



Attendance at Dell Primary

2026-2027

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

There are 365 days in the calendar year of which there are:

- 190 school days
- 175 non-school days

Good attendance means being in school at least 96% of the time which equates to **at least 182 days** in the school year.

Punctuality

Good attendance doesn't just involve being at school, it also involves being there on time. Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their child arrives at school on time. Our school gates open at 8.30am and

Lost minutes=
Lost learning!



close promptly at 8.45am. If your child arrives after 8.45am they should enter through the school office. Unauthorised late marks also count against your child's attendance percentage.

Tips to support good attendance.

1. *Get into good routines: start the year right and make attendance a priority.*
2. *Talk about school at home: ask your child what they're learning, how their friends are and how they're getting on.*
3. *Show an interest in school and education by going to parents' meetings and other school events.*
4. *Take family holidays during school holidays only.*
5. *Don't let your child take time off school for minor illnesses, particularly those that wouldn't stop you from going to work. Have a look at <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/> if you need support to decide whether to send your child to school.*
6. *Arrange routine doctors and dentist appointments outside of the school day. If an appointment is unavoidable in school hours, children should attend school before the appointment, and return afterwards. Proof of the appointment will be required.*

What does the law say?

Parents have a legal responsibility to make sure their children are in education from the term after they are five years of age until the end of June in the year which they turn 16 years old. Once you have registered your child at a school, you are legally responsible for ensuring that your child attends school regularly.

Non-statutory school age At Dell, we promote good attendance of all children, from Nursery through to Year 6. The same in school processes will be applied, no matter the age of the child.

Why is good attendance important?



Good attendance helps our children to learn the knowledge and skills vital to help them develop as successful learners academically, socially and emotionally.

What is the impact of low attendance at school?

- It is hard for children to catch up on work missed. This quickly affects their learning and leaves gaps in their understanding. One day off can mean as many as 5 lessons missed. One week off equates to 25 lessons missed!

- It gets in the way of building strong, positive friendships.
- Children miss out on the structures and routines of school which are important practice for adult life.
- Ultimately it affects exam/test results, and this means they have less choices about further education and careers.

Fixed Penalty Notices

Fixed Penalty Notices may be issued if your child has 10 unauthorised absences within a 10 week rolling period. This is equivalent to 5 days. The absences do not have to be consecutive. More information about Fixed Penalty Notices can be found at <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/schools/pupil-attendance-and-welfare/pay-a-school-penalty-notice-fine> Penalty Notices (fines) are issued per parent, per child. The first one is £80 per parent, per child – if it is paid within 21 days. A second fine within a 3 year period will be £160 per parent, per child – if paid within 28 days. If there is a third Fixed Penalty Notice within a 3 year period, the case could be referred to the Magistrates Court.

Penalty Notices for School Attendance from 19th August 2024

With the introduction of the National Framework for Penalty Notices issued by DfE, the following changes came into force for School Penalty Notices issued in Suffolk after 19th August 2024.

National Threshold

There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.

These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence.

The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

Please note: The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

Can my child ever be absent?

When a child is absent from school it will be marked as either 'authorised' or 'unauthorised'. Both types of absences reduce your child's overall attendance percentage.

Authorised absence are only permitted for exceptional reasons such as:

- illness – where your child is too ill to attend
- non-routine medical or dental appointments – routine appointments should be made outside of school hours or during school holidays
- taking an official examination
- other exceptional circumstances

Unauthorised absences are those which are not considered essential or reasonable. These may include reasons such as:

- forgetting school term dates
- oversleeping
- family holidays
- celebrating birthdays
- arriving at school after the register has closed
- leaving school during the day for a non-essential reason

If a child's absence is causing concern, support will be offered and an Attendance Support Plan will be put in place. Schools do not have to authorise any absences for a child where their overall attendance is causing concern. We may ask for evidence of all medical appointments in order to decide whether an absence will be authorised. **Just because we are notified of a reason for absence, does not mean it will be authorised.**

Requests for exceptional leave

Parents must complete a leave of absence request form in order to request time off school. Forms are available from the school office. Holidays/leave of absence requests will not be authorised, except in exceptional circumstances. Please note that holidays taken during term time will result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued by Suffolk County Council. Please note that any holiday for leisure purposes is not considered to be exceptional circumstances. Please be honest about reasons for a child's absence from school!



How does school monitor attendance?

Pupils' attendance is reviewed regularly by the attendance team. You may receive a phone call to check how your child is if they are not in school. Class teachers will check in with children when they return from a period of absence. Parents will be notified if their child's attendance is causing any concern. Parents will be invited into school to discuss any support we can provide and a support plan put in place if a child's attendance drops below our target. School

works closely with the local Education Welfare Officer to monitor attendance. If your child's attendance drops below 90% they are classed as a 'persistent absentee'. Home visits may be carried out in line with our safeguarding and attendance policies. This could be on the first day of an absence. **A Fixed Penalty Notice (fine) can also be issued for 5 days unauthorised absence for any reason, not just term time holidays.**

Celebrating good attendance

At Dell, we celebrate good attendance by:

- Attendance trophy awarded in assembly each week for the highest attending class
- attendance breakfast for the highest attending class each week
- attendance stickers and certificates
- attendance rewards

Too ill for school?

Children should attend school with minor illnesses such as coughs, colds and sore throats. We will contact you if we feel your child is too ill for school. If you are in doubt about whether your child should attend school, please visit: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/> for NHS advice. Please note our school policy for absence after sickness or diarrhoea is 24 hours. Parents can sign calpol or other medicine into the school office if you think your child may need it during the day.



Reporting Absence

Parents must inform school before 8.30am on the day of any absence. An answer phone message can be left if the office is closed, and we may call you back.

If you are having any difficulties with attendance, please give school a call and talk to Mrs Westrup or Mrs Berrecloth about how we can help you and your child. Thank you for your support!