

This Attendance Policy is designed to promote outstanding attendance for all pupils across both Harewood Infant and Harewood Junior Schools and links with other school policies such as Safeguarding, Behaviour, etc. We understand that there is a proven critical link between attendance, academic and social outcomes for all pupils. It is the desired outcome of this policy that it supports the development of all pupils into academically successful young people of good character with a thirst for knowledge and a love of learning.

This Attendance Policy takes account of the guidance set out in “Departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities” published by the Department of Education in September 2014, Working Together to improve School Attendance 2024 and subsequent updates and includes our actions in the event of a Child Absent from Education (KCSiE).

This policy acknowledges the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance and how they apply to head teachers, school staff, governing bodies, pupils and parents.

This policy takes account of key relevant legislation including;

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- and subsequent amendments

The policy complies with the Gloucestershire County Council Penalty Notice Protocol* which, under Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, empowers designated LA officers, Head Teachers (Deputies and Assistants authorised by them) and the Police to issue Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school (as from February 2004) and the new requirement and local response from GCC.

This policy takes due regard to all the requirements of the Human Rights Act and all Equal Opportunities legislation.

All schools have a responsibility to ensure that each and every child from the day they start school in Reception to the last Friday of June in year 11 is able to receive the education they are legally entitled to. Regular attendance is fundamental to the future success of children. We expect pupils to be in school for every session of the school day and for every day that the school is open for each academic year, which would normally start from September and runs cumulatively to when school finishes at the end of the academic year in July.

It is the duty of our school to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. It is the aim of the schools to support all their pupils so they can continue to attend school even though they may be facing challenging personal circumstances.

This can only be achieved in partnership with you, the parents/carers of these young people.

Harewood Infant School and Harewood Junior School can only provide the education that the children are entitled to if they attend school daily and on time. This is a key factor to ensure that all children have the best opportunities to achieve their own potential and increase their life chances after their formal educational years.

They need to feel part of a social community to be able to add their own contributions and aspirations to this community. By allowing your child to do this, it will give them a good feeling of self-worth, and the knowledge that they will be able to go out into the wider world with confidence at the end of their formal educational years.

Under the Education Act 1996 the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents/carers secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, may use legal enforcement.

Harewood Junior School Registration times:

- morning 8.40am to 9am in class room, morning register closes at 9.10am in the school office
- afternoon at 1.30pm to 1:35pm in classroom, register closes at 1:35pm

Children can arrive in school any time between 8:30am and 8:40am, but should be ready for registration and learning at 8:40am.

Please note that any pupil who arrives after registration has been taken will be marked Late (L). A pupil arriving after the register has closed will be marked with a (U). If a child is consistently late we will work with parents to improve the child's punctual attendance but if, despite this support, the situation does not improve and the child has a further 10 "U" codes over a given period and we reserve the right to request a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority. Please ensure you take note of the times our school closes the register both morning and afternoon.

How do we achieve good school attendance?

We will:

- Monitor attendance daily, monthly and half-termly.
- Contact parents on the first day of absence, if, we have not been notified as to why a child is absent from school. This means we will contact you regarding all your children if they are absent at the same time.
- Follow up any unexplained absences.
- Keep and mark the registers which are a legal document accurately within the guidance of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 1996, with the appropriate attendance code for both a.m and p.m registration.
- Be consistent in our attendance practices.
- Give high priority to punctuality and attendance.
- Promote good attendance at every opportunity – Induction, Parents evenings, Newsletters, Assemblies, on Notice boards, in each of the schools' attendance policy and also on our web site.
- Reward and celebrate good and improved attendance.
- Keep parents/carers informed of their child's attendance with letters if the attendance drops below 95% and 90%.
- Make good use of attendance data by specific analysis.
- Support parents with specific barriers to good school attendance.
- Develop action plans to meet individual circumstances in order to improve attendance.
- Work within a multi-agency approach in order to improve attendance and support pupils and families.

