

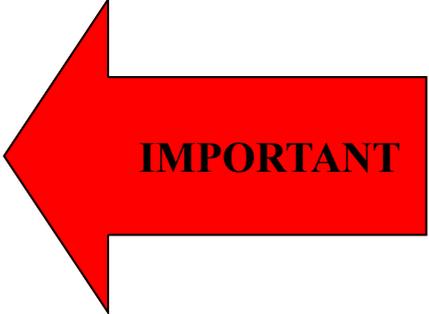
Merton Junior School



Term Time Absence **Advice & Support**

Unauthorised absence, including Holidays, during Term Time...

Hampshire County Council is currently completing a final consultation on a NEW Hampshire Attendance 'Code of Conduct for issuing unauthorised absence penalty notices'.



IMPORTANT

What does this mean?

A penalty notice will be issued for ANY *unauthorised absence* in the following circumstances as per the new code of conduct:

- Persistent lateness of 5 days (non-consecutive)
- Unauthorised absence for 10 or more sessions (5 days) during any 10 school week period (non-consecutive).
- Missed ANY public / formal school examination where dates have been published (e.g. KS2 year 6 SATs)

What is a Penalty Notice?

It is a fine of £60, per parent, per child. If it is not paid within 21 days, it is automatically raised to £120 per parent per child.



This is where a parent knowingly allows their child to be absent from school without good reason (unauthorised). This includes holidays.

e.g. A couple with 3 children would be fined £360.

What does this mean at Merton Junior School?

If you decide / have decided to take your child out of school for 5 unauthorised days then you MUST EXPECT to receive a penalty notice. You need to complete a leave of absence request form and we will inform you if any request has been unauthorised.

It is still VERY IMPORTANT that you complete a form because Basingstoke & Deane's Locality Team do regular random attendance days where follow-ups on children who are not in school are completed by Police and Childrens' Services, especially if your child's/children's whereabouts is unknown; if we have been made aware that you are on holiday then this may avoid a visit.

If your child is persistently late and you are at risk of being issued with a fixed penalty we will also contact you.

All schools in Hampshire will be following this new code of conduct.



90% attendance – that's good isn't it?

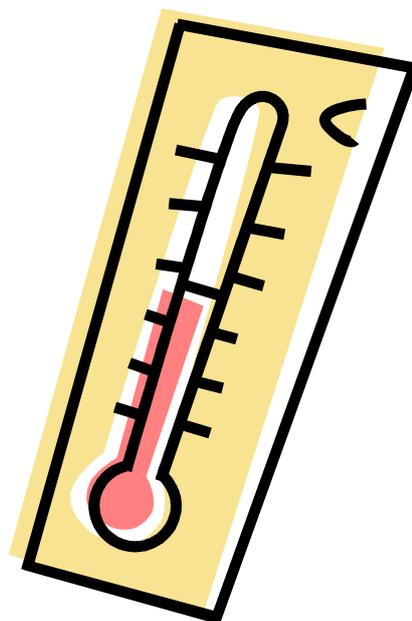
90% attendance means that the child has actually been absent from lessons for the equivalent of one half day every week. With 90% attendance they have missed the equivalent of 4 whole weeks of lessons in the school year. If they continue to attend school for only 90% then over 5 years they will miss the equivalent of about one half year of school!

What should I do if my child is ill?

If your child has **no temperature** but has a cough or cold, headache or earache, the advice we have been given is to give them some paracetamol (Calpol etc.) and send them into school. We will always contact you if your child's condition gets worse. Therefore, it is important that you keep your contact details up-to-date.

If your child has a **temperature** the advice is to keep your child off school.

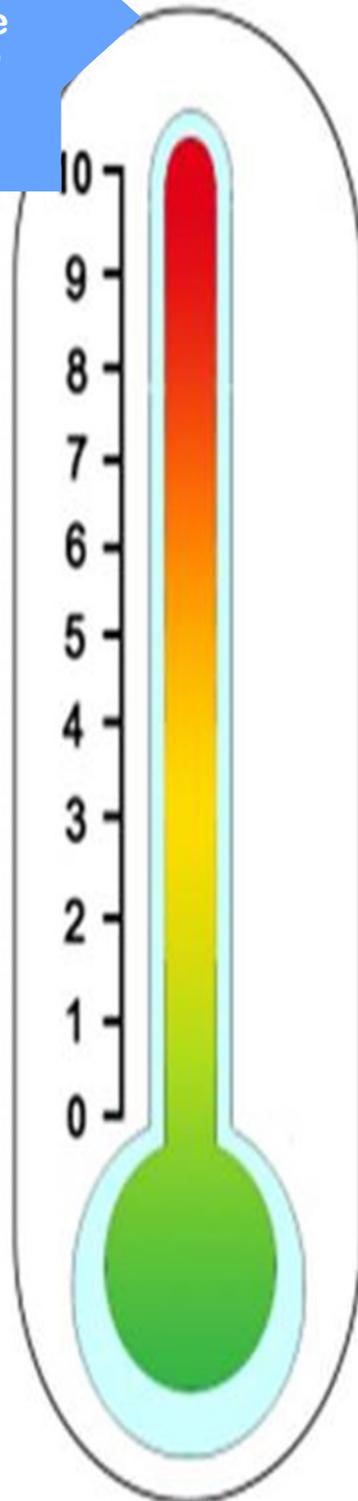
If your child has had a **disturbed night** due to coughing etc., please consider sending them into school in the afternoon. There are two attendance sessions in each day and a missed day is considered as two absences. On the next page there is a chart taken from The Health Protection Agency and contains guidance as to how much time should be taken off for *most* illnesses / infections.



