

Pupil Attendance and Absence Policy

INTRODUCTION

The Education Act 1996 requires parents and carers to ensure their child receives efficient fulltime education, suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Under current government legislation, all absence figures, together with the reasons for absence have to be reported to the Schools Governing Body, Local Authority (LA), and the Department for Education (DfE).

Parents, guardians and carers must ensure that they are fully aware of the school's attendance policy as any absence will have a huge impact on your child's learning. Regular school attendance is essential and parents, guardians and carers, together with our school staff all have a part to play in ensuring full potential is achieved.

Pupils are expected to attend school for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:

- **Authorised Absence:** is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence.
- **Unauthorised Absence:** is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's absence from school after a parent's request.

Please be aware that when a parent telephones the school with information that their child is unable to attend due to illness, or other circumstances, this may not be automatically authorised. Your child's current and previous school attendance will be taken into consideration and as a result the absence may not be authorised.

Repeated absences will require us to request that you obtain medical evidence from your doctor's surgery. This may be in the form of a date stamped compliment slip confirming your visit, or prescription or medicine bottle. Any of the above is to be shown to a member of the school office. (Please note: that the school is not asking any parent to incur a charge for such information and will not be liable for the cost.)

There is a clear connection between regular attendance and achievement. As attendance deteriorates, so does performance, achievement, friendship circles and self-esteem.

The achievement and maintenance of high levels of attendance is the shared responsibility of parents, guardians or carers, the school with its Governing Body and the Local Authority.

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

- To communicate clearly the attendance procedure and expectations of the school.
- Maintain appropriate attendance data.
- Have appropriate registration processes in place.
- To follow up absences and lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school: initially with a first-day absence telephone call.
- Inform parents/carers of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absences.
- To have systematic and consistent daily records which chart absence and lateness.
- To consistently administer the attendance procedure.
- To ensure that registers are taken twice daily: at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions
- To promote good attendance

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- To have children in class ready for teaching by the start of the day at 8.55 a.m. (8:45am or 12:30pm for Nursery pupils)
- To inform school on **first** day of any absence.
- To request leave as far in advance as possible.

- To make applications for leave in writing on the school's **'Request for Absence Form'**, giving the reason for the request.
- To work with the school to improve lateness and attendance.
- To avoid medical and dental appointments during the school day.

If parents or carers are worried about their child's attendance at school they should:

- Talk to their child; it may be something simple that needs your help in resolving
- Talk to your child's class teacher in the first instance.
- Make an appointment to see Mrs Cleak or Mrs Harry (Pupil and Family Support), or Miss Huddleston (Teacher with responsibility for pupil wellbeing and attendance) or Mrs Sharpe (Headteacher)

THE PROCESS FOR MONITORING ATTENDANCE

The school administrators will log instances of absence and lateness and discuss with the Head Teacher.

Where issues persist the following will be initiated:

Stage 1: Where there are concerns about attendance and punctuality the school will make verbal contact with home. (Usually via the class teacher)

Stage 2: If the concerns persist the school will write to the parents/carers.

Stage 3: If the concerns persist the school will arrange a meeting between the parent/carer and a school representative

Stage 4: If the concerns persist the school will make a formal referral to the Local Authority Educational Welfare Service to deal with the on-going issues.

ABSENCES DURING TERM TIME

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 explanatory note states:

Regulation 7 of the 2006 Regulations is amended to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil; except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Leave of absence taken without authorisation may be referred to the Education Welfare Service. This may result in prosecution proceedings, or a Fixed Penalty Notice. If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, a separate Notice would be issued to each parent for each child.

- Application for term-time leave of absence must be made in advance by the parent with whom the child normally resides on the form headed 'Request for Absence'. These may be obtained from the school office.
- Leave of absence will only be granted where the Headteacher considers it is due to 'exceptional circumstances'. Parent will be informed within 7 school days as to whether the request has been authorised or unauthorised.
- There are approximately 195 school days (390 sessions) a year which your child is expected to attend. There are also approximately 71 days (142 sessions) of school holidays. This is over 13 school weeks. Please ensure that your holidays are taken during this period.

LATENESS

Punctuality is an important life skill. It is also polite.

Children must be in class by 8.55 a.m. each day (8:45am or 12:30pm for Nursery pupils)

Registers will be taken as soon as possible after that time. Children will be marked late if they arrive at school after the registers have been taken.

Children who arrive after that time must come into the the main office, where their parents or carers must sign them in.

If the arrival at school is after the registers have closed at 9.20, the pupil will receive a 'U'. This equates to an absence although we are aware that the pupil is on the school premises in accordance with health and safety.

If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M'.

Please be advised that where possible doctors and dentists appointments are to be made outside of school hours or during school holidays.

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other pupils. Lateness is considered to be an equally serious absence. Parents, guardians or carers of pupils who seem to be developing patterns of lateness will be reminded by letter of the importance of good time keeping. If lateness persists parents, guardians or carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem.

SICKNESS

Please notify the school on the first day of the absence.

We reserve the right to request a doctor's/consultant's letter regarding recurring and frequent illness.

PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE

We celebrate good attendance throughout our School through weekly assemblies during which classes and individuals with good attendance are rewarded with certificates and prizes.

We are a Rights-Respecting School and this policy links with Article 28 of the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child:

"I have the right to go to school, be respected and learn new things. I have the right to develop my talents and personality at school; to respect and be respected by others."