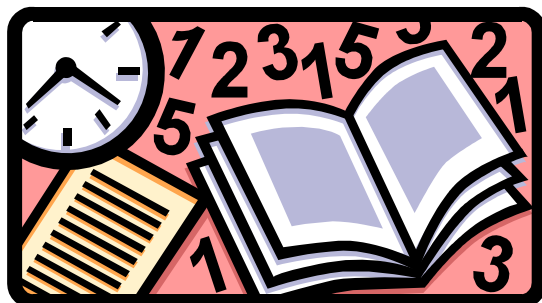




# School Attendance

Good school attendance is one of the main factors in determining your child's future and opportunities in life.

**Time off school for family holidays  
IS NOT A RIGHT**



One of the most important things you can do for your child is to make sure they attend school regularly, as the more school work they miss the harder it will be to catch up and the less they may want to try. Also the longer they are away the harder it may be for them to fit back into school life and form friendships.

By law, all children of compulsory school age (5 to 16, the last Friday in June of year 11) must get a suitable, full-time education. As a parent, you are responsible for making sure this happens

**If you do have to keep your child off school, please remember it is only the Headteacher who can authorise your child's absence.... even when you contact school, bring a note or fill in an Absence form.**

Setting good attendance patterns from an early age will also help your child later on. Employers want to recruit people who are reliable. So children who have a poor school attendance record may have less chance of getting a good job.

Being on time is also vital. Arriving late at school can be very disruptive for your child, the teacher, and the other children in the class.

As a parent, you are committing an offence if you fail to make sure that your child attends school regularly, even if they are missing school without your knowledge.

**Did you know:**

**90% attendance may seem positive but it equates to missing 4 weeks of school every year**

## **PENALTY NOTICES for non-school attendance**

Under existing legislation, parents/carers commit an offence if a child fails to attend school regularly and their absences are not authorised by the school. Depending on circumstances, such cases may result in prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. The Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 introduced the Penalty Notice as an alternative to prosecution.

Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child.

The penalty is £60 per parent per child. If payment is not made within 28 days the penalty rises to £120. If payment is not made within 42 days parents will be prosecuted in the Magistrates Court where, on conviction, they may be fined up to £1000

### These reasons for being absent from school are acceptable:

- My child is too ill to leave the house.
- My child has a hospital/dental appointment.
- Day of religious observance.
- Family wedding/funerals (immediate family).



### These reasons for keeping your child away from school are not acceptable:

- To treat head lice (nits)
- To mind the house.
- To look after brothers and sisters.
- To go shopping.
- To celebrate a birthday.
- Sleeping in.
- One child is ill, so all are kept off.
- Minor ailments such as tummy ache or headache.
- Because it is the end of the week or the term.



### What can I do to help?

■ If you suspect that your child may be missing school or is unhappy at school, you should contact the Pastoral Support Worker, Mrs Challenger on 07707 223752, the main school no. 842789 or arrange to see your child's Class Teacher.

■ Make sure your child understands that you do not approve of them missing school, but be on the alert for any particular reasons for non-attendance, such as bullying or problems with school work and discuss these with the school.

■ If your child is ill or absent for any other reason, contact the school on the first day of absence and keep them regularly updated.

■ Follow the school's procedures for notifying absence, and always let the school know of any days that your child is unable to attend.

■ Make sure your child arrives at school on time for both the morning and afternoon sessions.

■ Take an interest in your child's education. Ask them about their day, and praise and encourage their achievements at school.

■ Co-operate with any support

**Always keep school updated with any change of contact details**

### What about holidays in term time?



There are 190 school days in a year, leaving you 175 days in which to take holidays!

You should not expect your child's school to agree to an absence for a holiday in term time; **IT IS NOT A RIGHT**. Taking a holiday during term time means that children miss important school time – both educationally and for other school activities. It will be difficult for them to catch up on work later on.

**Parents do not have a legal right to take children out of school on holiday.** The law says that schools have the discretion to grant up to ten days authorised absence in a school year. Each application is considered individually by the school, taking into account factors like the reason for the holiday; its timing and the child's attendance record. Severnbanks will only consider requests up to 10 sessions (5 days leave a year) for exceptional circumstances. Confirmation from parents' employer is required if it is the only time during the year when holiday leave may be taken, providing your child's attendance is over 95% during the preceding 4 school terms.

If you need to take your child out of school during term time:

■ you should request the time off for your child as soon as possible;

■ never ask for time off during exam or test periods unless for exceptional circumstances;

■ remember that the school does not have to agree to authorise the time off.

Jackie Challenger, Severnbanks' Pastoral Support Worker, can be contacted on:

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Email: [jackie@severnbanks.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:jackie@severnbanks.gloucs.sch.uk)

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