

Adwick Primary School



Attendance Matters

WHY ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY AT SCHOOL IS SO IMPORTANT

It is essential that your child attends school regularly and maintains a pattern of good attendance throughout their school life.

Below are just some of the key reasons why it is so important children attend school:

- To learn.
- To make friends and maintain friendships.
- To experience new things in life.
- To achieve – there is a direct link between good attendance and good results.
- To gain important knowledge and to develop a variety of skills.
- To build confidence and self-esteem.
- To have the best possible start in life.
- To prepare them for adult life.

Please note your child should also be in school in time for the official start time. They will miss vital spelling and phonics learning in a morning if they are late – this will impact on their progress and attainment. Furthermore, children often feel embarrassed when entering a classroom late. If your child is late you must report to main reception and offer an acceptable reason for the lateness.

There are two types of absence, examples are given:

Acceptable and Authorised Absence	Unacceptable and Unauthorised Absence
Genuine illness Hospital appointment Emergency medical or dental appointment Family funeral Cultural/religious observance Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes	Shopping trips Sibling or parental illness/ appointments Family holiday in a term time Birthdays, reunions or family events Headache, woke up late or tired, etc.

Key Point

Young people who regularly miss school are more likely to become isolated from their friends, to underachieve in tests and/or become involved in anti-social behaviour.

WHAT THE LAW SAYS

It is the responsibility of parents and carers to ensure their children attend school regularly and on time. Failure to do so is an offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. Adwick Primary will support the process of encouraging good attendance, but ultimately it is the parent/carer's responsibility to achieve it.

Local authorities have the power to prosecute parents who fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at a school. The fines available to the courts if parents are found guilty of the section 444 (1) offence include a level 3 fine of up to £1,000. If they are found guilty of the section 444 (1A) the fine is at level 4, up to £2,500 and the court can also sentence them to imprisonment for up to three months. Local authorities have the power to prosecute parents of pupils found in a public place during school hours after being excluded from school. The fine is a level 3 fine of up to £1,000.

Key Point

Education is not an option – it is compulsory.

FAMILY HOLIDAYS AND REQUESTS FOR AUTHORISED ABSENCE

You can demonstrate your commitment to your child's education by not taking holidays during term time. Any child or young person who is absent from school due to a holiday will miss out on important learning and will fall behind with their school work.

In each Academic Year there are only a maximum of 190 statutory school days. This allows plenty of time (175 days) for holidays and other examples in the 'unacceptable and unauthorised absence' column of the above table, to be arranged outside term time. **Therefore, Adwick Primary will not authorise any holiday applications or examples from the 'unacceptable and unauthorised absence' column of the above table. These will be categorised and recorded as an unauthorised absence.**

Key Point

Avoid taking family holidays during the school term as it has a detriment to your child's education (see figures below).

1 week holiday's absence = 97% attendance, plus one week's illness = 94.7%

2 weeks' holiday absence = 94.7%, plus one week's illness = 92.2%

See the table overleaf to see how the above figures are described.

EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS

Every single day a child is absent from school equates to a day of lost learning. Attendance percentages can be misleading.

Descriptor	% Attendance	Learning Days Lost	Learning Hours Lost	Learning Lost from Years 2 - 6
Excellent	100%	0	0	0
Average	96%	7.5	48.75	Almost a full term (one third of a school year)
Unacceptable	90% (persistent absentee)	19 (half a day per week)	123.5	Half a school year
Unacceptable	85% (persistent absentee)	28.5	185.25	$\frac{3}{4}$ of a school year
Unacceptable	80% (persistent absentee)	38 (1 day per week)	247	A whole school year
Unacceptable	75% (persistent absentee)	47.5	308.75	A whole school year and almost a full term

For some parents, 90% may seem like an acceptable level of attendance, but the reality is that 90% attendance means that your child will miss half a school day each week or 19 days of school during the school year – that’s nearly 4 school weeks. If this continues from Years 2 -6, your child will miss half a school year of education.

From September 2016, a pupil becomes a ‘persistent absentee’ when their attendance falls to 90% or less across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child’s educational prospects and we need parents’ fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. Persistent Absentee pupils are tracked and monitored carefully and their parents may be subject to an Action Plan.

Key Point

Give your child the best start in life – every school day counts. A pupil who attends regularly will improve their achievement outcomes and life chances.