

Stillington Community Primary School Attendance Policy

Introduction

Good attendance at school is an essential pre-requisite for good pupil outcomes and contributes to a positive working ethos early in life.

The school aims to work together with parents to ensure that children attending Stillington Community Primary School attend both regularly and punctually. The school will promote regular attendance, offering all pupils equal access to learning.

At Stillington Community Primary School we encourage good attendance by making the school day and pupils' learning enjoyable. Children need to feel that their contribution in school is valued and that all staff care about them as individuals. We hope that parents will assist us in our work of raising attendance levels throughout the school by:

1. Ensuring the regular attendance of their child
2. Informing the school promptly (no later than 9:00am) when their child is absent from school
3. Provide a reason for absence
4. Attend any meetings about their child's attendance, which may be necessary.

AIMS AND TARGETS.

Our attendance target is 97.5%.

The school will:

1. Develop clear procedures to enable children to come to school
2. Ensure that all children and parents understand the issues and procedures for attendance
3. Ensure that all staff including governors, administration, support and non-teaching staff understand the issues and procedures for attendance.
4. Ensure that all staff are aware of the procedures and encourage them to adopt a consistent approach to recording and monitoring registration and attendance issues.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents' responsibilities:

1. Parents have a legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend on a regular and full-time basis.
2. Parents should ensure that, if their child is to be absent from school for any unavoidable reason such as illness, they should contact the school as soon as possible, on the first morning of absence before 9.00am. This may be done by phone or in person. Verbal messages on a parent's

behalf from an adult relative or representative such as a childminder or friend may be accepted at the school's discretion on the first day of absence – subsequent absences must be explained by the parent. Verbal messages from children, e.g. siblings, will not be accepted.

3. Parents may not authorise their child's absence – only the school can do this, on the basis of the explanation provided by the parents.

4. Parents should ensure that their child arrives on time for the start of registration (9:00 am). Children arriving after this time should report to the school office and be signed in as late.

5. Parents should avoid booking family holidays during term-time. Such holidays will not be authorised.

6. Parents should work with the school to improve lateness and attendance.

If parents, guardians or carers are worried about their child's attendance at school they should:

1. Talk to their child; it may be something simple that needs your help to resolve
2. Talk to the class teacher
3. Talk to the headteacher.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is the key person within our school who motivates the whole staff by demonstrating a commitment to promoting good attendance by:

1. Ensuring regular celebrations of good attendance take place
2. Providing regular reports to the Governing Body about attendance
3. Promoting attendance through communications with parents – i.e. school newsletters.
4. Ensuring the monitoring and implementation of the agreed policy and procedures
5. Being available, if appropriate, for parents who may wish to discuss specific problems in school which their children are experiencing
6. Ensuring that the appropriate training is provided as required on attendance
7. Ensuring that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all students to attend and to achieve
8. Monitoring the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensuring that the policy is reviewed annually.
9. Ensuring that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues. Ensuring that the Registration Regulations, England, 2006 and other attendance related legislation is complied with
10. Returning relevant school attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department of Education

11. Ensuring that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off-site are implemented
12. Ensuring that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
13. Developing a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support students and their families
14. Documenting interventions used to a standard required by the Local Authority should legal proceedings be instigated

The role of the Governors

The governing Body of the school is actively engaged in promoting good attendance by supporting and encouraging children and teachers in their work. They will achieve this by appointing a Safeguarding link Governor and will:

1. Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to students and their parents/carers
2. Annually review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy
3. Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2006 and other attendance related legislation is complied with.
4. Monitor the school's attendance and related issues through regular reporting at Governing Body Meetings.
5. Ensure that the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off-site
6. Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
7. Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of intervention

The Role of the Class Teacher

Class teachers are ideally placed because of their regular contact with the children in their class to be able to assess whether the explanations received for a child's absence are reasonable. In our school we recognise that building a good relationship with children is vital in promoting good attendance by:

1. Welcoming children back after they have been absent because of illness
2. Taking specific steps to assist children returning to school when they have been absent
3. Discussing any concerns with the Headteacher.

The Role of Administrative Staff

Our administrative staff provide valuable support to the Headteacher by:

1. Passing information received from parents at the school to the Headteacher
2. Helping where possible in providing an individual's attendance data as well as other statistical information.
3. Inputting data onto SIMs as required to do so.
4. Ensuring First Day calling is maintained no later than 9:30am.
5. Providing the Headteacher with attendance information on a half termly basis.
6. Contacting the LA for support where attendance concerns exist.
7. Ensuring that registers are completed in a timely way so that all absences are correctly coded on the register.

School responsibilities:

1. To communicate clearly the attendance procedure and expectations of the school.
2. The school will record and monitor attendance in accordance both with the statutory requirements and with the principle that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to a child's educational progress and personal wellbeing.
3. Have appropriate registration processes in place.
4. Registers will be taken in all lessons and recorded on SIMS.
5. Teachers will complete registers in accordance with guidance given by the Headteacher to ensure safe guarding of all pupils.
6. Registers are monitored daily by Office Administrator. The Office Administrator will follow up absences and lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school: initially with a first day absence telephone call.

