**The Priory Parish C of E Primary School**



**Attendance Policy**

December 2016

To be reviewed in December 2017

Values:

‘Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfill their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school’.

# School Attendance: Statutory guidance and departmental advice, DFE Aug 2013

The Priory Parish expects the highest attendance and punctuality from all pupils, at all times.

We support pupils and their families to ensure that excellent attendance is achieved.

• Wirral Education Authorities target for attendance is 96%.

• At The Priory Parish C of E Primary School, we are continuously working towards our goal of 100% attendance for all pupils.

# Overall Aims:

• To ensure that every child is safeguarded and their right to education is protected.

• To ensure the school attendance target is achieved, through rewards and incentives for good attendance and punctuality.

• To raise standards and ensure every child reaches their full educational potential, through a high level of school attendance and punctuality.

• To ensure all the stakeholders, governors, parents, pupils and staff receive regular communication, about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

• To keep accurate, up-to-date records and have a robust and rigorous system for analysing attendance.

• To identify causes of low attendance/punctuality with individuals, classes and groups of pupils and address them.

• To work with external agencies, in order to address barriers to attendance and overcome them.

# Rights and responsibilities for attendance/punctuality:

## The Legal Framework:

There are legal obligations on:

• The parent(s) to secure education for their children, whether at school or otherwise, to send them to school regularly once they are on the register

• The School to register attendance and notify the Local Authority of absence from school

• The Local Authority to provide education and to enforce attendance.

## Head Teacher:

• To be responsible for the overall management and implementation of the policy.

• To deal with parental requests for extended leave in line with Wirral Local Authority policies and procedures.

• To consider the use of Penalty Notices, in line with Wirral Local Authority policies and procedures.

## Parent Liaison Worker:

• To lead on/take responsibility for attendance/punctuality, on a day-to-day basis, including liaising with/responding to parental enquires.

• To oversee the analysis of/analyse weekly/termly/yearly data and respond to findings.

• To meet with the School Administrator and headteacher to monitor the systems and structures, ensuring they are having an impact on pupil attendance and punctuality.

• To liaise with external agencies such as the Education Welfare Officer and make referrals where necessary.

• To ensure that rewards and incentives for attendance and punctuality are being used.

• Work with the teachers, to plan for the reintegration of pupils after long-term absence.

• To revise and amend the policy, as required.

• To carry out and record the outcome of first day calls, when a child doesn’t arrive at school when no reason has been received.

• To monitor weekly attendance data for their year groups

• To promptly inform the headteacher, if there are any concerns relating to attendance/punctuality

## School Administrator

* To produce weekly/termly/yearly data for SLT to analyse.
* To ensure any unreported absences are followed up on the first day with a phone call to establish reason for absence.
* To record reasons for absence and updating class registers.
* To implement the daily checking of e-Portal registers after the morning and afternoon registration sessions.
* To contact parents/carers by letter, following 3 instances of lateness or absence.
* To maintain CMIS attendance records in line with this policy.
* To liaise with and report to with outside agencies such as the Education Welfare Service.
* To report to the Local Authority, as requested.
* To maintain clear communication with the SLT regarding attendance and punctuality within year groups.
* To oversee the admission and induction of new pupils.
* To support SLT with the promotion good attendance and punctuality, through finding/organising incentives.
* To ensure staff are following the registration systems and structures in this policy.
* Inform parents of school procedures, when parents have failed to inform the school.

## Staff:

• To ensure quality first teaching every day; with lessons that are well planned and resourced so that they challenge, inspire and meet their learners’ needs.

• To complete the daily class attendance and punctuality chart, with the pupils’.

• To keep accurate and up-to-date daily records of pupil attendance through the registration system.

• Take a formal register of all pupils twice a day. This is to be done at 9.00am and 1.00pm daily. (Our registration should be done by 9.05, after which children are deemed late).

• To regularly remind children and parents about the importance of good attendance.

• To follow up on pupil absence by ensuring reasons for absence are sought.

• Provide a welcoming and safe environment, which encourages attendance and promotes the best performance from children.

• Establish good and effective communication links with parents/carers and work collaboratively in meeting the child’s needs.

• If required, to work collaboratively with other agencies to assist them in fulfilling their statutory duties, regarding for example, child protection

• Work with pupils and their families where attendance is a concern, identifying barriers to good attendance and working to overcome these.

• To promptly inform the Headteacher or Parent Liaison Worker, of pupils who persist with poor attendance.

