

Rawmarsh Sandhill

A guide to attendance



Education is the most important gift we can give our children and a day lost is one too many. Regular attendance is linked directly to children's achievement. Unfortunately, at the moment, we are experiencing a large number of children who are absent from school. Our attendance target for the school year is 96.5%, which is the average attendance across the country. Currently we are falling short of our target and some children have significantly poor attendance. As a result, we have reviewed our attendance policy.

Are you having problems getting your child to school or arriving on time for any of these reasons?

- Won't get out of bed in the morning
- Won't go to bed at night
- Can't find their uniform, books, school bag...
- Slow to eat breakfast
- Haven't done their homework
- Worried about a test
- It's their birthday

If so, a set routine can help:

- Have a set bedtime
- Have a set time to get up in the morning
- Have uniform and bag ready the night before
- Have a set time for starting and finishing breakfast
- Set a time for daily homework activities
- Speak about school positively

Be firm, send your child to school, on time, every day including their birthday and last day of term!

Rewards

We have some exciting rewards in school - that the children have suggested - to encourage good attendance. The class with the highest attendance each week will get extra play. For every full week that the children are here, they receive an 'in it to win it' ticket which puts them into a prize draw at the end of the term. Each half term children with 100% attendance will receive a reward. Spot prizes throughout the year for a range of achievements e.g 100%, most improved attendance, In it to win it - these prizes will have an element of surprise and will be done periodically.

It's the Law

Parents/carers of children of legal school age must make sure their child receives a fulltime education. They must ensure they attend school regularly and stay there all day.

Section 444 of the Education Act is the law under which a parent/carer can be prosecuted.

Parents/carers can be taken to court for breaking the law. The maximum penalty is a fine of up to £2500 per parent per child and/or up to 3 months' imprisonment.

Absence Procedures

Should your child be absent from school for whatever reason, you **MUST** notify us via phone to the school office (01709 710875) before 9am. You must contact school for **each day** of absence giving us an update on your child's condition. If school do not know the reason for your child's absence, we will always send a reminder text to parents. If there is still no response, then school will refer this to the Education Welfare Officer who will make a home visit, as this is a safeguarding concern.

Attendance Below 96%

If your child's attendance falls below 96% for any reason, then you will receive an initial letter stating our concerns. We encourage parents to be honest and open about attendance issues – we can offer support where needed, but we do need to work together. Should your child's attendance not improve, then a further letter will be sent. We will then also need medical evidence, should your child's prolonged absence be down to ill health.

Attendance Below 93%

Should your child's attendance fall below 93% for any reason, you will receive a letter inviting you into school to discuss attendance issues with the Learning Mentor and Head Teacher. You will then be expected to attend follow up meetings every 6 weeks until attendance improves. Should you fail to attend any of these meetings then you will be provided with an action plan to follow to improve attendance. You may also receive a Home visit from the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) **IT IS IN YOUR BEST INTERESTS TO WORK WITH THE SCHOOL ON SUCH MATTERS.** Non-improvement of attendance will result in a meeting with the Executive Head Teacher and Chair of Governors. Intervention from the EWO will then be put into place.

Holidays in Term Time

Holidays during term time **WILL NOT** be authorised unless in exceptional circumstances, where evidence must be submitted.

Holiday application request forms need to be completed at least 2 weeks prior to any holiday. These can be obtained from the office.

A fixed penalty notice will be issued to parents of children taking holidays during term time where attendance has fallen below 96% in the current or previous year.



SOME FACTS ABOUT SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

A 2 week holiday each year in primary school which means a total of 14 weeks teaching time missed – this could have a real impact on their literacy and numeracy skills.

Keeping children away from school without good reason is a criminal offence.

90% attendance is like having a day off every 2 weeks.

If you take a 2-week holiday in term time your child's attendance will automatically be reduced to less than 95%.

Prolonged absence from school can lead to loneliness. It can make it harder for your child to get along with other children and make friends.