

# Attendance Matters at Swanwick Primary School.



<b>Above 97%</b>	Excellent attendance.
<b>95-97%</b>	Good attendance
<b>90 -95%</b>	Pupils with this attendance have missed the equivalent of a month's learning over a school year. This means that they will have missed 28 hours of English lessons and the same of Maths. Consequently, they will have gaps in their understanding and are likely to be behind in these vital subjects.
<b>85-90%</b>	Pupils with this attendance have missed the equivalent of six weeks' learning. This means that they will have missed 42 hours of English lessons and the same of Maths. Consequently, they will have substantial gaps in their understanding and will be behind in these vital subjects. They will need substantial support to help them to catch up and achieve their potential.
<b>80-85%</b>	Pupils with this attendance have missed the equivalent of a day a week. Children whose attendance stays at this level will miss the equivalent of over a year's learning throughout the primary years - meaning they could be a year or more behind by the time they get to secondary school.

*Not sure what your child's attendance is?*

*Need some help with improving your child's attendance?*

**Give us a call. We're here to help.**

## ***How do I know whether my child is well enough to go to school?***

Your own instinct as a parent will usually tell you when your child is unwell. If your child is in pain or just wanting to lie down and shows no interest in their usual games or activities, they probably need to be at home resting. If they feel better after an hour or so, you can bring them to school; we will be happy to see them. If your child is well enough to play on their console or play with their toys, they are probably well enough to go to school.

## ***What if I'm not quite sure?***

We all get ill sometimes, but many minor illnesses such as colds, feel worse first thing in the morning and then improve. If you are in any doubt as to whether your child is poorly enough to be at home, send them in and we will call you to collect them if they don't improve.

## ***What happens if my child's attendance has dropped but it is all illness?***

We understand that children are sometimes unwell. However, if your child is persistently absent due to illness (even if you have contacted school each time) we will still need to look at ways to support your child.

We may ask you for medical evidence.

## ***What if I am unwell and cannot bring my child to school?***

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that children attend school. If you are unwell you will need to find alternative arrangements to ensure your child gets to and from school safely.

## ***What's the harm in keeping my child off school from time to time?***

Poor attendance affects everything:

- When children have missed substantial chunks of learning, it is very difficult for them to understand what is being taught and lessons feel more challenging than they are for other children. This can lead to low self-esteem and can cause reluctance to come to school.
- When children are often absent, their friends get used to playing with other children and this can cause difficulties with finding someone to play with when they return.
- Children thrive on routine. Children who are not sure whether they will attend school each day can suffer low mood and anxiety due to uncertainty and a lack of routine.
- Children with poor attendance are missing the social learning and skills that are an essential part of primary school education and will prepare them for success at secondary school.
- Children have already missed too much learning because of lockdowns and this has caused emotional as well as educational difficulties. The best thing for the emotional and educational development of children is for them to be back at school with their friends having fun and learning.

### ***Who is responsible for my child's attendance?***

Any adult that holds parental responsibility (PR) for the child is responsible for their attendance and will be sent letters and information regarding it. Adults who hold PR are named on the child's birth certificate. Separated parents will receive separate letters.

### ***What about Holidays?***

We understand that holidays are more expensive during the school breaks, however it is Government policy that no holidays during term time will be authorised. Any term time holidays taken and may result in a fine from Derbyshire County Council.

If you take a holiday without informing school, a fine may still be issued and your child will feel uncomfortable if they feel the need to hide the truth from trusted adults in school.

### ***Which absences can be authorised?***

Medical or Dentist appointments, providing evidence is shown at the office. Periods of illness with medical evidence. If your child is sent home unwell from school. If your child is unwell and you have medical evidence.

Absences for religious observations that fall outside of the school holidays. For example, religious festivals and Family Funerals.

Weddings for close family members, such as Aunts and Uncles. Invitations will need to be shown as evidence.

However, this does not include parents as they are expected to hold their own weddings at a time when their child is not in school.

### ***What happens if my child's attendance is low?***

At Swanwick Primary School we are keen to offer support in any way we can. You can speak to the school office or your class teacher and ask for someone to contact you.

Initially you will be sent a letter to notify you of your child's attendance and that we will be monitoring their attendance for the next **six weeks**. If attendance improves significantly, then there will be no further action.

If attendance is still a concern following this initial six weeks, you will be issued with an invitation to an attendance panel. There will then be a further monitoring period which will be explained in the letter.

If attendance improves during this short period, there will be a further six weeks of monitoring. If attendance improves and becomes satisfactory following this, the case will be closed.

However, if the attendance does not improve, the matter will be passed to the attendance team at County to consider issuing a fine.