

Nunnery Wood Primary School Attendance Policy

Introduction

Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunity available to them.

This policy is intended to ensure every child's regular and punctual attendance at this school. We strive to work in partnership with parents/carers to give every child the opportunity to develop to their maximum potential academically, socially and emotionally.

Aims

- To ensure good levels of attendance for all children
- To raise awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality for all children
- To promote positive and welcoming provision in which children feel safe, secure and valued
- To ensure attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently
- To ensure that all parents/carers are aware of the processes to follow in relation to absence from school or in the event of lateness

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

- To set and monitor progress towards annual targets for attendance, in consultation with the Head Teacher
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy
- To compare attendance rates at the school with national benchmarks

School/Attendance and Family Liaison Co-Ordinator

- To ensure that effective systems are in place to accurately reflect individual pupil, group and whole school attendance patterns
- To monitor individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality
- To work in partnership with key agencies in cases where attendance and/or punctuality becomes a concern
- To make contact with parents/carers regarding any concerns about their child's attendance. (This may be by telephone, face to face and/or in writing)
- Take appropriate action regarding attendance and punctuality
- To offer support to parents/carers experiencing difficulties that affect children's attendance
- To support parents/carers to fulfil their legal duty to promote regular attendance
- To refer the child/family to appropriate agencies and/or the Local Authority when necessary
- To review and update the attendance policy

Louise Thomas
Attendance and Family Liaison Co-ordinator – Nunnery Wood Primary School
September 2020

Parents/Carers

- To ensure regular and punctual attendance.
Children are welcomed into the school at 8.35am and lessons start promptly at 8.40am.
Covid 19 - We are currently operating staggered start and finish times. All children need to be on site by 9am. The last collection time is 3.30pm.
The school day ends at 3.05pm for Reception children and 3.10pm for the rest of the school. We expect all children to be on time to start their day and to be collected promptly at the end of the day as School staff are not always available to stay after school with your children as they often have other work commitments
- If a child arrives after 8.40am we expect the parent/carer to bring their child to the office, where they must sign them in, giving the reason for lateness; this will be recorded as an official late, 'L' in the register
- Any child arriving after 9am will receive an absent mark for the whole of the morning session using either code 'U' or 'M' if the child has attended a medical appointment. Statistically, lateness marked 'U' counts as unauthorised absence
- To contact the school office on the morning of **every** day of absence to give a reason for the absence and suggest a likely return date

Non-urgent Medical/Dental Appointments

- Where possible, to arrange all non-urgent medical appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, advance notice should be given and parents/carers must sign the child out at the school office, and sign back in again upon return.
- **Leave of absence for holidays in Term Time**
Regulations came into force on September 1st 2013 which makes it clear that Head Teachers are not permitted to grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. There are very strict guidelines determining what constitutes exceptional circumstances and even in such circumstances, the head teacher does not have to authorise the absence. **Family holidays in term time do not count as exceptional circumstances.**
- If parents/carers want their child to have leave of absence during term time, the request must be put in writing to the Head Teacher at least 4 weeks before the required leave date. The request will not be granted unless the Head Teacher (taking into account statutory guidance) deems the circumstances for making the request to be exceptional. If the leave is not granted but still taken, the pupil's absence will be marked as unauthorised which **may** lead to a referral being made to the Local Authority, requesting a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued.
- Each request will be considered on an individual basis.

Other Absence

- Other absence from school will be considered on an individual basis and a decision will be made whether to authorise the absence.

Authorised or Unauthorised Absence

- **"Authorised"** absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as a satisfactory reason for absence.

The following may be reasons for authorising absences:

- Illness
- Family bereavements
- Medical and dental appointments where proof is available
- Days of religious observance, within certain parameters
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion until removed from roll or re-instated
- Traveller absence

All other absence must be regarded as **"unauthorised"**.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Registers are checked on a daily basis in order to identify any absentees. If a child is absent and no reason has been provided for the absence by their parent/carer, a member of the admin team will;
 - Send a text to the parent/carer asking them to contact school that day, to explain the reason for absence
- Attendance data is collected weekly to establish patterns of irregular attendance. This includes cases where there may be:
 - Persistent Absence
 - Incomplete weeks
 - Monday and Friday absences
 - Lateness
 - Periods of extended absence
 - Periods of "unauthorised" absence
 - Periods of absence for leave taken in term time

The Head Teacher and the Attendance and Family Liaison Co-Ordinator will discuss the impact of the School's Attendance Policy and the strategies used to promote good attendance at least annually and will ensure the Governors are kept informed of the whole school's attendance percentage.

The Governors and the Head Teacher will set an annual target of attendance and review this annually at its first meeting. The attendance target for Academic year 2020/2021 is 96.5%.

Covid 19

We are living in unprecedented times during the Covid 19 pandemic and are all having to adapt our daily lives. The government have said that it is now mandatory for children to return to school and attend regularly. We will continue to work closely with parents/carers during these challenging times.