



# Pikes Lane Primary School

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## Attendance and Punctuality Statutory Policy

LEADING SCHOOL | LEARNING SCHOOL | INCLUSIVE SCHOOL | HEALTHY SCHOOL | EXTENDED SCHOOL | REFLECTIVE SCHOOL

**Policy Leader:** Mrs V Wallace

**Linked Governor Sub Committee:** Health & Well-being, Safeguarding & Community Sub-Committee

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## Aim

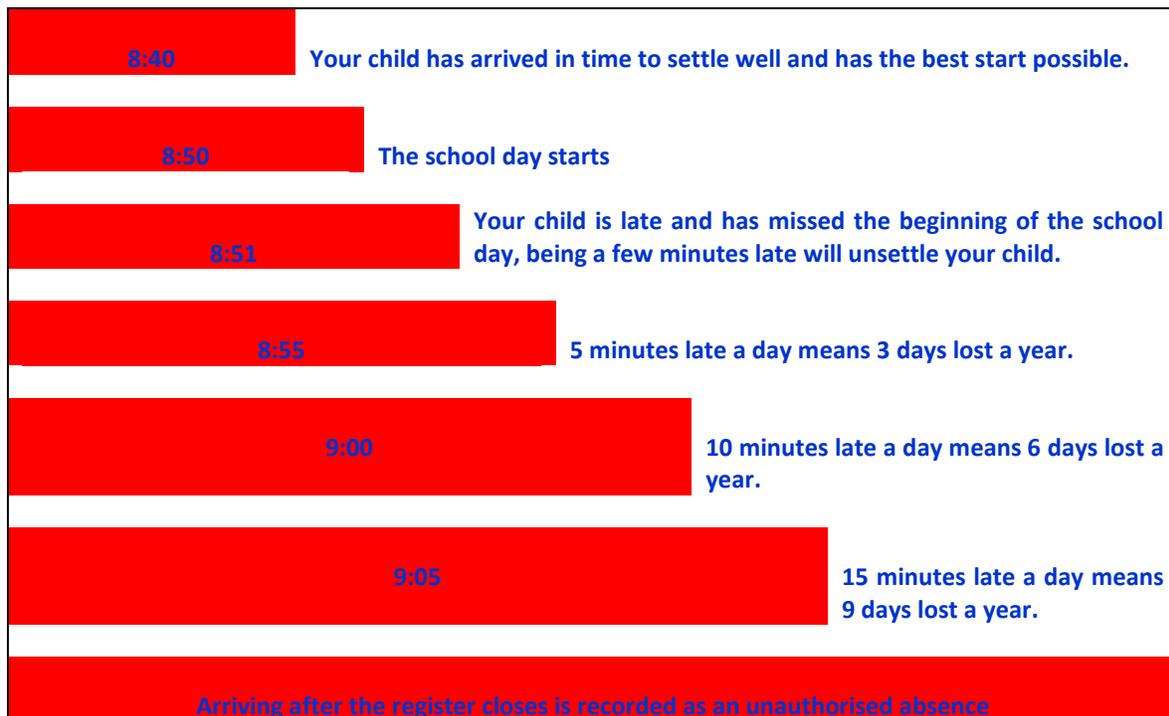
The school recognises that non-attendance and absence has a negative impact upon attainment and achievement. We will provide a welcoming, stimulating and structured learning environment, to encourage children to attend school. School will work closely with parents/carers and the local authority, to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly and punctually and to improve the overall attendance of pupils in school.

## Attendance, punctuality and achievement

When children are absent or late, this can create gaps in their education and prevent them from reaching their full potential. At Pikes Lane we colour code each child's attendance and insert this onto the child's assertive mentoring personal log. Letters are sent to parents if their child falls into the amber or red categories. The school target is 97%, we expect all our pupils to achieve this target.

Pikes Lane Attendance Assertive Mentoring		
Green	100%-97%	Expected Attendance
Amber	96.9%-93%	Risk of Underachievement
Red	92.9% and below	Severe risk of Underachievement

At Pikes Lane we monitor punctuality very closely and our lessons begin promptly at 8:50am. School is open from 8:40am in order for congestion to be reduced and to give all pupils a chance to arrive on time and settle for the day ahead. Arriving after 8:50am can have a detrimental effect on a child's progress. The graph below shows how being late can add up to a loss of learning:



As you can see, a child arriving 5 minutes late each day will miss 3 days of learning a year.

School finishes at 3:20pm. If there are any unforeseen circumstances as to why a parent is running late, they must contact school as soon as possible. If children are collected late on a regular basis, parents will be asked to make alternative child care arrangements. If children are not collected by 4pm and school have not received any communication from parents, school has a duty to contact the Police and Social Care.

### **Local Authority**

Parents have the primary responsibility for ensuring that children of compulsory school age receive a suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to ensure that parents meet these responsibilities. Attendance enforcement is carried out by the Local Authority Intervention Team who provides an important link between schools and families.