The Headteachers will:

- Create a school ethos that every pupil will want to be part of.
- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers.
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourages all pupils to attend and to achieve, that all staff in their school treat attendance as a priority, and are aware of the attendance policy
- Facilitate a process of reintegration back into school for a child who has been absent due to genuine reason for a long period of time.
- Provide adequately for pupils with difficulties, within the bounds of resources available, and ensure the appropriate delivery of the curriculum.

Parents/carers should:

- Ensure their child attends school daily and on time, appropriately dressed, equipped and in a fit state to learn.
- Let the school know if they are having difficulties with their child's attendance, so that any available help or support can be offered before the situation gets out of hand.
- Inform school on the first day of any absence with an expected date of their child's return. (This means each and every school aged child in the family that is absent)
- Notify school if they intend to remove their child permanently from school for whatever reason, and confirm this in writing.
- Instil the value of education and regular **daily** school attendance within the home environment.
- Support their child to recognise their successes and achievements.
- Support their child's school at every opportunity. Get involved in their education, form a positive relationship with school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home.
- Should aim to keep medical and dental appointments to a time outside of school hours. Six monthly regular dental appointments can be made to coincide with school holidays.

The Headteachers will have the final say as to whether a child's absence is coded with an authorised or an unauthorised mark.

There are two types of absence codes

Authorised or Unauthorised absences

Legitimate reasons for absence, including the following, may be authorised by Headteachers at all schools.

1. Sickness
The Headteacher may authorise a child's absence for illness, but may question too many absence days if your child or children are frequently absent for illness. If your child or children are absent for the reoccurrence of the same illness then school would want to work with you as a family to see if further support and advice can be offered through the School Nurse to enable the ongoing illness to be supported within school.
Medical or dental appointments (where ever possible these should be arranged outside of school hours).
2. Days of religious observance
3. Exceptional family circumstances e.g. bereavement

The following absences will **not** be authorised by the Schools:

- Looking after the house
- Looking after brothers and sisters or sick relatives
- Shopping
- Birthdays
- Translating
- Waiting in for the delivery of goods
- Family Holidays or days out – unless they meet the exceptional circumstances criteria

The Education Regulations 2006 have been amended, and, as from 1st September 2013 **no child may take holidays term time**, unless the Headteacher deems there to be exceptional circumstances.

Any parent taking a child on holiday that has not been deemed an exceptional circumstance should expect to be referred to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice. This **may** result in a fine to both parents/carers (including both parents if they are separated and their new partners) of £60 per child if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid between the 21st day and the 28th day. If the fine is not paid the Local Authority would then proceed to court for the criminal offence of non-school attendance under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. **As from September 2017 there will be no obligation for a school to send parents a Warning Letter.**

A Penalty Notice will be issued to the parent/s carer/s that have day –to- day care and responsibility including parents who are separated but still have regular contact with their child/children to inform them that: Under the Education Act 1996, parents and carers have a duty to make sure their children regularly attend school. If parents or carers fail to do this, they can be prosecuted.

A Parent is defined as per section 576 of the Education Act 1996 and means all natural parents, whether they are married or not and includes any person who, although not a natural parent: Has responsibility for a child or young person. Has care of a child or young person. Having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in Education Law

Exceptional circumstances are;

- Children whose parents/carers are in the armed forces.
- Children, whose parents'/carers' holidays are dictated by their employer e.g police, fire service or working for a company that closes between certain dates. (These requests will however need to be accompanied by a letter from the employer as to why the family can only take a holiday during said dates term time)
- A child with a parent/carer or sibling who has a life-threatening illness. (This request will need to be accompanied by a letter from a medical professional working with the family, or the request will not be seen as exceptional. The request will not be deemed as exceptional if it is the illness of other extended family members)

Pupils' attendance is informally monitored on a daily basis and any parent who has not informed us of the reason for an absence is contacted by phone. If we cannot contact the parent/ carer by phone a letter is sent from the school's administrator requesting the reason for the child's absence.

