



Policy for Attendance

In Mansbridge Primary School regular attendance and punctuality is given a high priority. We see it as of vital importance that all pupils are in school to maximise their learning and preparation for life after compulsory schooling.

Compulsory school age is defined as between five years and sixteen years. The law states that all pupils of compulsory school age should attend school regularly to obtain maximum benefit from their education.

Parents have a duty to secure efficient full time education for their children according to their age, ability, and aptitude and any special needs they may have.

As local education authority Southampton City Council must ensure that sufficient school places are available for the children in its area and that parents fulfil their duty to secure education whether at school or otherwise.

Schools must register attendance at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions and notify the LA

- a) Where a pupil is absent for a continuous period of not less than ten school days (specifying the cause if known)
- b) Where a pupil fails to attend regularly.

Schools must also:-

- a) Distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absences in the registers
- b) Publish the percentages of authorised and unauthorised absences, and of the numbers of pupils involved, in annual reports and prospectuses.
- c) Include a statement of unauthorised absences in pupil's annual reports.
- d) Ensure that registers are taken in accordance with school guidelines.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#). These amendments, as described below, will come into force on 1 September 2013.

Term-time holiday

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. The current law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must be in exceptional circumstances and the headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

The DFE points out that it is the school which authorises an absence and that a note containing an unacceptable explanation for an absence does not allow it to be treated as authorised.

Factors taken in to account will be current attendance and exceptional circumstances such as death or serious illness of a very close relative. This decision will rest solely with the Headteacher (or his nominated representative from the LMT). Furthermore the school may ask for evidence to corroborate the special circumstances for which the absence is requested such as inward and outward return flight details etc.

Any requests for extended leave beyond 5 days will require a meeting between the Head and/or the Education Welfare Officer. If a child is off school for more than 4 weeks consecutively and it is not authorised by the Head the child will be taken off roll (subject to legal permission granted by the LA)

Persistent lateness will be seen as a failure to attend school regularly. Pupils are marked as late if they arrive after 8.55 a.m. However the registers are closed at 9.30 am and pupils arriving after this time will be marked as unauthorised absence unless otherwise authorised by the Headteacher.

Persistent lateness will be monitored and followed through by the Education Welfare Officer and a member of the Leadership and Management Team.

Persistent absence has now been defined by the DFE as anything below 85% attendance and if a child falls below this figure they are liable for;

- school attendance orders
- prosecution for irregular attendance
- penalty notices for irregular attendance
- education supervision
- see Appendix 2 for details on the above

REMOVAL FROM SCHOOL ROLL

Children Missing Education Guidance covers removal from roll*, which must be compliant with The Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006 and subsequent amendments.

*** Removal from roll is only lawful after:**

- 20 school days of unauthorised absence
- Providing the child is not unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and
- Providing the school and LA have carried out enquiries and failed to locate the child

School Refusers

There are no lawful grounds for a pupil to be removed from the school roll on the basis that they are a school refuser. Such cases should be referred to the school EWO.

Dual Registered Pupils

When a pupil is jointly registered at a mainstream school and another education provision, the pupil should not be removed from the register of either the school or the subsidiary establishment without the consent of both providers.

Fixed Term Exclusion

Pupil remains on the school roll. Absence is authorised as it results from a school decision.

Permanent Exclusion

If permanent exclusion is confirmed the pupil's name should be removed from the school roll on the school day either:

- On expiry of the time allowed for appeals to be made following a governors hearing, or
- After the appeal committee's confirmation of permanent exclusion, or
- If before that, when the pupil takes up a school place elsewhere.

Custodial Sentences

Regulation 8(1)(i) applies to such cases:

that he is detained in pursuance of a final order made by a court or of an order of recall made by a court or the Secretary of State, that order being for a period of not less than four months, and the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will return to the school at the end of that period.

Home Education

Parents cannot generally remove a child from the school roll unless they intend to take responsibility for their child's education and plan to home educate. This would be in compliance with Regulation 8 (1)(d) of the above regulations.

Once the school receives written confirmation from the parent that they intended to home educate, the child must be removed from the school roll and the letter passed to the Children Missing Education Officer.

If the school are aware that the child is subject to Child Protection Planning and/or has a named Social Worker, this professional should also be advised of the child's withdrawal from school.

Schools should not actively encourage parents to electively home educate to evade prosecution or exclusion.

