

## Top tips



If you are struggling with your child's attendance and punctuality, here are some tried and tested tips to ensure good school attendance for your child:

- Talk to your child about how important it is to attend school every day.
- Show an interest in what your child has learnt at school each day.
- Help your child to keep to routines: going to bed and getting up at set times, completing home learning on the day it is set.
- Get everything ready for school the night before.
- Set your alarm clock 10 minutes earlier each day.
- Don't allow TV or computer games before everyone is ready - if at all.
- Unless unavoidable, please do not arrange medical or dental appointments during the school day.
- If you think your child is trying to avoid school, try to find out why? Ask them, ask their friends, ask their teachers.
- Talk to your child's teacher if you notice changes in behaviour.

**Many parents are surprised how quickly their children accumulate 17 days absence.**

## Missing School adds up

Children who attend school every day make better progress and achieve more than those who miss some days or weeks in a learning term.

### LEARNING MISSED IN ONE SCHOOL YEAR

<b>100%</b> Attendance	0 days of learning missed	Best chance of success
<b>95%</b> Attendance	9 Days Absence 1 week & 4 days of learning missed	Poor attendance will impact on learning.
<b>90%</b> Attendance	19 Days Absence 3 weeks & 4 days of learning missed	Very poor attendance.
<b>85%</b> Attendance	28 Days Absence 5 weeks & 3 days of learning missed	Significant impact on learning and social wellbeing.
<b>80%</b> Attendance	38 Days Absence 17 weeks & 3 days of learning missed	You are at risk of prosecution!

### LATENESS ADDS UP

Being 15 minutes late every day will add up to **two weeks** of school missed every year!

### Celebrating Excellent Attendance

#### Each Week

We have a Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 Attendance Trophy announcement in our Achievement assemblies. The class with the highest attendance percentage win the trophy to display in their classroom for the week.

#### Each Term

This year we will run an Attendance and Punctuality Fort-night each term. This involves children collecting stamps for coming in every day on time. Children who collect the full set receive a special attendance prize.

#### At the End of Each Year

Children who have 'Outstanding' attendance (99 % and above) are awarded a special certificate and attendance prize and reward.

RICHARD COBDEN  
PRIMARY SCHOOL



## Attendance Guidance for Parents

### Attendance Matters



Children are required to attend school for 190 days each year and to arrive on time every day. We are constantly striving to provide your child with the best possible opportunities for achieving a high level of academic and personal success.

**Please support us and, more importantly, your child** to achieve their maximum potential by continuing to ensure they attend school every day on time.

Where possible, please arrange dental and doctors appointments out of school hours or during school holidays.

At Richard Cobden our target is **97%** attendance for all our children and we are constantly striving to achieve this.

Attendance will continue to have a very high profile and parents will be regularly reminded in newsletters and meetings about the importance of good attendance.

### **Why it is important for children not to miss school**

We know parents want their children to get on well in life. Nowadays, it is more important than ever to have a good education behind you if you want opportunities in adult life. Children only get one chance at school and your child's chances of a successful future may be affected by not attending school regularly.

If children do not attend school regularly they may:

- Struggle to keep up with school work. In a busy school day it is difficult for schools to find the extra time to help a child catch up.
- Miss out on the social side of school life. Poor attendance can affect children's ability to make and keep friendships: a vital part of growing up.

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.

Research has shown that children who are not in school are most vulnerable and are easily drawn into crime. Those children who play truant are more likely to offend than those that do

### **Can we help?**

If you are worried or feel there is a problem with your child's attendance please come and talk to our **Attendance Lead, Ms Carlyle**, your child's class teacher or any member of the Leadership Team.

### **Unauthorised absence**

If a child is absent from school without an acceptable reason or prior authorisation, this will be considered an '**unauthorised absence**' and marked accordingly in the register. Unacceptable reasons for absence include: birthday treats, went to bed late, looking after siblings, shopping trips, oversleeping, closure of sibling's school, to visit relatives you have not seen for a while, etc.

### **Meetings with parents**

Where there is an emerging pattern to a pupil's absence, with or without explanation, the school will write to parents and may invite them to a meeting to discuss the reasons for absences.

Plans will be put into place with the parents and pupil/s to resolve any difficulties and improve attendance within a specified time limit— usually no more than 6 weeks. It will be explained to parents that any future absences will be unauthorised unless there is clear evidence of a good reason for them.

### **Referral to the Educational Welfare Officer**

If there continues to be unauthorised absences by the end of the specific time (or sooner, if the pupil is failing to attend school at all), the matter will be referred to the Educational Welfare Officer.

### **Exceptional leave**

Time off school for holidays during term time is **not** a right and **no permission will be given** unless in *exceptional circumstances*.

Parents or Guardians with whom the child resides may request that a leave of absence, of up to 10 days, be granted in **exceptional circumstances**. Schools have discretion to allow this if they believe that the circumstances warrant it. Requests must be made on an 'Exceptional Leave Form', which can be obtained from the school office, and handed in at least two weeks prior to the proposed absence where possible. The 'exceptional circumstances' must be clearly stated on the Exceptional Leave Form with accompanying documents of evidence.

- No authorisation will be granted *after* the absence has occurred.
- Holidays during term time will **not** be authorised.
- Authorisation may not be granted if the child has a high level of absence in the preceding 12 months, even if the reasons are unavoidable.
- Authorisation may not be granted if the school believes the disruption to a child's learning and progress will result in further learning difficulties.

**The Education Act:** This Act allows the local authority to prosecute parents for failing to ensure the child attends school regularly. It also allows the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices to parents as an alternative to prosecution.

**What is a Penalty Notice?** A Penalty Notice is an alternative to a prosecution. It requires the parent(s) to pay a fixed amount as a fine for their child's irregular attendance and avoid a court appearance.