



Attendance Policy

Evidence of intentions and practice - for the information of staff, governors, parents, LA, OFSTED and DfE

Prepared by:
Mrs S Waller
Head

Approved by:
Finance and Resources

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PARKSTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

1 Introduction

Good attendance and punctuality are essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills, knowledge and attitudes that will equip them for life. It is important to create a culture in which attendance is 'normality' and pupils, parents and staff expect that good attendance is valued and is an achievement within itself.

2 Aims

- To ensure that every pupil will arrive punctually for the start of morning and afternoon school.
- That pupils, parents and staff recognise and value the importance of attendance.
- To improve the overall attendance figure for our school and to maintain a percentage figure in line with LA and Government expectations.
- To encourage regular attendance through whole school and individual incentives.
- To work together with the Admissions Section of the LA, through regular contact with the Education Welfare Officer and to target children with irregular attendance.

2.2 School Attendance Target - The minimum attendance target laid down by OFSTED is 95%. A persistent absence is acknowledged when a child's attendance falls below 85%.

3 Registers

3.1 Electronic registration takes place at the start of each morning and afternoon session

3.2 Electronic registers are closed no later than half an hour after opening times. All children who have not arrived by this time will be marked absent. Pupils arriving after this time will be recorded as late.

4 Absences and Late Arrivals

4.1 The school operates a 'first day call' policy. At close of the register each morning the admin assistant will check registers for any first day absences and make every effort to contact the parent/carer of any absent child to verify the reason for the absence. This will only be necessary if the school has not already received notification from the parent. Teachers should ensure that, if they are informed directly by the parent/carer, a note is made in the electronic register. If a pupil is late, then the parent must sign their child in at the front office and they are handed a notice which informs them of the importance of attendance and arriving for school on time.

- 4.2 If a child does not return to school for the afternoon session and no reason has been given then the Admin Assistant will attempt to make contact with the parent/carer.
- 4.3 It should be noted that the school and not the parent authorises absences.**
- 4.4 All verbal reasons for absence will be recorded in writing indicating the date and name of the adult giving the reason for absence. A simple post-it message will suffice. All recorded reasons will be kept as they could be required for future court proceedings. They will be returned to the office.
- 4.5 If no reason is given, the child's absence will be recorded as 'unauthorised'.
- 4.6 It is the school's policy to encourage promptness at all times. School starts at 8.55am in the morning and 1.15pm in the afternoon. Children arriving after 9.25am, and after 1.45pm, after the register has closed, will be deemed as late and entered into a late book in the school office. Letters to parents regarding punctuality, unauthorised absence and non-attendance are an important part of the school's attendance policy. The school will regularly remind parents about the need to try to avoid taking holidays during term time. Lates will be monitored on a regular basis by the Admin Assistant, the Head and, if necessary, the EWO.
- 4.7 The school has adopted and follows the Children Missing Education protocol provided by the local authority.

5 Holidays during term time

- 5.1 **The legislation on school attendance for holidays in term time has changed from 1 September 2013.** Leave of absence can now **only** be granted during term time if there are exceptional circumstances. The exceptional circumstances, agreed by the Governing Body for Parkstone Primary School in authorising a holiday in term time are as follows:
- Service Personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term-time
 - Acute crisis within the family, where the family needs to spend time together to support each other
 - Court order/formal agreement where parents have separated
- 5.2 In response to any holiday request, the governors have agreed to adopt and use Appendix A provided by the Senior Education Officer of the Local Authority.
- 5.3 If a child is taken out of school for an unauthorised holiday Appendices 2 or 3 may be used. The school is now required to notify the Local Authority (Appendix 4) who then may issue a Penalty Notice fine of £60 to be paid within 21 days. If no payment is received the Penalty Notice will increase to £120 to be paid within 28 days.

6 Roles and Responsibilities

- 6.1 **Head**
The Head, with the Senior Admin Officer, will meet regularly to review pupils' attendance and take appropriate action as outlined in the policy. The school will obtain support from the LA's EWO service and will make a referral to them for individuals when necessary.

6.2 Staff

The teaching and designated non-teaching staff are responsible for monitoring attendance and for following the agreed practices within the attendance policy. In order for the attendance and punctuality policy to be effective it must be consistently applied over the whole school. Where a referral to the Educational Welfare officer is necessary the school will provide evidence of all action taken.

6.3 Parents

Parents are responsible for sending their children to school on time. Non attendance should be restricted to illness, medical appointments or family bereavement. Please see Section 5 re holidays during term time. First day absence should be notified to the office by a telephone call or reason for absence may be given in the form of a letter on the day that the child returns to school.

6.4 Children

Children will be expected to arrive at school on time and demonstrate a positive attitude towards good attendance.

6.5 Governors

The Governing Body is responsible for monitoring attendance in cohorts throughout the school. Governors will play a strategic role in scrutinising attendance data and evaluating practice within the policy and will be kept informed through the termly head's report.

7 Attendance Incentives and Rewards

7.1 The school has a weekly attendance trophy, which is awarded each Monday to the class with the highest attendance percentage for the previous week. A whole school attendance display charts the achievements of each class over time.