• To feed back to parents about pupil attendance and punctuality regularly and at Parents Evenings.

## **Parents:**

Children should only be kept at home if they have a serious illness or injury. If this is the case, parents should contact the school first thing. If a child has a minor illness e.g. mild headache, stomachaches etc. parents should inform the school and bring them in. If they don’t get any better, school will contact parents straight away, to collect them.

If pupils’ have a dental, clinic or hospital appointment, parents should let the school know. Pupils’ should be brought back to school after appointments. Pupils whose attendance falls below 90% will be expected to bring proof of appointments from the respective establishment.

Pupils should miss as little time as possible.

Therefore, parents are expected to:

**• Ensure their child attends school and arrives on time every day.**

• Promote a good attitude to learning by ensuring their children attend school in the correct uniform and with the basic equipment required for lessons.

• Not arrange medical and dental appointments in school time wherever possible.

• Telephone to inform the school to on the first day of absence for their child.

* To provide medical evidence (usually in the form of a medical note) for absences when a child’s overall attendance is lower than 90%.

• Work in partnership with the school and other agencies in the best interests of their child; this includes informing the school about significant influences and changes in the child’s life, which may impact on learning.

The Local Authority, through the Educational Welfare Service, is expected to:

• Support the school in improving attendance, through whole school initiatives and individual pupil interventions.

• Work with families and other agencies to remove barriers to good attendance.

• Ensure that parents are informed of their responsibilities in relation to attendance.

• Uphold and enforce the law in respect of attendance, child employment, and involvement in entertainment and child protection.

* Formal meetings are held after a specified period of time, for pupils with continued poor attendance. Targets are set and attendance is monitored for a further specified period of time. EWS court section issues fines to families, whose pupils fail to improve their attendance.

# **Strategies for promoting/rewarding excellent attendance:**

## **Aims:**

• To ensure good attendance and punctuality (above 96%) is regularly promoted and supported and remains high profile across school.

• To achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality (above 96%) through rewarding good attendance and punctuality.

## **Weekly Celebration Assemblies**

Celebration assemblies for attendance is held on Mondays during collective worship. Classes receive the attendance trophy if they are the class with the highest overall attendance the previous week.

Each child who has attended each day and arrived on time has a ticket which is put into a golden bag. This is then drawn and the weekly winner receives a £5 shopping voucher. These tickets are then placed into a termly bag for which the winner receives £10. A yearly golden bag is also drawn for which the winner receives £20.

## **Half Termly School Newsletter**

Each half term, the school newsletter is used to highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality. It regularly includes sections reminding parents of our school attendance target and what that means in terms of number of days absent. It also includes information about any initiatives, which the school is using, to promote attendance and punctuality.

## **School Attendance Board**

The boards includes attendance information and information about the classes with the highest attendance and punctuality. Details of how parents can support the school by improving their child’s attendance and punctuality, is also included.

Breakfast Club Daily Breakfast Club is free every day. This supports parents by allowing them to drop their children off from 7.45 am, ensuring they are on time for school. The club is supervised by three members of staff. Please speak to the office about a place.

## **The School Learning Environment**

A welcoming, organised learning environment, that supports and celebrates its learners is a key factor in ensuring children enjoy school and attend regularly. All staff ensure that their learning environments are of a high quality. Regular, rigorous environmental audits are carried out by the SLT, to ensure this.

## **Staff Promoting Good Attendance**

It is important that teachers are regularly promoting good attendance with their classes. Good class attendance is attributed to good teaching and this is celebrated.

## **End of Term Attendance Rewards**

At the end of each term there is a special reward for children who have achieved attendance of 98% or higher. The Headteacher and the Parent Liaison Worker organise and lead on the end of term attendance incentives.

## **Attendance Certificates**

Children with 97%+ attendance, receive a special attendance certificate, signed by the Head Teacher to take home and keep. Certificates are presented each half term, to reward those who achieve excellent attendance. Children whose attendance is 98% or greater at the end of term will be part of a larger reward. Any children who achieve 100% a term will be rewarded with a £10 voucher.

## **Sharing attendance data**

Pupils are informed on a weekly basis of attendance achievements. The class achieving the highest attendance, and the number of pupils achieving 97% - 100% attendance are shared in termly assemblies. This develops healthy competition between year groups to improve attendance. It also engages the form teacher in conversation with their classes about attendance.

