

<b>Attendance</b>	
<b>Policies &amp; Procedures</b>	

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<b>Owned by:</b>	Governors
<b>Status:</b>	Non statutory

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### Approvals

Area/Title	Name	Signature	Date
Chair of Governors	Gavin Bray	_____	___/___/___
Headteacher	Anna Ballance	_____	___/___/___

### Introduction

Regular attendance at school is essential to ensure children make the best possible progress both academically and socially. All children on roll are expected to attend school every day as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so.

Poor attendance can seriously affect each child's:

- Attainment in school
- Relationships with other children and their ability to form lasting friendships
- Confidence to attempt new work and to learn alongside others.

The Governors and Headteacher, in partnership with parents, have a duty to promote full attendance at school.

### Parental Responsibility

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and arrives on time. Pupils are expected to arrive between 8.40 and 8.45am, when the doors are opened and children go to their classes. All pupils who arrive late must report to the school office where they are registered.

**It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent before 9.00am.**

### Definitions

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school (not by the parents) as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**.

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent has telephoned the school or written a note to explain the absence.

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the Headteacher. Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no authorisation has been given. This includes:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy during the school day
- Absences that have never been properly explained
- Holidays not agreed.

## **Authorising absence**

Only the Headteacher can authorise absence for approved reasons. The absence must be unavoidable. The Headteacher is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation and if the absence is not authorised, parents will be notified.

Authorised absence codes will only be used after there has been some kind of communication between the parent and the school. The following are examples of the kinds of absence that **will not be authorised**:

- Persistent non-specific illness e.g. poorly/unwell
- Absence of siblings if one child is ill
- Parental illness except in case of emergencies
- Oversleeping
- Inadequate clothing / uniform
- Medical / dental appointments of more than half a day without good reason
- Child / family birthday
- Shopping trip

## **Leave of Absence / Holiday Absence**

Time off for family holidays cannot be authorised. The Headteacher has the discretion, in exceptional circumstances, to authorise leave absence; for example for service personnel who are prevented from taking holidays outside term time or in times of crisis.

Applications for Leave of Absence **MUST** be made in writing at least 4 weeks in advance of the requested date.

Consideration is given to each request before a decision is reached on behalf of the Governing Body. Each case will be judged on its merits in line with the criteria outlined above. The decision is final and once the decision to not authorise the leave has been taken, it cannot be authorised retrospectively.

## **Illness and Medical Appointments**

When a child is unwell, parents should contact the school before 9.00am on the first day of absence, giving the reason for the absence. If they know their child will also be absent the following day, they should make this clear in their call.

When a child is absent, the class teacher will record the absence in the register. As part of our Safeguarding Procedures, the school office will endeavour to contact the parent or carer if no message has been received regarding the reason for the absence to verify that the child is safe.

## **General Principles**

- Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours;
- If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment;
- If the child is absent due to vomiting or diarrhoea, they should not return to school for the next 48 hours after the last bout of sickness. This is to reduce the risk of infection to other children and adults at school.
- Where no reason is given for an absence, the absence will be recoded as unauthorised.
- Attendance figures are reviewed every half term. If attendance falls below 90% in a half term, the parent may receive a letter highlighting the poor attendance and asking for an improvement.
- If attendance continues to be an issue, the school may ask for the parents to produce a doctor's note for future absences.
- If there is still no improvement, a parenting contract may be issued.

Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. However, each case is different and the school acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case. Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding what intervention strategies to apply.

## **Children Missing Education**

If families move away from the area, or wish to transfer their child to another school, a Leaver's form should be completed. Children cannot be removed from the school roll until we have been notified by another school that a place has been offered and accepted. Children who stop attending and cannot be traced are referred to the Local Authority.

## **Lateness**

The class register is taken at 8.50am and at the start of the afternoon session by the class teacher. Pupils arriving after these times must report to reception. The pupil will be marked as either late before registration has closed or, after 9.10, they will be marked as late after registration has closed. Frequent lateness is disruptive to learning, both for the child concerned and the class. This will be discussed with parents and targets for improvement will be set. Frequent or regular lateness can provide grounds for prosecution.

## **Recognition of Positive Attendance**

The prime benefit derived from regular attendance is that continuity and progression in learning are ensured. Certificates are awarded at the end of the Summer term for 100% attendance; this is celebrated in the final whole school assembly.

Where positive impact is required, all staff in contact with the child will take extra care to welcome the child each morning, praise punctual attendance and acknowledge the effort the child has made.