

This guide is intended to give parents and carers some information and answer a few frequently asked questions about attendance.

Regular attendance is important because it:

- Establishes good habits for life.
- Provides continuity and progression in learning.
- Encourages your child to value education.

By attending school every day, your child receives 5 hours of learning and teaching time to learn and develop knowledge and skills in all curricular areas. Over a year this amounts to a total of **975 hours**. Where there are a number of absences this can have a significant impact on your child's progress.

There is a legal requirement on parents to make sure their children attend school regularly:

2.1 Section 30, (1) of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, places a duty on parents of school age children to provide education for their children either by regular attendance at a public school or by other means. The responsibilities of parents are highlighted further in The Parents' Charter in Scotland (1995) which outlines parents' responsibilities to ensure that their children attend school regularly.

Attendance is recorded daily as authorised or unauthorised, using codes on guidance issued by the Scottish Government Education Department (June 2003).

What should I do if my child is ill or absent from school?

You should contact the school office on the first morning of the absence to let us know the reason and anticipated return date. This information will be passed to the Class Teacher and will be used to record the type of absence. If your child is absent for more than one day please call the office on each day of the absence to ensure we continue to record the correct absence code. Please send a letter explaining the absence to the school on your child's return.

Attendance is monitored by Class Teachers and senior management. Where an absence is unexplained, parents will be contacted by text message as part of our pastoral responsibility to establish the nature of the absence.

If, for any reason, you have been unable to contact the school then you should give your child a note explaining the reason for absence on their return.

What about an absence in order to celebrate a recognised religious event?

Parents from ethnic minority religious communities any request that their child be permitted to be absent from school to celebrate recognised religious events. Only written requests will be considered. Appropriate requests will be granted on no more than three occasions in any one school session and the pupil will be noted as an authorised absentee on the register.

What about holidays during term time?

Family holidays during term time will be categorised as an unauthorised absence. This would include holidays taken for the following reasons:

- Availability of cheap holidays.
- Availability of desired accommodation.
- Poor weather experienced during school holidays.
- Holidays which overlap the beginning/end of term.
- Parental difficulty obtaining leave.

It is acceptable under exceptional circumstances for the school to authorise a family holiday during term time. Such circumstances would include:

- Family holidays judged to be important to the family following a traumatic event.
- Where a parent's employment is of a nature where school-holiday leave cannot be accommodated (e.g. armed services or emergency services where leave is cancelled)

In both cases prior agreement must be sought from the school otherwise the absence should automatically be classed as unauthorised.