## **Parent/teacher consultation evenings**

This provides an opportunity for form teachers to praise and recognise excellent attendance or share attendance concerns and discuss barriers to good attendance. Where necessary a target for improving attendance is set. The class teacher then monitors this. If there is no improvement in attendance/punctuality, the pupil is referred to the DHT.

## **Monitoring and Recording**

Attendance & Punctuality Class Registers Class registers are recorded using sims. The system ensures that no children are missed and that pupil information can be shared quickly and securely. Registers are the only way of recording pupil attendance and must be completed accurately. This is the responsibility of whichever member of staff has been directed to take the register for that session. Registers can be re-submitted in the case of a mistake or a pupil arriving after submission, but registers must be accurate and submitted at key times (see below).

Morning Register Class registers remain open until 9:05am. The teacher may submit the register as many times as they wish before 9.05 am (e.g. if a mistake has been made or a child has arrived slightly late) but at 9.05 am the register must be correct and submitted. From 9.00 am the main KS1 and KS2 doors will be closed.

A member of the administration team or SLT is outside the main office reception to meet children arriving late. Lates should be recorded using the normal registration system. This is to ensure that no children are missed on the register due to arriving in school late.

Children arriving after 9:05am are recorded as ‘L’ (late after register closed) in the register. The School Administrator officer then checks that the children who have arrived late have been marked ‘/’ (present) in the registers and corrects any mistakes or inputs codes for children who are known to be absent. The administrator then informs the parent liaison officer who begins first day absence calls – especially of children who are persistently absent. Afternoon Register Registers must be submitted by teaching staff straight after lunch before afternoon lessons commence. They should be completed by 1:05pm

## **School Attendance Letters**

The school sends out letters, to communicate with parents about attendance and punctuality.

## **Punctuality**

This may involve speaking to parents directly, or via a phone call. Letters regarding the school’s concern over lateness may also be sent; explain how much learning pupils are missing. If it does not improve, parents are invited in to school, to discuss the concerns with the Headteacher and plan a way forward. If lateness does not improve following the meeting, then the family will be referred to the ESW who will contact parents warning them that further action may be taken.

**IMPORTANT:  Child Protection and safeguarding concerns must be acted on immediately, in line with the school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.**

## **Monitoring First Day Absence**

If a child is absent from school and the school has not received a phone call or other message from the parent/carer, a first day absence call will be made.

The SA follows this system:

• Phone parents’ contact number(s).

• Repeat this during the first morning of absence if no response.

• Phone emergency contact number(s) to get an up-to-date contact number for the parent/carer and update the school system accordingly.

• Parent liaison Worker/Member of SLT to speak to the parents at home time, if they are at school to pick up other children.

• Speak to the parents face-to-face or by phone the next day and establish reasons for absence and update contact numbers. The parent/carer is asked to provide a reason as to why the child is not in school. The absence reason is recorded next to the child’s name on the first day absence sheet and this is filed in the absence folder.

* The SA must establish a reason for every absence. No absence should

left on the system as an ‘N’ (no reason given) code. If the SA has not been able to contact parents after 2 days then the absence is recorded as ‘O’ (unauthorised).

## **Attendance Meetings**

The Parent liaison Worker, Headteacher and governor representatives monitor individuals, classes, year groups, different ethnic groups, SEN and FSM pupils. They identify patterns and trends in absence/punctuality, including persistent absence. The systems and structures are then followed, to improve attendance for these individuals or groups.

Letters are sent out to parents whose children’s attendance is below 95% and parents who are concerned about their child’s attendance, are invited to work in partnership with the school.

