



# **Pikes Lane Primary School Attendance Statutory Policy**

**Policy Leader: Mrs V Wallace**

**Governors: Health & Well-being, Safeguarding & Community Sub-Committee**

**Last Updated: August 2017**

**Review Date: August 2018**

## **Aim**

The school recognises that non-attendance and absence has a negative impact upon attainment and achievement. We will provide a welcoming, stimulating and structured learning environment, to encourage children to attend school. School will work closely with parents/carers and the local authority, to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly and punctually and to improve the overall percentage of pupils in school.

## **Local Authority**

Parents have the primary responsibility for ensuring that children of compulsory school age receive a suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to ensure that parents meet these responsibilities. Attendance enforcement is carried out by the Local Authority Intervention Team who provide an important link between schools and families.

## **School**

To assist in monitoring and controlling school attendance the school employs the following measures:

- An electronic registration system
- First day contact with parents of children who are absent from school without prior knowledge or parents have not made contact with the school (see Appendix 1 for procedures)
- Log kept regarding pupils out of school on appointments/agreed absence
- The promotion of school attendance being shared by everyone in the school
- Attendance guidelines being laid out in a parent friendly leaflet and made available to all parents both online and at the front office
- The collection and analysis of data about attendance to check pupils progress against measurable outcomes
- Weekly attendance award and 'Beat The Bell' punctuality award being made to the highest classes
- Individual weekly attendance draw for all children with 100% for 1 week
- 100% wristbands/badges for a full term of 100% attendance
- Communication with parents weekly on the newsletter
- To provide support and intervention with families where required, utilising partner agencies such as family support team or School nurses to help support the family to increase attendance
- Meetings with the Head teacher for all parents who intend to take their child out of school during term time.

School is required to tell the Local Authority if a pupil fails to attend regularly or has been absent for a continuous period of ten days and the absence is treated as unauthorised. School can notify the Local Authority earlier if there are areas of concern.

\* First day visits are conducted on the first day of school absence for any child who is subject to a Child Protection Plan or Interim Care Order and living at home. These visits are in order to check on the child's welfare, the reason for absence and to

confirm an expected return date. These visits are carried out by the Early Intervention officer and/or the duty social worker, and feedback will be given to school.

### **Responsibilities of parents**

Parents have the prime responsibility for ensuring that registered pupils of compulsory school age attend school regularly. If a child does not attend regularly, parents will need to work in partnership with the school to resolve the problem. From 1 March 2001, parents found guilty of school attendance offences could be subject to a penalty of up to £2500 and/or a period of imprisonment for up to three months (see guidance).

School requires parents:

- To notify any absence on the first day of absence by 9.30 a.m.
- For a period of continuous illness – to telephone school each morning whilst absent (this ensures that the child is safe and not missing on the way to school)
- To inform school of an intended leave of absence on the appropriate school form at least two weeks before leave is required
- To provide appropriate documentation of medical appointments.

### **Pupil registration**

School ensures that an attendance register for all pupils on the school roll is taken twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. For each pupil, the register must be marked either as present, engaged in an approved educational activity away from the school site or absent. If the pupil is absent, the register must say whether or not the absence has been authorised by the school.

### **Authorised or unauthorised absence**

Authorised absence is absence with permission from an authorised representative of the school. This includes instances of absences for which a satisfactory explanation has been provided (e.g. illness).

Unauthorised absence is absence without permission from an authorised representative of the school. This includes all unexplained or unjustified absences.

If a child is persistently late for school, this will be recorded by the office staff and appropriate action will be taken. After the child has been late three times, a warning letter will be sent to parents. If this continues and a child reaches five late marks, parents will be invited to school to meet the Head teacher to discuss problems and agree a course of action. Following this meeting, if the child continues to arrive after the register is closed, they will receive an unauthorised absence.

## **Family holidays – Extended Leave**

**Extended Leave New Government Regulations** Schools have received the following information from the Department for Education, which has led to our Governing Body meeting to review our current policy.

Amendments have been made to The Education Regulations 2006, which will remove all reference to family holidays and extended leave. The amendments state that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time.

