

POLICY

Policy number	PS02
Policy name	Register of Pupils' Attendance
Issue date	1 st January 2017
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Owner	Senior Leadership Team

Guiding principles

- 1.1 Attendance at school is a legal requirement between the ages of 5 – 18 years. Young people are entitled to formal education during this phase of their lives. It is important that they receive their entitlement for their present and future lives and for the economic and well-being of society.
- 1.2 Portfield School and the local authorities whose children come here are responsible by law for making sure that registered students of compulsory age regularly attend school. The Government also has a priority in reducing unnecessary absence from school.
- 1.3 Many students attending Portfield School are more vulnerable and have greater needs than the majority of their mainstream counterparts. This means that they may have more genuine absences from school for medical reasons or experience greater social need than others. It is our responsibility as educators to do all we can to encourage and support regular and frequent school attendance.
- 1.4 Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school. We at Portfield School are committed to ensuring that Portfield families understand how important this is. We give high priority to conveying to parents and students the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there are concerns about attendance.
- 1.5 If there are problems which affect a student's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents/carers and students to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

PROCEDURES

2. The register is a legal document and must be marked accurately, recording pupils attendance or absence and in the latter case if authorised or unauthorised. A certified extract of the register can be used as evidence in legal proceedings against parents for failing to ensure their child's regular attendance or in seeking an Education Supervision Order.

Registration

3. At Portfield School a manual registration system is currently used to register students in the class. Registers must be marked in ink and where an alteration is necessary this must be clearly identified showing both the original entry and change. Registers are then returned to the school office at the end of the registration period. The information is then entered onto the school's information management system. The morning register closes at 9.30. All student arrivals after this point are treated as absent from that session, unless they arrive on school transport.

Procedures for following up absence/lateness

- 4.1 Students who arrive late should be registered as absent but with a small capital L in red in the absence circle on their arrival (usually by the office staff). Students who arrive more than 30 minutes after the beginning of registration should be marked absent for that session (i.e. half day). These absences are regarded as unauthorised absences if no satisfactory explanation is given in a note or by telephone by the parents/carers. Parents or carers dropping students off late must report to reception and explain the reasons for lateness. This is also recorded in the school's information management system along with the time of arrival.
- 4.2 It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to contact the School on the first morning of the child's absence. This can be done by leaving a message on the answer phone or phoning when the school office opens at 8.30am. In any case a parent/carer should contact prior to 9.30am. If this contact is not made the school will contact the parent/carer by telephone or, if the parent is unobtainable, send an email and/or write a letter requesting information.
- 4.3 If this fails to provide an explanation for the absence the Head Teachers will attempt to get in touch and a (second) letter may be sent to the parents/carers.
- 4.4 If a student is persistently late the school will write to the parent/carer inviting them to a school-based meeting to identify and resolve the difficulties which are preventing the student from attending school. The parents/carers will be made aware of the legal requirements regarding school attendance.

Authorised and unauthorised Absence

- 5.1 "Leave" in relation to a School means leave granted by any person authorised to do so by the governing body or Senior Leadership Team.
- 5.2 The Head Teachers will only consider authorising an absence during term time where an application has been made in advance in writing and where (s)he is satisfied that there are exceptional or special circumstances to justify the request. The DfE (2013) now state that leave of absence requests for holidays should not be granted. It is acknowledged that due to individual needs of students at Portfield School, the Head Teachers may apply special consideration to requests for leave.
- 5.3 It may be necessary for the School to ask the parent/carer to provide the School with written evidence of the reason for absence e.g. appointment cards, medical certificate or a letter from the GP.
- 5.4 If there is an extended period of absence due to medical reasons the School may ask for permission of the parent/carer to contact the child's GP to confirm that the medical condition prevents the child from attending school and to establish a possible return date for the child.

