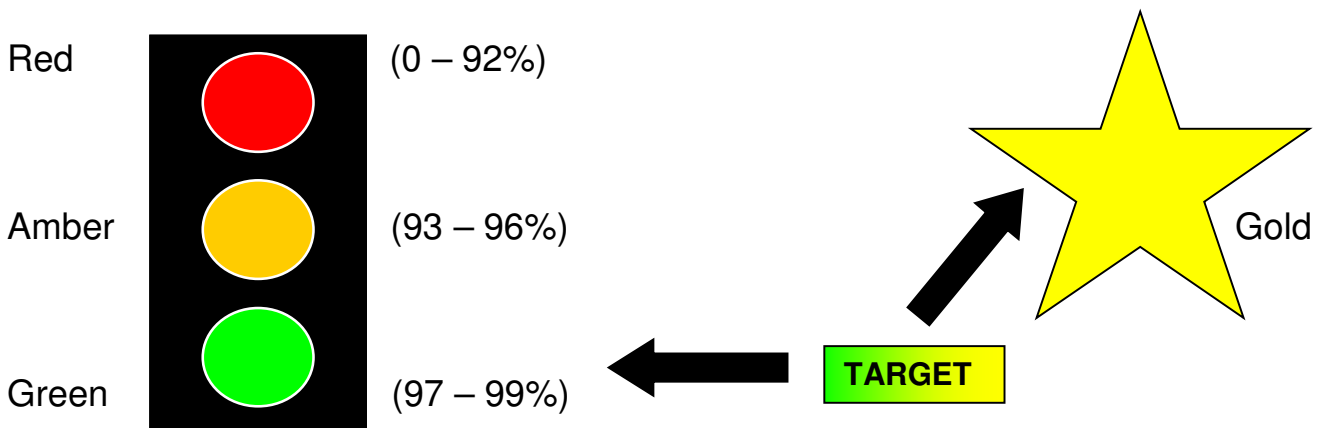


SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Parents and carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school. We value the opportunity to work together with parents/carers to support a healthy level of attendance for all children who attend our school.

We colour-code every child's attendance depending on how many days they have attended school. The target for every child is to achieve at least 97%.



The register is taken twice a day therefore if your child is absent for the full day they will have two sessions of absence.

What happens when my child is off school?

- Parents/Carers must contact school by 9.30am on the first day of absence to provide a specific reason for absence and an expected date of return.
- Where a reason has not been provided our Admin Officer will ring home as part of our safeguarding procedures to establish where your child is.
- Unexplained absences, regular absences or frequent lateness will trigger a home visit from our School Welfare Officer.
- Where children are absent due to illness you may be asked to provide supporting evidence from a medical professional. A referral may be made to our School Nurse with your consent.
- Frequent absences/lateness and lengthy absences are a concern and we will notify you when we are concerned about your child's attendance.
- Continuous poor attendance (without a valid reason) will be referred to the Local Authority for consideration of further action which may include prosecution.

What is the difference between authorised and unauthorised absences?

It is school's decision whether or not to authorise an absence.

Authorised absences are those absences where the reason provided by parents/carers is deemed to be genuine, valid and unavoidable.

Unauthorised absences are those absences which are either unexplained or where the reason provided is not deemed to be valid or appropriate. Absences may also be recorded as unauthorised when the length of absence is viewed as being longer than expected. Unauthorised absences can trigger legal action.

My child has a medical condition. What should I do?

- At the earliest opportunity please inform school of any medical condition affecting your child. We can offer support from our School Nurse if appropriate.
- Where possible please ensure medical appointments are made outside of school time (e.g. doctor / nurse / dentist / routine appointments)
- If the above is not possible then please ensure that an appointment card is provided to school before the date of the appointment. This will allow school to authorise the absences. Please return your child to school after the appointment (unless advised otherwise by a medical professional)
- If sufficient evidence of appointment is not provided then this will be recorded as unauthorised absence.
- We record all appointments taken within school time.

I would like to take my child on holiday:

- We strongly advise against removing your child from school to go on holiday.
- The Local Authority have changed their thresholds this year which now means that there is a greater likelihood of a Fixed Penalty Notice (fine) being imposed, especially if a child already has poor attendance.
- It is a parent/carer's responsibility to inform school, in writing, of a holiday in term-time. This should be done using the Absence Notification form which can be obtained from the school office.
- If we do not have this information from you, and your child is absent without explanation, then we will refer to our **safeguarding procedures** in order to establish the whereabouts of your child. Home Visits will be carried out and we will also try to establish contact with other relatives using the emergency contact details that you have supplied to us. Please note that this may also include contacting other agencies such as Housing, Health, Children's Social Care, and/or the Police.

What are considered valid reasons for absence?

- Please refer to the quiz and answers on our website for details of valid reasons for absence.
- If you have any doubts, please ring us at school to discuss.

Keeping in contact with school:

- It is vital that you keep us up to date with any changes of telephone numbers or addresses.
- We require these details in the event of an emergency affecting your child.

PARENTING CONTRACTS & PROSECUTION:

- A formal contract drawn up between home and school to outline the steps that everyone will take to ensure attendance improves. This includes any support that may be offered by school.
- Parents/Carers will be offered a parenting contract when school are concerned about unauthorised absences.
- If a case is referred to the Local Authority for legal action then complying with a Parenting Contract is considered as evidence. Failure to comply is also considered as evidence.

SUPPORT:

- We can offer lots of support where attendance is a concern:

1-1 or group work with your child to address any issues

1-1 / regular meetings with parents/carers

Parenting / Family Support

Home-School book where school refusal / reluctance to attend is an issue

Referral to the school nurse to support where illness is affecting attendance

Early Help Plans to involve parents and professionals working together to support their child(ren)

REWARDS:

- Children whose attendance is above 97% are rewarded at different stages of the year. This may include achievement postcards, certificates, celebration events and assemblies, individual praise and/or class prizes.

USEFUL CONTACTS:

School: 0191 267 4315

School Welfare Officer: 07506 221 466 (phone / text)

School Nurse: 0191 282 3319

Local Authority Attendance Service: 0191 277 4500