



SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Department for Education expects schools and local authorities to promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence. As school with a strong Christian ethos we have a strong belief in encouraging endurance and commitment therefore at Packington Church of England Primary School we expect all of our children to attend school regularly and to enter the premises punctually. The link between good attendance and good progress is irrefutable; the better the attendance, the better the progress made by our pupils. (Good attendance being 96%+ attendance with no unauthorised absences).

We publish our term dates on our school brochure, our parents' newsletters and our school website. We review and agree our term dates each year with our family of schools networks. Our term dates align with our local and feeder schools but may differ from those published on the Leicestershire Education website.

Our school day runs from 8.55 am until 3.15 pm.

We expect children to be collected by a parent or a delegated adult at 3.15pm or after the end of club activities if this applies. Parents who are regularly late in collecting their children will be issued a warning by the school. If the situation continues the school may make a referral to the First Response Team.

Should pupils be absent from school we expect parents to notify us of the cause as soon as possible. It is vital for both safeguarding and security reasons that we know which children are in or out of school. The school secretary will ring the home by 9.30 am if there is no contact made during the first morning of absence. Once the period of absence has finished a note covering the illness is requested to support records kept in school.

Pupils who are late arriving into school or who need to leave the school premises early should be signed in or out of school by an adult in the Absence Record book.

Should a pupil need to attend a medical appointment then an absence request form needs to be completed and returned to school. Forms are obtainable from the school office. Proof will be required when an appointment is on a Friday afternoon or around a holiday period ie the day before or the day after a holiday.

The school actively discourages parents from taking children out of school for holidays or leisure activities during the school term and this policy reflects Government amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration- England) Regulations 2006 which came into force on **1st September 2013**. These amendments state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence for holidays during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances; in these cases it is the Headteacher and the Governing Body who determine the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Under the current guidelines it is expected that parents arrange family vacations during the school holidays. The Headteacher can only authorise absence in exceptional circumstances.*

Parents needing leave of absence for exceptional circumstances* should complete an Absence Request Form at least two weeks before the anticipated start date with the reason for the request given in detail. This form will be shared with the Attendance Governors before a final decision is made and a notification sent back to parents. Applications should be made before the leave is arranged as absences will not be granted retrospectively.

It is at the Headteacher's and Attendance Governors discretion whether the request will be authorised. Absence will only be authorised in certain circumstances. Absence is unlikely to be authorised if the child's attendance is less than 96%. If the Headteacher declines to authorise an absence and an illness is reported on this occasion, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. It is expected that parents will be open and honest with the school, however, if a request for absence is found to be untrue then the absence will be unauthorised, even if it has been previously agreed.

**Examples of exceptional circumstance;*

- *Accredited Exam – ballet/music (extra-curricular)*
- *Gifted and Talented opportunity (part in a pantomime, sporting event, coaching etc see Appendix1)*
- *Bereavement*
- *Serious family crisis*
- *Holiday due to factory shut down (proof shown to the school to verify from employer)*
- *Holiday due to restricted leave (police, forces personnel etc- proof shown to the school to verify from employer)*
- *Wedding – close family relative (parent, grandparent, sibling, 1st auntie/uncle)*
- *Religious Days*
- *Other exceptional circumstances to be considered on an individual basis*

Requests for leave of absence will not be granted for:

- ❖ *Availability of cheap holidays and cheap travel arrangements*
- ❖ *Convenient travel times (proof will be required of alterations to travel times/ arrangements by carriers)*
- ❖ *Days overlapping with the beginning or end of term*
- ❖ *Full or part days around a weekend*
- ❖ *To attend routine sporting or leisure activities such as dance or swimming lessons. (see Appendix 1)*

The School and its staff regard the regular attendance of children at school as being vital to each child's education and development. It is for this reason that non attendances (however short or infrequent) are treated seriously. It remains the policy of the school to only sanction non-attendance during term time in exceptional circumstances. In the event of a child not attending school regularly, we will make contact with the parents to ascertain the reason for the absence. In certain circumstances we may call in our colleagues in the Attendance Improvement Service to investigate further. The school may also report the case to the Local Authority. If your child has unauthorised leave of absence you may either be issued with a Penalty Notice of £120 per parent per child (discounted to £60 if paid within 21 days), or, your case could be referred by the Local Authority directly to the Magistrates' Court for the purposes of a criminal prosecution.”

As part of our continuing drive to maintain and further improve overall attendance the school will send home an attendance review certificate for each pupil every term to reward good attendance and help parents monitor absence. Pupils who have 100% attendance over the academic year will be awarded with a special commendation at the end of year Church service.

This policy will be reviewed regularly in accordance with our monitoring and evaluation policy and following any changes to legislation.

Appendix 1: Attending Out of School Activities During School Hours (Gifted and Talented opportunities and routine sporting or leisure activities)

Requests for leave of absence are not granted for pupils to attend routine or regular sporting or leisure activities for example swimming, tennis or dance lessons. Parents must ensure that lessons are arranged for times out of school hours and they should allow sufficient time to travel from school to the venue. Pupils must not leave school early just because there is not enough time from the end of the school day (3.15pm) to get to an activity or because it is convenient for parents.

The school does recognise and encourage pupils who are gifted and talented and as such will grant a leave of absence, or agree time for a pupil to be educated off site, in order for pupils to undertake activities that enable them to develop their gifts and talents. This may include release time for specific coaching or coaching programmes and academy schemes and participation in competitions. In these circumstances, parents must seek permission from, and discuss arrangements with the Head Teacher. They must also provide the school with written proof from the child's coach, club or academy in order for the school to agree to the request. (Class teachers must not give permission for any leave of absence.)

Parents who wish to collect pupils early for any reason **MUST** report to the school office and wait for a member of staff to collect their child. Parents must not go directly to the class to get their child.