

Attendance Policy and Guidelines (Following advice from Portsmouth City Council)

Governor for Attendance – Mrs Emma Aldred

Rationale:

Children who do not attend school become more and more alienated due to poor relationships with the other children and/or adults, and increasing gaps in their learning which means they fall further and further behind the others. Those who attend fully have better relationships and more consistent learning, thus they achieve more highly and usually have higher self-esteem and confidence.

Policy Statement:

It is our intention that all children should attend school unless they are too ill to do so. It is also our policy that they arrive on time in the mornings to ensure the class is not disturbed during lessons and that the child themselves is settled and ready and able to learn.

Start of Sessions:

The morning bell is at 9.00 a.m. by this time children should be in the classroom and time for all parents to leave. The register is read at 9.00 a.m. and 1.10 p.m. Children entering the room after these times are late and will be marked as such. The registers are closed in the classroom at 9.10 and children arriving after that time will be marked as L. Registers are officially closed at 9.30 am. Children arriving after this time will be marked as U, being so late as to earn an absence for that whole session. The school gates are locked at 9.05 a.m. by the caretaker. All late children must then enter by the main door where their names are taken to ensure the registers are updated for lunch and attendance. (Health and Safety).

Registers:

Registers are run on the SIMS Pupil Registration Form. **No pupil should be marked present unless in the room at the time even if staff know the child will attend later.** Absences are recorded on the SIMS system twice a day when registers are closed. The following marks are available:-

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| A | Present | M | Medical/Dental appointments |
| B | Educated Off Site (not Dual Registration) | N | No reason yet provided for absence |
| C | Other Authorised Circumstances | O | Unauthorised absence |
| D | Dual Registered | R | Religious Observance |
| E | Excluded (no alternative provision made) | U | Late (after registration closed) |
| F | Extended Family Holiday (agreed) | X | Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory |
| G | Family Holiday (not agreed) | Y | Enforced Closure |
| H | Family Holiday (agreed at least 5 days beforehand) | Z | Pupil not on roll |
| I | Illness (NOT medical or dental etc appointments) | # | School closed to pupils |
| L | Late (before register close) | | |

NB

- Recent amendments to **The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006** make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.
- Leave of Absence for parental illness (unless sudden real emergency), birthdays, visits to or from relatives, shopping or visits to the hair dressers are all unauthorised.
- If there is any debate about the type of absence the Headteacher will decide the coding.
- A paper trail is required for all absences and parents are asked to send a letter to school or fill in a form at the school office desk when a child returns to school. If parents do not give a reason for absence after being asked on two separate occasions either by text or letter from the school office, the absence is marked as unauthorised.

In July each year (at the end of the school year) the printed registers will be archived and kept for at least 3 more years.

Lateness

Lateness constitutes a failure to attend school regularly. It is detrimental for the child's well being and education to miss the important start of the day in the class routine. They often miss out on important information or one to one Intervention. The other children and the teacher are disturbed by late arrival and the late child is usually embarrassed and often worried by their lateness.

At the age and stage of our children it is the **responsibility of the parent to ensure prompt attendance** and a failure to do so stores up many potential problems later in school life. It is also telling the child that school is not important and lateness does not matter which is the opposite to the schools policy.

Leave of Absence (formerly known as Holidays) in Term Time

In line with **The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007** and the Amendments that have been made to **The 2007 Regulations in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013** the Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term times unless there are very exceptional circumstances. Requests for Leave of Absence must be made on a Leave of Absence Request Form. Parents will be asked to attend a meeting with the Headteacher and the Attendance Manager. Parents who pursue an unauthorised absence will be referred to Portsmouth City Council for a recommendation for fining.

- Leave of Absence from school in the Autumn Term will NOT be authorised.
- NO requests will be authorised during May or June or any other times when national Testing takes place.
- Leave of Absence will NOT be authorised for children whose attendance falls below 96%.
- At all other times, a maximum of 5 days will be authorised only.

Failure to adhere to the School Policy may result in a referral to Portsmouth City Council School Attendance Team for fining.

Systems and Practices to follow up attendance or non attendance.

The registers are read twice a day by the office staff. Children whose absences which have not been explained on return to school will receive a reminder text or a letter to take home which asks for an explanation for absences on the specific dates. This will be repeated once more and if no explanation (or an invalid one) is given the absence will be recorded unauthorised.

Continued and repeated absences, unexplained ones or endemic lateness results in either a letter from, or an interview with, the Headteacher and/or referral to the School Attendance Team as noted below.

Portsmouth City Council School Attendance Team (SAT) monitor children's attendance half termly and will identify those children who are Persistent Absentees. The school are required to report on those children identified, and guidance and suggested ways to proceed will then be given by the School Attendance Team to action.

Systems to encourage attendance

Attendance Reports known as the Traffic Light Report will be completed during the school year and these will be shared with parents at Parents Evenings. This will help to keep parents informed of their child's percentage attendance and how this is reflected against the national average of 96%. Children's attendance will be categorised as being either in the Green, Amber or Red Zone. All parents whose child's attendance falls into the Red Zone ie. below 90%, or who are known to be a Persistent Absentee may be called to a meeting with the Headteacher, Pastoral Lead and Attendance Manager and any other appropriate outside agencies. These meetings are known as Restorative Meetings and take the form of support and school working with families.

Children who have excellent attendance 99%+ in the school year are rewarded along with those who have achieved 100%, these are recognised at the end of the school year. Personalised letters and small gifts are awarded to those with excellent attendance, and larger prizes to those who achieve 100% within the year.

Punctuality

Punctuality and the importance of consistent attendance are both part of ethos of the school. Children are praised for both. Lateness and poor attendance are not always discussed or obviously disapproved of, with the child, as it is seldom their fault at this age but the parents are contacted. However, all the children are aware that it is not the way to approach school and their work and friendships will suffer.

Unauthorised absences and late attendance are published on the child's annual reports and the documentation which is sent on to any school a child may subsequently attend.

All absence notes are kept and filed to help assess patterns of absence or reasons for it.

It is the parent's responsibility to inform schools of the reason for a child's absence by 9.30 on the first day of absence and provide further information at a later stage should it be required.

Reporting on Attendance

The Local Authority monitors the attendance of each child, as does the school. The School Attendance Team can be involved whenever a child's attendance or punctuality causes concern.

Attendance Targets

Targets are set annually by the LEA. All staff are requested to raise the profile of attendance and punctuality in their classes in an effort to improve our attendance figures. The Governors and Headteacher will continue to raise the issues with specific parents as necessary and all parents in general.

Reviewed February 2020

Signed Headteacher

Signed Chair of Governors