



## Fitzwaryn School

# Attendance-A Parent's Guide

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### 1. When does my child need to be in school?

School opens for pupils at 9.00am. Your child should be ready in good time for the school transport to ensure that they arrive on time.

### 2. Does the school need letters explaining my child's absence or will a phone call do?

We would expect a parent/carer to telephone school on the first day of absence before 9.30am and confirm in writing in the child's home/school book upon their return. If you do not phone us, we will try to contact you.

If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not authorise the absence, and this will be shown on your child's end of year report.

### 3. What reasons will the school accept for absences?

- Illness
- Dental/medical appointment. Please make routine appointments after school or during the holidays, wherever possible. (We do understand that many of our pupils at Fitzwaryn School have medical appointments and these are unavoidable. For this reason we hold many clinics in school to help minimise absence and support parents and carers)
- Day of religious observance
- Family bereavement
- **Exceptional** special occasions, eg a family wedding, where permission has been granted in advance using a Special Leave of Absence Request form
- Other **exceptional** circumstances, where permission has been granted in advance using a Special Leave of Absence Request form
- Attending an interview e.g. for college

Except in the case of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss school well in advance, giving full details. In cases of recurring absences through illness you may be asked to produce a medical certificate.

### 4. What is unacceptable?

The school will not authorise absence

- Day trips, visiting relatives, shopping, birthdays
- Late for the transport (it is expected that pupils are ready in time for their transport. If they are late it is the parent's responsibility to get them to school)

Guidance adapted from <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/absence-due-sickness-school>

## **5. Will the school contact me if my child is absent?**

We would expect a parent/carer to telephone the school before 9.30am on the first day of absence. If you do not phone us, we will try to contact you. This is to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance. If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not authorise the absence, and this will be shown on your child's Annual Review report. If we are concerned about aspects of your child's attendance or punctuality we will contact you to discuss the best way forward.

## **6. What can I do to encourage my child to attend school?**

Try to make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she is ready for the transport, if provided. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education.

### **Absence due to sickness from school**

Inform the school before 9.30am on every day your child is absent from school due to illness. You may also need to inform the transport your child uses.

Occasionally pupils are too unwell to attend school. We will monitor and engage with parents as soon as a pattern of absence becomes apparent.

When deciding whether or not your child is too ill to attend school, ask yourself:

- Is your child well enough to carry out the activities of the school day? If not, keep your child at home and consult your GP as appropriate
- Does your child have a condition that could be passed on to other children or school staff? If so, keep your child at home
- Would you take a day off work if you had this condition? If so, keep your child at home

### **Common conditions**

Most illnesses can be classified as one of a few minor health conditions. Whether or not you send your child to school will depend on how severe you judge the illness to be. This guidance can help you to make that judgement. If you're concerned about your child's health, consult a health professional.

#### **Cough and cold**

A child with a minor cough or cold may attend school. If the cold is accompanied by raised temperature, shivers or drowsiness, the child should stay off school, visit the GP and return to school 24 hours after they're feeling better. If your child has a more severe and long-lasting cough, consult your GP, who can provide guidance on whether the child should stay off school.

#### **Raised temperature**

If your child has a raised temperature, they shouldn't attend school. They can return 24 hours after they're feeling better.

#### **Rash**

Rashes can be the first sign of many infectious illnesses such as chickenpox and measles. Children with these conditions shouldn't attend school. If your child has a rash, check with your GP or practice nurse before sending them to school.

### **Headache**

A child with a minor headache doesn't usually need to be kept off school. If the headache is more severe or is accompanied by other symptoms such as raised temperature or drowsiness, then keep the child off school and consult your GP.

### **Vomiting and diarrhoea**

Children with these conditions should be kept off school. They can return 48 hours after their last bout of sickness or diarrhoea. Most cases of vomiting or diarrhoea get better without treatment, but if symptoms persist, consult your GP.

### **Sore throat**

A sore throat alone doesn't have to keep a child from school. If it's accompanied by a raised temperature, the child should stay at home.

### **Informing the school**

By law, only the Headteacher can authorise your child's absence. It is important to keep the school informed if your child is going to be absent as soon as possible at the start of the day. The school will have a clear process for you to follow to inform them if your child will not be attending. Telephone the school to tell them that your child will be staying at home. The school will ask about the nature of the illness and the expected duration of absence from school.

If your child is frequently absent due to illness the school may request permission to contact your GP for confirmation that they are too ill to attend school. The school may need to set up a plan in consultation with medical professions to help support your child if an illness is making full time school difficult to manage.

If it becomes clear that your child will be away from school for longer than expected, phone the school to explain this as soon as possible.

We at Fitzwaryn School recognise that many of our pupils have medical conditions that hinder their attendance. We will of course look at each pupil individually and may still ask to meet with you to see if there are any issues that we may be able to help resolve.