

Attendance and Registration of Pupils Policy



Purpose

This policy provides a framework and guidance for staff and parents to encourage excellence in attendance so that pupils can maximise the educational opportunities available.

Rationale

As a Church of England primary school whose ethos is rooted in Christian values we believe that our core purpose is to "...maximize the learning potential of every pupil within the love of God". Good attendance is vital to this purpose. We aim to ensure pupils feel happy and safe to come to school and that where attendance is an issue or pupils have been excluded to support the child and family to overcome any barriers to attendance.

Roles and responsibilities:

The **headteacher** will ensure that:

- Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently
- Each child's attendance record will be reported to parents as part of their child's annual report
- Parents or carers are contacted when reasons for absence are unknown or unauthorised
- Pupils attendance and lateness are monitored regularly
- School attendance statistics are reported to the LA and governing body
- The school's allocated Educational Welfare Officer is provided with registers of attendance and will support the school in following up long-term absences, frequent absentees and lateness
- Pupils absent for long periods because of ill-health receive appropriate learning support
- Parents are encouraged to take holidays outside of term time.
- In the case of poor attendance where there is no explanation for the absence the school will follow the LAs procedures for, 'fixed penalty notices for poor school attendance' in conjunction with the allocated Educational Welfare Officer
- If high levels of absence continue a request may be made to the Education Welfare Officer begin procedures for fast 'track to prosecution'

All **teachers** are expected to:

- Register pupils accurately and efficiently
- Record known absences in the register e.g. where the parent has informed the teacher
- Report pupil attendance and lateness daily
- Encourage pupils to attend school regularly and inform colleagues if there is a problem e.g. social or emotional problem that may lead to absences
- Inform the head teacher of any unusual absences or patterns of absence

All **Administrative staff** are expected to:

- Check registers daily
- Print off copies of class registers at 9:15 and 1:30 to be used to check pupil numbers in the event of an evacuation of the school.
- Keep a blank registration form available for each class in the event of the school ICT system failing so that registers can still be taken and maintained.
- Ring the parent/guardian of any child who is not in school who have not already made contact with the school on the first morning of absence to ask the reason for their child's absence
- Inform teachers of the reason for a child's absence if necessary
- Highlight poor attendance figures to the head teacher and teachers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Ensure the child attends school regularly
- Make medical, dental appointments etc, out of school hours, where possible
- Inform the school on the first day of non-attendance
- Complete an 'absence from school form' (see appendix) for planned absences and return it to the office in advance of the absence.

Reception Age Children

Children do not reach statutory school age until they are five years old. However, we want to establish good attendance patterns for children from an early age so our expectations will be that they follow the same procedures as the rest of the school.

Requests for Absence in Exceptional Circumstances

As head teachers we are expected to uphold the law when parents request a planned absence during term time. Schools are required to be proactive in discouraging absence. Pupils have 13 weeks holiday during the year and it is our belief that this provides ample opportunity to take holidays during the published holiday period.

Parents of registered pupils have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 to make sure that children of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and full time basis. Any absence has a detrimental impact on a child's education, for instance 90% attendance is the same as missing half a day of school every week.

Headteacher's discretion (delegated by the governing body)

As of 1 September 2013 there has been a change in the School Attendance Regulations. Where there used to be the option for headteachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during the term time in 'special circumstances' of up to ten days in a year, this has been removed.

Headteachers are now only allowed to authorise any leave of absence when an application has been made in advance and it is felt to be for an exceptional circumstance; the annual family holiday would not be deemed an exceptional circumstance

Requesting Leave of Absence in exceptional circumstances

Please send a written request using the schools leave of absence form.

Authorisation

The school recognises that there may be some occasions when a child will need to be taken out of school. Examples of exceptional circumstances might be:

- Appointments made by third parties, e.g. hospital or exams
- On compassionate grounds
- Religious events

Headteachers (and governing bodies) do not consider the following to be exceptional:

- Holidays
- Absence for a celebration (e.g. birthday)

Headteachers will not normally authorise an absence if:

- A pupil has an attendance rate below 90%
- During assessment weeks or national curriculum (SATs) tests
- The first two weeks of any term

Unauthorised Absence

Any absence where appropriate notification has not been made will be considered unauthorised, this could result in the issuing of a fixed penalty notice which at present stands at £60. In exceptional circumstances, if a child is absent from school without proper notification, the school has an obligation to ask the police to undertake a "safety check" to ensure their wellbeing.

The **governing body** will ensure that the LA is informed about the long-term absence of any pupils.

Registration Requirements

For the morning session the school register will open at 8.55 a.m. every morning and close at 9:00 a.m.

- Children not in their seat when their name is first called out at 8.55 a.m., but who are in school before the register closes will be marked as late before the register closes (L)
- Children arriving after the registers have been officially closed will be marked as late after the register closes (U) with a note made of the time of arrival. *This mark will count as an unauthorised absence.*

For the afternoon session the school register will open at 13:10 for Keystage 1 and 13:15 for Keystage 2. The registers will be closed 15 minutes after they have been opened with children being marked in the same way as set out above.

We will review our policy bi-annually.

Reviewed March 2016 in light of changes to government legislation and advice.

Next review March 2018 or sooner if legislation changes