

Attendance Policy



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Review: July 2019

Statement of intent

- The aim of this policy is to outline the school's policy and procedures with regard to the attendance of children who are recorded as being on the school roll.
- The school will record and monitor attendance in accordance both with the statutory requirements and with the principle that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to a child's educational and social progress.
- We aim to work together with parent/carers to ensure that all children registered at our school attend both regularly and punctually.
- Procedures in this policy take in to consideration statutory and non-statutory guidance from the Department for Education, (DFE) and LA.

Roles and Responsibilities

The law requires children aged 5 – 16 years to attend school on a daily basis.

Parents'/ Carers' Responsibilities

1. Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend on a regular and full time basis.
2. Parents/carers should ensure that if their child is to be absent from school for any unavoidable reason, such as sickness, they should contact the school as soon as possible; this should be the first morning of absence and then subsequent mornings. This should be done by phone or in person. The phone line is available 24 hours a day in order to leave a message.

We follow the advice from the Health Protection Agency and adhere to the 48 hour rule at Moldgreen Community Primary School. This means if a child/adult vomits or has diarrhoea then they must have 48 hours clear of symptoms before returning to school.

3. Parents may not authorise their child's absence – only the school can do this on the basis of the explanation provided by the parents/carers. (Should there fail to be a satisfactory reason supplied the child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised.)
4. Parents should ensure their child arrives at school in time for the start of registration at 8:55 am. Key Stage 1 children should line up in front of the school and KS2 children will be met on the top playground. There will be an adult in both playgrounds until 9:05 am. After this point children should report to the school office. All Key Stage 1 children must report with an adult. Nursery starts at 8:50 am and 12:30 pm.
5. Any child arriving after class registers close at 9.05am will be classed as late. Children arriving after 9:30am will be entered as U (unauthorised) unless they have been to a medical appointment and parents bring the appointment card with them (or text message from the hospital). All appointments, if at all possible, should be outside the school day or during the holidays. We realise in some circumstances this is not possible.

If a child has a persistent late record parent/carers will be asked into school to meet with the Attendance Officer to resolve the problem.

6. Parent/carers can approach school staff at any time for support if they are having problems getting children to school regularly and on time.
7. Parents should avoid booking holidays/leave of absence during term time. In line with Government guidelines, absences during term time will only be granted for 'exceptional circumstances'; holidays DO NOT qualify as 'exceptional circumstances'. If there is an exceptional circumstance, a request must be made, in writing, to the Head teacher at least three weeks in advance of the leave of absence requested. A leave of absence request form is available from the main office. A letter will then be sent back from school.

An exceptional circumstance could be:-

- A bereavement of a **close** family member.
- A family needs to be together because of a serious and significant traumatic event.
- Visiting seriously ill relative- end of life imminent.
- A parent/carers is in the armed forces.

In the majority of these cases authorised absence will be given for the day. If the circumstances dictate that the family need to travel a significant distance up to a further 2 days may be authorised.

If a holiday or a leave of absence is taken in term time which has not been authorised, a Penalty Notice may be issued by Kirklees. The Penalty Notice is for £60, for each parent of each child, if paid within 21 days, and £120 if paid after this date but within 28 days. Repeated unauthorised term-time holidays may result in prosecution. In such cases the Head teacher will give consideration to requesting that a Penalty Notice be issued to the parents by the LA, in line with the agreed Kirklees Code of Conduct. Penalty Notices have now replaced prosecution in cases where Headteachers consider that parents are failing in their duty to ensure the regular attendance of their children at school. The school recognises, however, that this sanction is only to be used as a last resort and that all parties will work together positively to ensure that children attend school regularly in order to achieve their best.

Children having more than 5 days unauthorised leave of absence over the school year will also have their details passed on to Kirklees and this could result in a fine being issued.

Families taking children on unauthorised year on year will lead to Kirklees Council taking the parents straight to prosecution which could lead to a criminal record and a fine up to £1,000.

Consequences of Unauthorised Leave

1. The possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued (to each parent for each child).

2. The possibility of losing the school place, and the likelihood of being re-admitted to the school.
3. The possibility of prosecution under section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for repeat offences of unauthorised leave of absence.
4. The possibility of a fine of up to £2,500 or 3 months imprisonment for non-payment of a penalty notice should the case go to court.

Teachers' responsibilities

1. Teachers are responsible for marking the register twice a day, at the start of the morning and afternoon session.
2. Teachers will mark children present, but will leave an N (no reason yet provided for absence) if the child is not present. The office will fill in the rest, using the agreed LA codes to record reasons for any absence.
3. Teachers will emphasise any issues arising from frequent absences and/or lateness at consultation afternoons/evenings.

Home and School Development Worker's (HSDW) Responsibilities

1. The HSDW will contact parent/carers on the first day of absence if school has not received any contact by 9.20 am.
2. A record will be kept of persistent lateness, including times and reasons. These will be communicated to the Headteacher on at least a weekly basis. If there are any concerns, the parent/carer will be invited to a meeting with the HSDW in a letter which outlines the concerns.
3. If absence levels reach 10%, each case will be discussed with the Headteacher, and if it is deemed appropriate, a letter outlining the percentage of attendance will be sent to parent/carers, which also outlines how important it is to attend school. A meeting with the parent/carer may also be requested.
4. Absence figures will be produced for each Governing Body meeting, together with a breakdown of reasons for non-attendance.
5. The HSDW will liaise with the Attendance and Pupil Support Officer regarding individual unauthorised absences of 10%, and in the monitoring of the registers.

The Headteacher

1. The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that registers are completed correctly and stored appropriately.
2. The Headteacher will ensure that the school's policy and procedures for ensuring attendance at school will be communicated to parents and other interested parties through the school prospectus and at least termly reminders in the school newsletter.
3. The Headteacher will meet weekly with the HSDW to discuss any attendance/lateness issues, and the way forward with these.

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Request for Term Time Absence

Parents do not have an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. Head Teachers are only able to grant Leave of Absence in exceptional circumstances e.g. family bereavement and significant medical needs. School policy states that more than 5 days unauthorised absences in any one term will result in the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice, any holiday taken in term time will incur a £60 fine for each child and each parent.

Parents wishing to apply for their child to have leave from school should complete this form and return it to school for authorisation. Thank you.

PARENTS SECTION

| | | | |
|---|-------|------------------|----------------|
| Surname of child | | First name | |
| Date of Birth | | Class | |
| Surname of parent/guardian | | First name | |
| Address of child | | | |
| Post code | | Telephone number | |
| Reason for absence | | | |
| Length of absence applied for (total number of school days) | | From | To |
| Previous absence applied for: | Dates | | Number of days |

Parent/guardian's signature _____

SCHOOL SECTION

| | |
|---|---|
| Absence authorised for _____ days. Authorised by _____ | Absence unauthorised Reason. _____ _____ _____ Signed by _____ |
|---|---|

Must be signed by Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher



committed to
inclusive staff
development