



PRIORY INFANT SCHOOL PARENT INFORMATION LEAFLET



ENSURING GOOD ATTENDANCE

In keeping with Priory Infant School's ethos of "working together with parents" this leaflet clearly sets out important information about our attendance and absence policy. (The full copy of our Attendance Policy is available on request from the school office and on our school website).

For your child to gain the greatest benefit from education and to set good practices for their future working life it is vital that they attend school regularly and punctually.

The responsibility for ensuring children attend school rests with a child's parents (or any carers with parental responsibility).

Why regular attendance is so important



We know that young children can be susceptible to illness and understand that if they are poorly they may need time off school to recover (this is reflected in our school target for every child to have at least 95% attendance). However, regular absences will seriously affect their learning and could affect their emotional wellbeing (sometimes young children find it hard to come to school again after a break in routine).

Ensuring your child comes to school on time every day is your legal responsibility and keeping them off school without good reason is an offence in law. Persistent absence results in a visit from the Educational Welfare Officer and may lead to you being prosecuted – which of course is something we want to avoid.

If your child is absent from school because they are ill you must:

- Phone the school office by 9:30am to tell us why they are away today, leave a message on the automated voicemail service
- Phone us every day they are away to keep in touch
- If it is impossible to phone then please ensure that you bring in a written note as soon as possible

- School phone number 01843 593105



If your child is away and we don't know why we will contact you immediately.



Holidays:

Holidays should not be booked during term time.

In line with Government policy on school attendance we will not authorise any holiday absences unless there are *exceptional circumstances*.

If you want your child to have time off school for any reason - including holidays and medical appointments - you must:

- Collect a form (Application for Leave of Absence) from the school office BEFORE the absence
- Complete the form with as much information as you can about why you want to take your child out of school and return it to us
 - **Medical/Dental Appointments** must be supported by evidence i.e. appointment card/hospital letter
- We always look at every case individually .

Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

The school has, by law, to classify every absence mark your child has with either “authorised” or “unauthorised”. The school Governors are responsible, with the Headteacher, for making a judgement about how to classify each absence. Schools have to report their absences termly to the Educational Welfare Service at the Local Authority who may want to contact parents about high rates of absence.

- Authorised absences will be granted for good reasons e.g. illness, medical or dental appointments (we may ask to see an appointment card), emergencies or other exceptional circumstances after discussion with the Headteacher. When deciding whether to authorise an absence the Headteacher and Governors will take into account previous absences and the % attendance for the year for that child.
- Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider essential or reasonable. Holidays will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Examples of unauthorised absence could include:

- Forgetting school dates
- Oversleeping
- A family member being ill
- Day trips or family outings
- Problems with uniform/clothing
- Birthdays
- Holidays

Lateness

Being on time is very important – not just in school – but in all walks of life. We ask parents to set a good example to their children by being punctual.

Every class starts the school day with Reading Time – so if your child is late they will miss vital reading practice.

Although teachers are very careful NOT to make an issue of it, children who are late can get upset or embarrassed about walking into a classroom in front of all their friends who have already



started the activities.

- Registers are marked at 9:00am as soon as the children come in
- If a child arrives after the classroom doors have been closed parents **MUST** sign them in the late book at the front entrance (so that we have a record of the child being on site in case of an emergency)
- If your child comes in later than 9:30am they will be marked in, but as “unauthorised”.
- If they have several unauthorised marks the Headteacher or Educational Welfare Officer may want to have a meeting with you to discuss the reasons why.

Working with parents and families

We do want to help you – and the vast majority of children at our school have **very good attendance**.

These are some of the ways we could help you if you have difficulties getting your child to school on time or attending regularly:

- Meetings to discuss your needs with Marie, our FLO
- Providing a place at Breakfast Club for your child
- Helping you to link up with other parents who may be able to bring your child to school on occasions
- Contacting the school nurse about medical issues you may be worried about
- Working with your child to help them understand how important it is to get ready quickly in the mornings and not “playing up”!
- Putting you in touch with parenting advice groups who offer support
- Rewarding children with good or improved attendance and punctuality with certificates



PLEASE DO COME AND TALK TO US – WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU AND YOUR CHILD.