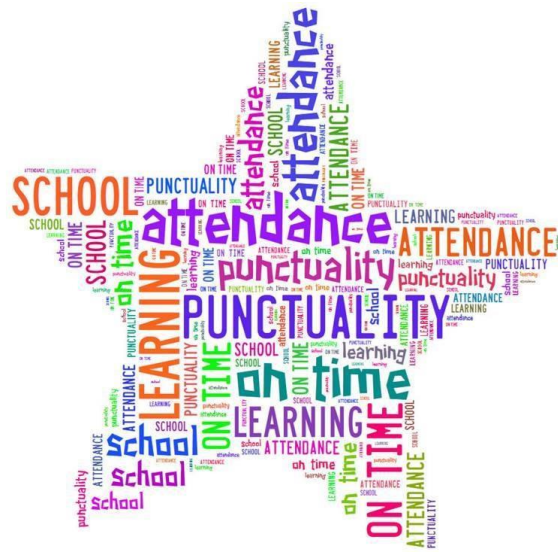


# Attendance - what you need to know



## Why is attendance important?

Pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school

To ensure our learners achieve the best possible outcomes we are currently striving to improve our level of attendance.

Unbroken attendance at school is important for learning. However, there will be times when absence is unavoidable and acceptable. This letter explains the approach we are following to manage attendance.

## Types of Absence

Each absence is classed as authorised or unauthorised. Absences are coded as authorised where reasons are considered valid and unauthorised where no explanation or unacceptable reasons are given.

### Unacceptable Reasons

The following reasons are not considered to be acceptable:

- shopping visits
- care for family members
- days out to theme parks or to attend concerts/shows
- parents' work commitments or business trips
- holidays taken in term time (including long weekends taken on Fridays and/or Mondays)
- parental illness

## Illness and First Day Call



If your child is unable to attend school through illness you should inform us by telephone on the first day of absence before 9.00am. Alternatively you can email us at [balmerino.enquiries@fife.gov.uk](mailto:balmerino.enquiries@fife.gov.uk) or call in in person at the Office.

It is useful to know the expected day of return. If you do not supply us with this information we have a duty to contact you for so that we may be sure of the child's whereabouts as this is a safeguarding measure.

Where the child is absent through illness or medical appointments this will normally be counted as authorised. Where we have concerns over excessive absence patterns through illness we will need to discuss this with parents in order to gain a better understanding of the problems and to offer support

### **Medical/Dental Appointments**

It is generally better if these can be arranged outside school hours, but we know this is not always possible. Where there is a need to attend such appointments during the school day it is important that parents come first to the Office before collecting your child. Please bring your child to the office on returning from the appointment. Please indicate in advance whether s/he will be returning by lunchtime.

Medical and dental appointments count as authorised absences.

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*Where pupils need to attend such appointments during the school day it is important that parents come first to the Office before collecting children.*

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### **Emergency Occasions**

There are some occasions e.g. bereavements, family problems, etc where it may be inappropriate for children to attend school; we will be sympathetic to such needs.

### **Lateness**

Please try to ensure that your child arrives at school on time. Meeting and exchanging news with friends before school is important for the children's social development. Lateness causes problems over lunch money/numbers, register marking and missed instructions. Where a genuine reason for

lateness exists this will be an authorised absence but where explanations are inadequate or the lateness is after 9.10 a.m. then an absence (late) will be recorded.

### **Holidays**

It is not our policy to authorise holidays in term time. There are rare exceptions to this (e.g. for parent in armed forces or police) but parents should always discuss a holiday with headteacher before booking.

### **Approved Public Performance**

Where children are invited to perform in a licensed show or concert (e.g. orchestra, pantomime) you are asked to consult with staff about how much time away from school is required. Where possible such requests will be granted provided that the child's education is unlikely to suffer. The school will also be sympathetic towards leave to participate in a recognized city, county or national sporting event.



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*Please help us by doing what you can to support your child's attendance at school.*

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