



Pupil Attendance Policy

Mount Pleasant Primary School

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| Written | November 2021 |
| Review 1 | November 2022 |
| Review 2 with updates | September 2024 |

Statement of intent

The aim of this policy is to outline the school's policy and procedures with regard to the attendance of children who are recorded as being on the school roll.

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 and social progress.

We aim to work together with parent/carers to ensure that all children registered at our school attend both regularly and punctually.

Procedures in this policy take into consideration statutory and non-statutory guidance from the Department for Education, (DFE) and LA.

Roles and Responsibilities

The law requires children aged 5 – 16 years to attend school on a daily basis.

Parents'/ Carers' Responsibilities

1. Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend on a regular and full-time basis.
2. Parents/carers should ensure that if their child is to be absent from school for any unavoidable reason, such as sickness, they should contact the school as soon as possible; this should be the first morning of absence and then subsequent mornings. This should be done by phone or in person.
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/carers. (Should there fail to be a satisfactory reason supplied the child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised.)
4. If a child's attendance begins to fall, and they are in danger of becoming a persistent absence child, parents/carers will be informed via SchoolPing text in the first instance, followed by letters and then requested to come into school to meet with the Attendance Officer and Senior Leader.
5. All appointments, if at all possible, should be outside the school day or during the holidays. We realise in some circumstances this is not possible. Parents/carers are asked to bring any appointment letters, cards or texts.
6. Parents should ensure their child arrives at school in time for the start of registration at 8.50am. The school doors open from 8:40am to 8:50am. Any children arriving after this time must report to the school office. Nursery starts at 8:35am and 12.20pm.
7. Any child arriving after ~~class~~ registers close at 9.10 am will be classed as late. (L)
8. Any child arriving after 9.20 am will have an unauthorised absence late mark. (U)
9. If a child has a persistent late record, parent/carers will be asked into school to meet with the Attendance Officer to resolve the problem.
10. Parent/carers can approach school staff at any time for support if they are having problems getting children to school regularly and on time.

11. School will consider what support the family can be offered to secure attendance. A school attendance improvement contract will be offered. Failure to adhere to the contract or failure to participate in offered support may result in a Notice to Improve being served on the family.

What is expected of the pupils?

1. To do all they can to attend school regularly and punctually
2. To inform a trusted adult if they feel that they are being bullied
3. To encourage friendship and a sense of belonging
4. To be happy and encourage others to feel happy

Teachers' responsibilities

1. Teachers are responsible for marking the register twice a day, at the start of the morning and afternoon session.
2. Teachers will complete the register using the agreed LA codes to record reasons for any absence.
3. Teachers will emphasise any issues arising from frequent absences and/or lateness at consultation afternoons/evenings.

Attendance Officer / Senior Leader responsibilities

1. The Attendance Officer will follow same day calling procedures if parents have not provided any reason for absence.
2. The Attendance Officer will track on children at risk of falling attendance figures and provide senior leaders with the list at least every half term.
3. The Attendance Officer will send a school ping to any parent of a child whose attendance falls between 95 -91%.
4. Attendance letters will be sent to parents if their child's attendance falls below 91%.
5. The Attendance Officer will regularly track these children for signs of improvement.
6. The Attendance Officer-Senior leader will track these children and send a second letter if the attendance improves- does not improve.
7. Senior leaders will meet with any parent of a child whose attendance continues to fall and set up an Attendance Contract with them.

The Headteacher

1. The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that registers are completed correctly and stored appropriately.
2. The Headteacher will ensure that the school's policy and procedures for ensuring attendance at school will be communicated to parents and other interested parties through the school website and reminders in the school newsletter.
3. The Headteacher or Deputy will meet fortnightly with the Attendance Officer to discuss any attendance/lateness issues, and the way forward with these.

Attendance rewards

We believe that it is important for children to value the importance of regular attendance and punctuality at school. Children will receive the following rewards

1. Class with the best attendance every term in each phase will receive a class reward.
2. Children with 100% attendance in a term will receive a 100% certificate and a small reward.

3. Children with 100% attendance for the full year will receive an Attendance Trophy.
4. Children with 96%+ attendance at the end of each term and at the end of the year will receive a certificate.

Term time Leave of Absence

Parents should avoid booking holiday/leave of absence during term time. In line with Government guidelines, absences during term time will only be granted for 'exceptional circumstances'; holiday/leave of absence DOES NOT qualify as 'exceptional circumstances'.

All requests must be made, in writing, to the Headteacher **before** any booking is made. A leave of absence request form is available from the main office. The headteacher will make arrangements to meet with parents to discuss the reason for the leave of absence and discuss the importance of good school attendance.

An exceptional circumstance could be:

- A bereavement of a close family member.
- A family needs to be together because of a serious and significant traumatic event.
- Visiting seriously ill relative- end of life imminent.
- A parent/carer is in the armed forces.

In the majority of these cases authorised absence will be given for the day. If the circumstances dictate that the family need to travel a significant distance up to a further 2 days may be authorised.

Penalty Notice

If a holiday / leave of absence is taken in term time which has not been authorised, a Penalty Notice may be issued by Kirklees.

A Penalty Notice is triggered if a holiday/leave of absence is five days (ten school sessions) or more, within a ten week rolling period (this can be split over weekends or school holidays).

For the first offence, the Penalty Notice is for £80, for each parent, for each child, if paid within 21 days, and £160 if paid after this date but within 28 days.

However, if a second offence takes place within a three year period, the Penalty Notice will be £160 for each parent of each child, without the option of an £80 discounted rate.

On a third offence, school must consider other options which can include going directly to the Magistrate's Court without the option of a Penalty Notice in lieu of prosecution.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice could result in the Local Authority starting legal proceedings against each parent for the offence of not ensuring your child's regular attendance at school. If you are found guilty of the offence you may be fined up to £1,000, and you will receive a criminal record.

Consequences of Unauthorised Leave

1. The possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued (to each parent for each child).
2. The possibility of losing the school place, and the likelihood of not being re-admitted to the school.

3. The possibility of prosecution under section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for repeat offences of unauthorised leave of absence.
4. The possibility of a fine of up to £2,500 or 3 months imprisonment for the aggravated prosecution 441(A), for such things as breaching school attendance orders or parenting orders.

Leavers and Children Missing Education

The school has a responsibility to safeguard pupils from harm. This includes knowing and taking reasonable steps to check the destinations of leavers. If your child is leaving other than at the end of Year 6, parents should:

- give the school full information about their plans including
 - date of move,
 - name of new school,
 - new home address,
 - the start date at the new school if known,
 - and reasons for moving (a form is available at the school office),
- confirm the school has your current mobile phone number,
- let us know when you move.

When pupils leave and parents have not given us the above information, and we cannot contact the parent, then a child is considered to be a Child Missing Education. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations to try to track and locate the child. Telling us leaving details saves unnecessary investigations.

Suspended / Excluded Pupils

If a pupil has been suspended or excluded, that pupil may not be in a public place during the period of suspension/exclusion without just cause (such as attending a medical appointment). If that pupil is seen in a public place, a penalty notice is issued to each parent of each child. This is for £60 if it is paid within the first 21 days, increasing to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

Religious Observance

If you wish to refer to religious observance days, 3 days are permitted within a 12 month period where a religion other than Christianity is practiced and those days are specifically set by the religious body and the day falls on a usual school day. (Please note, pilgrimage or performing Umrah are not 'religious observance' days and are not considered reasonable cause for a child to miss school.)

Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents 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 a high a level of attendance as possible.

Appendices

1. Safeguarding Procedures
2. School Ping message

3. Attendance Letter – attendance under 90%
4. Attendance letter - attendance not improved but close
5. Attendance letter - attendance contract invite Letter
6. Attendance letter - attendance improved
7. Attendance letter - attendance improved but still below 96%
8. Attendance letter - extended leave absence affecting attendance
9. Attendance letter - Parent Letter re Term Time Leave of Absence
10. Leave of Absence Form
11. Attendance and Punctuality Posters

Appendix 1 **SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES**

At Mount Pleasant Primary School, we take Safeguarding very seriously. We carry out the following measures to ensure safety for all children.

If your child is going to be absent, can you please call school as soon as possible and leave a message on the absence line.

Please always make sure you notify the school of any new telephone numbers for any of the emergency contacts we have on our system for your child/children.

If we do not know the reason why your child is absent from school our daily procedures are as follows;

1. Admin staff check voicemail and email messages from 8:00- 8:50am and record absence and reason on the register.
2. Teachers close the class registers at 9.00am
3. Any children coming into school after doors close at 8:50am come into school via the Main Entrance and are added to the attendance register.
4. Attendance Officer checks all absences against the Late Register.
5. Attendance Officer rings families of the children who are absent (and who have not been provided school with a reason) – initially the first contact is telephoned for a reason for absence, and this is recorded on the register. (9:10-9:45am)
6. Where there has been no response for a child, then the second contact and subsequent contacts will be phoned. (9:45am)
7. If no contact has been made, the DSLs will make a decision whether the circumstances warrant a home visit.
8. If after a home visit we still have not made contact, we would ask the Police to initiate a “safe and well” check on behalf of the school.

PLEASE NOTE: ALL THE ABOVE ACTIONS ARE FOR THE SAFETY AND WELLBEING OF YOUR CHILD.

Appendix 2

School Ping message

Dear Parent/Carer

We would like to share our concerns with you regarding XXXX's attendance which is currently XX%.

When attendance falls below 96% we have a duty of care to bring this to parents' attention. In line with Government expectations we expect children to achieve at least 96% overall attendance throughout their school life.

Should you require support in this matter please do not hesitate to contact us.

Appendix 3

Attendance Letter under 90%

Dear Parent/Carer

RE: NAME-CLASS

Current Attendance Percentage: XX%

With reference to your child's attendance, we would like to share our concerns with you. When a pupil's attendance falls below 90%, we have a duty of care to investigate the reasons why. This could involve parents being invited into school for a meeting to discuss any concerns and/or home visits being made.

