

Thames View Infants



 Bastable Avenue
Barking, Essex
IG11 0LG
 020 8270 4317

 Paul Jordan
Headteacher
Rosa Corcoran-Jones
Deputy Headteacher

Adam Dobson
Assistant Headteacher
Kelly Ager
School Business Manager

 Office@ThamesViewInfants.org
 ThamesViewInfants.org
  @TVInfants

13 September 2026

Dear Parents/Carers,

Coming to School Everyday Matters

It is a good time to remind everyone about the importance of **regular attendance and arriving at school on time.**

We all have a responsibility for getting our children to school regularly and on time. The more regularly your child attends school, the better their chances and prospects in later life.

Children do best when they are in school regularly. They learn more, build stronger friendships, feel part of their class and develop the routines and confidence that help them succeed. Even relatively small amounts of absence can add up quickly and make it harder for young children to keep up with their learning and feel settled at school.

At TVI, we want every child to enjoy coming to school and to have every possible opportunity to succeed. **Every school day matters.**

Unauthorised Absence and Lateness

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school regularly. Getting into this routine – for parents as well as children – starts from Nursery.

Where a child is absent without a valid reason, the absence will normally be recorded as **unauthorised.**

Being late matters too. Arriving once the children have entered school after **8:45am** is recorded as late. If your child arrives after **9:15am**, this is recorded as an unauthorised absence for that session.



However, **late is always better than absent**. If you are having a difficult morning, please don't give up and keep your child at home. Bring them in, however late it is, and talk to us. We would much rather have your child in school for part of the day than miss the whole day.

Term-Time Leave and Holidays

Please arrange family holidays, overseas visits and other planned trips during the published school holidays. We have a **two-week October half-term**, which gives families an additional opportunity to plan longer trips and overseas visits outside term time.

Headteachers may only grant leave of absence during term time where the particular circumstances are considered **exceptional**. A family holiday or trip is not automatically authorised because a request has been made.

Unauthorised absence can have legal consequences. Under the national framework, a penalty notice must be considered when a child reaches **10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school-week period**. Ten sessions will usually amount to five school days and can include different types of unauthorised absence rather than one continuous period.

For a first penalty notice, the fine is **£80 per parent, per child** if paid within 21 days, rising to **£160** if paid within 28 days. A second penalty notice for the same parent and child within three years is **£160**, with no reduced rate. A maximum of two penalty notices may be issued to the same parent for the same child within a three-year period; further offences may result in other legal action being considered.

We would much rather work with families long before attendance reaches that stage.

If Your Child Is Absent – Please Call Us

If your child cannot attend school, please telephone our **Attendance Hotline on 020 8270 4317 (Option 1) by 9:30am**. (Do not select the school office – option 0)

Please call us **on every day of the absence**, unless we have already agreed something different with you.

Talking to us is important. It enables us to understand why your child is absent, make sure they are safe and consider whether there is anything we can do to help them return to school.

“But They’re Not Quite Themselves...”

All children are different and parents know their children best. There will, of course, be occasions when a child is genuinely too unwell to attend school.

However, young children also have coughs, runny noses, tired days and difficult mornings. On their own, things such as **a mild cough or cold, a runny nose, having had a late night, not wanting to get dressed for school or simply saying “I don’t want to go to school today”** are not reasons to keep a child at home.

It is quite common for children who are reluctant in the morning to be perfectly happy shortly after arriving at school.

If your child does not want to come to school, **tell us**. There may be a reason behind it and we would much rather work with you to understand, offer you some strategies and help you resolve the problem than have your child stay at home. [We made this short video to offer some help and advice if your child does](#)

[not want to come to school](#). Similarly, if your child has had a difficult night, bring them **later rather than not at all** if that is what is needed.

If your child is genuinely very poorly, they should stay at home and recover. A digital thermometer is inexpensive and is a much more reliable way of checking whether your child has a high temperature than simply feeling whether they are hot to the touch. If you're unsure whether they are well enough to attend, telephone us and talk it through.

We Can Help

TVI is a caring school and there are lots of practical things we can do to help a child who is recovering from illness or finding attendance difficult.

We can keep an extra eye on them, telephone you with an update, support them if they are tired or unsettled, administer medication where appropriate and in accordance with our procedures, and work with you where mornings or coming into school have become difficult.

Sometimes a small adjustment is all that is needed. Please don't struggle at home until attendance has become a much bigger problem. **Talk to us early.**

Appointments, Difficult Mornings and Family Circumstances

Wherever possible, please arrange routine medical and dental appointments outside school hours.

Where an appointment has to take place during the school day, your child should normally attend school before and/or after it wherever practicable. Please give us as much notice as possible and provide appointment information where requested.

Families also experience emergencies, bereavements and difficult periods. There isn't one answer that fits every child or every family. Come and talk to us. We will listen, consider the individual circumstances and work with you to find the best way forward. Generally speaking, from experience, we find that children benefit from the familiar routine and structure of school during periods of bereavement.

If you are unable to bring your child to school

We understand that parents sometimes face unexpected difficulties or emergencies. However, if your child is well but does not attend because the person who normally brings them to school is unavailable, this will still be recorded as an absence. Wherever possible, families should have a **back-up plan** for getting their child to school if an emergency arises – for example, another parent/carers, relative or trusted adult who can help. **It is a good idea to think ahead and have a plan in place, just in case.** If you are genuinely stuck, **please call us and talk to us rather than simply keeping your child at home.**

Working Together

We monitor attendance carefully, but this isn't simply about percentages. **Attendance is about children.**

It is about belonging to their class, seeing their friends, learning something new every day, developing independence and resilience, and making the very most of their infant education.

Where there is a genuine barrier to attendance, we will work with you to understand it and offer support. Equally, we need parents to work with us and make regular attendance a priority.

If attendance begins to fall, we will meet with you. Each term, where attendance is showing as a concern, we will write to you. Where attendance is **approaching or has fallen to 90%**, we will agree a **Parent Partnership Plan** with you, setting out further support to help ensure attendance becomes more regular. Where unauthorised absence has become sufficiently irregular that you are at risk of receiving a fine, we will issue you with a **Notice to Improve**, giving you a further opportunity to improve your child's attendance and avoid further action. [We made this video to explain a bit more about attendance percentages.](#)

Routines Help

Good morning and bedtime routines make an enormous difference. Individual children vary, but young children need plenty of sleep. A good bedtime routine and a sensible bedtime make a real difference to how children cope with the school day. Prepare uniform and bags the night before and make coming to school the normal, expected start to every school day. [We made this video to explain a bit more about bedtime routines.](#)

Thank you for your continued support. My staff and I are always happy to listen and help. **Working together gives our children the very best chance of doing well.**

Yours sincerely,



Paul Jordan
Headteacher