

# PENTLAND INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

2017 – 2018

### INTRODUCTION

**Pentland Infant and Nursery School regards regular attendance at school as essential in ensuring the best possible learning outcomes for all children.** Regular attendance at school is necessary to promote better life chances. The school's ethos encourages children to feel that their presence in school is important and that they are missed when they are absent or late.

There is a clear link between good attendance and high standards. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and every child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

There is now more Government pressure on schools than ever before to ensure the regular attendance of children in their school. There is a legal requirement for schools to set targets for improving school attendance.

This policy sets out the principles and guidelines by which we seek to raise attendance, improve punctuality, to raise levels of achievement and to maximise opportunities both in school and in later life.

***Our aim is to have an annual attendance figure of 96%, or better.***

***We rely on our partnership with parents to achieve this.***

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**PROMOTING REGULAR ATTENDANCE** and helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents, pupils and school staff.

**To help us all achieve good attendance for all pupils, school will:**

- Give parents details on attendance in regular newsletters
- Report to parent/carer's termly on their child's attendance if there are concerns
- Monitor whole school attendance continuously
- Celebrate good attendance by awarding class achievements
- Take the register twice per day, ie at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions
- Keep attendance data in accordance with legal requirements and the policy of the school

- Inform the Local Authority about pupils who do not attend school regularly or who have been continuously absent for an extended period (2 weeks) unless it is covered by a medical certificate
- Make every effort to find out the reason for any absence in order to safeguard the well-being of each child
- Ensure that policies and procedures are upheld; the Governing Body will monitor the effectiveness of this policy

Kirklees LA are required to ensure that parents carry out their responsibilities with regard to their children's education. Pentland works closely with the Kirklee's Attendance and Pupil Support Officers to monitor each individual child's attendance.

#### **PARENTS/CARERS ARE EXPECTED TO:**

- Ensure that their child attends school every day and arrives on time. This will support the school in doing the best for every child's learning and achievement and to raise the overall school attendance figures.
- Convey to their child the positive aspects of school attendance; be supportive and instil in them a good attendance routine.
- Arrange medical appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. If this is not possible, then ensure that their child attends school before and after the appointment. Parents are asked to show appointment cards at the school office.
- Refrain from taking holidays (extended leaves of absence) during school term time.
- Bring their child to school on time. Our school day starts at 9.00 am. Registers are marked shortly after this. Parents will be asked to sign a late register at the school office if their child arrives after 9.10am. If pupils arrive after 9.20am they are marked in the official register as late.
- Ensure that their child remains in school until the official home time of 3.00pm, to ensure that no learning time is lost. Only under the most exceptional and occasional incidences, will an early collection time be approved.

#### **ABSENCE PROCEDURES**

##### **If a child is absent parents/carer's must:**

- Tell school of all absences on a daily basis by phoning school (01924 451631) to tell us if their child will be away and why. Parents are expected to tell us when their child is expected to return to school.
- Or parents/carers can call into school and report to reception, who will arrange for a member of staff to speak with them.

##### **4.2 If a child is absent school will:**

- Telephone parents/carer's on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them.
- Invite parents/carers in to school to discuss the situation with our Attendance Support Officer.

## **We can authorize an absence if:**

- Your child is sick
- Your child has to attend a medical or dental appointment which cannot be arranged outside school hours
- There are days of religious observance e.g. Eid (if they fall within term time. A specified number of days only can be authorized)

## **Examples of absences that will definitely not be authorized include:**

- You are taking your child shopping
- You want to take your child on holiday
- If you want to take your child to the airport to meet or say goodbye to family
- If you have slept in after a late night
- You want to take birthday trips
- Your child is saying they do not want to come to school

## **LATENESS**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day they can miss work and vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons; it can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

- Children will receive a late mark if they are not in class by the end of registration.
- All children arriving after registration period will be entered into the “late book” in the office. The reason for lateness is also recorded. No admittance to classes by parents is allowed after 9.00am. Children who arrive late will be escorted to class by Mrs Mulla, the Attendance Support Officer.