The Role of Pupils

The school believes that all children should attend regularly if they are to reach their full potential. Children should:

1. Aim for 100% attendance, only being absent through genuine illness.
2. Arrive at school on time for registration
3. Register with the school office if they arrive after 9.00am

Holidays

No parent/carer can demand leave of absence as of right. The Education regulations state that applications for leave must be made in advance by a parent with whom the child lives and can only be authorised by the school in exceptional circumstances. Each application is considered individually by the school. The following are examples of the criteria for leave of absence, which may be considered as 'exceptional':

- Service personnel returning from active deployment
- Where inflexibility of the parents' leave or working arrangement is part of the organisational or company policy. This would need to be evidenced by the production or confirmation from the organisation/company

- Where leave is recommended as part of a parents' or child's rehabilitation from medical or emotional problems. Evidence must be provided

- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis

Taking a pupil on leave during term time interrupts teaching and learning and can disrupt educational progress. Before completing this application form parent/carers are asked to consider the effect on their child's continuity of education.

Any family who persistently takes unauthorised time off during term time could be liable to a fine. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 explanatory note states: *"Regulation 7 of the 2006 Regulations is amended to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil; except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. Leave of absence taken without authorisation may be referred to the Education Welfare Service. This may result in prosecution proceedings, or a Fixed Penalty Notice. If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, a separate Notice would be issued to each parent for each child."*

AS OF 1ST SEPTEMBER 2017, THE RATE PER PARENT PER CHILD WILL BE £60 IF PAID WITHIN 21 DAYS AND RISING TO £120 IF PAID BETWEEN 22 AND 28 DAYS.

If the penalty notice is not paid each parent may be liable to prosecution at the Magistrates Court, and if proved, each notice may receive a criminal conviction and/or a fine to the maximum of £1,000 plus costs.

- Application for term-time leave of absence must be made in advance by the parent with whom the child normally resides on the form headed 'Application for leave of absence during term time'. These may be obtained from the school office.

- Leave of absence will only be granted where the Headteacher considers it is due to 'exceptional circumstances'. Parents will be informed as to whether the request has been authorised or unauthorised. No holidays will be authorised unless significant mitigating factors exist.

There are approximately 195 school days (390 sessions) a year which your child is expected to attend. There are also approximately 71 days (142 sessions) of school holidays. This is over 13 school weeks. Please ensure that your holidays are taken during this period.

Lateness

Punctuality is an important life skill. It is also polite.

Children must be in class at 09.00 each day. Registers will be taken after this time. Children who arrive after 09:00 are to report to the school office. Lateness will be monitored by the Office Administrator.

If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M'. Please be advised that where possible doctors and dentists appointments are to be made outside of school hours or during school holidays. When needed the school may require appointment letters/ cards. Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other pupils. Lateness is considered to be an equally serious absence. Parents, guardians or carers of pupils who seem to be developing patterns of lateness will be reminded by letter of the importance of good time keeping.

First day contact guidance (Sickness)

First day contact is a widely used practice in schools and has been shown to improve attendance rates. The correct procedure at Stillington Community Primary School is as follows:

1. Parents / Carers to contact the School by 9am informing them of their child's absence.
2. As soon as registers close, the office administrator checks absentees against messages received.
3. For pupils for whom no message has been received, the office administrator will attempt to make contact with the parent at the earliest opportunity.
4. When contact is made, the parent will be asked for the reason for absence. In the event that no proper reason is supplied, the parent will be informed that the absence will not be authorised.
5. In the event that a parent is unaware of their child's absence and believes their child should be in school, the School will double check to make sure the child is absent and a mistake has not been made in the register. If after this, the child proves to be definitely missing, the School will then contact the police to report the child as missing.
6. In the case of minor ailments, the parent will be encouraged to send the child in with an assurance that school will keep a close eye on him/her.
7. Where no contact is made, a message should be left asking the parent to contact the school. Where it is impossible to leave a message, the office administrator will attempt to contact the next named contact.
8. Reasons for absence are inputted into SIMs. Please notify the school in the morning and of subsequent absences. (We reserve the right to request a doctor's/consultant's letter regarding recurring and frequent illness.)

Persistent absentees

Persistent absentees are defined as children whose attendance is below 90% and where unsatisfactory reasons are given for absence. However, the procedures outlined below may apply to children whose attendance is above 90% but where there are concerns about deteriorating attendance or where patterns are emerging, e.g. regular absences on particular days or persistent lateness.

These pupils are carefully monitored.

Absence for part of the day

From time to time, pupils show symptoms of illness at school. School will contact parents and other family members if a child needs to go home. School asks parents to ensure we have up-to-date contact names and telephone numbers for this purpose.

In the event of school Closure

At Stillington, we rarely close except in a most difficult situation. During winter months it may become necessary to close school due to adverse weather conditions. If this closure takes place at the start of the day, parents will receive a text or phone call, notification via the school website and the closure will be broadcast on BBC Radio York. If the weather or other condition means that a decision is taken to close school during the school day parents and guardians will be texted or phoned and asked to collect their children as soon as possible. The staff will remain on the

premises until all children have been collected. The School Closure Policy should be read in conjunction with this policy.

Policy Approved by Governing Board: March 2019

Next Review: March 2020