



## ATTENDANCE IN THE MADRAS CLUSTER

***Attendance at school for young people is stipulated in national legislation and in international treaties (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 28).***

***Every child has the right to grow up fully included in their learning experience and to be treated with respect (Included, Engaged and Involved Part 1: Promoting and Managing School Attendance).***

Each new academic session provides a fresh start and an opportunity for all to have excellent attendance. It is more important than ever that we support pupils across the Madras Cluster to attend school as regularly as possible.

Our aim is that all pupils should attend for at least 95% of the school year. Evidence suggests that children/young people who attend for 95% or more of the school year have the best future attainment outcomes. It is important that good attendance routines are established from the very beginning of a child's time at school. Excellent attendance supports social and emotional development and positive routines and habits. It helps pupils to develop and sustain friendships. Attendance below 85% falls into the cause for concern bracket. There is evidence that absences pushing attendance below 85% have a significant impact on overall attainment and development of skills for learning, life and work.

### **Why the drive for improved attendance?**

Below are some important figures and the impact this can have:

- Attendance of **95%** for the year equals **10 days** that the pupil has been absent, that is **2 full weeks** of learning missed for that year.
- Attendance of **90%** for the year equals **19 days** that the pupil has been absent, that is almost **4 weeks** of learning missed for that year.
- Attendance of **85%** for the year equals **29 days** that the pupil has been absent, that is almost **6 weeks** of learning missed for that year.

- Attendance of **80%** for the year equals **38 days** that the pupil has been absent, that is over **7 school weeks** missed. **This is equivalent to almost an entire school term!**

### **What can families do to support good attendance?**

To support good attendance, we need to work in partnership with you. Here are some ways that you can support improved attendance:

- Make sure they attend every day that they are well enough to do so.
- Speak to school as soon as possible if you sense any reluctance in your child to come to school so that we can help. Parents with concerns like this should contact guidance staff (secondary) or the head teacher (primary).
- Book family holidays and breaks away in school holidays. Almost all holidays taken in term time will be recorded as unauthorised. This includes breaks which extend the school holiday even by a day or two. There are rare circumstances where a short holiday/break can be authorised (e.g., when it is for the wellbeing of the family or because a parent's employer won't allow them to take leave in school holidays) but we strongly recommend parents discuss this with the school before booking.
- Try to book all non-emergency appointments out with the school day.

### **To help accurate recording of school attendance:**

- Email/call the school at the earliest opportunity to notify the reason for absence.
- Inform us in advance if your child needs to attend an appointment in school time or if they are going to attend a cultural, religious, sporting or competitive event.

### **Punctuality:**

Punctuality is as important as good attendance to the wellbeing and learning of your child/young person. Arriving on time helps create good habits and allows them to settle into the school day, with their peers. When children/young people are late essential teaching inputs and social interactions are missed.

We understand that sometimes pupils may arrive late for reasons out with their control. Guidance staff or headteachers will contact families should there be any concerns in relation to punctuality.

### **To support good attendance, our schools strive to make sure:**

- Every child/young person is happy in their friendships at school.
- Every child/young person is happy in their learning at school.
- Every parent knows who they can come to with concerns at an early stage – contact the guidance teacher (secondary) or head teacher (primary).

Across the Madras Cluster we have an increased focus on improving school attendance. Your child's school will communicate with you regarding attendance rates.

All staff across the Madras Cluster are committed to working with our children, young people and families to support learning and wellbeing through best possible attendance at school. If you have any concerns, do not hesitate to get in touch - we are here to help.