



# Be an Attendance Hero...



Here

Everyday

Ready

On Time

## WHY IS GOOD SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IMPORTANT?

Good school attendance gives your child the opportunity of success and helps develop skills for life. Your child should attend every day unless there is an unavoidable cause such as illness. Missing school damages a child's learning, disrupts routines and can impact on their wellbeing.

Please refer to the school's Attendance Policy for further information

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## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD IS UNWELL?

There will be times throughout the year, when children may be unwell and occasions when they may be just too poorly to come to school. If they are sick or have diarrhoea, then they should not attend school for 48 hours. However they can come to school if they have a mild cold, cough or runny nose. Further information about how to assess whether your child is well enough to attend school can be found in a document on the attendance page of the school website.

Parents must telephone the school as early as possible on the first morning of each absence to give the reason, whether this is illness related or for any other reason. The school has a designated telephone line for the reporting of absences. (Tel 01233 621616). Parents must ensure that their contact details on Arbor are always kept up to date so we can get hold of you should the need arise.

Please make routine dentist and doctor appointments after school or during school holidays. If you have to make an appointment during school time, help your child to be at school for most of the day and let us know about the appointment.

You may be asked for medical documents or an appointment card if your child is regularly absent due to illness or dental/medical appointments or if their absence due to illness causes a concern. If your child has an ongoing diagnosed illness, you are advised to let us know and to keep copies of letters from health professionals and also any appointment cards or prescriptions.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD IS STRUGGLING TO ATTEND SCHOOL?

We want all our children to be happy and keen to come in through the gates in the morning, ready to enjoy the exciting day ahead of them. However we recognise that sometimes, some children need support in attending school. We are here to help.

If your child is struggling to attend, parents must:

- Talk to your child—try to find out why
- Try to understand what is happening for your child and help them to resolve the problem.
- Talk to a member of our school staff (your child's teacher, our Family Liaison Officer (FLO) Mrs McGibney, or a member of the Senior Management Team) to discuss the

situation and look for solutions. We may be able to signpost you to other agencies for further support such as the School Nursing service or Early Help.

The school may be able to help with the administration of prescription medicines during the school day. Further details about medication in school is outlined in our Medical Needs Policy which is available on the school website, alternatively, please contact the school office.

We can also work with our Local Authority appointed, School Liaison Officer to help with your child's attendance and look for further strategies to help improve their attendance.

## WHAT IF I WANT TO GO ON HOLIDAY DURING TERM TIME?

Holidays in term time are not authorised unless there are very exceptional circumstances. Please refer to the school's Attendance Policy for further details. Please be honest about your intentions; you must always ask permission from the Headteacher if you are intending on taking your child out of school for the purpose of a holiday.

Dates of school holidays are always issued a year in advance and are available on the school website, enabling parents to plan ahead.

You might be at risk of a penalty notice if you go on holiday in term time and the absence is not authorised. New penalty notice rules came into force in August 2024 and saw a sharp increase in fines for unauthorised absence.

## SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND THE LAW

It is important parents and carers promote regular school attendance and punctuality, and have an awareness of their legal responsibilities in relation to their child attending school. Parents must also understand the impact that poor attendance can have on a child and the consequences of this.

Parents and carers commit an offence if a child does not attend school regularly and the absence is not agreed by the school (i.e. the absence is unauthorised). A child's unauthorised absence from school could result in one of the following:

### 1. Penalty Notice

The penalty is £80 payable (per parent, per child) within 21 days, rising to £160 if paid between 22 and 28 days. A penalty notice is an alternative to prosecution; it does not require a court

appearance, but still aims to improve school attendance. Failure to pay may result in prosecution.

Penalty notices may be issued by the Local Authority, where a child has 10 or more sessions (1 day = 2 sessions) of unauthorised absence within a 50 school day period, these days do not have to be consecutive.

## 2. Prosecution

Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. Prosecution could result in a criminal record and fines of up to £2500 and / or 3 months imprisonment. A range of other disposals are also available such as parenting orders or community sentences.

## HOW CAN I IMPROVE MY CHILD'S PUNCTUALITY?

The school gates open at 8.35 a.m. for early morning work and close at 8.50. All children must be in school by 8.50 a.m. Arriving late can be immensely unsettling and can impact on a child's wellbeing for the rest of the day. They also miss out on learning opportunities.

In order to help your child arrive on time...

- Make sure your child gets up in good time to have breakfast.
- Encourage your child to pack their bag and lay out their clothes the night before.
- Give yourself enough time to travel to school, ensuring that you make allowances for possible traffic delays. Remember that traffic is always heavier on wet days, so walking to school is far more reliable. Please remember that if you do drive to school, park at Chimney's car park.
- Walking to school means you are better able to gauge how long your journey will take.



The school runs a Breakfast Club (Early Birds) from 7.50 a.m. every day of the week. The children are able to have breakfast and enjoy a range of different activities. For details about availability of places and charges, please contact our Breakfast Club team [breakfastclub@godinton.kent.sch.uk](mailto:breakfastclub@godinton.kent.sch.uk)

## THE IMPACT OF POOR ATTENDANCE

Poor attendance soon builds up and will have an impact on your children's academic progress as well as their personal wellbeing.



**HELP YOUR CHILD TO BE AN ATTENDANCE HERO AND REMEMBER,  
EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS**