

# Attendance and Punctuality Matter



at The Grange

This leaflet contains very important information on why it is so important to be in school every day and on time!

**Important times: Breakfast Club open - 8.00 a.m.**

**Doors open – 8.35 a.m. Registration – 8.45 a.m. End of day – 3.15 p.m.**  
**When is it ok for your child to miss school?**

- When he or she is too ill to attend or has a medical appointment that can't be arranged at another time.
- In very special and unusual circumstances – these have to be agreed by the Headteacher who can authorise absence.

**When is it not ok for your child to miss school?**

- To go on holiday.
- On their birthday.
- When other family members are ill.

**Why is it so important to attend school?**

- If a child is not in school, he/she cannot learn what we are required to teach them. This can affect their chances in life as they may not fulfil their true potential.
- All schools are required to achieve attendance targets that are based on the national average for school attendance – this is currently 96%.
- The definition of a 'persistent absentee' (i.e. someone who is considered to miss too much school) is a child who has an attendance rate of less than 90%. Calculations are made at the end of the spring term. If a child has missed a little over two weeks of school (approximately 12 days) they are likely to fall into the category of persistent absentee. When schools are inspected they can be heavily criticised if levels of persistent absenteeism are too high.
- Persistent absence figures have to be reported to Sefton Council's Attendance and Welfare officers.

**Why is punctuality so important?**

- Being late for school usually means that a child misses the introduction to a lesson and instructions on what to do. Even if a child is five minutes late this means that the teacher has to go over the start of a lesson again for the child who is late. This means that the other 29 children who arrived on time can't have the teacher's attention. This isn't fair.
- A child arriving late often feels uncomfortable and embarrassed – this affects their learning even more.

- A child who is five minutes late every day misses the equivalent of three and a half days a year – this gap in their learning can't be made up.

### **What happens if your child misses school?**

- All absences (and the reasons for them) are recorded. When a child is absent for medical reasons or when the Headteacher has agreed to the absence this will be an authorised absence.
- The parents/carers of children with persistent absence are required to attend school to meet with an Attendance Panel where a solution to the problem can be found.
- If your child's absence is unauthorised (e.g. if you take them out of school for a holiday) this is likely to mean that Sefton Council's Attendance and Welfare Service will be alerted.

### **What happens if I do take my child out of school for a family holiday?**

- We do appreciate that holidays are more expensive during school holiday periods. We also understand that some parents' and carers' employers impose restrictions on when holidays can be taken. We do, however, believe that nothing is more important than your child's education so we do ask that you do not book holidays in term time.
- In common with other schools, parents and carers of children who are taken out of school for a holiday may have a fixed penalty notice (a fine) imposed by the Local Authority. This is currently £60 per parent/carer if paid within 21 days (The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.)
- Our school governors are clear that this is the course of action that must be taken to stop parents/carers from booking term time holidays.

**THIS LEAFLET IS YOUR FORMAL WRITTEN NOTIFICATION THAT REQUESTS FOR HOLIDAY ABSENCE WILL NOT BE AUTHORISED.**

### **How is good attendance rewarded?**

- The greatest reward for high attendance is that your child has the best possible opportunity to realise his/her potential and fulfil their dreams.
- The final assembly of each term is used to celebrate and reward good attendance. Full-time children who have 100% attendance and no late arrivals during the whole term (usually between 60 and 80 days) receive a prize. We have asked children what prize they would like and it is currently £10 in cash!

- There are various other individual and class prizes awarded during the year for very high attendance, these include a weekly prize and a namecheck in the newsletter to a child, chosen at random, who has 100% and no lates in any given term. One of the criteria for selection to eat at the Golden Table is good attendance and punctuality. Classes with 98% attendance or better each week receive a prize and a namecheck in the newsletter.

### **We want to help you!**

- Attendance and punctuality can be difficult and sensitive issues. The most important message is that we want to help you. If you have a problem with getting your child to school every day and on time, please tell us. In such circumstances it is possible that we can help. One of the most successful methods of improving punctuality and attendance that we use is to find a place for your child on our Walking Bus - this means that your child is collected and brought to school for breakfast by school staff at no cost.
- Your first point of contact for attendance and punctuality concerns is Mrs. Carole Edge - Home/School Liaison Officer at the school. Please contact her - she is there to help you with any short term or longer term issues with attendance or punctuality.
- To advise you that your child's attendance is becoming a problem, we issue letters during and at the end of each term to parents/carers of children whose attendance is 90% or below. These letters are sometimes shared at Parents' Open Afternoon. It is hoped that where a child's attendance falls to 90% or below during the year, appropriate action can be taken to see that it rises by the end of the year.

### **If I absolutely have to keep my child off school ...**

- There may be times when you have to contact the Headteacher to request authorisation to keep your child off school. This may be for a significant family occasion or to deal with an unforeseen event.
- All such requests will be considered by the Headteacher on their individual merits. If you do need to make such a request, please ask for a Request for Authorised Absence Form at the school office. Please don't ask for a Holiday Form - there is no such thing!

We know that you share our desire to give your children the best possible chances and that high attendance and punctuality help enormously in achieving their potential. We thank you for your co-operation and support.