### **Governors**

The Governing Body of the school is actively engaged in promoting good attendance at the school by supporting and encouraging pupils and teachers in their efforts. They achieve this by:

- Delegating authority to a member of staff (Pupil Welfare Manager) who may 'authorise' absence on their behalf.
- Ensure the school abides by Government guidelines for the recording of school attendance.
- Attend meetings when necessary with the parents of Persistent Absentees.

### **School Staff**

A robust system is in place to ensure that staff, parents and pupils are aware of our attendance policy thus any concerns can be answered and support given. To assist in monitoring and controlling school attendance the school employs the following measures:

- Using the electronic registration system accurately and consistently in accordance with the Government guidelines.
- First day contact with parents of children who are absent from school without prior knowledge or parents have not made contact with the school (see Appendix 1 for procedures)
- Log kept regarding pupils out of school on appointments/agreed absence
- The promotion of school attendance being shared by everyone in the school
- Attendance guidelines being laid out in a parent friendly leaflet and made available to all parents both online and at the front office
- The collection and analysis of data about attendance to check pupils' progress against measurable outcomes
- Weekly attendance award and 'Beat The Bell' punctuality award being made to the highest classes
- Individual weekly attendance draw for all children with 100% for 1 week
- 100% wristbands/badges for a full term of 100% attendance
- Communication with parents weekly on the newsletter
- To provide support and intervention with families where required, utilising partner agencies such as family support team or School nurses to help support the family to increase attendance
- Meetings with the Head teacher for all parents who intend to take their child out of school during term time
- Regular reports to the Governing body about attendance.

School is required to tell the Local Authority if a pupil fails to attend regularly or has been absent for a continuous period of ten days and the absence is treated as unauthorised. School can notify the Local Authority earlier if there are areas of concern.

First day visits are conducted on the first day of school absence for any child who is subject to a Child Protection Plan or Interim Care Order and living at home. These visits are in order to check on the child's welfare, the reason for absence and to confirm an expected return date. These visits are carried out by the Early Intervention officer and/or the duty social worker, and feedback will be given to school.

### **Responsibilities of parents**

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, section 7 states that Parents have the prime responsibility for ensuring that registered pupils of compulsory school age attend school regularly. If a child does not attend regularly, parents will need to work in partnership with the school to resolve the problem. From 1 March 2001, parents found guilty of school attendance offences could be subject to a penalty of up to £2500 and/or a period of imprisonment for up to three months (see guidance).

### **School requires parents:**

- To work together with school staff to put the interests of the child first.
- To take an active interest in their child's school life.
- To ensure that their child attends school every day on time.
- To notify any absence on the first day of absence by 9.30 a.m.
- For a period of continuous illness – to telephone school each morning whilst absent (this ensures that the child is safe and not missing on the way to school)
- To inform school of an intended leave of absence on the appropriate school form at least two weeks before leave is required
- To provide appropriate documentation of medical appointments.
- To take extended leave in the school holidays.
- To attend any necessary meetings and respond as quickly as possible to any texts, letters and phone calls about their child's attendance.

Should a pupil be absent without contact from parents, this will be treated as a matter of concern for the child's welfare. Contact will be attempted by the school and external agencies will be involved where necessary.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absence, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parents, but at the same time may have to request the provision of medical evidence (Appointment card, Doctor's note or letter, prescription, medical certificate) or indeed contact the GP's surgery ourselves. The assistance of the School Nurse or the Health Visiting service may also be sought.

### **Pupils**

The school believes that all pupils should attend regularly if we are to encourage them to reach their full potential. Pupils should:

- Aim for 97% attendance and above, only being absent through genuine illness.
- Report to the main office if they arrive late in school.
- Do not leave the school premises during the school day without permission.

## **Pupil registration**

School ensures that an attendance register for all pupils on the school roll is taken twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. For each pupil, the register must be marked either as present, engaged in an approved educational activity away from the school site or absent. If the pupil is absent, the register must say whether or not the absence has been authorised by the school.

## **Authorised or unauthorised absence**

Authorised absence is absence with permission from an authorised representative of the school. This includes instances of absences for which a satisfactory explanation has been provided (e.g. illness).

Unauthorised absence is absence without permission from an authorised representative of the school. This includes all unexplained or unjustified absences.

The following is a list of some of the reasons given for school absence that will be unauthorised:

- Extended Leave
- Pupil/family members birthday
- Shopping
- Having a hair cut
- Preparing for a wedding
- Closure of sibling's school for INSET or other purpose / Closure of other local schools
- Sibling or parent has an appointment
- Poor weather
- Illness where the child is considered well enough to come to school
- Translating Duties
- Visiting embassies, passport offices, having passport photos taken or collecting relatives from the airport.