STRATEGIES FOR RAISING ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

- a) Newsletters will remind parents of attendance issues
- b) The School prospectus will contain clear attendance statistics for the previous year.
- c) The parent guidelines will contain information on, and expectations about attendance and punctuality.
- d) The Education Welfare Officer and/or the Cantell Federation Lead for Prevention of Absence will work in partnership with the school.
- e) The Business Manager will have lead responsibility, under the direction of the Headteacher, for monitoring attendance
- f) Assemblies will address attendance and punctuality using the School Attendance Support Team "dog" SAM (School Attendance Matters) and his friend ODO (Odd Days Off)
- g) A cup will be presented weekly to the class who has the highest attendance.
- h) The class with the highest attendance each week will have their name published on the notice board in the school Hall
- i) Children with 100% attendance will be presented with a book token at the final assembly of the year.
- j) Sanctions as noted above for persistent absence or unauthorised holidays may be used.

PROCEDURES FOR ABSENCE AND LATENESS.

- a) On each day of absence an adult member of the family must inform the school before 10.00 a.m. of the reasons for absence. If for any reason the school has not been notified the Admin staff will check the registers and will activate Truancy Call (the automated messaging system advising parents that their child is not in school and requesting a reason that's same day. If parents persistently refuse to let the school know (i.e. more than three times in a term) and rely on the messaging service to follow up absence then it will be recorded as unauthorised. Parents must contact the school on each and every day of absence before 10.00 am unless given permission by the School Business Manager to accept contact from parents on a less frequent basis i.e. if a child has chicken pox parents may not need to phone in again for 3 days or a broken leg two weeks etc
- b) When children return to school after an absence of more than a week they will not be made to feel guilty but they will be welcomed back. The class teacher or LSA will give them a brief "back to school" interview to ensure they feel secure and will also bring them up to date on what has happened in their absence.
- c) Attendance registers will be monitored each week and absences identified. If a reason has not been given, by the parent, for the absence it will be recorded as unauthorised,
- d) If the school are concerned at the absence of a child a member of the Leadership and Management Team may undertake an unannounced visit to the child's home. This will be recorded on the school attendance audit and mentioned to the EWO during their next visit.
- e) A member of the LMT will contact the Federation Lead for Prevention to arrange contact with parents if necessary.

- f) In some cases of absence the Head will use fixed penalty notices or parenting orders. This will be carried out with the advice of the Education Welfare Officer. (See appendices for these guidelines)
- g) For all cases of children whose attendance has dropped (or will drop because of the absence) below 95 % or in the case of the Autumn half term with more than 3 days absence all holiday requests of more than a day will require a meeting between the parent and a member of the leadership and management before the request is granted.

Readopted 5th July 2006

Readopted 4th July 2007

Readopted 24th September 2008

Readopted 30th September 2009

Readopted 30th June 2010

Readopted 6th July 2011

Readopted 4th July 2012

Readopted 3rd July 2013

Appendices

Appendix 1 DFE guidance on Local authority duties and legal measures to ensure school attendance

General article Updated: 11 June 2012

All children of compulsory school age (five to 16) should receive suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or through other arrangements. If a child is registered at school, parents have the primary legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends regularly.

Local authorities (LAs) have a duty to satisfy themselves that children are in the school system or receiving education otherwise. If the LA believes that a child is not getting a suitable education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise than at a school, it has a duty under section 437 of the Education Act 1996 to serve a notice or a school attendance order on a parent. The notice requires the parent to satisfy the LA that the child is receiving a suitable education while the order requires the parent to register the child at a named school.

LAs also have responsibility under sections 444, 444A and 444ZA of the Education Act 1996 for legal action to enforce attendance at school. This duty is often exercised through the Education Welfare Service and its Education Welfare Officers (EWOs), also known as Education Social Workers. They also have the following legal powers to enforce attendance:

- school attendance orders
- prosecution for irregular attendance
- penalty notices for irregular attendance
- education supervision orders.

LAs can also use parenting contracts in their efforts to improve a pupil's attendance.

The local authority determines when a fixed penalty notice can be issued and the school follows their guidance

For a maintained school the local authority (LA) determines how many school sessions a pupil must miss before a fixed penalty notice can be issued to parents.

The LA does not specify how many sessions of authorised absence result in a fine. Instead, it says that a fixed penalty notice may be issued in the following circumstances:

- Where unauthorised absence levels are unacceptable
- For unauthorised leave in term time
- Where parents are unwilling to sign a contract offering support and where attendance is below 85% over a six week period without justification
- Where parenting contracts or orders have been unsuccessful or ignored
- Where a pupil is in a public place during school hours, without reasonable justification, during days one to five of a fixed term or permanent exclusion

Appendix 2

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the **Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**. These amendments, as described below, will come into force on 1 September 2013.

The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents must pay £60 if they pay within 28 days; or £120 if they pay within 42 days.

Amendments to 2007 regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.