough to want to always do your best are essential life lessons that all children need in order to be successful, productive citizens.

The law says that parents must do everything possible to ensure their child attends every day the school is open, unless they are too ill. If parents do not do this, it can have a very significant impact on learning for their child. We pride ourselves on supporting our pupils **to be the very best that they can be** at both schools and we want to do everything we can to make sure every child receives a high-quality education.

When a child's attendance, lateness or early leaving is causing a concern, we will work closely with the family to remove any barriers and support parents to improve this. Sometimes, if necessary, this may include a more structured Early Help approach.

Please note that any child whose attendance dips below 90% is classified as a **persistent absentee** and we would be expected to discuss what we have put in place to improve attendance with our Local Authority Inclusion Officer.



Illness

Young children are occasionally ill, so when this happens we do not expect them to come to school – of course they need to be at home. However, typically, children do not become too ill to attend school on a regular basis. Any patterns of illness will be identified and staff will begin conversations with the family so that learning does not suffer.

Occasionally a child will have a more serious illness or accident that will need a longer absence. Typically, this is not a regular occurrence and we will work with parents to tailor provision in order to ensure as little learning time as possible is lost. When the child returns to school, the rest of the class will have gained experiences, knowledge and understanding that the absent child will not, meaning he/she may find it difficult to fit back in with the learning that has been covered. This can then put pressure on both the child and the class teacher, who has to find extra time to support that child. Whilst we will always do all we can to manage these situations, it is important that parents are aware of the potential issues that will affect their child.

Lateness also matters

Teach your child the importance of being organised and arriving on time. Not only is this a vital part of work life, but children find it embarrassing and confusing to arrive after work has started and may miss out on essential phonics learning that usually takes place at the start of each day.

Occasionally appointments are necessary; we ask that these be organised outside school hours if possible. Early pick up before 3pm will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

If your child is late, arriving after 9 am, please make sure you sign your child in at the office. A child arriving after 9.30 am will be given a 'U' code on the register. This will count as an unauthorized session on your child's attendance record.

Requests for authorised absence

Legislation makes it clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term-time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. Our decisions about exceptionality are always in line with other local schools. Parents and carers should avoid taking children out of school during term-time to go on holiday. Whilst we are aware of the increasing issues of affordability, we will continue to prioritise children's education over holidays. Until now we have made the decision not to administer fines to parents, but we will continue to monitor school attendance and keep this approach under review with the school governing body.

We have a joint goal; our incentive is maximising the chances of your child making great progress and giving them the best opportunities for the future.

So, let's work together to make it happen!