

Attendance Information for Parents and Carers



Children should arrive at school at **8:45am** ready to start learning at 8:55am

What you need to know...

Every moment in school counts and missed days add up quickly. Evidence shows that pupils who have good attendance at school perform better than those who don't.

How to let us know your child will be absent

The quickest way is to let us know via our Absence Line - 02392 375475. Alternatively, please email the school – admin@medina.portsmouth.sch.uk

If your child is absent and we have not received a reason for absence

We will send you a message via ParentMail and/or will contact you by telephone, we may also make a home visit. If we do not have a valid reason, the absence will be recorded as 'unauthorised'.

Children arriving late to school

Children should arrive at school from 8:45am, ready to start the school day at 8:55am. Children arriving after 8:55am will be recorded, in the register, as late.

All children and their parents/carers will be asked to sign their child in and to provide a reason for lateness, which will be recorded in the register.

If a child arrives after the register has 'closed' this will be recorded as unauthorised absence (U code) even though the child is in school.

What if my child needs to miss school?

If you are applying for a leave of absence, due to an exceptional reason, a LOAF (Leave of Absence Form) must be completed before the absence starts. LOAFs are available from the School Office.

What if my child needs to miss school?

Your child must attend every day that the school is open, unless:

- Your child is too ill to attend (you may be required to provide medical evidence to support the absence)
- You have received permission, in advance, by the school for your child to be absent on a specific day due to exceptional circumstances (LOAF must be completed)
- Your child cannot go to school on a specific day as it is a day set aside for religious observance (LOAF must be completed)
- The local authority is responsible for arranging your child's transport to school and it is not available or has not been provided yet (evidence must be provided).

Parent Communication

Medina Primary School follows Portsmouth City Council's guidelines regarding school attendance. There are a number of letters that we may send you regarding your child's attendance.

- We may write to you to advise you that we are concerned about your child's punctuality
- We may write to you to advise you that we are concerned about your child's attendance and that unless there is an improvement you may be asked to provide medical evidence in order for future absences to be recorded as authorised
- We may write to you advising you that in order for absence to be recorded as authorised we must receive medical evidence to support the absence (see below for what constitutes medical evidence)
- We may write to you advising you to consult your GP or arrange an appointment to speak to the School Nurse regarding your child's repeated illness (for example sickness and diarrhoea)
- We may write to you advising you that we are concerned regarding your child's unauthorised absence
- We may write to you following receipt of a request for Leave of Absence (LOAF)
- We may write to you to inform you that a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) has been requested
- We may invite you into school to discuss how we can work together to support you in improving your child's attendance.

Providing Medical Evidence to Support Absence

Medical evidence may be in the form of an appointment card, note from the medical practitioner's reception, copy of a prescription, copy of any medication given. All medical evidence must clearly show your child's full name and date. Please note that we do not require a medical certificate.

If you do not provide medical evidence, the absences will remain unauthorised in the register.

Repeated illness

We understand that children can suffer from all sorts of illnesses. If a child has *repeated* episodes of illness, for example diarrhoea and/or sickness, we would expect you to consult the GP or see our School Nurse. Repeated episodes are unpleasant for you and your child so finding the root cause is really important. You will need to provide evidence of your child's appointment with health professionals for us to continue to authorise absence for repeated diarrhoea and/or sickness.

What is an exceptional circumstance?

It is the decision of the Headteacher as to what might constitute exceptional circumstances and each request for term time leave will be considered on an individual basis, including looking at your child's current and previous year's attendance record and requests. Exceptional circumstances are *not*:

- Availability of cheap flights and/or holidays
- Availability of desired accommodation
- Parent/carer work commitments
- Poor weather experienced during school holiday periods
- Travelling in quieter periods because your child has a special educational need
- Any overlap with the beginning or end of term, half term.

Exceptional leave will only be granted for the minimum number of sessions.

Formal notifications and Fixed Penalty Notices (Fines)

There are two types of Fixed Penalty Notices (Fines)

1. When a pupil has at least five school days (10 sessions) recorded as an *unauthorised absence* in a 10-week rolling period. Failure to provide medical evidence may result in unauthorised absence. These sessions do not need to be consecutive and can be made up of any type of unauthorised absence. The 10-week period can span different terms or school years.
2. When a child has five school days (10 sessions) or more of *unauthorised holiday* in a 10-week rolling period.