If a child has a persistent late record parents/carers will be asked to meet with the Attendance Support Officer or the Head Teacher to resolve the problem, but parents/carer’s can approach us at any time if they are having problems getting children to school on time.

## **PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM (PA)**

A pupil becomes a ‘Persistent Absentee’ when they **miss 10% or more of school sessions across the year for whatever reason**. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child’s educational prospects and we need parents/carer’s fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and parents/carer’s will be informed of this immediately.

All PA cases are automatically made known to the Local Authority Attendance and Pupil Support Service. School and the Local Authority will support families to improve their child’s attendance.

## HOW WE MONITOR ATTENDANCE:

- Our Attendance Support Officer monitors and measures attendance on a daily basis.
- The weekly percentage figures for each class are calculated and discussed with the Headteacher.
- The average percentage attendance for the whole school is calculated and recorded by the Headteacher.
- Reports on school attendance are given regularly to the Governing Body and the Local Authority.
- The school has a proactive approach to ensuring that children's attendance does not become of a concerning level. The following measures will be taken, to help work towards improving attendance, should a child's attendance level be deemed to be of concern:
- ***If a child's attendance drops below 96%, the Head teacher will issue a letter of concern to the parent's and offer the support of the school to see if we can help in any way to improve attendance***
- ***If a child's attendance falls below 92%, a letter will be sent to request a meeting to discuss concerns regarding attendance and to work together to improve it***
- ***If a child's attendance falls below 90%, a letter will be issued to request a meeting between the parent, the Headteacher and the school's Attendance Support Officer. This is to help avoid the child falling into the Government's bracket of 'persistent absenteeism,' deemed to be those children that attendance is at 90% or below.***

***Attendance is also noted on Report; these are passed to the Junior School.***

## HOW WE CELEBRATE GOOD ATTENDANCE

We celebrate good attendance every Monday in assembly. A certificate is given to the class with the best attendance for the week.

Children who achieve over 100% attendance during a half term are given a certificate of merit and small prize at the end of the half term. Any child achieving 100% attendance for the whole year will receive a celebratory certificate and a special prize. Those children achieving 96% at the end of the year, will also receive a certificate and small prize.

If a class achieves 100% attendance in any one week, they are given a special celebration party.

## HOLIDAYS – (now termed: Leaves of Absence) IN TERM TIME

Taking leaves of absence in term time will affect a child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in term time.

**The government has now made it clear to schools that they may not grant any leave of absence during term time, unless there are the most exceptional of circumstances.**

Parents/carers planning to take their child out of school for a leave of absence during term time must complete the **Extended Leave of Absence Form** and meet with the Headteacher to discuss their decision **before** booking any travel arrangements. The form is available from the school office.

Parents/carers must understand that by taking children out of school they are making a choice to miss out on part of their child's education.

If parents/carers take their child out of school on a leave of absence which has not been authorised by the Headteacher, they will be issued with a penalty notice and fined £60.00 if paid within 21 days, rising to £120.00 if paid within 28 days. This is per parent and per child. Alternatively, the Local Authority may take legal action against you for the non-attendance of your child where the maximum penalty for an offence is £2500. Penalty notices will also apply should extended leave of absence extend beyond any period of time that has been authorised by the headteacher.

Each request will be dealt with on a case by case basis, but only in the most exceptional of circumstances will authorised absence be granted.

Parents must notify school if their child is absent and when they expect to return, even if this is an unauthorized absence. Failure to give a return date, or notify school of any unexpected delays in return, will result in a Child Missing in Education referral to the Local Authority.

## **SUMMARY**

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures and to promote attendance. Equally parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend regularly. All school staff are committed to working in partnership with parents, children and families to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible

**PLEASE WORK WITH US TO HELP US IMPROVE ATTENDANCE AND MEET OUR TARGET**