## **Appointments**

If a pupil has a medical appointment during the school day, parents must show a copy of the appointment card to the school office. If the pupil has a sibling in school, it is the parents' duty to ensure that the siblings arrive in school / collected from school on time. We are unable to authorise sibling's absence. If a child is taken ill during the school day or is unable to come to school due to illness, it is important that any other siblings attend/remain in school otherwise their absence will be marked as unauthorised.

## **Punctuality**

If a child is persistently late for school, this will be recorded by the office staff and appropriate action will be taken. After the child has been late three times, a warning letter will be sent to parents. If this continues and a child reaches five late marks, parents will be invited to school to meet the Head teacher to discuss problems and agree a course of action. Following this meeting, if the child continues to arrive after the register is closed, they will receive an unauthorised absence. This may lead to referral to the Local Authority for fining.

## **Extended Leave Government Regulations**

Amendments were made to The Education Regulations 2013, which removed all reference to family holidays and extended leave. The guidelines state that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time.

This means that **no term time holidays can be authorised.**

### **What This Will Mean:**

The legislation means that any absence for a holiday will be recorded as unauthorised. This can lead to a penalty notice being imposed by the Local Authority. The Local Authority will issue a fine of £60 per parent, to be paid within 21 days. After which, this will increase to £120.

We actively discourage all term-time holidays. Children are at school for a total of 190 days every academic year. Weekends account for 110 days, holidays account for 65 days. We feel therefore, that there is more than enough time/opportunity for holidays out of school time. With only 190 school days per year, it is essential that every attempt is made by parents/carers to get their child to school every day.

**If any child at Pikes Lane is absent for a period of 20 days or longer, the child will forfeit their place and be taken off roll, as places will be offered to children on the wait list.**

### **Appendix 1 - Attendance Procedures**

At Pikes Lane our primary concern is for the safety and welfare of our children and this is why we have a thorough system in place. We value our parents support and cooperation in this matter. When a child is absent from school, class teachers and office staff must follow strict procedures.

- If a child is absent from school in the morning with no known reason provided by the parents/carers in advance, they must be given an absent mark on the class register.
- The ESM will check SIMS and if there has been an explanation given as to the reason the child is absent, the appropriate mark will be transferred into SIMS. The ESM will then act upon any cases where a child's whereabouts is unknown. This includes texting or telephone calls to parents. In some cases, there may be a home visit conducted by a member of staff or the Early Intervention Team.
- The school office will take a list of all late comers and record this on the register.
- If a child arrives to school after registers have closed, this will be recorded as a late mark (L). Persistent lateness will be monitored by ESM who will contact the parents after 3 late marks to issue a warning, followed by an invitation to meet the Head teacher after 5 late marks.
- If no message has been received, staff **must** contact the parents to find out why a child is absent.
- Should a parent confirm as to why their child is absent, office staff or ESM must amend the SIMS record as appropriate with either an 'I' (illness), 'M' (medical/ dental appointment), 'C' (other authorised circumstances, such as family emergency, etc) or a 'O or G' (for any unauthorised reason, i.e. a holiday that has not been authorised by school).
- Short-term absence - Any standard absences will be managed by the ESM and the school office staff eg. reasons for absence, appointments, etc. But, there may be occasions when absences are referred to the DHT/HT eg. the reasons given for absence are questionable, and parents need to be spoken to/challenged by a senior member of staff.

### **Persistent Lateness/Absence**

- Extended Services and Pupil Welfare Manager, Class teachers as well as office staff must be vigilant and take note of any children who start to show a pattern of lateness or are regularly absent from school.
- If concerned, the absences will be discussed with the parent/ carer in order to draw their attention to the amount of class time their child is missing, in the hope of this being corrected.

**Things to look out for concerning lateness and absences are:**

- Reoccurring absences on the same day i.e. only being absent on Thursdays, etc.
- Having regular medical appointments with no explanation from parents as to what the medical issue may be, again especially on reoccurring days.
- In the case of children of whose parents share custody, being repeatedly late or absent when staying with one parent, compared with the other.
- Repeated late pick-ups after school.
- Continual 'illness' days for prolonged periods.
- Should staff see a pattern emerging, and after having conversed with parents with a print-out of their child's attendance, school still has concerns and little improvement has been made, ESM may feel the need to call a Child Action Meeting or then contact the Early Intervention Team who will decide on a course of action to try and rectify the situation.
- This intervention could be a home visit to parents to discuss any issues they may be having, or to set up a meeting with parents, school staff and an early intervention officer to see if there are any changes which can be made by those involved.
- If still no progress is made, and the number of unauthorised absences exceeds ten full days in one term, the early intervention team may feel that a monetary fine is necessary to encourage parents/ carers to ensure their child is in school regularly and on time.

**Please also see Pikes Lane Attendance Policy Leaflet for parents for more information.**