Strategies for promoting attendance/punctuality

- 6.1 Attendance statistics are monitored by the Head Teachers and the Governing Body and reported to the Local Authority (under 90% over the academic term). Targets are set annually for attendance figures. The current target is 95%.
- 6.2 Parents and carers, students and staff will be regularly reminded of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence. Parents will be kept regularly informed of all concerns regarding punctuality and attendance.
- 6.3 The Senior Leadership Team will contact parents and carers to discuss any issues, which may cause a student to experience attendance difficulties, will be promptly investigated by the school. The Senior Leadership Team will have regular meetings with the placing authority (if required), in order to identify and support those pupils who are experiencing attendance difficulties.

Sanctions for persistent lateness and non-attendance

- 6.1 A penalty notice can be considered for unauthorised leave of absence taken without permission after the third day of absence. It will be issued by the placing authority at the request of the Head Teachers in accordance with the Local Authority code of conduct after consultation with the chair of Governors. A penalty notice can also be considered for any unauthorised absence where there is no justifiable cause. There is no statutory right of appeal against the issuing of a penalty notice.
- 6.2 The local authority may impose an education supervision order, parenting contract or parenting order in certain circumstances.

Student absence monitoring procedure

1. ALL registers must be returned to the office by 9.30am
2. All absent students will be contacted on their first day of absence by either a designated member of the administration team or the Education Team. All telephone calls home will be made by 10.30am.
3. Records of late arrivals will be made on Behaviour Watch.
4. The time of all calls to the student's home will be recorded on Behaviour Watch
5. If on the first call to a student's home no one answers, then a message will be left for the family to contact the School as soon as possible to explain why the student is not at school.
6. On making contact with the student's family, they will be informed that for every day the student is absent the family must contact the school to inform them of the student's progress. If they do not, then the school will contact them each and every day of absence.
7. If a student is absent for more than two days without contact by the family the Senior Leadership Team will be informed to follow up the absence.
8. If the admin staff are unhappy with the reasons given for a student's absence then the Senior Leadership Team will be informed of any concerns and will follow up with the student's family.

Information to Parents

Punctuality

At 9.30am the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have a late mark. If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Senior Leadership Team to resolve the problem.

Persistent lateness should be discussed with your child's Class Teacher who may refer the matter to the Head Teachers.

Reporting Non-Attendance

In addition to the procedures set out above, the school will report students' attendance and unauthorised absences to the family home in accordance with the legal requirements outlined in the latest government circular.

ROLES

Families will:

- Notify the School of any absences on the first day of that absence
- Keep close contact with the School if their child is on extended leave due to ill health

Teachers will:

- Keep an accurate and up-to-date attendance register of their class (see details on marking the register above)
- Correct any inaccuracies which may occur in the attendance register
- Follow up absences as outlined above (see “following up absences”)
- Liaise with the Senior Leadership Team about attendance
- Inform office staff if they receive any communication that a student will need to leave the school premises part way through the day by prior arrangement e.g. for a medical appointment
- Pick up and mark registers at the start of the day and after lunch.
- Discuss the impact of low attendance on learning with families at consultation meetings where appropriate

Administrative staff will:

- Maintain a record of student attendance on the school’s computer system
- Telephone student’s homes as necessary re attendance
- Pass on information re attendance to the relevant staff
- Keep records and inform outside agencies as necessary to comply with local and national policy and procedures
- Store notes from home in the student file

Senior Leadership Team will:

- Liaise with the placing authority or other relevant services
- Contact parents/carers (by telephone or home visit) to monitor attendance
- Liaise with admin staff over any queries
- Keep records of students who arrive late and note down reason
- Notify the safeguarding team of absences of vulnerable students

Registration codes

Code	Description
/	Present (AM)
\	Present (PM)
B	Educated off site (NOT dual reg)
C	Other authorised circumstances
D	Dual registration (attending other school)
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)
F	<i>Not in use</i>
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess)
H	Family holiday (agreed)
I	Illness (NOT med/dental appointments)
J	Interview
L	Late (after registers close – in red pen)
M	Medical/dental appointments
N	Unauthorised absence
O	Other reason authorised
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work experience
X	Non-timetabled session
Y	Enforced closure
Z	Student not on roll
#	School closed to students
-	All should attend/no mark recorded