This means that **no term time holidays can be authorised from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013.**

### **What This Will Mean:**

The new legislation means that, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013, any absence for a holiday will be recorded as unauthorised. This can lead to a penalty notice being imposed by the Local Authority. Amendments to the 2007 regulations also reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013, the Local Authority will issue a fine of £60 per parent, to be paid within 21 days. After which, this will increase to £120.

We actively discourage all term-time holidays. Children are at school for a total of 190 days every academic year. Weekends account for 110 days, holidays account for 65 days. We feel therefore, that there is more than enough time/opportunity for holidays out of school time. With only 190 school days per year, it is essential that every attempt is made by parents/carers to get their child to school every day.

A child's attendance will be colour coded and inserted on the child's assertive mentoring personal log.

97% – 100% - Green

93% – 96.9% – Amber

92.9% and below – Red

In EYFS, we recognise that children are not yet of compulsory school age. However, if a child in nursery or pre-school is absent for a period of 20 days, the child will risk forfeiting their place and taken off roll, as places will be offered to children on the wait list.

## **Appendix 1 - Attendance Procedures**

When a child is absent from school, class teachers and office staff must follow strict procedure.

- If a child is absent from school in the morning with no known reason provided by the parents/ carers in advance, they must be given an absent mark on the class register.
- The ESM will check SIMS and if there has been an explanation given as to the reason the child is absent, the appropriate mark will be transferred into SIMS. The ESM will then act upon any cases where a child's whereabouts is unknown. This includes texting or telephone calls to parents. In some cases, there may be a home visit conducted by a member of staff or the Early Intervention Team.
- The school office will take a list of all late comers and record this on the register.

- If a child arrives to school after registers have closed, this will be recorded as a late mark (L). Persistent lateness will be monitored by ESM who will contact the parents after 3 late marks to issue warning, followed by an invitation to meet the Head teacher after 5 late marks.
- If no message has been received, staff must contact the parents to find out why a child is absent.
- Should a parent confirm as to why their child is absent, office staff or ESM must amend the SIMS record as appropriate with either an 'I' (illness), 'M' (medical/dental appointment), 'C' (other authorised circumstances, such as family emergency, etc) or a 'O or G' (for any unauthorised reason, i.e. a holiday that has not been authorised by school).
- Short-term absence - Any standard absences will be managed by the ESM and the school office staff eg. reasons for absence, appointments, etc. But, there may be occasions when absences are referred to the DHT/HT eg. the reasons given for absence are questionable, and parents need to be spoken to/challenged by a senior member of staff.

### **Persistent Lateness/Absence**

- Extended Services and Pupil Welfare Manager, Class teachers as well as office staff must be vigilant and take note of any children who start to show a pattern of lateness or are regularly absent from school.
- If concerned, the absences will be discussed with the parent/ carer in order to draw their attention to the amount of class time their child is missing, in the hope of this being corrected.
- Things to look out for concerning lateness and absences are:
  - reoccurring absences on the same day i.e. only being absent on Thursdays, etc.
  - having regular medical appointments with no explanation from parents as to what the medical issue may be, again especially on reoccurring days.
  - in the case of children of whose parents share custody, being repeatedly late or absent when staying with one parent, compared with the other.
  - repeated late pick-ups after school.
  - Continual 'illness' days for prolonged periods.
- Should staff see a pattern emerging, and after having conversed with parents with a print-out of their child's attendance, school still has concerns and little improvement has been made, ESM may feel the need to call a Child Action Meeting or then contact the Early Intervention Team who will decide on a course of action to try and rectify the situation.
- This intervention could be a home visit to parents to discuss any issues they may be having, or to set up a meeting with parents, school staff and an early intervention officer to see if there are any changes which can be made by those involved.
- If still no progress is made, and the number of unauthorised absences exceeds ten full days in one term, the early intervention team may feel that a monetary fine is necessary to encourage parents/ carers to ensure their child is in school regularly and on time.

Please also see Pikes Lane Attendance Policy Leaflet for parents for more information.