

Attendance and Lateness Policy

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend school and are on time every day, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. This is because teachers do not repeat lessons, and so it's easy for children to fall behind if they are late or absent. This can also cause disruption to the other students.

We expect every child to have a yearly attendance of over 95%. There are 190 days in a school-year, and so this means we expect children to miss less than 9.5 days per year due to illness or unforeseen circumstances.

We will regularly update you on your child's attendance and lateness. If their attendance falls below 95% or you are late more than 3 times in a term, then we will inform you in writing. If we do not see an improvement after this, then we will invite you to a meeting with the Attendance Officer and Education Welfare Officer to try to get to the root of the problem. If we still see no improvement and are not given a sufficient reason for the absence, you may be fined or prosecuted.

We also offer a number of rewards for children with a high attendance.

What to do if your child cannot attend school

In the case of illness

- If your child is too ill to attend school please let the office know as soon as possible. You can let us know in person, online via the studybugs app, by phoning (including leaving a message on our absence line) or emailing the school office info@banisterschool.co.uk
- Please contact us every day your child is absent unless we have agreed otherwise e.g in circumstances such as a doctor has suggested a week in the case of chicken pox etc.
- If your child has vomited or has diarrhoea, they will need to wait 48 hours from the last episode before they can return to school.
- If your child has a long-term medical condition and you anticipate that they will have repeated absences due to illness or medical appointments, please come and speak to us. We will do everything we can to support you and your child.
- All absences due to illness will automatically be authorised unless you have more than 3 days of illness in a term, in which case we may require evidence.

In the case of appointments that cannot be made outside of school-time

- Please try to arrange all appointments to be made outside of school-time. If this is not possible, please try to minimise the time your child will miss from school.
- If your child has a medical/dental or visa/embassy/passport related appointment please let us know the date and time as soon as possible and please provide evidence; so that we are able to authorise the absence.
- Absences due to appointments of this nature will automatically be authorised unless your child has more than 5 appointments in a school-year.
- We are unable to authorise a full day absence for a single appointment i.e. if your child has a dental appointment at 10.15am we would expect them to return to school for the afternoon session.

In the case of religious holidays

- Your child is entitled to 2 days off of school per year for religious holidays. Please let us know if your child will not be in school for this reason so that we can authorise their absence.

In the case of family emergencies/weddings/funerals

- We may be able to authorise some time off for family emergencies or events like weddings and funerals. This will depend on personal circumstances.
- If you expect your child to be off for one day please let us know and provide us with evidence so we can decide if it will be authorised.
- If you expect your child to be off for more than one day, please obtain an 'Extended Leave Form' from the office. Once you have completed the form and provided us with the necessary evidence, we will let you know whether or not your absence will be authorised.

In all other circumstances

- If your child needs to be off school for any other reason, please let us know and we will consider authorising it if it falls into the category of 'extreme and unavoidable circumstances'.
- We will not authorise holidays during term time. We are aware that the price of flights and hotels may go up in the school holidays and so will try to schedule teacher-training days for the last days before the holiday so you can travel on these days instead.

- If your child has more than 5 unauthorised days off over an 8-week period, then you may be subject to a penalty notice or prosecution.

What to do if your child will be late

- If you expect your child to be late for school, please ring and let us know. If they have a school dinner, we will need to order this before 9:30 am. Otherwise we cannot guarantee that they will get their choice of dinner.
- If there is a long term problem that prevents you from getting to school on time, please come and talk to us about it.
- If your child is late more than three times per term, we will inform you in writing. If there is no improvement after this and you have not come to talk to us about it, we will invite you to a meeting with the Attendance Officer and Education Welfare Officer to try to get to the root of the problem. If we still see no improvement, you may be fined or prosecuted.

Attendance Rewards

We aim to reward children with a high attendance. While rewards may be subject to change, a rough guide to our reward system is given below:

100% in a half-term

- If your child attends school every day for half a term, then they will get a small reward such as a sticker.

100% in a term

- If your child attends school every day for a full-term, then they will get a certificate and a small reward such as extra play-time.

100% in a year

- If your child attends school every day for a whole school-year, then they will be invited to take part in an activity the following September. In previous years we have taken our 100% attenders to Paulton's Park for the day.