

Thursfield Primary School



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Attendance Policy 2018 / 2019

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential.

Aims and Objectives

- To ensure all pupils take full advantage of opportunities for learning in school
- To ensure the well-being and safety of children at Thursfield Primary School
- To set school targets for attendance
- To monitor pupil absence and the reasons

Intentions

- To actively promote and encourage 100% attendance for all pupils
- Each Friday the best attending class in Key Stage 2 and Reception/Key Stage 1 will be applauded and celebrated in assembly
- To celebrate at the end of every term 100% attendance in individual pupils
- An Award will be presented at prize giving at the end of the year to all children with 100% attendance.
- To monitor regular or extended absence and take steps to resolve this
- To work with EWO (Attend EDC) to ensure no child is absent without school being aware of the reason
- To ensure that discretionary power to grant leave is only used in exceptional circumstances
- To use the School Information Management System to analyse and monitor pupils' patterns of absence and work with parents to rectify patterns

We employ Attend EDC Ltd. They are an Independent Education Welfare Company who work with the school, to raise attendance and deal with welfare matters. They will communicate with parents / carers if there is an issue they can support us with. Pupil's attendance will be monitored and may be shared with Attend EDC if it becomes a cause for concern. Attend EDC are GDPR Compliant and will not share personal data with any third party.

Teaching and Learning Impact

Thursfield Primary School will endeavour to reduce the disruption to children's learning through unnecessary absence and will work with families towards avoiding lateness or avoidable time off from school.

Equality and Inclusion

All children will be dealt with in the same manner. Allowances within this policy will be made for children with severe disabilities or illnesses who require additional time off for administration or medication.

Safeguarding

If a child is absent for any reason not previously advised to the school, Parents or Carers must contact the school office in some way before 9.30 am on the first day of absence. A text message will be sent followed by a phone call to the Parents/Carers of any child who is not in school and school has not received a message about. If no contact is made with the school regarding the absence "Attend" will be notified and an Education Welfare Officer will visit the home.

Registration of pupils

- Thursfield Primary School will ensure that staff are aware of any new legislation with pupil registration
- Registers are to be completed accurately at the beginning of every session i.e. morning and afternoon
- Parents to be aware of importance of contacting school to report absence before 9.30am
- Senior Managers and School Governors to ensure evaluation of attendance procedures
- Regular reports will be provided for the Governing Body of Thursfield Primary School
- All absences will be reported by the Head teacher to the Educational Welfare Officer on their monthly visit.

Contents of the Attendance Register

Each class teacher will take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. On each occasion they will record whether every pupil is present or absent.

The school will follow up any absences to:

1. Ascertain the reason;
2. Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;
3. Identify whether the absence is authorised or not;
4. Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census

Registration and Absence Procedures

All absences will be recorded on school registers using the national codes. Any pupil who is on roll, but not present in school must be recorded within one of these categories:

1. Unauthorised Absence – This is for pupils where no reason has been given or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason. This can occur if a child arrives after 9:30am.
2. Authorised Absence – This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.
3. Approved Educational Activity – This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken offsite but with the approval of the school.

Doors open at 8.40am and registration is 8.50am-9am. Children who arrive late to school (after 8.50am) must enter the building via the main entrance and be signed in. Children arriving late i.e. between 9.00am and 9.30am will receive late mark (code L) in the register. In accordance with regulations if your child arrives after the registers have closed at 9.30am, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean that they will have an unauthorised absence. (code U) The Education Welfare Officers can hold 'late gates'; issue notices to parents/carers who arrive to school late.

Reporting Absences

It is a parent's responsibility to inform school of any reasons for a child's absence, before 9.30 am, each day that they are absent from school (unless otherwise arranged with school) and to provide further information as required. The process for notification is included as part of the school's prospectus and indicates a phone call or contact on the first

day of absence, followed by a letter of confirmation on the child's return to school. We will send a letter requesting information if an explanation has not been received. We will refer the matter to the school's EWO (Educational Welfare Officer) if no response is forthcoming

Leave of Absence during Term Time

Head teachers 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.

What should parents do if they wish to request a leave of absence?

Parents should contact the school and complete a leave of absence request form.

What happens if a child goes on holiday in term time or takes leave of absence for other reasons?

The absences will be marked in the school register as unauthorised holiday absence (code G) and this may result in a Penalty Notice of £60 (rising to £120) per parent per child being issued by the Local Authority. In some cases, parents may be prosecuted for the offence of failure to ensure regular attendance at school.

Changes to the Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices Commencing 1st January 2018

- **Penalty Notice for leave of absence (holiday) in term time**

Any period of unauthorised leave may result in you as a parent receiving a penalty notice fine. The head teacher will continue to be the only person able to authorise leave in term time, but this will apply only in exceptional circumstances. Any unauthorised absence will be referred by the head teacher to the EWO.

- **Penalty Notice for persistent lateness**

Previously a pupil had to achieve 20 unauthorised late marks before a penalty notice warning could be issued. **This has now changed to 10 marks**, and late marks do not have to be one after the other in order for the penalty notice to be issued.

- **Period of time used to measure persistent absence and lateness**

If your child has had 10 days unauthorised absence or is late 10 times over a twelve week period, you may receive a penalty warning notice and also potentially a fine.

Circumstances where a Penalty Notice may be issued:

- A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence.
- There will be no limit on the times a Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave of absence can be used in an academic year.
- In cases where there is more than one pupil in a family with unauthorised absences, Penalty Notices may be issued for more than one child.
- The presence of an excluded child in a public place at any time during school hours in the first five days of exclusion.

Penalty Notice for persistent absence

- Parents whose child is repeatedly absent will now only receive one warning notice period to bring about improvement in attendance in a single academic year. If attendance deteriorates again then no further formal warning notice will be issued and the Local Authority can automatically consider other statutory actions if unauthorised absence re-occurs.

Medical Appointments

Parents of children attending a medical appointment during the school day need to produce an appointment card/letter or similar paperwork prior to the appointment. Where possible all medical/dental appointments should be made outside of the school day. We can then confirm lateness as a 'medical' absence and therefore authorised.

School Action on Repeated Absence

Where a child is persistently late or absent, even if the Head teacher has been informed, the following steps will be taken:

- A letter will be sent home informing parents of the number of late arrivals
- If lateness persists then the parents will be contacted by the Educational Welfare Officer
- Please note that any lateness or unexplained absence will be monitored by the EWO as a matter of course.
- Schools and EWOs must now adhere to the 'Code of Conduct under the Provision of the Education (Penalty Notices) Regulation 2007 and Subsection (1) Section 23 Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003'.

Roles and Responsibilities

Attendance is overseen by Mrs Burch and Mrs Asprey who maintain a record of children's attendance rates and reasons for absence. Children causing concerns are also identified and appropriate procedures, as outlined in the policy are followed. In addition to this, Thursfield works closely with the Local Support Team to discuss individual cases and decide on appropriate next steps, hold 'late-gates' and look at whole-school improvements or concerns relating to attendance statistics.

Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend school. Our staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible. Colour coded letters will be sent home termly to inform the parents of their child's attendance.

GREEN GROUP

96% - 100%

WELL DONE - THIS IS EXCELLENT!

YELLOW GROUP

90.1% - 95.9%

LOW ATTENDANCE

RED GROUP

Less than 90%

PERSISTENT ABSENCE PUPIL

Due for Review: May 2019

Signed R Owen Chair of Governors

Signed E Bradbury Headteacher