7.2 Children who achieve 100% attendance in a half term receive a prize. If they then have 100% attendance for the whole term they receive a badge (autumn: bronze, spring: silver and summer: gold). Each term all the pupils who achieve above 97% attendance go into a draw to win a substantial prize (for e.g a bike in the summer term). In addition, children who achieve a 100% attendance record each term are also awarded with a certificate.

8 Monitoring of Attendance policy

The Personnel Committee and Senior Management Team are responsible for ensuring that the policy is applied consistently across the whole school.

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Not agreeing to absence – sent within 5 school days of request received

Date

To Parent/ Carer of

Address

Dear Parent/ Carer

TERM-TIME HOLIDAY LEAVE OF ABSENCE

As you know, pupils of school age must, by law, attend school regularly. If your child is to be away from school you need to ask for leave of absence and for this absence to be approved (authorised), which it will be when there is a good reason. You cannot yourself authorise a child's absence. This school, the Adult, Children & Family Services and many parents are working in partnership to enable children to reach their full potential and this requires regular attendance at school.

The legislation on school attendance for holidays in term time has changed from 1st September 2013 so that I am unable grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The exceptional circumstances agreed by the Governing Body for **(name of school)** in authorising a holiday in term time is/are:

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I would ask you to think again about this request for XXXXXXXXX to be out of school. I think it is important that all parents should be aware of the implications of taking holidays during term-time as this can seriously disrupt their child's progress and achievements. Not only do children miss the teaching provided on the days they are away, they are also less prepared for the lessons building on this learning after their return. XXXXXX's progress may be seriously slowed and there may also be a future risk of underachievement. Your child's absence can also disrupt the work of other pupils in the class, who may suffer as a result, and there is likely to be additional work and planning for teachers.

As your request is not covered by the exceptional circumstances I am not currently willing to agree to (authorise) XXXXXXXXX's absence for this holiday. I look forward to hearing from you should you wish to discuss this further. Please contact xxxxxxxxxx if you wish to make an appointment to see me.

If however you take XXXXXXXXX out of school for a unauthorised holiday, I am required to notify the Local Authority who then may issue a Penalty Notice fine of £60 to be paid within 21 days, if no payment is received the Penalty Notice will increase to £120 to be paid within 28 days.

Yours sincerely

Head

No notification or request to school for a holiday – sent within 5 school days of pupil returning to school

Dear (Parent name)

RE : Pupil name D.O.B

Following my letter dated ##, informing you that your holiday request submitted would not be authorised, I am disappointed that you have taken holiday leave of absence.

This action makes working in partnership more difficult to achieve, shows a disregard for your child's education and gives a message that school is not important. Unauthorised absence from school is a serious matter and can lead to Penalty Notice being issued.

This absence for XXXXXXXXXXXX has been recorded as unauthorised absence and I am required to notify the Local Authority regarding this absence from school. An unauthorised holiday in term time can result in a Penalty Notice fine of £60 to be paid within 21 days, if no payment is received the Penalty Notice will increase to £120 to be paid within 28 days.

Please ensure your child attends school regularly and that you work in partnership with my staff and I to ensure that XXXXXXXXXXXX catches up with the work missed. If you wish to discuss this matter further please contact the school for an appointment.

Yours sincerely

Headt

No request to school for a holiday – to be issued within 5 school days of pupils return to school

Dear (Parent name)

RE : Pupil name D.O.B

I am disappointed that you have taken holiday leave of absence without any discussion with my staff or myself.

As you know, pupils of school age must, by law, attend school regularly. If your child is to be away from school you need to ask for leave of absence and for this absence to be approved (authorised), which it will be when there is a good reason. You cannot yourself authorise a child's absence. This school, the Adult, Children & Family Services and many parents are working in partnership to enable children to reach their full potential and this requires regular attendance at school.

The legislation on school attendance for holidays in term time has changed from 1st September 2013 so that **I am unable** grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The exceptional circumstances agreed by the Governing Body for **(name of school)** in authorising a holiday in term time is/are:

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Please ensure your child attends school regularly and that you work in partnership with my staff and I to ensure that XXXXXXXXXXXX catches up with the work missed. If you wish to discuss this matter further please contact the school for an appointment.

Yours sincerely

Head

If no request made for holiday, please evidence how school was made aware that holiday had taken place.

Date of agreement that the school's Governing Body agreed amendments to the school's policy in not authorising holidays in term time except in exceptional circumstances:

How were parents informed – please attach copy

Any further information relevant to this referral:

To be completed by Education Welfare Service Support Officer:

Penalty Notice issue date:

Date school notified PN issued:

Date:..... Headteacher:.....

Please return the completed form to Senior Education Welfare Officer, Prosecutions.
Treasury Building, 2nd Floor, Guildhall Road, KUH, HU1 2AB Fax 613235

THE PENALTY NOTICE WILL ONLY BE PROCESSED WITH ALL THE RELEVANT DOCUMENTS ATTACHED.

ewo/archive/ref-formC