

Working Together to Improve School Attendance

Elmstead Wood Primary School

What is the new Statutory Guidance and what does it mean for parents & carers?

In August 2024, Statutory Guidance from the Department for Education came into effect detailing the responsibilities of schools, Local Authorities and parents. Schools must offer support to address problems quickly and identify any barriers to learning.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

For most children the best place to be is in school surrounded by the support of their friends and teachers. It is not just important for their learning but also for their wellbeing, wider development and mental health.

What can you do if your child is struggling to come into school?

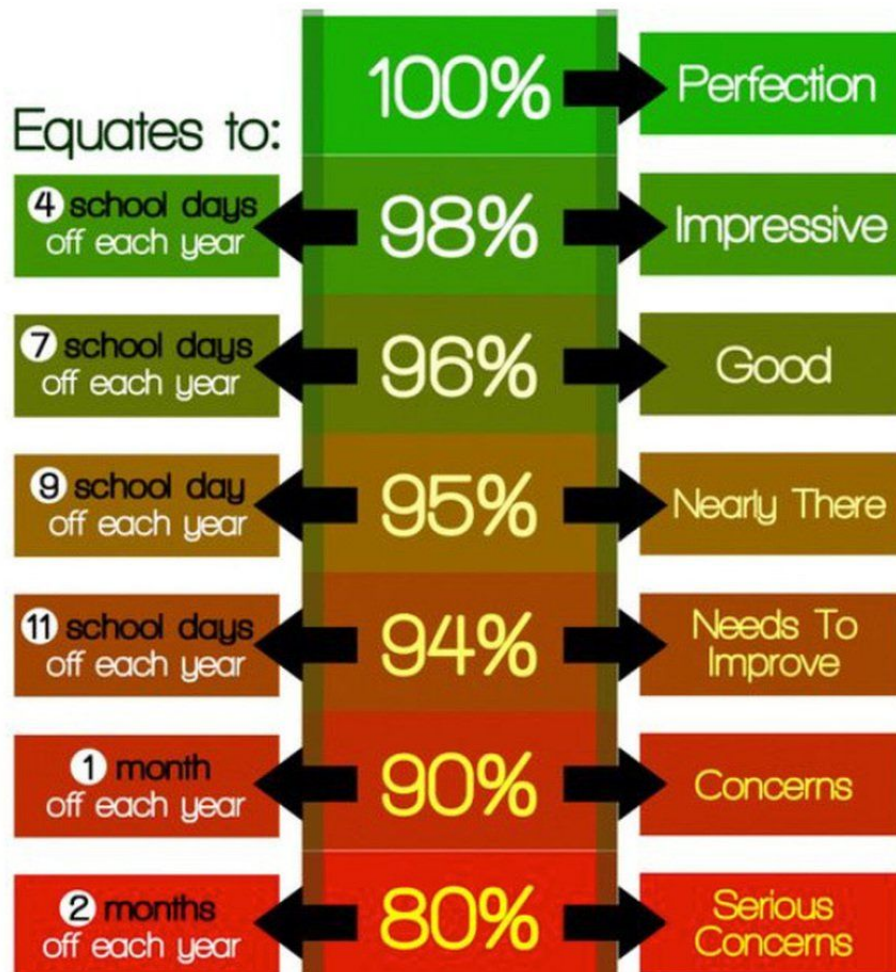
Please let us know as soon as possible if your child is having difficulty coming into school, early intervention is key to successful outcomes. These barriers can be for a variety of reasons which may include friendships, difficulty with learning tasks or an illness or mild anxiety. Often, these issues can be resolved quickly.

We aim to support parents and their children by providing a range of bespoke support packages beyond our universal offer. This could include one to one support or referral to an external agency.

What does my child's attendance percentage mean?

The Department for Education expects that children will attend at least 96% of the time. This equates to a maximum of 7 days absence in an academic year.

Persistently absent children have an attendance percentage of 90% means that your child has missed a whole month and 80% is equal to two months of the academic year. An attendance percentage of below 90% throughout your child's primary life, will mean they have missed more than a year of school.



Every day at school is like getting a piece of a jigsaw puzzle. The more pieces children have, the easier it is for them to solve the puzzle. So it would make sense that every day a child is at school, the more successful their learning will be.

We plan learning opportunities that build on previous activities and understanding. Therefore, every day is important. The more time your child is in school, the more confident and successful they will feel in themselves.

What happens if my child has unauthorised absences school?

If we have offered support and this has not been effective, or if you take unauthorised leave, the Local Authority can use the following measures;

Issue a Penalty Notice.

Seek an Education Supervision Order from the family court.

Prosecute you.

My child is always in school, do you reward excellent attendance?

We are looking into renewing our rewards programme. We would like to offer a termly reward, which will be reset each term for children who have attendance above 96%. We would like to reward children who have 100% attendance over the year.