See also the section below on Children Absent from Education.

Attendance is formally monitored on a monthly and termly basis and those whose attendance has dropped below 95% and 90% receive a letter from the headteacher. Pupils who are Persistently Absent from School for whatever reason will be monitored on a week by week basis. These pupils are known as Persistent Absentees students. This is someone who has attendance below 90% at any given time during the academic year.

Governors at each school will:

- Monitor and evaluate attendance data
- Ensure that the policy is implemented
- Expect all children to attend school 100% of the time that the school is open to them
- Ensure attendance data is reported as required to either the Local Authority or DfE as requested in a timely manner.

Where the action of the school has not resulted in improved attendance the Headteacher will involve the GCC Inclusion team, who:

- Support all schools to maintain a high level of attendance
- Meet with schools to look at and evaluate attendance data.
- Carry out home visits to families to offer support to the family and young person.
- Meet with pupils in school and their families as appropriate.
- Inform parents who have been referred in writing what the next steps will be.
- Hold formal meetings with parents/carers and pupils whose attendance continues to cause concern.
- Manage the start of the legal process of parents/carers for poor school attendance when appropriate.

Part-time Attendance and Flexi-schooling:

All children are entitled to 25 hours of schooling each week, however we recognise that in certain circumstances this may not be the best approach for the child. We will work with parents, carers and any supporting agencies to find the right approach for individual children where there are exceptional circumstances.

Where a child's SEN or Additional Needs are such that they would benefit from a part-time timetable or flexi-schooling, this is discussed and agreed with the parents, carers, Inclusion and any supporting agencies. The Headteacher will complete the appropriate paperwork and submit it to the local authority as set out on the GCC website and will conduct informal reviews on a daily and weekly basis and formal reviews after four weeks. Part-time or flexi-schooling is not meant to be a long-term solution and will always be used where other alternatives have failed to meet the child's needs.

If a child's SEN or Additional Needs are such that they would benefit from provision off-site, we will always commission a place at local provision ie Altus Alternative provision School or a nurture group based at another GCC mainstream or special school.

Dual Registration:

If a child's circumstances are such that they need to live in another part of the country for a short time, we will keep them on roll in order to protect their place here at Harewood and they will be dual-registered with a school in the area where they are temporarily resident. We will follow GCC procedures for dual-registration.

Children Absent from Education:

If a child is absent from school for ten sessions and we are unable to contact parents/carers or the alternative contacts for a child, including the social worker or other professional if the family are being supported by outside agencies, the headteacher will follow the GCC/DfE requirements as detailed on the GCC website and report the child as missing from education. We will continue to attempt to contact the family and work with other agencies to safeguard the child.

Elective Home Education:

If a child's parent decides to home educate, they must follow the current guidance as detailed on the GCC website. The headteacher will engage in a conversation to ascertain whether there are any unresolved issues that can be addressed to avoid the child being removed from school. If the parent's decision remains the same then the school will de-register the child and notify the local authority as soon as possible using the form found on the GCC website.

Procedures for Promoting Attendance at HJS

Classteacher to monitor punctuality and attendance daily



The office will ring parents/carers by 10am on the day of the absence, if they have not already been notified of the reason for the absence.



The School Administrator and Headteacher monitor attendance daily.



If the office hasn't been able to make telephone or face-to-face contact with parents/carers,

A letter to be sent to parents requesting details of absence



If attendance drops below 95%

Headteacher to send letter, notifying parents of need to improve.



If attendance drops below 90%

Headteacher to send letter, notifying parents of need to improve and that attendance is being formally monitored



If no improvement

Headteacher to invite parents/carers into school for a meeting to identify barriers and set expectations.



If attendance is consistently below 90%

Headteacher to invite parents/carers into school for a meeting to develop an individual action plan



If no improvement, the school will request support from the Inclusion Team, who may complete a home visit. If parents/carers fail to engage or if this is the second referral within a two-month period it may go straight to a Warning Letter and an **Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM)** will be held.

