



Great Attendance at Cowplain - We need your help!

Great attendance is essential to ensure that students benefit from the maximum number of learning opportunities. We know that students who attend regularly get more from their education, take part in a wider range of activities, achieve better examination results relative to their ability and find better employment than those who do not attend regularly.

Therefore, it is our joint responsibility as adults, to make sure that each child attends as often as possible. In addition, we must work to ensure that students arrive in school and at lessons on time and that all timetabled activities begin on time.

What YOU must do:

Expect your child to go to school every day and ensure that they know this.

Contact the school before 8.30am each day of your child's absence.

Tell the school in advance, of any medical appointments and share appointment cards/letters.

If you are not sure whether your child is well enough to attend school, send them in anyway as they often perk up on arrival.

Have a backup plan for if your child misses transport, call on a family member, neighbour or friend.

If you and your child are experiencing difficulties with school attendance then talk to us as a first step so we can help!

What WE will do:

Check your child's attendance every day.

Phone home to discuss your child's attendance with you.

Invite you into school for attendance meetings if we are concerned or to offer support.

If we cannot establish a reason for absence, then we will follow this up the same day.

We expect all students to miss less than 10 days of school each academic year. Data published by the Department for Education from 2019 shows that 84% of pupils who attended school every day achieved the expected progress standard, compared to 40% of pupils who were persistently absent.

With great attendance comes great attainment.

When a student has poor attendance other issues can develop including a drop in self-confidence and sometimes barriers appear regarding return to school.

Please take the time to view the information contained in this document which explains the framework we operate within to manage attendance at The Cowplain School.

Should I send my child to school?:

- **Illness** - Consider if your child is too unwell to attend school. Hampshire County Council guidance states that if your child has no temperature, but has a cough, cold, headache, earache, sore throat, then give them paracetamol and send them to school. If your child's condition worsens, we will be able to send them home. If your child is unwell and you are unsure if they should come to school, please refer to the NHS link below.
 - <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>
- **Appointments** - Dentists and GP surgeries etc. are used to being asked for appointments outside of school hours. The school asks that parents / carers request appointments that do not clash with school time. If an appointment can only be made during school time, students should attend school whilst not at the appointment i.e. before / after as appropriate.
- **Weather** - On hot or wet days, especially if it is raining, it appears some students try to avoid a journey into school. If you suspect that this may apply to your child, please impress upon them that unless the weather is so bad that the school is shut, they should be making every effort to attend school. Please ensure your child is equipped for travelling to and from school even if the weather is not ideal.

The day after wet weather can also cause school to suffer reduced attendance. Some students do not take care to stay dry and do not attempt to dry their clothes / shoes when they get home. As a result their uniform is wet the next morning and they are delayed coming in or miss a whole day.

Please advise your child on the importance of trying to stay dry and organising the drying out of wet clothes as soon as they get in from school. Advise your child that getting wet is not a reason to be off school.

- **Lack of sleep/tiredness** - If a child attends a school trip or other activity the day before, the child must attend school at the normal time the next day. It is not acceptable to miss or be late for school due to being tired.
- **Avoidance** - Parents / carers should be mindful of the possibility that their child may wish to avoid school for a reason other than being ill. It can be easier for a child to tell a parent / carer that they are too ill to go to school, rather than explain that they have fallen out with a friend, haven't done their homework etc. If parents / carers feel their child is experiencing something that is reducing their willingness to attend school, please contact school to share your concern. As long as school are aware of the problem, the problem can often be solved.

Leaving school during the day

There are three authorised ways a student can leave school during the day:

- They are unwell.
 - Our medical team assesses if your child is too unwell to stay in school due to poor physical or mental health. This decision will be made using the [NHS guidance](#) and our understanding of your child and their individual needs. We will liaise closely with parents ensuring that the welfare of your child is paramount. If you are at all worried about your child's health and them being in school, you can email or call us to discuss those concerns and how we can support.
- They have an appointment off site.
 - The school must be informed of any pre-existing appointment in advance of the student leaving site. This can be done by telephone call or email. attendance@cowplainschool.co.uk
- They are suspended.
 - In the rare event the decision is made to suspend a child, we will contact parents to make arrangements for their child getting home and schedule a parent meeting for their return.

If a parent decides to collect their child from school against our advice or for any other reason not authorised by the school, or a child leaves the school site against the advice of the school, this absence will likely be coded as unauthorised.

If a student bypasses our school systems and contacts home using their phone to arrange to go home, that student may receive a sanction for phone misuse upon their return to school.

Who is responsible for attendance at The Cowplain School?

At The Cowplain School, we strongly believe that great attendance leads to great attainment, as a result, we employ both an attendance manager and attendance assistant. We also have a team of heads of year and assistant heads of year who will challenge and celebrate attendance. The role of the tutor is key as they have daily contact with your child and will raise initial concerns about attendance. Similarly, the role of individual class teachers is also important in creating a positive learning environment and encouraging good attendance. For additional guidance on general school attendance management please visit the Hampshire County Council website:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/behaviour-attendance-parents>

Home visits

When a student's attendance is low, no reason is given for absence, or we are repeatedly told they are unwell, without any medical evidence, we will seek further clarification of these reasons. We may carry out home visits to do this. It could be conducted at any stage of an absence to help support a student come back into school. These may be arranged in advance or unannounced.

Absence for holiday

School holidays are published well in advance on the school's website. Holidays in term time will not be authorised. Requests for absences may be authorised if there are exceptional circumstances.

<http://www.cowplainschool.co.uk/media/1066/leave-of-absence-request.pdf>

Reporting absence

Please contact the school for any absence explaining the reason before 8:30am. Parents/carers should contact the school every day that their child is absent. Absence can be reported via ClassCharts or over the phone. A guide on how to report absence on ClassCharts can be found [here](#)

When leaving a message via the answer phone, please tell us the following information:

- The name of the student who will be absent or late.
- The students tutor group.
- The reason for absence. This needs to be a clear explanation. Simply reporting them as 'unwell', 'poorly' or 'sick' is not acceptable.

It may be necessary for us to request medical evidence* advising that the student is unfit to attend. This evidence must also state how long this will be for.

If there is no reason for your child's absence provided, then we will contact you to establish reasons. At this stage, we do not know where your child is and if they are safe,. Given this, we consider this a safeguarding concern and will address the matter as follows;

- 1) We will ring all known contacts until we find out about your child's absence
- 2) If we cannot contact you over the phone, we will likely conduct a home visit that same day.
- 3) If we cannot make contact with you at the family home, we will refer the matter to Childrens Services. We will do this as we don't know where your child is and they may be at risk of harm.

** Please note that the Education Act 1996 places the responsibility on parent/carers to provide medical evidence when requested by the school. There is an 'Information Sharing Consent Form' available from GP practices where a parent can give consent for the GP to share information about their child.*