

Ensuring Good Attendance at School

Advice for Parents and Carers

For more details please see our Attendance Policy, available on the school website.

Why is good school attendance important?

- Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child receives an education
- You can help your child achieve full potential by ensuring good attendance
- Missing school seriously affects children's longer-term life opportunities

How good is 'good attendance'?

Good attendance is above 95%.

90% attendance at school would mean your child would miss 18 days of school in a year: three and a half weeks of school.

If this is maintained for the whole of a child's school career, by the time they are 16 years old they will have missed more than a whole year of school.

At Trinity Oaks we take good attendance very seriously. We work closely with families to ensure good attendance, and support those whose children's attendance falls to **95% or below**.

How can I ensure good attendance as a parent / carer?

There may be genuine medical reasons why children can't go to school. However, attendance at school needs to remain the highest priority:

- Encourage and show interest; discuss their day with your child.
- Attend parents' evenings and parent workshops.
- Contact the school if your child is worried about something.
- Let the school know the reason(s) for any absence and a likely return date, on the first day of the absence and update the school **daily**.
- Make medical/dental appointments out of school time, whenever possible.
- Read all school communications.

What support is available for my family?

At Trinity Oaks your child's class teacher, the office staff, Home-School Link Worker, or the Special Needs Co-ordinator can all offer support. The Local Authority's Inclusion Officer also works with families to improve attendance. GPs and school nurses can also support you if your child has known medical conditions that might affect their school attendance.

1 or 2 days a week doesn't seem like much but...

If your child misses...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling that's...
1 day every 2 weeks	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years
1 day per week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over 2 ½ years of school
2 days per week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over 5 years
3 days per week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Nearly 8 years

How about 10 minutes late a day? Surely that won't affect my child?

He/she is only missing just...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling that's...
10 mins per day	50 mins per week	Nearly 1 ½ weeks per year	Nearly ½ year
20 mins per day	1 hr. 40 mins per week	Over 2 ½ weeks per year	Nearly 1 year
30 mins per day	Half a day per week	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years
1 hour per day	1 day per week	8 weeks per year	Over 2 ½ years

EVERY DAY COUNTS

If you want your child to be successful at school then, YES, attendance does matter!

What happens if I don't ensure my child attends regularly?

We have a statutory duty to know where our pupils are every day. The school will contact you if no reason for a child's absence has been provided by 9:30am. Please make sure to call the school office or use the Study Bugs app to make us aware of illness.

If concerns persist, or attendance doesn't improve parents will be invited to a meeting to support with attendance. We may need to involve our Inclusion Officer to help with this.

Importance of Punctuality

Good routines for mornings at home make sure that your child can arrive on time and is equipped with the right uniform, PE kit, school bag, books etc.

Children should be in school on time. Persistent lateness disrupts a child's education and encourages poor attendance. The school will help parents to support their child with punctuality.

Can I take my child on holiday during school term time?

One day off can be disruptive and term-time holidays have a lasting impact on learning. Term dates are published well in advance allowing parents to plan family holidays outside of term time.

Schools legally are not allowed to authorise requests for children to be taken out of school for a holiday during term time. Exceptional Circumstances may be considered by the Head Teacher on submission of an absence request form, available on the school website: www.trinityoaks.surrey.sch.uk. These must be submitted at least 2 weeks in advance.

Parents may be issued with a Penalty Notice (fine) for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. This is issued as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school and requires the recipient to pay a fixed amount.

The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice. This rises to £120 per parent, per child, if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police. The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

You may be fined if your child has five or more unauthorised days off (which do not have to be consecutive). For further information on when fines will be issued, please see our Attendance Policy on the school website for full details.