



Attendance Policy

Principles of school attendance

Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. It is important that good attendance habits are established from the beginning of a child's life at school. At junior school, it is the full co-operation of the parents that will ensure good attendance. It is therefore our intention to inform parents of necessary practices and procedures as soon as they enter school.

Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent. Effective lines of communication will clearly form the basis of good attendance. All parents will be informed of the legal requirements, the school's policy on attendance and their responsibilities.

Authorised/unauthorised attendance

What does this mean?

Each half day absence has to be classified by the school, not the parents, as either authorised or unauthorised. This means information about the cause of absence is always required by the school.

- Authorised absences are morning or afternoons away from school for a reason such as a genuine illness or unavoidable cause.
- Unauthorised absences are those, which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. It is the school's prerogative to decide whether absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Where a child has a significant amount of unauthorised absence, then the local authority may issue a fixed penalty fine.

Aims of our Attendance Policy

- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including parents, pupils, teachers and Governors.
- To develop a framework, which defines agreed roles and responsibilities of all concerned.
- To work in co-operation with parents to ensure that all pupils achieve their optimum attendance rate, in order to achieve continuity of learning.
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.
- To establish effective monitoring systems in school for checking upon individual attendance, to reinforce our belief in the link between high attendance rates and successful learning.
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering data about attendance and analysing the findings successfully.

- To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service and other services and agencies; providing relevant information about individuals, year groups and the whole school.

Agreed Roles and Responsibilities

Parents' Responsibilities

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school. High attendance rates correspond to increased chances of success in school.

Parents should:

Ensure that their child arrives at school before registration at 8.55am. The playground is supervised from 8.45am.

Illness

If a child is unable to attend school because of illness, parents are asked to inform the school by telephone, before 10am, on the first day of absence and every subsequent day. Parents can ring the school on 01273 087513.

Lateness

Any child arriving late in school must report to the school office with the adult who has brought them to school. The parent/carer should give the reason for lateness. If a parent knows in advance that the child will be late, it is helpful if the school can be informed.

Medical Appointments

We appreciate that it is not always possible to arrange medical appointments outside school hours, but whenever possible they should be arranged for after school. If your child has an appointment during school hours, we must receive a written note or a telephone message confirming the appointment.

Holidays during term time

No holiday will be authorised during term time in accordance with local authority and national guidelines.

Parents should be aware that the local authority has the right to issue a fixed penalty notice where a child's attendance falls below a certain level, including where this involves family holiday during term time.

Other absences

Other absences must be notified to the Headteacher, who will determine whether or not the circumstances should be recorded as unauthorised or authorised. If there is a genuine reason why a child cannot attend school – such as a family funeral – then this absence will be authorised.

Teachers' responsibilities

Registration

- Registration is carried out at 9am and 1.20pm.
- It is the responsibility of each teacher or supply teacher to ensure registers are accurately completed.

Lateness

- If a teacher knows the child is going to be late for any reason, they must still be recorded as absent, until they physically arrive at school. The child must always report to the office when they arrive at school late.
- Teachers are asked to notify the school office if they know a child is going to be late, to enable the staff to order a school dinner if necessary.

Absences

All letters or messages regarding absences should be sent to the office, in the register, on the day they are received, so they can be recorded.

Illness/partial absence

If a child becomes ill at school, the office should be informed. They will decide whether or not the parents should be contacted and the child sent home. They will also inform the class teacher. Whenever a child is taken out of school for any reason during the day, the adult who collects him/her must first report to the office.

Attendance Officer's Responsibilities

It is the A.O's responsibility to oversee attendance records for retrieval or for information in connection with DfES returns, school reports etc. and to provide the class teacher or Governing body with information as required.

The A.O. must provide teachers with computer register sheets to fill in weekly.

Daily

- All telephone and written messages regarding absences are recorded in the register on the first day of absence.
- The A.O. must input attendance into the SIM's computer system where the information is stored centrally.
- Coding for absences is recorded daily on the registers once the A.O. has been notified by a parent/carer about a child's absence from school.
- The A.O. will operate a **First day call** system where she will contact any parent after 1 hour of the child not arriving at school, if no message has been received about their absence.

Holiday Absences

Details of children taking holidays during term time are also recorded in the register from the first day of absence.

- Correspondence regarding holidays is filed safely in the office.
- The A.O. will input holiday absences on to the SIM's computer system before the child goes away on holiday. This means that the class teacher is aware of holiday absences by looking at the weekly register sheet.

Children subject to a child protection plan and children in need

- These children should be prioritised when undertaking first day contact with parents.
- If attendance for these children falls below 95% in any half term, then the social worker needs to be informed.
- The school should contact the social worker immediately if there is an absence and the parents cannot be contacted.

Headteacher's Responsibilities

The Head teacher will monitor attendance for all pupils via information gathered, and will contact parents whenever there is cause for concern over lateness or frequent absence.

When necessary, the Head teacher will contact the Home School Liaison Officer to discuss any serious concerns over a particular child's attendance.

It is the Head teacher's responsibility to report the numbers of unauthorised absences to the LEA, the DfES and to ensure that they are published in the school's prospectus.