Attendance Improvement Meeting

An Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM) is set up to allow parents/carers and students an opportunity to show an improvement in their attendance percentage over a set number of weeks.

Initial meeting set up with Inclusion/member of SLT /student/parents/carers and any other relevant agency.

During the meeting a target of 100% will be set for the student's attendance and the number of weeks it will be monitored over (usually 4 – 6 weeks)



Review meeting



(Possible extension if close to target and a second review date for meeting set)



Targets met case closed



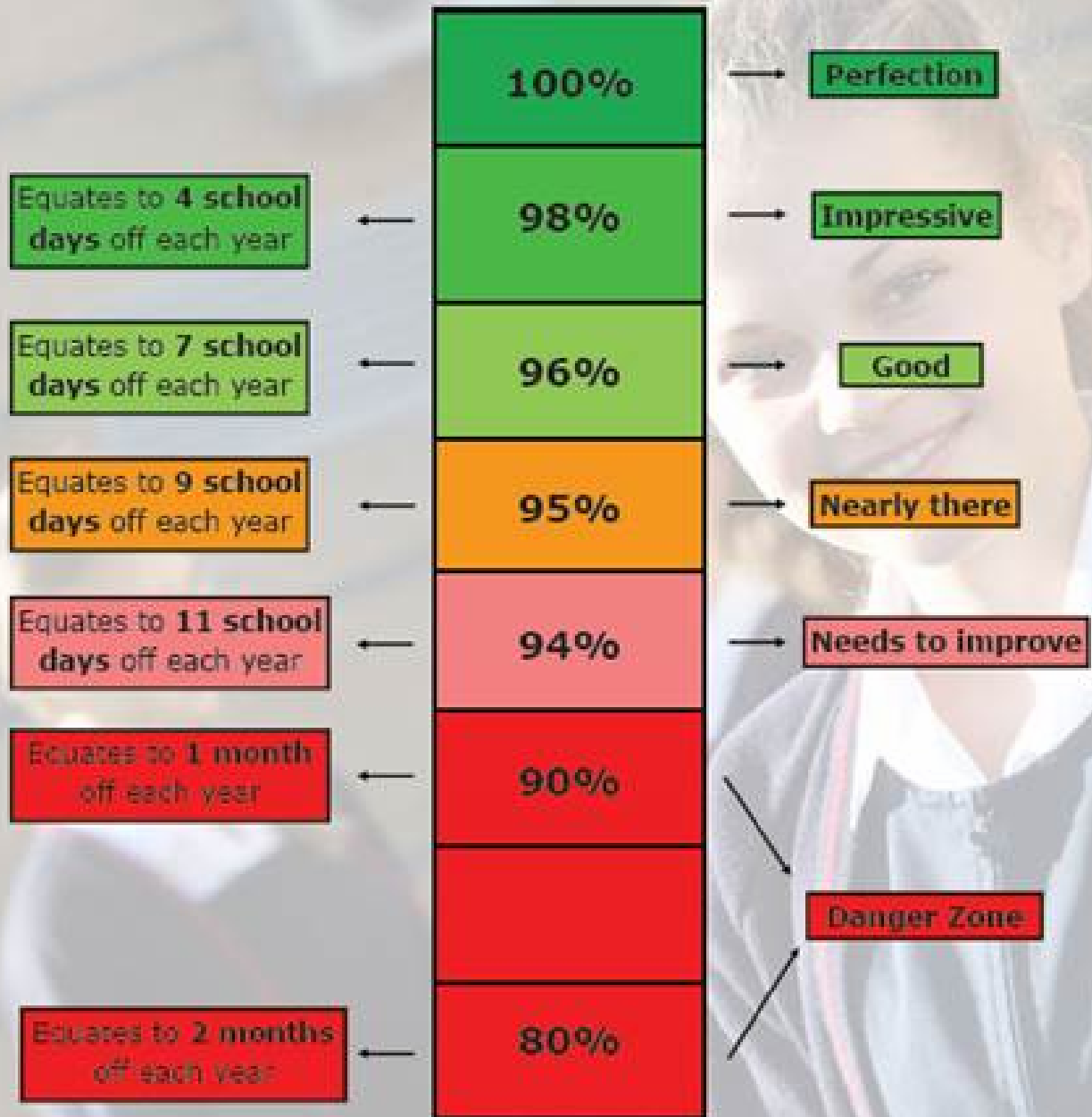
Targets not met plan **Failed**



Case referred to the Education Performance and Inclusion Team who will see the legal process through to an **Interview Under Caution meeting**, to determine how to proceed and dispose of the offence

Attendance Ladder

How close is your child to reaching the top?



The screenshot shows a PDF document titled "Prosecution Process for schools - EEL.PDF" in Adobe Reader. The main content is a flowchart with the following steps:

- Flowchart Title:** School actions when considering request for legal proceedings following unauthorised absence
- Decision 1:** Have any of the statutory defences been met?
 - Yes:** Authorise absence
 - No:** Send letter warning parent of possible prosecution
- Decision 2:** Following further investigations, is there continued unauthorised absence?
 - Yes:** Hold Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM) chaired by member of SLT
 - No:** Continue to monitor and support
- Decision 3:** Has the pupil achieved at least 85% attendance in the 4 weeks since the AIM? (absent for 6 unauthorised sessions or less)
 - Yes:** Continue to monitor and support
