



Birchfield PRIMARY SCHOOL

Our whole school
attendance is 95%

We hope you have all had a great start to this academic year.

At Birchfield Primary we place great importance on good attendance and punctuality. We know that a child's attendance has a direct impact on their learning. Children who are regularly absent from school and late do not achieve their full potential and fall behind in class. Please support us by ensuring that your child attends school regularly and arrives ready to learn on time at 8:55am.

There are few changes, reminders and advice we would like to share with you.

Attendance Expectations

We expect all children to attend school every day. Children should only be absent if they are too ill to attend. A recent letter published by the DfE and with advice from the chief medical officer stated: "it is usually appropriate for parents and carers to send their child to school with mild respiratory illness. This includes general cold symptoms: minor cough, runny nose or sore throat. You can read the full letter here [Letter to school leaders on mild illness and school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/letter-to-school-leaders-on-mild-illness-and-school-attendance)

What is persistent absentee?

You may have heard the term persistent absentee. Persistent absentees are those who have missed more than 10% of their school session. In a year there are 190 teaching days; if a child misses 19 days or more they will fall into this bracket. (90% or below attendance) Children who are persistently absent will be monitored very closely to ensure their attendance improves. If your child's attendance fails to improve they will be referred to Birmingham Attendance and Legal Team where legal action may be taken. These prosecutions are criminal proceedings and could result in you having a criminal record.

Authorised or unauthorised?

If your child is ill, school will need details of their illness. If the reasons for the absence are made known to us, and are appropriate, the absence will be authorised for the first few days. If their illness continues, you may be asked for evidence from your GP. However, school will not authorise non-attendance for illness, if it becomes too frequent. If your child's attendance falls below 90% (persistent absentee), you will also be asked for medical evidence in order to authorise the absence.

What are the rules around taking children out of school during term time?

Birchfield School are following the LA guidelines for extended leave. We will look at each signed contract on an individual basis and will only authorise in exceptional circumstances. Your child only attends school for 190 days out of 365. This leaves 175 days for holidays. Please book your holidays during these 175 days. Leave taken during term time may result in a penalty notice. All request for leave in term time should be made via the leave in term time contract which is available from the school office. If you would like to speak to someone about term time absence please see Mrs Ahmed.

Punctuality matters too

Missed Minutes = missed learning. School gates open at 8:45am in preparation for a prompt start at 8:55am. If your child arrives after 8:55am they are late and must report to the office to sign in, this is so their teacher knows they have been registered. This is also for health and safety reasons.

Why might the school conduct a home visit?

If we are concerned about your child's attendance or safety, we may deem it necessary to visit your home to discuss how we can support you and your family. Home visits are always conducted in the best interest of you and your child with the main purpose to check that everyone is safe and well.

Absence Reporting:

If your child is going to be absent please call the school on **each day of your child's absence by 9am**. Please call **0121 464 5661** and leave a message on the absence line. Include the child's full name, class and reason for their absence. Please tell us where possible the nature of the illness. "Sick" or "unwell" does not outline the reason for absence. This will ensure that we have an accurate attendance record for your child.

If no reason is given, this will become an unauthorised absence.



To Send or not to send?

Coughs and colds It's fine to send your child to school with a minor [cough](#) or [common cold](#). But if they have a fever, keep them off school until the fever goes.

Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues and to wash their hands regularly.

High temperature If your child has a [high temperature](#), keep them off school until it goes away.

Chickenpox If your child has [chickenpox](#), keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over. This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.

Cold sores There's no need to keep your child off school if they have a [cold sore](#). Encourage them not to touch the blister or kiss anyone while they have the cold sore, or to share things like cups and towels.

Conjunctivitis You don't need to keep your child away from school if they have [conjunctivitis](#). Do get advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.

What to do if your child has tested positive Your child is no longer required to do a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test if they have symptoms. But if your child has tested positive for COVID-19, they should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day they took the test.

Ear infection If your child has an [ear infection](#) and a high temperature or severe earache, keep them off school until they're feeling better or their high temperature goes away.

Hand, foot and mouth disease If your child has [hand, foot and mouth disease](#) but seems well enough to go to school, there's no need to keep them off. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly.

Head lice and nits There's no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice. You can treat [head lice and nits](#) without seeing a GP.

Impetigo If your child has [impetigo](#), they'll need treatment from a GP, often with antibiotics. Keep them off school until all the sores have crusted over and healed, or for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment. Encourage your child to wash their hands regularly and not to share things like towels and cups with other children at school.

Ringworm If your child has [ringworm](#), see your pharmacist unless it's on their scalp, in which case you should see a GP. It's fine for your child to go to school once they have started treatment.

Scarlet fever If your child has [scarlet fever](#), they'll need treatment with antibiotics from a GP. Otherwise they'll be infectious for 2 to 3 weeks. Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics.

Slapped cheek syndrome (fifth disease) You don't need to keep your child off school if they have [slapped cheek syndrome](#) because, once the rash appears, they're no longer infectious. But let the school or teacher know if you think your child has slapped cheek syndrome.

Sore throat You can still send your child to school if they have a [sore throat](#). But if they also have a high temperature, they should stay at home until it goes away. A sore throat and a high temperature can be symptoms of [tonsillitis](#).

Threadworms You don't need to keep your child off school if they have [threadworms](#). Speak to your pharmacist, who can recommend a treatment.

Vomiting and diarrhoea Children with [diarrhoea or vomiting](#) should stay away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 2 days (48 hours).

