

SHIREMOOR PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY



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All children are entitled, by law, to an education. All parents should endeavour to give their child the best future prospects by ensuring punctual and excellent attendance. Not sending your child to school regularly is neglect.

Parents are responsible for their children attending school daily in a punctual fashion.

What the law says about school attendance

Parents are responsible for making sure that their child attends school regularly. If your child fails to attend regularly the Local Education Authority may take action against you in the Magistrate's Court (Magistrates can fine parents up to £2,500 or impose a custodial sentence. Magistrates can also impose a Parenting Order). Alternatively the Local Education Authority can issue a penalty notice (Currently £50 if paid within 28 days, rising to £100 if paid after 28 days but before 42 days).

The Government requirement is that children achieve an attendance rate of at least 95% or more. This is because attendance below this rate means that children have missed too much learning.

Over the course of a year, if children miss school, this is what it can equate to:

90% - 95% Attendance	Almost 2 weeks of learning missed	Below Government expectation. School to ensure parents recognize that their child's attendance is below acceptable standard.
85% - 90% Attendance	Almost 4 weeks of learning missed	Unacceptable. School action taken
80% - 85% Attendance	Almost 6 weeks of learning missed	Safeguarding concern. Fine may be issued. School will involve other agencies unless acceptable reason for absence presented.

By monitoring attendance half-terminally, we try to avoid absence building to become unacceptable as by then it is too late. This means that, if your child misses school in the first half-term, we will be flagging up to you their percentage to avoid further absences where possible in the terms that follow. Red slip means that your child's attendance is below 85% and in danger of being unacceptable if it does not improve. This could result in a fine. Amber slip means that your child's attendance is below acceptable in this half-term and will be monitored.

At Shiremoor Primary School we aim to:

- Prepare your child for the world of work by teaching the importance of punctuality and good attendance
- Attain the best possible attendance and punctuality rates for all our pupils
- Celebrate excellent attendance of 100%

- Ensure all parents' and pupils' are aware of the importance of regular attendance by alerting parents to our policy, having visible displays, tweeting updates, sending letters, meeting with parents where appropriate

Good attendance is important because:

- Regular attendees make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attendees adapt well to school routines
- Regular attendees enjoy learning
- Every school day counts
- There is evidence that children who have good attendance habits in primary have more successful outcomes in life

We will:

- Publish your child's attendance rate on his/her annual report
- Celebrate good attendance
- Let you know if we have concerns regarding your child's attendance or punctuality by issuing termly attendance figures
- Monitor any child's attendance who is causing concern with a view to addressing any issues and improving their attendance by putting support in place with school or other agencies

As a parent you must follow school policies and procedures:

- Ensure your child attends school unless they are unwell
- Phone school on the first morning of all absences with the reason and stating when your child will return
- Provide proof of medical appointments
- Make sure your child is punctual in the morning and collected on time at the end of the school day or after an extra-curriculum club to ensure that you are a good role model yourself for punctuality
- Arrange dental and doctor's appointments out of school hours or during school holidays
- Keep us updated by telephone or letter if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness. Work can be arranged to be sent home for your child (See below)
- Ensure that your child's contact details are kept updated

School Procedures:

- Each morning the office will accept phone calls or listen to messages about absence
- If we have not heard from the parent of a child who is absent, we will try the main contact number. If it is a child who already has attendance issues, or if

we consider that it could be a safeguarding concern, we will then contact the other numbers on the emergency contact list

- If we have not seen a child for two days and have had no contact with parents about the reasons for this, a letter will be sent to the home address reminding parents to contact school. If we then do not hear from parents, and the child does not return to school the next day, we will notify Children's Services or alert the police dependent on level of concern
- We will also do home visits where we wish to ensure the well-being of child
- School will regularly provide parents with information about their child's attendance through half-termly attendance update letters
- Where a child's attendance is of concern over time, parents will be invited to meetings to see how we can best support parents in removing any barriers to attendance to that the child does not miss their educational entitlement.
- We will issue parenting contracts to provide clear timescales for improvements and we will work with other services to support families so that the children's well-being is not neglected.

Homework to support medical absence

If a child is too ill to attend school for an extended period of time, but is well enough to do work, this can be arranged via the school office who will liaise with the teacher to organise appropriate work which can be posted to the family or collected from the office. When work is returned, more work can be issued.

In addition, if a child is going to be unwell for a period of time, teachers are generally able to organise class cards so that children can feel missed. Where appropriate, the Headteacher may also visit a child in hospital or at home if parents support this arrangement.

Holidays

Holidays are not authorised as a reason for absence. Parents wishing to request a leave of absence for a holiday must do so at least two weeks in advance of the holiday and this request will be unauthorised. Please ask the office for a form.

Parents may be liable to a fixed penalty fine issued by the Education Welfare Service. **Any parent who chooses to remove their child during a key assessment period will automatically receive a fine. Please check with school when statutory tests take place.**

Term Time Leave of Absence

Leave of absence is only allowed at the discretion of the Head Teacher in accordance with the school policy as agreed by the Governing Body.

The Headteacher will allow a Leave of Absence only when family circumstances require that the family have no choice. Please meet with the Headteacher if you have a family crisis to see how we can best support the family and the well-being of the child.

In addition, if a child is competitively involved in a sporting activity that may benefit the child's future outcomes, the Headteacher may authorise on request by the parent when information is provided. We are very proud of any sporting accomplishments of our children outside of school.

Authorised Absence

Some absences are unavoidable and are known as 'authorised absences'. School reserve the right to decide whether the absence is authorised or **unauthorised dependant on the circumstance and previous attendance record**. Generally, an authorised absence is when the child has a previously good attendance record and school are notified of the child being unwell. In addition, where a parents provides medical evidence of unavoidable absence.

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are not permitted. These are known as 'unauthorised absences'. For example: going for a family day out, because it is your child's birthday, unapproved holidays or where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory. When the child has had repeated absence for minor ill health complaints.

Unauthorised absences are reported to the Local Authority. The Education Welfare Officer may contact you and consider taking legal action against you if your child has unauthorised absences.

Children Missing In Education

If you remove your child from school without securing a new school place, this will automatically be a safeguarding concern and will mean that the local authority will be informed and will do checks. The Government consider that children missing education are at increased risk of abuse.

Punctuality

Children should be in their class line by 8.55 am to be ready to begin the school day.. If your child misses this short but vital session, their work for the whole day will be affected. This will also affect their well-being if it happens regularly.

We will let you know if we have concerns about your child's punctuality.

It is also essential that you collect your child from school at 3:15pm.

Every minute of learning counts.

Over a year, if your child is late for:

5 minutes late each day	3 days lost
10 minutes late each day	6.5 days lost
20 minutes late each day	13 days lost
30 minutes late each day	19 days lost

If your child is late, they will be issued a late slip to alert you to the fact that they have been late. Late slips issued will be monitored to build up a picture over a half term. If your child is persistently late, you will invited for a meeting to ascertain why the lateness is occurring and, in the first instance, to support you in making improvements. If no improvements are made, other steps will be taken such as creating a parents contract, issuing a fine or involving the agencies.

Rewards to celebrate success

Each term, children who receive 100% success with attendance will receive a 100% Attendance Badge for their Excellence Sash. In Autumn, this will be Bronze in line with Behaviour Awards. Children can then work towards Silver and Gold!