

New Park Primary Academy **Attendance policy**

Attendance and punctuality at school is essential if children are to benefit fully from their school life. Regular lateness and absence can lead to poor progress and poor attainment.

Attendance procedures

- If your child will not be attending school the office must be informed by telephone (01423 503 011) on the first morning of any absence before 9am and for every day of their absence thereafter
- If the school is not telephoned to explain an absence by 9am then the office staff will telephone the parent/carer for an explanation. If the parent/carer cannot be contacted then other emergency contact numbers provided will be called. It is vital that parents/carers keeps all relevant contact numbers up to date. In exceptional circumstances, if we are not able to establish the whereabouts of a child and are concerned for their safety we will contact Children's Services or the police
- Parents/carers must ensure that their child arrives at school on time. The school gates are opened at 8:30am and the school day begins at 8:45am. Any child arriving after 8:55am must be brought by an adult to the main entrance
- Leave of Absence forms must be completed before taking children out of school. Forms are available from the office. Absences without permission from school will be registered as unauthorised
- Family holidays are not permitted during term time and will not be authorised. Service families who wish to take a holiday during term time due to postings outside of their control should provide a covering letter from their unit welfare officer
- For sickness and diarrhoea children must not return until 48 hours after the last episode. For other illnesses, if a child feels better during the morning we would expect them to return school for the afternoon.

Registers

Class teachers complete a register twice daily via SIMS. Registers close at 8:55 a.m.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Absences can be authorised if they are for certain reasons e.g. sickness, religious observance, bereavement etc. The ultimate responsibility to authorise absence rests with the Headteacher. If the Headteacher is not satisfied with the reasons provided, the absence may be categorised as unauthorised.

Absence procedures

If a child's attendance drops below 96%, a letter will be sent to parents/carers.

If attendance drops below 90%, a letter will be sent to families inviting them to make an appointment with school to discuss the causes of absence and plan any strategies to help increase attendance.

If a child's attendance continues to be below 90%, a referral will be made to the local authority attendance officer who may choose to hold a PACE formal caution interview which may result in a penalty notice.

Leave of Absence

Parents/carers cannot demand leave of absence as of right. Applications must be made in advance by a parent/carer and can only be authorised by the school in exceptional circumstances. Each leave application is considered individually by the school taking into account any factors presented by the family. Application forms are available from the school office.

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.

The decision of the Headteacher is final.

Where a child is taken out of school for the purpose of leave of absence in term time without the permission of the school, the absence will be coded as unauthorised and as such may result in a Penalty Notice.

Medical Appointments

- Medical appointments should be taken out of school hours and children should attend school before and after their appointment.
- Parents should inform the class teacher or office in writing indicating attendance at the dentist, doctor or optician before the arranged appointment unless an emergency situation has arisen.
- Children should be collected from and returned to the school office to be signed in or out when attending medical appointments during the school day. If a child has an appointment in a morning or afternoon session and does not attend school for the other session, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence unless it has been agreed with the Headteacher.

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