 - No:** Review the evidence – ensure it meets the threshold for prosecution
- Final Action:** Request to initiate legal proceedings through the LA

The Adobe Reader interface includes a toolbar with icons for file operations, a zoom level of 50.5%, and a right-hand sidebar with options for exporting to PDF, creating PDF, and sending files. The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the time as 11:16.

The Statutory Defences

Education Act 1996

S444

(3) The child shall not be taken to have failed to attend regularly at the school by reason of his/her absence from the school—

(a) with leave,

(b) at any time when s/he was prevented from attending by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause, or

(c) on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his parent belongs.

(4) The child shall not be taken to have failed to attend regularly at the school if the parent proves—

(a) that the school at which the child is a registered pupil is not within walking distance of the child's home, and

(b) that no suitable arrangements have been made by the local education authority for any of the following—

(i) his transport to and from the school,

(ii) boarding accommodation for him/her at or near the school, or

(iii) enabling him/her to become a registered pupil at a school nearer to his/her home.

(5) In subsection (4) —walking distance —

(a) in relation to a child who is under the age of eight, means 3.218688 kilometres (two miles), and

(b) in relation to a child who has attained the age of eight, means 4.828032 kilometres (three miles), in each case measured by the nearest available route.

(6) If it is proved that the child has no fixed abode, subsection (4) shall not apply, but the parent shall be acquitted if he proves—

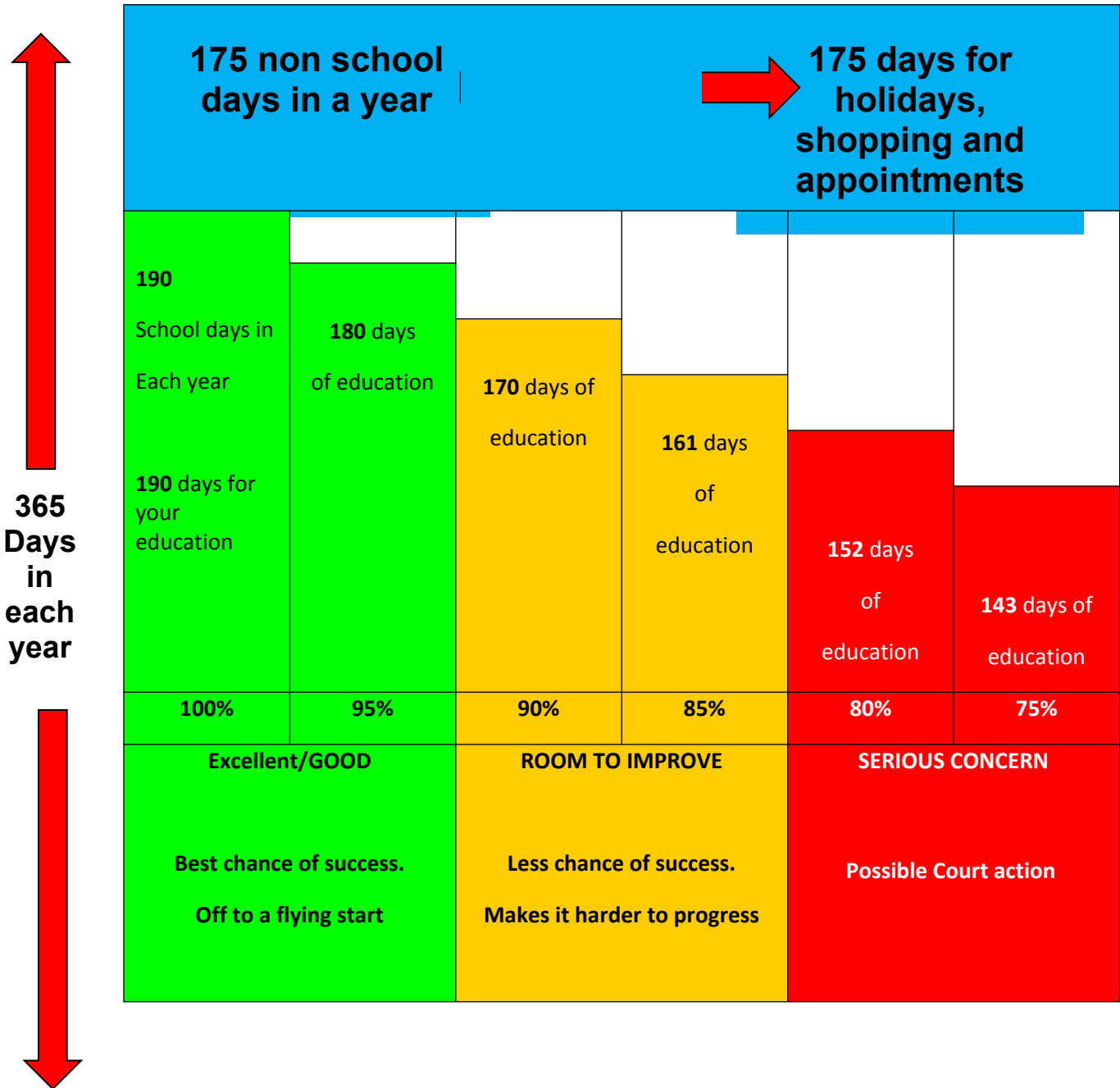
(a) that he is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require him to travel from place to place,

(b) that the child has attended at a school as a registered pupil as regularly as the nature of that trade or business permits, and

(c) if the child has attained the age of six, that s/he has made at least 200 attendances during the period of 12 months ending with the date on which the proceedings were instituted.

Days off from School

add up to lost learning!



Why were you absent?

It was my birthday

My uniform wasn't
clean

Went
Shopping

Had to get my
hair cut

Had to take the dog
to the vets

Alarm didn't
go off

Had to wait for
the gasman

Couldn't get up, I had
a late night



Had to look after my
little sister

These absences would
NOT be authorised

Every school day counts

365 days in a year

190 days in school each year -
this leaves 175 days for holidays,
shopping, and appointments



Good time keeping means...

...making sure your child is at school and ready to learn, before the school bell rings!

Did you know? - being 15 minutes **late** each day is the same as missing **two weeks** of school!*



**Lost minutes =
Lost learning!**



Every Schoolday Counts

but every **minute** is equally important!

* Over one full academic year