



## **Penponds Community Primary School**

### **Attendance Policy**

**Reviewed: December 2019**

#### **Aims and Objectives**

This attendance policy ensures that all staff and governors in our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

#### **Through this Policy we aim to:**

- Improve pupils' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Achieve a minimum of 96% attendance for all children, apart from those with chronic health issues.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school.
- Raise awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- Ensure that our policy applies to Nursery and Reception aged children in order to promote good habits at an early age.
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff and the Education Welfare Service so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of their own responsibility.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognise the key role of all staff, but especially class teachers, in promoting good attendance.

#### **We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:**

- Raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents and pupils.
- Ensuring that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on them for making sure their child attends regularly and punctually.
- Equipping children with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good school attendance and punctuality appropriate to the child's age and development.
- Maintaining effective means of communication with parents, pupils, staff and governors on school attendance matters.
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness.
- Supporting pupils who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at school which are preventing good attendance.
- Developing and implementing procedures to follow up non-attendance at school.

### **Attendance registers**

The attendance registers are completed electronically at the beginning of every morning and afternoon session using SIMS (paper registers as a backup)

Registers are electronically returned to the office by 9.15 each morning and by 1.15 in the afternoon. The register is marked as below:

- / Present (am)
- \ Present (pm)
- B Educated off site
- C Other authorised circumstances
- D Dual registration (attending other establishment)
- E Excluded (no alternative provision made)
- G Family holiday (not agreed or days in excess) H  
Annual family holiday (agreed)
- I Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
- J Interview
- L Late (before registers close) M  
Medical/Dental appointments
- N No reason yet provided for absence
- O Unauthorised absence (not covered by other code) P  
Approved sporting activity
- R Religious observance
- S Study leave
- T Traveller absence
- U Late (after registers closed) V  
Educational visit
- W Work experience
- # School closed to pupils and staff
- Y Enforced closure
- X Non-compulsory school age absence
- Z Pupil not on roll
- All should attend/no mark record

**The following are marked on the register as:**

**Authorised absences:**

- Illness, supported by a note or telephone call
- Appointment with the doctor or dentist. Pupils to be at school before the appointment and returned to school straight after if treatment allows. Inform the school of any appointment dates.

**Unauthorised absences:**

- No reasonable explanation is offered regarding the reason for absence.
- Shopping trips.
- Oversleeping. If this happens pupils should arrive at school as soon as possible.

Pupils who arrive after 9am must report to the main office upon arrival, where the reason for their late arrival will be recorded electronically on the school's system (SIMS), along with how many minutes late they have arrived.

Any pupils who have to leave school during the school day must report to the main office before leaving the premises so their departure can be recorded.

The onus to report absence of pupils is on the parents/carers. A note or telephone call is required on the first day of absence from the pupil's parent or carer.

Reasons for absence should not be reported by siblings. A message can be left on the child absence line. Messages will be listened to every morning.

If a pupil is not present at the time of marking the register and no reasonable explanation has been given for the absence, Mrs Wood (school secretary) or Mrs Evans in her absence will contact the parents/carers by phone. If Mrs Wood is unsuccessful in contacting the parents/carers, a text message and/or e-mail will be sent through the School Comms service. A record of all communication will be kept electronically on the school system (SIMS) and the reason for the absence will be logged.

**Attendance Monitoring**

Mrs Wood monitors attendance each half term. Attendance is monitored using the "Traffic Light" system. If a child's attendance is 96% or above they will receive an attendance book mark. If a child's attendance is between 90 and 96% parents will receive an orange letter to encourage them to take action to improve their child's attendance. A parent will receive a red letter if a child's attendance is below 90%, which makes them a Persistent Absentee, and the parent/carer will be given/ offered an appointment for an Attendance Clinic. Parents/carers of children

who persistently arrive late to school may also be given an appointment for the Attendance Clinic.

The Attendance Clinic is held after every half-term as required. All parents/carers with an allocated appointment will be able to discuss their child's attendance/punctuality with the Headteacher, the Education Welfare Officer, Fran Pender and on some occasions, the School Nurse, all of whom will offer advice and support on how best to improve the child's attendance/ punctuality. If a pupil's attendance fails to improve after the Attendance Clinic, a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Officer. If a pupil's attendance continues to cause concern, the school may refuse to authorise absences without supporting medical evidence.

### **Long-Term Sickness**

On rare occasions if a child requires a long period of absence from school due to a more serious illness, workbooks can be sent home upon request. When the child is well enough to return to school, the completed workbook should be returned and marked by the relevant teacher. The child's absence mark can then be changed from an illness mark to an educated off site mark, which will not affect their overall attendance.

### **Attendance Reward System**

Every week in assembly, the class with the best overall attendance and the class with the least amount of late arrivals, will be presented with a trophy to keep until the next week. Each half term, every child with 100% attendance will be presented with a reward for their achievement in Celebration Assembly and all pupils attending at 96% or above will receive their book mark. At the end of the academic year, each child who has achieved 100% attendance will receive a larger prize – this is usually a voucher.

### **Requests for Leave during Term Time Due to Exceptional Circumstances**

It is advisable for all pupils to be in school for the allocated times. If there are exceptional circumstances that require leave during term time, parents may submit a "Request for Leave during Term Time due to Exceptional Circumstances" form. These forms are available from the main office and also the Penponds School website [www.Penponds.cornwall.sch.uk](http://www.Penponds.cornwall.sch.uk). Forms should be completed by parent/carers in advance of the leave of absence required and submitted to the Headteacher for consideration. If the Headteacher deems the reason for the absence to be exceptional, and the pupil's level of attendance high enough, the request will be granted. However, if the Headteacher does not consider the reason for the absence to be exceptional (and therefore refuses the request) but the pupil is absent from school regardless, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Please note that the Local Authority can issue a Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave or absence of 5 consecutive days (10 sessions). It is VERY important that the school is notified of any absence at the start of the school day as any absence taken without informing the school as to the reason why, will result in an unauthorised absence.

If a parent takes their child out of school without an agreed leave of absence then the absence will have to be recorded as unauthorised which may be subject to a Penalty Notice fine by the Local Authority of £60 per child. This fine will increase to £120 if not paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the fine within 28 days may lead to court proceedings.

If you take your child out of school without permission you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may refer the matter to the Education Welfare Service who may decide to prosecute. A conviction may result in a fine of up to £2,500, a prison sentence of up to three months or both.

We hope that parents will work with the school to achieve the best possible attendance for their children so ensuring the best possible outcomes for their education.

Next review date: January 2020

Signed:

(Headteacher) Signed

(Chair of Governors)