

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Mission Statement

Together with Jesus we learn and grow in faith

Introduction

The Government expects all pupils to be punctual to their lessons and attend school regularly. Regular attendance is crucial for social development and for children to fulfil their academic potential. Missing lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and can jeopardize development of life skills necessary for the world of work and adult life. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less both in primary and secondary school. Parents/ carers have a responsibility to ensure that their child receives a full-time education and attends schools on a regular basis. There is NO legal entitlement to leave for a family holiday. Schools should encourage and highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

As from September 2015 the government has made several key changes to school attendance. One of the most significant changes was to 'Persistent Absenteeism' now any child whose attendance falls below 90% is considered persistently absent and will be closely monitored and may result in EWO involvement.

Holidays taken in term time continue to be unauthorised and result in a fine unless they meet the exceptional circumstances as outlined below.

Aim:

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all children receive their full entitlement to education and attend school regularly.

School Responsibility

- To follow the agreed school systems and protocols consistently.
- To encourage and highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Celebrate and reward good attendance both individually and by displaying achievements.
- Keep an attendance register, as required by law, to be taken at the start of the first session of the day and once during the second (afternoon) session.
- Use the appropriate registration codes and record them electronically. Monitor and reduce absence; acting early to reduce patterns of absence.

- Follow-up any absences to ascertain the reason and identify whether they are approved or not.
- If necessary the Home school link officer will carry out a home visit to ascertain further information and offer the family support.
- Inform parents/carers of details of their child's attendance and absence in school reports.
- Liaise regularly with the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) and report any concerns. The EWO may contact or visit parent/carers if necessary to ensure support is given to the family.
- All holidays except in exceptional circumstances will be unauthorised and fines will be issued.
- Inform parents that request for leave of absence to return to the country of origin, will mean the child is will be removed from class register for the duration of the visit as advised by EWO
- To ensure lateness is recorded on the school Inventory System.
- To monitor punctuality and identifying issues or concerns.
- Invite parents in to discuss any issues or concerns.

Parent Responsibility

- Parents/carers have a duty to ensure that their child receives full-time education and attends school on a regular basis.
- To ensure child/children arrive to school on time avoiding unnecessary lateness.
- If a child is absent on any occasion, parents/carers are expected to provide an explanation.
- To provide medical evidence to support all absences if your child is deemed persistently absent i.e. falls below 90% attendance.
- An 'authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for the absence.
- If an explanation for the absence is not provided, or felt to be appropriate, it will be recorded as an 'unauthorised absence'.
- For all absences parents/carers are required to ring school on the first morning of absence and to provide a letter of explanation when their child returns.
- Where possible, medical or dental appointments should be arranged outside of school hours. However, if unavoidable, expected absence due to a medical or dental appointments should be reported to school at the earliest opportunity.
- Parents should recognise that it may be damaging to their child's education if holidays are taken during term-time, any pupil's absence can disrupt teaching routines. The law says that parents/carers *do not have the right* to take their child out of school for a holiday during term-time. Taking a holiday in term-time is discouraged. An application for a holiday must be made in advance in writing and will only be considered by the Head Teacher in the exceptional circumstances below:-

“For service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term-time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil’s education”

Evidence would have to be provided from parents employers to back up these requests.

The Head Teacher has the final decision whether any requests meet the criteria outlined above. If a child is taken away from school without permission the absence will be marked as ‘unauthorised’ and will result in a fixed penalty holiday fine being issued.

School Systems and Protocols:

- Registers are checked on a daily basis. Children who are absent are identified daily and the schools’ record system is cross referenced for any messages.
- Initial contact is made with the parent requesting them to confirm reasons for absence.
- Home School Family Link Officers report attendance issues and concerns daily / weekly on an individual needs basis to the appropriate Deputy Head Teacher.
- Deputies may then proceed to parent interview or EWO.
- School follows a variety of strategies to support whole school attendance including:
 - Class rewards in assembly
 - School attendance display and 100% stars for each class.
 - Termly certificates
 - Attendance Mascots – Quinten Quackers / Everyday Eddie tokens are given to the children daily.
 - Half termly traffic light letters
 - When necessary letters are sent requesting medical evidence for all absences for children who are classed as persistently absent.
- Fortnightly, the Deputies will meet with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and discuss particular concerns. Actions and ways forward are agreed as listed below:
 - Stage 1 – A letter is sent out to highlight potential attendance concern.
 - Stage 2 - Meeting with Home School Link Officer
 - Stage 3 – Meeting with appropriate Deputy Head Teacher
 - Stage 4 – Meeting with EWO regarding next steps and support systems
 - Stage 5 – If attendance is still a concern a Fixed Penalty Warning will be issued.
 - Stage 6 – If still no improvement or engagement court action will be initiated.

Governor Responsibility

The governing body of the school has a responsibility to monitor attendance and punctuality. They will request termly reports from the Head Teacher.

The governors have set this policy and have overall responsibility for it. It will be reviewed on an annual basis.