Please note only the Headteacher (or nominated Deputy in the Headteacher's absence) can authorise an absence from school. The school does not get any money from any Fixed Penalty Notices or prosecutions.

Who is responsible and what is the fine?

Each parent/carer is individually responsible for the child's attendance and commits a separate offence if the child does not attend school on a regular basis

S.576 Education Act 1996 defines a parent as all-natural parents, not a natural parent, but has parental responsibility or has care of a child.

The current payment is £160 per parent per child if paid within 28 days. This is reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days. Unpaid Penalty Notices after 28 days will result in a prosecution.

Can parents/carers appeal?

No. There is no statutory right of appeal once a Fixed Penalty Notice has been issued. However, if the parent/carer believes that its issue was procedurally incorrect they can contact the Local Authority with the relevant information.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for a leave of absence in term time or irregular school attendance the Penalty Notice will be charged as above.

Second Offence

When it has been deemed appropriate to issue FPN to the same parent for the same pupil within three years of the first notice, the second FPN will be charged at £160 per parent per child to be paid within 28 days. There is no reduction for this. Unpaid Penalty Notices after 28 days will result in prosecution.

Third Offence and any Further offences (within 3 years of the first offence)

The third time that any offence is committed and a sanction is required for either a leave of absence or irregular attendance, FPN will not be issued. The case will be presented straight to the Magistrates Court. Prosecutions can result in criminal records and fines up to £2,500.

Cases found guilty in the Magistrates Court can show on the parent's record as 'failure to safeguard a child's education'

How can we help?

We want to work with parents/carers to support their child's attendance in school. If you need support, in the first instance please email admin@medina.portsmouth.sch.uk

What does your child's attendance mean at Medina Primary School?

Category	Impact on your child's progress at school...		School/Local Authority Actions
100% OUTSTANDING	- No lessons missed! - No time off for appointments or illness	Best chance of success – every opportunity available to make progress	- Headteacher Award 100% attendance termly certificate 100% attendance annual certificate/prize - Reward in celebration assembly - Positive comment on reports home - Improved attendance certificate
98% GOOD	- Very few lessons missed 4 days absence in a year	Very good chance of meeting at least expected grades	
95% REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT	10 days (two weeks) 50 hours of lessons missed	Less chance of success: 50 hours of teaching to catch up on....	- Medical evidence required for absences - School Fixed Penalty Notice warning letter for irregular attendance - Close monitoring of attendance on a weekly basis - Referral to School Nurse
90% VERY CONCERNED *PERSISTENT ABSENTEE STATUS	20 days (four weeks) absence in a year 100 hours of lessons missed	Less than 50% chance of achieving expected grades	- School reports pupil as a Persistent Absentee to Governors, Local Authority (LA) - Medical evidence required for absences - LA Fixed Penalty Notice Warning letter requested - Referral to Early Help agencies as appropriate - Home visits from LA School Attendance Team as appropriate
Below 85% SERIOUS CONCERNS *PERSISTENT ABSENTEE STATUS	30 days (six weeks) absence in a year 150 hours of lessons missed	Less than 30% chance of achieving expected grades	- Direct action from LA – School Attendance Team and specialist support - Fixed Penalty issued - Risk of prosecution by LA - Regular formal meetings in school to review attendance plan - Possible neglect/safeguarding concern raised with Social Care

Weekly attendance cup for the class with the highest attendance percentage.
Half termly non-uniform day for the class with the highest attendance percentage.

Please note that pupils with diagnosed medical conditions, or serious injuries, may have Individual Health Care Plans agreed with parents, the school and professionals and therefore are not necessarily subject to the procedures outlined above.

Evidence of all medical appointments must be provided to the school office.

Attendance Matters

**0 days
absence**

**100% Attendance
Outstanding**

**4 days
absence**

**98% Attendance
Impressive**

**7 days
absence**

**96% Attendance
On Target**

**9 days
absence**

**95% Attendance
Needs Improvement**

**13 days
absence**

**93% Attendance
Concerns**

**19 days
absence**

**90% Attendance
Very Concerned**

**29 days
absence**

**85% Attendance
Serious Concerns**