



Attendance Newsletter November 2024

Why Is School Attendance Important?



At SASJ, we expect children to attend school everyday, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so.

Encouraging regular school attendance is one of the most powerful ways you can prepare your child for success and happiness, both in school and in life!

We all want our children to be happy and achieve!

We feel that the most important way to promote good attendance is to ensure that both pupils and parents have a positive relationship with school.

Research shows that children who attend school regularly develop essential social skills and friendships and are more likely to succeed academically; we only get one chance at school, and your child's chances of a successful future may be affected if they are not attending school regularly.

Whole School Attendance Figures



The whole school attendance figure so far this Academic year, November 2024 is**92%**

Class Attendance Autumn Term 2024 to date:

- **EYFS** **89.9%**
- **Year 1/2** **88.4%**
- **Year 2/3** **93.0%**
- **Year 4** **96.5%**
- **Year 5** **92.9%**
- **Year 6** **91.5%**

We do have an ever increasing percentage of pupils who are proud to have excellent attendance but as a school we need to increase this figure. Anything less than 100% attendance means that your child is missing out on their education. Whilst we recognise that every child's attendance reflects on their own unique circumstances, we know you will really support us in focusing on achieving a higher attendance figure over this coming academic year.

What You Can Do!



Make school attendance a priority at home:

Talk about the importance of attending school everyday.

Help your child maintain daily routines and get a good night's sleep.

Try not to make dental and medical appointments during the school day and avoid taking holidays during term time.

If your child wakes up saying they are feeling a little unwell and you are unsure, please send them into school. If a child is genuinely unwell whilst in school we will always ring parents.

Talk to us if your child is worried about something or if you notice sudden changes in behaviour. Miss Westwell, our Pupil and Family Support Lead, is available to offer support and help to our families.

Always ask for our help if you are having difficulty getting your child to school.

Punctuality Matters Too!



Lost Minutes = Lost Learning = Lost Opportunities

Punctuality is also very important!

When a child is late, even if only by a few minutes, this can cause considerable disruption. It is disruptive not just to their own learning, but to the learning of the rest of the class.

'Lost minutes equal lost learning'. Just 5 minutes late per day equates to 3 days of school missed each year.

The school gates open at 8.45am ready for school to start at 8.55am. Morning registration is between 8.55am and 9.00am.

Anyone who arrives after this time will be given a late mark 'L'.

Anyone who arrives after 9.25am will be given a late mark 'U', this is counted as an unauthorised absence.

Pupils who arrive late must go straight to the school office to sign in and give a reason for being late.

If your child continues to be late you will be asked to meet with Miss Westwell, Pupil and Family Support Lead and Mrs Grimshaw, School Business Support Officer, to discuss strategies to improve punctuality. Persistent lateness can result in further action being taken.

If you are having problems getting your child to school on time, please contact us to discuss this.

Communication is vital!



To report a pupil absence you must either;

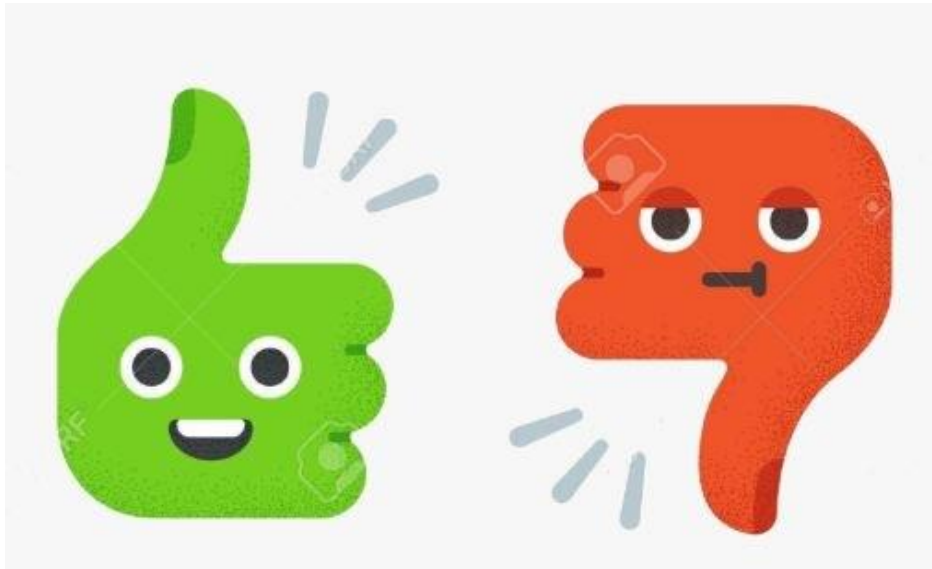
- Telephone 01254233019 and leave a message on the answer machine or speak to a member of the school office, or
- Leave a message on the Parentmail app

If your child is absent and we have not heard from you, we will telephone you on the first day of absence to find out what the reason is. We will also send out a 'reason for absence' email via Parentmail.

If we are unable to contact you, we will approach your emergency contacts and, if necessary, make a home visit.

If your child wakes up saying they feeling a little unwell and you are unsure, please send them into school. If they are genuinely unwell whilst in school we will always ring you.

Types of Absences



Every half-day absence from school has to be classed as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

- **Authorised** absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments (emergencies or other unavoidable causes) which fall in school time.
- **Unauthorised** absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no authorisation has been given. This type of absence can lead to the local authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

Any child may be off school because they are ill but sometimes it may be that they are reluctant to come to school for other reasons. In these instances it is better to speak to school to resolve the issue, rather than trying to cover up their absence, or give into pressure to let them stay at home. We will always work with parents to understand and address the reasons behind absence.

Continuous unauthorised absences may be referred to the Local Authority Team with a risk of legal proceedings being taken.

Leave in Term Time



Leave of Absence Request

By law, maintained schools cannot authorise any leave in term time other than in exceptional circumstances.

Taking a child out of school in term time will affect their education and progress as much as any other absence.

If leave is being requested for a holiday or extended leave abroad, approval should be obtained from the Headteacher before making any bookings.

Parents/Carers who need to request leave for their child during term time should complete an application form, available from the school office or printed from the attachment on the school website as soon as possible for consideration by the Headteacher. On occasions the school may request a meeting with parents but all requests will be advised in writing, whether the absence is authorised or not.

Education-related Penalty Notices

You may be aware that the Department for Education announced national changes to the issuing of penalty notices for unauthorised absence in term time. **These changes came into effect on 19th August 2024.**

Changes to be aware of are:

- Increase in rate of penalty charge, £160.00 per parent per child (this can be paid at £80.00 if paid within 21 days).
- Increased rate for the issuing of a second penalty notice within a rolling 3-year period,
- The threshold for the issuing of a penalty notice is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10 school weeks can span different terms or school years,

- A maximum of 2 penalty notices may be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3 year period, subsequent leave may attract attendance legal intervention or prosecution.

Excessive Leave

Unfortunately, some parents are choosing to take their children out of school for longer periods, as the fine amount is the same regardless of the number of school days missed.

From 1st January 2025, the following rules will apply:

- Unauthorised leave less than 15 school days - a penalty notice issued (1st instance)
- Unauthorised leave of 15 school days or more - the Local Authority will review any requests for penalty notices and may prosecute and **not** offer the opportunity to pay a penalty notice fine.

More information can be found on the documents on the school website.