## **Summary of procedures to promote good attendance/punctuality:**

The following tables show specific procedures to maintain and encourage excellent attendance at The Priory Parish C of E Primary School:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Daily Procedures | By Whom | Outcomes/Actions |
| Parents ensure pupils arrive at school on time. | Parents/carers |  |
| Parents/carers inform the school by 8.45am, if their child is absent that day. | Parents/carers | School administration ensure registration codes are updated. |
| Pupils arriving late (after 9.05) are registered by the school administration staff. | Teachers will mark late comers up to 9.15. After this time this will be marked by the administration staff. | Absence marks appearing on sims will be changed to late. |
| Teachers use the registration system which is to be completed by 9.05 am and 1.05am. | Teaching staff | Teacher informs parent liaison worker or head of any concerns. |
| First day absence phone calls are made to inform parents of their child’s unexplained absence for that day. | PLW/administration staff  HT | Updated codes on register. |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Weekly Procedures | By Whom | Outcomes/action |
| Attendance/punctuality statistics produced by year group and school. | PLW Entered into Attendance Overview spread sheet to allow for monitoring and analysis | Entered into Attendance Overview spread sheet to allow for monitoring and analysis. |
| Attendance/punctuality statistics produced and shared in Celebration Assembly, displayed on the School Attendance Boards. | Headteacher/School administration team. | Parents are able to see which class(es) have been successful with their attendance and punctuality. |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Half termly/Termly Procedures | By Whom | Outcomes/action |
| Analyse attendance/punctuality data to monitor trends and progress | PLW/HT/Governor rep |  |
| Assemblies to promote attendance/punctuality and share term’s data and progress | PLW and HT |  |
| Discussions as required in response to specific attendance/punctuality concerns of a particular cohort of pupils | PLW/HT |  |
| Individual attendance/punctuality discussed with pupils and families, at parents’ evenings | Class teachers | Mentoring/advice on attendance/punctuality issues provided to all families. |
| Analyse attendance/punctuality data and information to identify cases of concern and develop appropriate interventions | PLW/HT/Governor rep | Targeted intervention for individual concerns |
| Meeting to discuss individual cases, monitor progress and refer new concerns. Support and meeting provided for pupils and families. | PLW/ESW/HT |  |
| Review success and impact of attendance/punctuality strategies for the term. | PLW/HT/Governor rep |  |

## **Extended Holidays**

In line with Wirral Local Authority, ‘Leave in term Time Guidance’ and the 2013 Amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations, **leave for pupils during term time is not authorised under any circumstances**.

The school recognises that taking children out of school may constitute a safeguarding risk and will make necessary enquiries, in order to be satisfied that the child is not at risk. The school may contact outside agencies in order to ensure that a visit is legitimate and safe for the child/children.

Head teachers may now only grant leave in term time where the circumstances are exceptional, for example:

• death of parent/carer or sibling of the pupil

• life threatening or critical illness of parent or sibling of the pupil

• parent/carer recuperation and convalescence from critical illness or surgery (leave request to be made within 6 months of recovery and medical evidence required)

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always in the best interest of the child, nor appropriate for them to miss school for family emergencies that are being dealt with by adult family members.

Being at school, friendships and support from staff can provide children with stability and care during difficult times. The routine of school can provide a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

If you have exceptional circumstances, which have lead you to request leave in term time for your child/ren, please complete the required form, which you can obtain from the school office. The Head Teacher will then make a decision, on whether or not the leave can be lawfully authorised and will do so only if there is a genuine, exceptional and urgent reason for a child to be absent during term time.

## **Penalty Notices**

**If a child is taken out of school without the Head Teacher’s authorisation, it will be recorded as unauthorised absence. This may lead to the issuing of a penalty notice and legal action being taken.**

**Section 23(1) Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2007:**

Penalty notices may be issued to the parent of pupils who have unauthorised absence from school. The amount of the penalty is £60.

• If this is not paid within 21 days the amount rises to £120.

• If not paid within 28 days the Local Authority will prosecute under section

444(1) unless it comes to our attention that the penalty notice had been issued in error.

**Section 444(1) Education Act 1996:**

“If you are the parent of a child of compulsory school age who fails to attend school regularly, you are guilty of an offence.”

The court can fine each parent up to £1,000 per child, order payment of the prosecution costs and/or make a Parenting Order.

Please note that:

• penalties and prosecutions are in respect of each parent for each child.

• Parent’ includes any person who is not a parent of the child but who has parental responsibility for the child (and applies whether or not that person lives with the child) or who has care of him/her.

This was reflected in a Supreme Court hearing in 2016. We follow the local authority stance which states that penalty notices may be considered appropriate in the following circumstances:

* Attendance below 90% with at least 10 days lost due to unauthorised absence. These do not need to be consecutive.
* 5 days or more unauthorised absence due to holidays in term time.
* Pupils stopped on Police Truancy Sweeps in some circumstances, for example, if this is repeated.
* The presence of an excluded child in a public place at any time during school hours in that child’s first five days of a school exclusion without good reason.
* A pupil arriving late after the registers are closed (using a code U) on 10 or more separate occasions.”

**These prosecutions are criminal proceedings and could result in you having a criminal record.**

Date agreed by the Governing Body: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: (Chair of the Governing Body) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Policy to be reviewed in Autumn 2017