



Attendance Policy

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'This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all children, and expects our staff and volunteers to share this commitment'.

Aims

- To define the legal duties for the school and parents to ensure that children attend school regularly and on time,
- To set out roles and responsibilities for the school, parents and children,
- To set out the ways in which good attendance is promoted and the link made with educational achievement,
- To set out ways in which school can support parents in ensuring children attend school.

Principles

Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

Some children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted by the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never a good idea to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that good attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, not by the parents, as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.

School will promote holidays out of term time as under no circumstances will we authorise absence on the grounds of a holiday.

Procedures

If a child is absent from school, the parent should telephone school to report the absence.

Parents are requested to contact the school office by 9:30am each day to report their child's absence. If a child is absent from school and no telephone call or note has been received, school will contact parents to find out a reason by 10.00 a.m. These reasons are then recorded. School has to classify every half day absence as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why we always require information from parents about the reason for their child's absence.

The Head Teacher and Learning Mentor monitor weekly listings of attendance from the

start of the year and identify children with low attendance. Individual records are then monitored and actions decided upon. We will inform you of our concerns and you will be invited to attend a meeting with us in school in the first instance to discuss any issues.

If improvements are not made or in the event of non-attendance to the first meeting without communicating with us:

- The Big Community are contacted and a referral is made
- Big Community will contact you directly
- The Big Community arranges to meet with the responsible adult either at school or home
- If the reasons for absence are not appropriate then formal proceedings may be started.

These arrangements can be superseded by legal requirements as set out in National Guidance through actions including the Spotlighting Scheme

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the **parents'** responsibility to ensure that children attend school regularly and on time. It is also their responsibility to provide school with the reason for any absence. If a dental or doctor appointment is needed, this should be made out of school hours whenever possible

It is the **class teacher's** responsibility to:

- Mark the register at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions through the use of e-portal,
- Promote regular attendance and make the link with educational achievement,
- Raise any attendance concerns with the Head Teacher.

It is the responsibility of **administration staff** to:

- Carry out daily register checks for absence,
- Telephone parents if no reason for absence has been received by 10.00 a.m.,
- Produce absence reports,
- Produce weekly reports for the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher and Inclusion Coordinator.

It is the **Head Teacher's** responsibility to:

- Promote good attendance,
- Work with families to ensure that all children are able to attend school regularly and on time,

- Liaise with The Big Community to ensure children attend school regularly and on time,

It is **The Big Community's** responsibility to:

- Support the school in promoting and supporting whole school attendance policies,
- Provide advice on proven good practice,
- Work together with school on programmes designed to improve attendance levels,
- Undertake work with individuals,
- Undertake family centred work,
- Act on referrals made by school in the most appropriate way,
- Initiate statutory proceedings on behalf of the Local Authority,

It is important that everyone works together to make sure that all children get the most from their schooling.

Classification of Absences

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness or other unavoidable cause.

There are only three grounds for authorisation:

-the child has been granted "leave of absence" by the proprietor of the school

-the child is unable to attend through sickness or other "unavoidable cause" (if the child's attendance is of concern (below 95%) then medical proof will be required for absences to be authorised); religious holiday, or LA has not made suitable transport arrangements where required to do so

-the child is attending another school or unit where he or she is also registered.

Leave of absence

If the child is not sick or absent for some other "unavoidable cause", the absence can only be authorised as "leave" by the school not by the parent. Leave can only be granted on certain grounds. For example:

approved and licensed "performances" such as pantomimes, TV, film, professional sport, modelling etc. at the instruction of the LEA.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- parents keeping children off school unnecessarily,
- a day off for a birthday,
- truancy before or during the school day,
- absences which have never been properly explained,
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark,
- children away on holiday during school term-time,
- school has the right to remove children from their register if extended leave is taken. It is then the responsibility of the parent to apply for a new place at the school if one is available at the time.

It is not appropriate for the school to authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, day trips etc. Leave may, however, be granted in an emergency e.g. bereavement or for medical appointments which must be in school time in regular attendance is below 95%, then medical evidence will need to be provided in the form of a doctor's note, appointment card or medicine bottle with the child's name printed on the label.

Before 9.30am, a late mark will be given to any child who arrives in school. After this time and the registers have closed, this will be classed as an unauthorised absence. This time is 30 minutes after the start of the morning session.

We are a Spotlight School

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the The Big Community. They will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these Officers can use court proceedings (spotlighting) to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and or 3 months imprisonment.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact The Big Community themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office.

Information about individual school targets, projects and special initiatives

The school has adopted the following attendance targets and special projects:

- weekly attendance certificates and trophies for classes,
- best attending classes shown on notice board,

- half-termly and annual Attendance Awards,
- Spotlighting group for persistent absences or lates.

The target for attendance is 96% and all classes are made aware of their progress towards this target.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Information from the CMIS management system will be used to provide data relating to attendance.

Class attendance will be monitored by the Senior Management Team on a termly basis.

Attendance of specific groups of children will be monitored on a termly basis by the Head Teacher and the Learning Mentor.

Termly attendance summary reports are presented to the Governing Body.

Feedback will be given to parents through newsletters.

Evaluation of strategies used with individuals or families will be monitored and evaluated weekly by the Head Teacher, Learning Mentor and the Inclusion Coordinator.