



School Attendance Information for Parents July 2018

A Parents' Guide to Attendance

At Mount Pleasant Junior School, we work hard to build effective home school links and believe that working in partnership is vital. Sometimes absence from school is unavoidable: everyone gets ill. By working together we can ensure that absence is kept to a minimum and your child is happy and learning in school.

This information is designed to help parents understand aspects of school attendance, including the systems for reporting absence and the expectations for school attendance, including the consequences and implications of persistent absence and the rewards of good attendance.

School Attendance Matters!

As a parent or carer it is your **lawful duty** to ensure that your child regularly attends school. Failing to ensure that your child attends regularly has a number of serious consequences, most importantly:

- Your child may not learn enough to succeed in life
- Your child may struggle to build and maintain friendships
- You could face legal proceedings and criminal prosecution

Categorising Attendance

The table below describes how we categorise attendance:

red	amber	 Green	 Emerald	 Diamond
90% or less	90.1% - 94.9%	95—95.9%	96% or above	100%
Persistent Absence	Poor Attendance	OK Attendance	Good Attendance	Perfect Attendance

Good attendance means achieving 96% attendance each term of the academic year. This is the same as coming to school for 173 days out of a possible 180.

Come in!
Stay in!
If not...
Pop in!
Phone in!
Email in!

Come in!

Make sure that you bring your child to school every day.

Stay in!

Children can often be helped to last the school day, even if they are a little unwell

If not...

Children who are really unwell, need to stay at home, in which case you must always inform us what is wrong with your child and how long their absence is expected to be. This can be easily done in a number of ways for your convenience:

Pop in!

Come to the school office and let us know why your child is absent.

Phone in!

There is a dedicated messaging service on the school number for you: 023 8022 3634

Email in!

info@mpjs.org.uk

Attendance and the Law: Penalties and Prosecution

If you fail to send your child to school regularly, this will lead to pursuing criminal prosecution. The results of which could be:

- Fixed Penalty Notice of between £60 and £120 per parent per child
- Education Welfare Service Referral
- Legal Measures to Enforce Attendance:
 - Criminal Record
 - Fine of £2500 per parent per child
 - Community Service
 - Parenting Order
 - Education Supervision Order
 - Prosecution Under the Education Act
 - 3 months in prison

Triggers for Prosecution

Prosecution, including Fixed Penalty Notices, can be triggered in different ways including:

- Unauthorised absence of 10 sessions or 5 days in any 8 week period, including lateness
- Absence due to holidays
- Overall attendance below 90% and a referral to the Education Welfare Service

Informing the School of Absence

This is a dull but vital process that you must **repeat every day** of your child's absence from school. **Why?**

- Because parents have a lawful duty to notify the school why a child is absent
- Because schools have a lawful duty to safeguard children

What do you need to tell us?

My child is absent today because they have toothache and I have made an emergency dental appointment at 2:30pm.

Appointment card or text

My child is absent today because they fell off their bike, cut their leg and have had stiches at the walk in centre.

Injury is visible and discharge note from Walk in Centre

My child is absent today because they have tonsillitis and an appointment to see the doctor.

Appointment card or text and prescription medicine

Come in!

Stay in!

If not...

Pop in!

Phone in!

Email in!

My child is absent today because they are ill.

My child is absent today because they are under the weather.

My child is absent today because they are sick.

My child is absent today because they are unwell.

Telling us that your child is 'sick' or 'unwell' is not enough information and you can expect staff to ask you more questions so that we have **specific detailed information.**

Unauthorised Absence

10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence can lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice:

- If your child's absence is unnecessary it will not be authorised.
- If you do not inform us why your child is absent it will be unauthorised.
Your child should not be absent due to:
- Routine dental or medical appointments: schedule appointments for after school or school holidays
- Birthdays
- Holidays: book holidays during the holidays: a cheaper holiday costs your child's learning
- Head lice—treat and get them in!
- Brother or sister is ill—arrange with a friend or relative to bring them in

Application for Leave During Term Time

In the rare situation of your child needing to be absent from school during term time, you must make an application to the headteacher.

Forms are available on line from the school website or collect one from the school office. **Authorisation will rarely be given as there are few reasons that would validate your child's absence from school.**

Every school day consists of 2 **sessions**. If a child misses the morning they will still get an attendance mark for the afternoon session if they are in school.

Research shows that children's learning is negatively affected if their attendance drops below 96%, which means missing 7 days in an academic year. Therefore we use 96% as the benchmark for good attendance and set this as a target for all our families.