Every lesson in school matters, children who have time off find it difficult to catch up.

Type of Illness	Recommended period to be kept away from school	Comments
Diarrhoea or vomiting	24-48 hours since last episode	This may vary in each case, please contact school for further advice
Flu	Until recovered	
Whooping Cough	5 days from commencement of antibiotics or 21 days from onset if no antibiotic treatment	After treatment non-infectious coughing may continue for many weeks.
Conjunctivitis	None	
Head Lice	None	Recommend use of proprietary hair conditioner combed through the hair with a nit comb.
Mumps	5 days from onset of swelling	
Thread Worms	None	Treatment is required for the child and household contacts
Tonsillitis	None	There are many causes, but most cases are due to viruses and do not need antibiotics
Chicken Pox	5 days from onset of rash	Chicken Pox can affect pregnant women if they have not already had the infection – please call school
Cold Sores	None	Avoid contact with the sores
German Measles	6 days from the onset of rash	If pregnant women come into contact with German Measles she should inform her GP immediately. Please call school
Hand, Foot & Mouth	None	
Impetigo	Until lesions are crusted and healed or 48 hours after starting antibiotics	Antibiotics can speed the healing process and reduce the infectious period
Measles	4 days from the onset of rash	If a pregnant woman comes into contact with German Measles she should inform her GP immediately. Please call school
Slapped Cheek	None	If pregnant women come into contact with Slapped Cheek she should inform her GP immediately. Please call school
Warts & Verrucae	None	Verrucae should be covered in swimming pools, gyms and changing rooms.

This is only a guide, if you have any doubts at all then please contact your GP for advice.



**EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT
(A & E) OR 999**
Choking, chest pain, blacking out, blood loss, serious injury

MINOR INJURIES UNIT/GP
Deep cuts, bites, sprains

111 SERVICES, GP, OUT OF HOURS SERVICES OR DENTAL SERVICES
Vomiting, ear pain, painful cough, toothache

111 SERVICES, PHARMACIST, OR OUT OF HOURS SERVICES
Diarrhoea, upset stomach, runny nose, headache

SELF CARE
Grazed knee, sore throat, cough

What will the School do?

- ⇒ Provide a warm welcome everyday.
- ⇒ Encourage and recognise good and improving attendance. This will include certificates, stickers and class attendance award cup.

What we ask from Parents:

Contact the school promptly to report an absence:

Ring the school on the first day of absence by 9.00am. You can leave a message at anytime on the school answer machine. **If you do not contact us your child's absence will be unauthorised.**

Medical/Dental/Optician appointments

Whenever possible make all medical appointments at the end of the school day or outside school hours. Please be aware that the absence or illness of a pupil should NOT affect the education of their siblings. If a pupil has an appointment (particularly at the beginning or end of the school day) arrangements should be made to ensure that the other sibling is either dropped off or collected from school on time.



Further details about school attendance and parental duties can be found on:

www3.hants.gov.uk/education/hias/learning-behaviour-attendance/lba-resources-for-schools/atten-guidance.htm



Marnel Junior School



Marnel



Merton Junior School



'Aiming High, Achieving Together'



Chiltern Primary School



Attendance Expectations Booklet



The Everest—Fort Hill Cluster have produced the following information booklet which will be issued to all of the above schools in the local area.

Parents/carers are **committing an offence** if they fail to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at school. It is a **legal** responsibility of the parents.

Nationally, the definition of good attendance is **96%+** each year. Each school, within our cluster, has its own target. Our school's target is 96.5%.

Key Points

In line with the Government's Policy, schools cannot authorise leave of absence, **including holidays**, during term time unless it is an exceptional circumstance.

Exceptional circumstance is decided on a case by case basis by each school.

Each day has 2 attendance sessions - one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Please ensure that all medical / dental appointments are outside school hours. Where this is not possible, please provide the school with an appointment card/ letter.

School determine whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised on a case by case basis.

The Government has suggested that Local Authorities can issue a Penalty Notice on families whose child's attendance is a cause of concern.

Currently, the Penalty Notice fine starts at £60 per child, per parent. Penalty fines are to be paid directly to Hampshire County Council.

Penalty Notices can be triggered by unauthorised absences. Please note that persistent lateness (i.e. after the registers close) is classed as 'unauthorised absence' .

It is important to inform school as soon as possible if your child will be absent.

Schools may have to refer a child's attendance to Children's Services Department.

When a child moves school, their attendance record will move with the child.

Why does attendance & punctuality matter?

Being on time and attending school regularly is vitally important in order for children to make the best progress in their learning and achieve their potential.

Children who are late and have frequent time off school often find it difficult to catch up and do well. It can have a significant impact on the child's self-esteem.

Being on time and attending school from the earliest age will also teach your child good habits for later life and the working world. It will give your child the opportunity to:-

- Make lots of friends and feel included
- Learn new things and develop many skills
- Increase their confidence and self-esteem
- Improve their social skills

Every Child Matters, Every Lesson Counts

A copy of the school's Attendance Policy can be obtained via the school office or website.

Merton Junior School



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