

**Hardwick Primary School**  
**ATTENDANCE - A GUIDE FOR PARENTS/CARERS**



**1. When does my child need to be in School?**

Your child should be at school in good time for registration. The morning register is called promptly at **9.00 a.m.** and the afternoon register is called at **1.15 p.m.** Children may come into the school from 8.50 a.m. onwards. External doors are locked at **9.00 a.m.** If your child arrives after that time they enter school via the main entrance.

**2. What happens if my child is late?**

- If your child arrives between 9.00 a.m. and 9.15 a.m. he/she will be marked late
- If your child arrives after 9.15 a.m. he/she will be marked as absent (unauthorised) unless an acceptable reason is given.
- Pupils who arrive after registration should report to the school office, and parents/carers should sign the late book. If a pupil is consistently late a meeting will be arranged to discuss reasons/ difficulties for lateness.

**3. Does the School need letters explaining my child's absence or will a phone call do?**

We would expect a parent/carer to telephone or e-mail the school on the first day of absence. If you do not contact us, we will try to telephone you. Telephones are manned from 8.30 a.m. or you can leave a message on the answer-phone before this time. However, we need a written explanation on your child's return to school. 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. The teachers, Headteacher and the Education Welfare Officer monitor absence.

**4. What reasons will the school accept for absences?**

- Illness
- Emergency dental/medical appointment. (Please make routine appointments after school or during the holidays)
- Day of religious observance
- Family bereavement or exceptional family circumstances

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.

**5. What is unacceptable?**

The school will not authorise absence for day trips, visiting relatives, shopping, birthdays, family treats or long weekends away. It is Local Authority policy that where a pupil has been identified for the first time as having a total of 10 sessions or more of unauthorised absence (1 day = 2 sessions), over a period of 12 weeks, the parent will be subject to a penalty notice warning issued by the Local Authority. This applies whether the sessions were consecutive or not. If you require further information about this, please ask at the school office.

**6. Can we take family holidays during term-time?**

The school policy is that all holidays are taken in school closure periods, unless there are very strong reasons otherwise e.g. when an employer will only allow a holiday at a specific time. Saving money is not a valid reason for the authorisation of a term time holiday. The holiday form provides details of the exceptional circumstances in which holidays are permitted.

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

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education. Attend Parents Evenings at school to enable you to support your child's progress in the classroom.

**8. My child is trying to avoid coming to school. What should I do?**

Contact your child's teacher immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – difficulties with schoolwork, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem. In some cases you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with an Education Welfare Officer. The Service is based at: West Suffolk House, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3YU Tel: 08456 066067.