

Attendance

Research shows that good school attendance impacts upon children's success in learning; good attendance helps them to **fulfil their potential** and gives them a **chance of a better future**.

Every day that your child is absent from school is an opportunity missed. Schools and parents/carers have a **shared responsibility** to ensure that children attend school regularly.

Punctuality

Greenfields Community Primary School starts at **8:50 a.m.** every morning. It is **essential** that your child is in the school yard before 8:50 a.m. and lines up with the rest of the children from their class. Parents/carers of children who are persistently late could face legal action.

Absences from School

If your child is absent from school you need to:

- Contact the school on (0191) 2007919
- Give the reason for absence.
- Say when you expect your child will return to school

If your child is in the amber or red zone, please bring along any appointment cards, prescriptions, details of medical attention or documentation that may allow us to authorise the absence on their return.

Phoning school to say your child is absent does not authorise the absence. School must make that decision based upon the evidence we have.

Traffic Light System

At Greenfields, we work closely with the Education Welfare Team within the Local Authority and we have adopted the local authority procedures for school attendance. These are based on a Traffic Light System.

Attendance above 96% = Green (safety zone)

The government expects attendance to be 96% or above.

It's fantastic if your child is in the green.

Attendance between 90 and 95.9% = Amber

This is considered to be the "at risk zone".

If your child is in the amber, your child's attendance is below the standard set by the government. As a school, we will look at ways to support you in improving your child's attendance; this may be through

- meeting with you to put together an attendance contract
- monitoring your child's attendance over a 4 week period.
- discussing your child's attendance with the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer.

Attendance below 90% = Red (danger zone)

If your child's attendance falls below 90% your child's attendance must be referred through the Local Authority Fast Track system to the Education Welfare Officer.

Your child's attendance will be closely monitored along with any absences and we will ask you to sign an attendance contract

If there is no improvement in your child's attendance, it could lead to prosecution.

Please be aware that both authorised and unauthorised absences are included in your child's attendance percentage.

Having 90% attendance means that your child is absent from school on average half a day every week.

80% or lower attendance means that your child is missing on average at least one day of school every week.

Holidays

A week's holiday taken during term time could mean your child **missing 50 lessons** and could lead to your child struggling to catch up and falling behind with their work.

In 2013 the Department of Education changed the legislation relating to holidays during term time. This legislation **does not** give any entitlement to parents/carers to take children on holiday during term time.

Applications for leave of absence can only be authorised in **exceptional circumstances**.

Full details of this can be found at:

www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence

A **leave of absence request** must be completed prior to the absence, so that school can decide whether the proposed absence is an **exceptional circumstance** and therefore can be authorised.

Parents/carers can be fined for taking children on holiday during term time without consent from the school.

If holidays can be taken out of term time, then they should be taken out of term time.

How can I help my child get the best out of school?

- Be aware of the impact of regular absences - missing school means missing out.
- Make sure your child arrives at school on time.
- Don't let your child stay away from school for reasons like going shopping, birthdays or simply saying they don't feel well.
- Avoid taking family holidays in term time.
- Try to make non-urgent medical and dental appointments out of school time.
- Be involved with your child's education and school - ask questions.
- Build up good habits of punctuality and attendance.
- Only keep your child at home in accordance with Health Protection Agency infection control guidelines (contact the school if you are unsure) and send them back to school as soon as they are better, even if it's only for one day - every day counts.

Good attendance

At Greenfields we like to reward children who do well and follow school the school rules.

Good attendance automatically gives the children the chance to earn their merit vouchers faster.

We also have rewards for classes that have the best attendance each week and for children who have 100% attendance.

Why is good attendance important?

- The law states that all children and young people aged from 5 to 16 must receive a **suitable full time education**.
- With **high attendance** your child gets the chance to **make friends** and learns to get on with others. **Communication skills** are vital for your child's development.
- Research shows that children and young people with **less than 90%** attendance, do dramatically **less well** in public examinations.
- Employers will want to be sure that the people they recruit are reliable. Children and young people who have a poor school attendance record have less chance of getting a job.
- Children and young people who stay away from school for no good reason are **at risk of becoming victims of crime or abuse**. They may also be drawn into anti-social behaviour.
- Children and young people who don't come to school regularly will be at **risk of not achieving their full potential**.
- **Parents/Carers** of children and young people with poor attendance can be prosecuted.

If you are experiencing any difficulties with your child's attendance or punctuality, please don't hesitate to contact one of our Deputy Headteachers, Mrs Hardy or Mrs Dobson on 0191 200 7919



GREENFIELDS

COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Information for Parents and Carers

September 2015