



Summerseat Methodist Primary School

Policy for Attendance and Punctuality

This policy was adopted by the Full Governing Body on October 8th 2013.

Rationale

At Summerseat Methodist Primary School we believe good attendance at school is crucial for effective learning to take place.

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education.

Attendance Lead

In our school, the Head Teacher takes the lead on attendance. Data is inputted into Integris and analysed by the headteacher.

Attendance Target

The Governing Body will set a realistic annual attendance target at their Autumn term meeting.

Responsibility of Parents

Our “Home-School Agreement” sets out the responsibilities of parents to:

- Make sure my child is at school regularly and on time
- Contact the school promptly by phone when my child is absent (before 9.00 a.m.)

In addition we ask parents to:

- Keep their child off school for 48 hours after their last bout of sickness or diarrhoea
- Submit any requests for absence during term time at least 10 days prior to the proposed absence

Responsibility of School

We will

- Record all attendances, absences and lates
- Provide an annual statement of attendance to be included with the annual school report
- Follow up any unexplained absences, after 9.30 a.m., by a phone call
- Reply to requests for absence in a timely fashion
- Inform parents of any unavoidable school closure (e.g. due to snow)
- Work with parents where a child’s attendance is becoming a concern
- Work with the Educational Welfare Service where concerns persist
- Publish termly and annual absence rates
- Provide termly and annual absence data as required by the Local Authority and DfE

First Day Absence

If a child is absent, parents/carers should call the school on the first day stating the reason for the absence. A note should then be sent into school on the day the child returns explaining the absence.

If no contact is made by parents/carers explaining the absence on the first day the school will try to phone to secure an explanation. Where the school is unable to make contact by phone a letter will be sent.

If, after the child returns to school no explanation of absence is given by the parents/carers, the school will write again. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised after 4 weeks if no explanation can be obtained.

Regular register checks are carried out by the SAO (School Attendance Officer) or a member of school staff allocated this task. If attendance falls below 85%, a letter will be sent home by the Head Teacher requesting an improvement and offering support. If attendance rate does not improve, the Head Teacher will liaise with the School Attendance Officer or designated member of school staff who may contact the parents/carers by letter, do a home visit or invite parents/carers to a formal meeting.

Requests for absences in term time

The law gives no entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must only be in exceptional circumstances and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances are exceptional and warrant the granting of leave. Head Teachers would not be expected to class any term time holiday as exceptional.

The headteacher will refer to the "Bury Children's Services guidance on Leave of Absence and Holiday in Term Time requests September 2013".

If the request is denied school will inform the parent/carer of the reason by letter. If the parents/carers choose to continue with the planned holiday it will be taken as an **unauthorised absence**.

Penalty Notices

Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated LA Officers, Head Teachers (and Deputy Head Teachers authorised by them) and the Police to issue Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school.

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2004 came into force on 27th February 2004.

From the 1st September 2013, Penalty Notices can be requested for any child with at least 5 days or 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a pre determined period set by the Local Authority - otherwise known as batch dates. Penalty Notices are issued at **£60 per parent per child if paid with 21 days, rising to £120 per parent per child if paid with 28 days**. If the Penalty Notice(s) remain unpaid, legal proceedings will be initiated under Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996.

Only the Local Authority can make the decision to withdraw a Penalty Notice once it has been issued.

Absence notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Authorised Absences

The Head Teacher will consider the following factors when dealing with all term time absence requests

- The age of the pupil
- The time of year
- The nature and purpose of the trip
- The impact on the pupil's education
- The pupil's ability to catch up on work missed
- The pupil's educational needs
- The general welfare of the pupil
- The overall attendance pattern of the pupil
- History of previous trips taken

Absences are authorised by the Head Teacher under the following exceptional circumstances:

- Attending events related to future careers (limited to one per academic year)
- Application to take child out of school for the purpose of a family holiday when parent/carer unable to have leave in school holidays from the Fire Service
- Application to take child out of school for the purpose of a family holiday when parent/carer is in the armed forces and on a short/limited period of leave before returning to official duties
- Application to take pupil out of school for the purpose of a family holiday when family have undergone a difficult period/transition in recent months
- Application to take pupil out of school in term time due to pupil's ongoing health/medical needs or the need for specialist accommodation
- Application to take child out of school for the purpose of a close family member's wedding abroad
- Application to take pupil out of school for the purpose of parent's wedding abroad
- Application to take child out of school for the purpose of visiting a sick close relative abroad
- Application to take child out of school for the purpose of a close relative's funeral abroad
- Application to take child out of school for the purpose of a religious festival/pilgrimage
- Application to take child out of school for the purpose of visiting a parent in custody

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

Medical / Dental Appointments

Where possible, appointments should be made out of school hours.

Where this is not possible, parents are requested to inform the school by phone or letter. Parents must report to the office when collecting a child for or returning a child after an appointment.

The school will keep a record of when children depart and return.

Attendance Monitoring

Attendance data is input and submitted to the Local Authority on a weekly basis. Attendance data is analysed at the end of each half term. Parents of children whose attendance is below 85% are contacted by the Head Teacher. If absence is unexplained or due to lateness after close of register, parents are expected to improve this during the following half term. If not, the Head Teacher can refer the matter to the Educational Welfare Service who may consider issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Role of the Educational Welfare Service

The EWS has a statutory role to monitor absence on behalf of the Local Authority and DfE. The Head Teacher meets with a representative from EWS every half term. Absence rates are discussed alongside any children whose attendance is below 85%. The EWS will consider issuing Fixed Penalty Notices to parents of children who are persistent absentees (below 85% attendance).

Punctuality - Start of School Day

It is important that children arrive in school on time so that they have a settled start to the day. The school day begins at 9.00 a.m. A teacher is on duty in the playground from 8.55 a.m. The doors are locked at 9.05 a.m. and any children arriving after that time are recorded as late. Registers close at 9.15 a.m. Any arrival after that time is recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Punctuality Monitoring

Punctuality is monitored every half term. The parents of children who have been recorded as late on 6 or more occasions during the half term are contacted by the Head Teacher. The parents of children with an unauthorised absence rate of more than 15% due to lateness will, in the first instance, be contacted by the Head Teacher. If the situation does not improve, the Head Teacher can refer the case to the Educational Welfare Service who may consider issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Punctuality - End of School Day

The school day ends at 3.20 p.m. Children must be collected on time, unless they are making their own way home or attending an after-school activity. Children who are not collected by 3.30 p.m. are placed into the care of the Head Teacher who will immediately contact the parents. With parental agreement, the child may attend the Out of Hours Club if there is space and the parents will be charged the higher rate. If there is no space in the Club, the child will remain in the care of the Head Teacher. If the child is not collected by 5.30 p.m., the Head Teacher will contact the Social Care department.

All cases of lateness at the end of the school day will be recorded.

The registration system

The School will use manual paper registers for keeping the school attendance records. The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances	Authorised absence

	(not covered by another appropriate code/description)	
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Monitoring and Review of this Policy

Attendance data is monitored every half term by the Head Teacher. Attendance and absence data will be included in the Head Teacher's Termly Report to Governors.

This policy will be reviewed every three years.