



Pucklechurch CE VC Primary School **Attendance Policy** **2016**

Pucklechurch School's ethos relies on pupils, parents and staff working together to ensure that all children attend school regularly so they can fully benefit from the educational opportunities provided. All children of compulsory school age must, by law, receive suitable education whether at school or otherwise.

Clear expectations related to attendance will be provided for parents and pupils in the Attendance flyer which will be distributed to all parents.

The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. Only if the school is satisfied as to the validity of the explanation offered by the letter/message will the absence be authorised.

Unauthorised absences have the effect of devaluing learning from the child's point of view. Regular and punctual attendance is a crucial lifeskill for children which we aim to model in both action and attitude.

ATTENDANCE

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn. If a child is prevented for any reason from attending, or is late, parents are requested to notify the school by 9.00am by phone call or in writing. A pupil's absence must be considered unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming from the parent. If a child is absent without explanation, the school will contact the parents. Persistent absence will be followed up using a standard procedure. Parents should avoid making routine medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours. If this is unavoidable, parents/carers are encouraged to make them towards the end of either a morning or afternoon session as this minimises the disruption to learning for the child and the class. Pupils must be signed in/out at the office if leaving the premises during the school day. Similarly if a child is taken home ill the office must be notified.

100% attendance for the school year will be recognised by the awarding of certificates on an annual basis.

REGISTRATION

The school doors open at 8.45am. Reception and KS1 doors close at 8:55 am promptly. KS2 doors close at 8:50 am promptly. Afternoon sessions begin at 1pm. Registers will be marked in black in accordance with the list of symbols as set out in the register front sheet.

If a pupil arrives after the register closes, he/she will be marked as absent. The pupil should report to the office and sign the late book. They will be given a slip that they must give to the classteacher to ensure that we have a full record of everybody who is on the school premises in case of emergencies. The register will subsequently be amended to read absent/late.

AUTHORISED/UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Absence can be **authorised** if:

- the pupil was ill or prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause.
- the absence occurred on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent belongs.
- LA transport arrangements fail.
- the pupil is the child of traveller parents and the conditions as stated in paragraph 47 of the guidance are met.
- the pupil is participating in an approved public performance or sporting event.
- the pupil is involved in an **exceptional** special occasion. This is at the school's discretion.
- Pupils attending an approved off-site activity (e.g. sports matches, music days) or who are on a school trip or visit is regarded as **present** for statistical purposes. The register will be marked with the relevant letter.

Holidays

Children are not expected to be taken out of school for family holidays. Such situations would only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. If you have any queries or questions regarding your child's attendance please email the Headteacher and the school office on david.forrester@pucklechurchprimary.org.uk and admin@pucklechurchprimary.org.uk

Parents should note that the fact that holidays are cheaper in term time is not regarded as a valid reason for missing education.

We will not authorise absence for any child during September or for children in Year 2 and Year 6 between January and May. No more than 10 days can be granted whatever the circumstances. Any absence over 10 days will be regarded as unauthorised.

If an absence request is not sent in before the holiday is taken the absence will be deemed as unauthorised.

Absence will be **unauthorised** if:

- no explanation is given.
- the school is dissatisfied with the explanation.
- the pupil is absent for **unexceptional** special occasions (e.g. birthdays).
- the pupil is on a family holiday without permission or if the parents have failed to seek permission in advance of the holiday and instead seek retrospective approval.

- the pupil is staying home to look after siblings or because siblings are absent for any reason.
- the pupil is shopping.
- Where unauthorised absence is considered excessive by the school, either through being repeated or unnecessarily long the school may consider applying for a Penalty Notice through the Education Welfare Service. These currently stand at £60 per child, per parent, if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 per child per parent after 21 days. Therefore, two children could cost from an extra £240.to £480.

MONITORING AND MAINTAINING ATTENDANCE LEVELS

Attendance will be systematically monitored using a computer-based system. Registers will be stored centrally in the school office. The Headteacher and School Administrator will meet to analyse attendance on a termly basis.

If a pupil is persistently absent (or late) and the school's efforts to effect an improvement fail, the situation will potentially be referred to the education welfare officer. The Headteacher will, when appropriate, also liaise with other agencies educational psychology, social services, child psychiatry etc to assist such pupils.

A named Governor has responsibility for monitoring attendance; having a clear understanding of our targets, the procedures in place to achieve them and how attendance impacts on school.

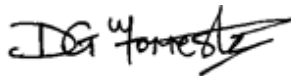
The Headteacher will make an annual report to the school's governing body on attendance matters.

The Governor responsible for attendance is: Mr Bob Symons

This Policy was last approved by: FGB – October 2016

Document due for review by: FGB – October 2018

Headteacher:



Appendix A of Attendance Policy - Requests for Authorised Absence

Full and regular attendance at school is a vital factor in achieving a successful education, and we therefore do everything we can to promote it. Requests for absence during term time have become more common in recent years and, by breaking the pattern of full attendance, cause real disruption to a child's learning as well as their educational and social progress. Please bear in mind that whilst your child will gain from spending quality time with their family, missing school can make learning harder for them. This is because work in class is carefully planned so that topics are covered and then extended. Your child may miss vital links, which helps them make sense of future learning.

LEGISLATION: Firstly, it may surprise parents to know that all leave for holidays is at the discretion of the school and not an automatic entitlement. The school has the right to refuse requests that are not consistent with the criteria below. The basic framework is contained in paragraphs 8(3) and 8(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations of 1995 which state:

- 8(3) Subject to paragraph (4), on application made by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides, a pupil may be granted leave of absence in order to go away on holiday.
- 8(4) Save in exceptional circumstances, a pupil shall not in pursuance of paragraph (3) be granted more than ten school days leave of absence in any school year.

Relevant attendance figures for you to be aware of:

- 95% Attendance is equivalent to 9 days absence in a year.
- 90% Attendance is equivalent to 18 days absence in a year.
- 85% Attendance is equivalent to 27 days absence in a year.

REQUESTS FOR ABSENCE should be made:

- ❖ In a letter and handed in to the Headteacher.
- ❖ If possible, before the holiday is booked.
- ❖ At least 3 weeks before the holiday.
- ❖ By the parent "with whom the pupil normally resides". This covers the situation of children whose parents are separated or divorced, and who wish to go on holiday with the other parent or other relative. The parent with care should always make the request on behalf of the other parent or relative, in order to avoid any subsequent misunderstandings or disputes.

In the first instance the request will be considered by the Headteacher. Parents have the right to make representations to a Governor's Sub-committee if their request is refused.

SCHOOL POLICY The school will consider each request for absence on its merits but the general principles are:

- a) Holiday leave will only be granted in **exceptional circumstances**.
- b) Holiday leave will only be given where a pupil has a good punctuality/attendance record. This means at least 90% attendance.
- c) The absence would not take the child's attendance level below 90%.
- d) Holiday leave will not be granted at the following times:
 - I. During September for any Year Group.
 - II. Between January and May for children in Y2 or Y6.
- e) Holiday leave will not be granted for attendance at one-off activities that are purely for recreation.
- f) Any pupil who is absent through holiday for more than 20 consecutive days risks removal from the school roll.
- g) Where unauthorised attendance is considered excessive the school may refer the case to Education Welfare.

This could ultimately result in parents receiving a Penalty Notice. The details of this are in the school policy.

We hope you will find this guidance useful and feel able to support us in continuing to provide the best possible education for your child.

Please contact the Headteacher if you wish to discuss specific plans or concerns.