

Pensby Primary School



Attendance Policy

Mrs K Brown

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Attendance Policy

For children at our school to gain the greatest benefit from education it is essential that they attend school regularly and punctually. They should only be absent from school when it is absolutely necessary.

School absence will disrupt a child's learning and may affect their academic progress. It may also disrupt their friendships and impact on their social and emotional development. Children may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly.

School attendance is given a high profile throughout the school because we know how important it is. It is discussed at all school assemblies, parents' evenings, staff meetings and governors' meetings. It is also included in all school reports and newsletters. We also provide visual displays highlighting the importance of good attendance and punctuality in prominent positions throughout the school.

Reward Systems

Our school has a system of rewards for children whose attendance is good or excellent. These include individual certificates and rewards for good and excellent attendance and class rewards too. Depending on the circumstances these rewards are reviewed e.g. during the pandemic.

Sickness

If your child is sick or has a medical appointment it is important that you inform the school as soon as possible. Parents are also asked to send in a note/explain in person through a call or visit to the school to explain the reasons for any absence. If the sickness continues for more than a few days we would expect you to consult your doctor. If your child has ongoing health problems the school nurse may be able to help.

Action Plans

If a child's attendance becomes a source of concern, the school will write to the parent and they may be invited to a meeting or school attendance panel. The meeting will give an opportunity to discuss any concerns and to agree an Action Plan or Parenting Contract to support the family.

Persistent Absence

If a child's attendance falls below 92% they will be defined by the Department of Education as Persistently Absent. At this level their progress and development may be significantly impaired. The case may be referred to the Education Social Worker who would contact the family and offer to visit them at home to address any concerns and offer support. All attendance is monitored and if it drops below 95% action will be taken to avoid it moving to persistent absence.

Lateness

Children need to be in school on time at 8:55am each day when the registration period begins. It's important that all children make a good start to the day and are ready to learn. If a child arrives after 8:55am but before 9:05am [when registers close] they will be given a late mark [L]. Children who arrive late are often embarrassed and may not be in the best frame of mind to begin learning. They may miss out on something important. If children arrive after 9:10am [when registers close] they will be marked with a **U** which equates to an unauthorised absence. The admin team monitor late arrivals. Pupils who arrive after 8.55am must wait to gain entry to the second lesson of the day at 9.10am (the first lesson starts at 8.55am). They are not permitted to enter before this time as they will interrupt the learning of the pupils who have arrived on time. If a child arrives after 8.55am on 5 occasions in any academic year, they are invited to a meeting with the Headteacher and a governor who will explore how this situation can be improved for the child's benefit. If the child then arrives after this time for another 5

occasions, the Headteacher will consider a fixed penalty fine. Children who arrive after 8.55am but have extenuating circumstances agreed by the headteacher, will be permitted entry to the first lesson.

Parent's legal responsibilities

The Education Act [1996] Section 444 requires parents to ensure that their children receive full-time education which suits their needs. Parents who fail in this duty may be prosecuted via the courts and fined up to £2 500 or, in some cases, imprisoned. The Anti Social Behaviour Act [2003] Section 23 also indicates parents may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice if their child's absence from school is unauthorised. Fixed Penalty Notices are for £60 if paid within 21 days and £120 if paid within 28 days.

Children missing from Education

If any child is missing from Education and there is no explanation as to why, the school will inform either the local authority or other outside agencies where appropriate, so that the child's whereabouts are established quickly. In the case of suspicion of radicalisation, the PREVENT system is implemented. A child is considered missing from Education on day 1 of an unexplained absence.

Holidays in term time

Pensby Primary School adheres to the DFE guidance given in its 'School Attendance' document;

Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

Parents/carers must ask permission for their child to be absent during term time, and it is at the Headteacher's discretion to decide whether or not the absence will be authorised. The Headteacher may authorise leave for *exceptional circumstances* only. If leave is taken without permission, or no application is made, parents/carers risk being issued with an Education Penalty Notice.

COVID Pandemic (and other Special Circumstances).

In light of the 2020/21 COVID pandemic, (and in other special circumstances), statutory attendance may be adjusted for individuals and groups of pupils. In those cases, the governors of the school will be involved in determining how and when these measures are implemented, ensuring the safety of staff and pupils is the priority.

Further advice and guidance

Further advice and guidance may be found on the Department of Education website:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance>