



Why attendance matters!

Harewood Junior School
Harewood Close

Tuffley

Gloucester

Office telephone 01452 525364

Coming to school regularly and on time is essential if your child is to make the best possible progress and enjoy their time here at Harewood Juniors. Missing school or arriving late means missing out on important opportunities to learn new things. Here are some of the ways that you can work with us to make sure that your child's attendance does not affect their learning or achievement.

Illness

Of course, we understand that all children are occasionally too unwell to come to school. If that happens, you can help by ringing the school office on **525364** before school on the first day that they are away. This will avoid the need for us to contact you to ask for a reason for absence. We also realise that it can be very tricky to decide just how bad a tummy ache is very early in the morning! If you are in any doubt as to whether your child should come into school, we are happy to give you our opinion although of course we are not doctors! We will always get in contact with you during the day if they become ill or feel worse. We do not normally ask for evidence of illness or medical appointments unless your child's attendance is causing concern.

Medical appointments

If your child has to attend a medical appointment during the school day we will collect them from class if you come to the school office and sign them out. Going to the doctor or dentist should not normally require a day off school. Children should come into school before medical appointments, and return to school after them, whenever the appointment time makes this possible.

Holidays

The regulations have changed and holidays taken in term time cannot be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. This ruling has not been made by our governing body or Gloucestershire County Council but applies, by law, to all state schools in England.

Exceptional circumstances are:

- Children whose parents/carers are in the armed forces.
- Children, whose parents' holidays are dictated by their employer e.g. police, fire and ambulance services or staff working for a company that closes between certain dates. (These requests will need to be accompanied by a letter from the employer.)
- A child with a parent/carer or sibling who has a life threatening illness. (This request will need to be accompanied by a letter from a medical professional working with the family.)

If holidays are taken in circumstances that do not meet these criteria parents or carers may receive a Fixed Penalty Notice which can result in a fine.

Checking attendance

We are required to check all children's attendance regularly. If a child's attendance falls to or below 90% they are classed as a 'persistent absentee'. All persistent absenteeism is monitored by the local authority every term. We will send information on your child's attendance at intervals throughout the year and contact you directly if we are concerned about the level of absence or if queries have been raised by our Education Welfare Officer on her monitoring visits.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

If your child is away because they are ill or attending a medical appointment, their absence will be authorised though we may require verification of this from a doctor in cases where your child is frequently absent. If you do not tell us why your child was away their absence will be recorded as unauthorised and you may receive a Fixed Penalty Notice which can result in a fine.

Arriving late

When children arrive late to school they miss an important part of the first lesson of the day. It can also be an embarrassing and uncomfortable experience to walk into the classroom when everyone else is already busy. Children should come into school at 8.50am. If the children's entrance door is closed you will need to bring them round to the school office to sign them in. Arriving very late after the registers have closed is recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Remember.....we're here to help

If you have any concerns about your child's attendance we are always happy to help. Our Learning Support Mentor, Julie Hearfield, may be able to suggest ways to make the mornings a little easier or to advise you about things that we can do in school to support the encouragement and good work that you are putting in at home. She can be contacted by email at lsm@harewoodjunior.co.uk

Our Education Welfare Officer is Christine Phillips and she can be contacted through the school office.

Please support us in ensuring that all children come to school and enjoy learning and playing together on every school day that they possibly can.

