

# A is for Attendance!

At The Gattons we aim to develop the gifts and talents of all our pupils and encourage a life long love of learning. To achieve this, and for children to reach their full potential, excellent attendance and punctuality is crucial. The aim of this newsletter is to promote good attendance for the children in our school and as parents we need your help and support to ensure your child reaches their full potential.

## The impact of absence on your child

In life, 90% is a very good score - who wouldn't want 90% in a test! However, **10% absence** equates to 19 days of education lost in a school year. Likewise, if your child is 15 minutes late every day, that is the equivalent of two weeks lost learning. Odd absences/lateness quickly add up to a significant amount of time missed from school. Children who are late often find it can be embarrassing to go into class after their peers and it can be disruptive for the class. Children can also miss important information during registration including the plan for the day.

We will contact any family whose child's attendance drops below 90% which is the persistent absence threshold. It is important that parents/carers and school work together to reduce absence and prevent legal action being taken as a result of persistent absence.

We categorise levels of attendance into red, amber and green.

**GREEN - 100%.** Excellent attendance above the national expected average, ideally where all children should aim to be.

**AMBER - 96.7% or above.** Good attendance - in line with or above national expected average.

**RED - below 96.7%.** Attendance below expected level. We will monitor the child's attendance and if we do not see an improvement we will contact you by letter.

A copy of your child's attendance record is available, on request, from the school office and a copy was provided with your child's annual report. You can also view their attendance via the MCAS App in real time. Please contact the school office if you have not activated your MCAS account and we will send you an activation email.

## Holidays and Absence during term time

Absence will not be authorised during term time except in exceptional circumstances. It is very important that all parents and carers understand that children with unauthorised absences, including holidays, and unexplained absences are at risk of receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) from West Sussex County Council. A FPN is issued per parent, per child and is £160. If it is paid within 21 days this may be reduced to £80. Further information can also be found on our website.



## Attendance Letters

Each month we look at whole school attendance, including all the reasons for absence, and we will contact, by letter, those parents whose child has an attendance level below 90% which is classed as Persistent Absence. We currently have 35 children whose attendance is below 90%. **This is more than a whole class.**

We aim to work with parents/carers to help improve a child's attendance so that all children can benefit from being in school regularly and achieving their full potential.

If you would like any support or advice on attendance or punctuality, please speak to your child's class teacher or the Headteacher.

Just a reminder for the new term.

- ◇ Gates open at 8.40am
- ◇ Classroom doors open at 8.50am
- ◇ Late arrival is between 8.55am and 9.25am
- ◇ Arrival after 9.25am is recorded as unauthorised. **20 late arrivals can trigger a FPN especially if your child also has other unauthorised absence!**

**15 minutes**  
late every day  
=  
**two weeks**  
of learning lost  
each school year



We understand that school mornings can be hectic, but

... **Did you know?**

**Being 20 minutes late each day is the same as missing almost three weeks of school!**

See our minutes lost calculator to find out how much school your child misses each year if you are late.

Developing good habits now will help your child immensely as they progress through their education and into adulthood.

### New Year, New Resolution!

Small changes can make a big difference! Why not pack your child's bag or lunchbox the night before? Set the alarm clock ten minutes earlier? These small changes can help everyone to be ready to leave home in good time, arrive at school punctually and be ready for the day ahead.



## Expectations - Providing Reasons for Absence

Please remember when phoning or emailing in for a child who is off school, we require an actual reason for the absence. **Please remember to provide your child's full name and class as well.** Thank you.

**Medical Appointments** - We request that, where possible, routine medical and dentist appointments are arranged outside school hours as these appointments will affect your child's percentage attendance. We do understand that some appointments, such as hospital consultations, are not always possible to arrange outside of school hours. However if your appointment time allows your child to come to school for registration and then leave, this will have a positive impact on their attendance figure. Likewise if they are able to be back in school for afternoon registration - 12.45pm - Reception and Year 1, 1.15pm - Year 2 this will also have a positive impact.

Please make sure you have contacted the school by 9.25am if your child is going to be absent. If we do not hear from you, we will ring you to find out why your child is not in school. We review registers weekly on a Monday and if there are any absences where a reason has not been provided, these will be marked as unauthorised.



Thank you for your support in helping to lower our absence rate and raise our school attendance. Please remember we are here to help you too. If you need any support or advice on attendance or punctuality, please speak to your child's class teacher or Mrs Gospel.

**Attend Today –  
Achieve Tomorrow!**