



Attendance

At West Byfleet Junior School we promote good attendance by:

- Ensuring there is a warm and welcoming start to every day
- Helping children understand that good attendance is normal and that attending school regularly promotes positive relationships and academic success. It also gives them the chance to make the best of extra-curricular activities such as representing the school in a sports team or taking part in a performance
- Providing a caring and welcoming learning environment
- Providing an appropriate and engaging curriculum for pupils
- Acknowledging that some pupils may need support to overcome challenges in coming to school and putting actions in place to support them
- Praising and rewarding good attendance and punctuality where appropriate
- Sharing information with parents and carers in an easily accessible form
- Raising parents' and carers' awareness of their legal responsibilities regarding attendance.



The Start of the Day

- The school gates open at **8.30am**. The gates are closed at **8.45am** for all children and the register is taken at **8.50am**
- Children arriving in school after this time must sign in with an adult at the main school reception and will be marked late in the class register
- Children arriving after **9.20am** are marked absent for the whole morning as this is seen as an unauthorised absence
- As parents or carers, it is your responsibility to ensure that your child attends school regularly and arrives punctually every day.

When everyone arrives on time:

- Registration takes place quickly and smoothly
- The day gets off to a good start for everyone
- Your child hears the timetable and other important information needed to have a successful day
- Your child will not be anxious about missing vital information.

Five minutes late each day means three school days missed across the school year.



Reporting an Absence



By law, schools must record absences and the reason for these absences.

If your child is ill, and you decide they are too unwell to attend school, **you must phone the school before 9am** to tell us.

Tel: **01932 348961 Option 1**

Phoning well before 9am is welcome; you can leave a message on the absence line. Please make sure you clearly tell us your name, your child's name, your child's year group and class, the reason for the absence and how long you expect it to be. Only the parent or main carer of the child is allowed to make this call.

You must phone in before 9am every day your child is absent, regardless of whether you said they are likely to be off for more than one day in your initial phone call.

If your child is absent and you have not called, we will email you. If we do not hear from you we will phone you. We will then work through your child's emergency contacts. If we still cannot reach you by 10.30, we will make a welfare check - a visit to your house to check on your child's well-being. Schools are duty bound to do this for safeguarding reasons; we cannot have children missing from school and unaccounted for.

Appointments

Dentist, doctor, hospital and optician appointments should be made during holidays or after school where possible. When this is not possible, please notify school of the appointment in advance and bring a copy of the appointment to the School Office, so that the absence can be authorised.

Requesting Leave of Absence

The school can only authorise absence for exceptional and unavoidable instances.

Leave of absence must be requested using the Leave of Absence Request form – this can be obtained from the school office, or from our attendance policy (appendix 1).

Absence must be requested at least two weeks prior. Any absence requested at shorter notice than two weeks will not be authorised.

Absence will not be authorised for any child whose attendance is below 95%, or whose attendance would dip below 95% with the day(s) off requested.

Leave for religious observance must be requested two weeks in advance in the same way as any other absence.

Only one day of absence will be authorised for religious observance. The school will define this as one day where the pupil's parents would be expected by an established

religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

Where an absence request is not authorised and the pupil is still absent on the day(s), this could lead to a penalty fine and the school will write to you to inform you of this.

Authorised Absence:



- Illness of pupil (medical evidence may be requested)
- Recognised religious observance (1 day).

Unauthorised Absence:



- Illness of a parent/carer
- Shopping trips
- Birthday treats, family events, weddings
- Oversleeping due to late night
- Looking after other children
- Visiting sick relatives
- Holidays during term time.

The policy of Surrey County Council, to which this school has agreed, states that **each** parent who takes their child out of school for five days or more during term time, without the authority of the headteacher, will be liable to receive a penalty notice of **£80**, but this will rise to **£160** if it is not paid within **21 days**. Failure to pay a penalty notice will usually lead to **prosecution**. Penalty Notices will be issued by the Local Authority. Further information is available in our Attendance Policy.

Contact Information



Please ensure that the School Office has up to date home and emergency contact information at all times. Should you change your phone number (landline or mobile), email address or home address, please remember to inform us immediately.

Why is Good Attendance Important?

As a parent/carer you are legally responsible for ensuring that your child attends school regularly.

Good attendance and punctuality are vital for success at school, and to establish positive life habits that are necessary for future success.

Through regular attendance, pupils can:

- Develop life skills
- Engage in essential learning and other school social events
- Achieve to their full potential
- Minimise the risk of engaging in antisocial behaviour and becoming victims or perpetrators of crime.

Every School Day Counts!