We hold regular meetings in school to discuss ways of improving the attendance and achievement of pupils. With your help we aim to make good attendance a priority for all pupils. We expect, in line with Government expectations, for your child to achieve at least 96% overall attendance throughout their school life.

We are aware that your child has had several absences due to illness and unfortunately their attendance is now below 90%. We are sure that as a caring and responsible parent/carer you will share the importance, along with the school, on the need for regular and punctual school attendance. This is essential to ensure every child receives the full benefit of their education to which they are entitled.

We have attached an attendance summary for your perusal. Please be advised that we will now be monitoring attendance over the next half term and will be looking to see an improvement.

Should you require support in this matter please do not hesitate to contact us.

Appendix 4

Attendance letter – attendance not improved but close

Dear Parent/Carer

RE: NAME-CLASS

We wrote to you explaining our concerns about your child's attendance. You were informed of the level of your child's attendance at that time and a target was set for their attendance to improve.

We have now reviewed your child's attendance for the monitoring period and are disappointed to find that the target has not been achieved.

Their overall attendance from the beginning of September 2024 is **xxx%**

Whilst our aim is to work in partnership with parents/carers to resolve any problems relating to attendance, we do have the powers to bring cases before the Magistrates Court or issue a Fixed Penalty Notice if unauthorised absence persists. Please see our Attendance Policy.

We will continue to monitor attendance for the next half term; If your child's attendance does not significantly improve you will be asked to attend an Attendance Meeting in school to discuss the reasons for non-attendance.

Should you require support in this matter please do not hesitate to contact us.

Appendix 5

Attendance Letter – Attendance Contract Invite Letter

Dear Parent/Carer

RE: NAME-CLASS

Current Attendance Percentage:

We last wrote to you on **(Date)** explaining our concerns about your child's attendance. You were informed of the level of your child's attendance at that date and a target for attendance was set.

We have now reviewed your child's attendance for the subsequent monitoring period and are disappointed to find that the target has not been achieved. We are committed to raising the attendance and attainment of all students and we need your help to achieve the best for your child.

Therefore, you are invited to attend a meeting in school on **(Date)** where you will be requested to sign an Attendance Contract, we will also discuss the reasons for non-attendance and we will offer support via a referral to the Multi Agency Team (Social Care/Educating Safeguarding/Early Intervention) to help resolve any problems/issues you have around school attendance.

Please be aware that you have a legal responsibility to ensure your child attends regular education; failure to comply with a Parent Contract Order will result in legal steps being taken to issue parents/carers with a Fixed Penalty Notice and could lead to prosecution in a Court of Law under the 1996 Education Act.

It is of vital importance that you attend this appointment however, if this date or time is not convenient, please contact us to re-arrange.

Appendix 6

Attendance letter – attendance improved

Dear Parent/Carer

RE: NAME-CLASS

We wrote to you explaining our concerns about your child's attendance, which at that time was **xxxx%**. You were informed of the level of your child's attendance and set the target for your child's attendance to improve.

We have now reviewed your child's attendance for the period **xxxx** to **xxxxx** and are very pleased to see that attendance has improved to **xxxx%** over the last monitoring period.

However, your child's attendance is still below the target of 90% and, as such, we will continue with our monitoring until this target has been reached.

Should you require any support in this matter please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Appendix 7

Attendance letter – attendance improved but still below 96%

Dear Parent/Carer

Re:

We wrote to you explaining our concerns about your child's attendance, which at that time was **XXX %** you were informed of the level of your child's attendance and set the target for this to improve.

We have now reviewed your child's attendance for the period **XXX** to **XXX** and we are pleased to see that attendance has improved to **XXX %**.

However, this attendance is still below the target of 96% and, as such, we will continue with our monitoring until this target has been reached.

Should you require any support in this matter please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Appendix 8

Attendance letter – extended leave absence affecting attendance

We are pleased that your child's attendance in school is consistently good.

However, we would like to make you aware of the adverse effect their extended leave of absence has had on their attendance percentage. Currently their attendance is **XXXX%**. This is due to the unauthorised holiday taken in term time. Please ensure your child continues to attend daily to increase their overall percentage by the end of the year.

In line with Government expectations, we expect children to achieve at least 96% overall attendance throughout their school life.

Please could you arrange your future holidays to coincide with the school holiday periods. I attach a list of the school term dates for your reference to help you with future planning.

Appendix 9

Parent Letter re Term Time Leave of Absence

Re: Leave of absence request for Name of Child-Class-DoB: NOT AUTHORISED

We have received a request for **Name of Child** to be granted leave of absence from **Date to Date**. Following your conversation with, you were informed that leave of absence was unauthorised. The reason is that you do not meet the exceptional circumstances as highlighted in the school's Attendance Policy.

Should you continue with your plans, I must draw your attention to the school's Attendance Policy which makes it clear that if a leave of absence occurs which has not been authorised, a penalty notice may be issued. However, in this instance no penalty will be issued because the absence is less than 5 days. Your child however will have an unauthorised absence on their attendance record.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Appendix 10

Leave of Absence Request Form



LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

This form has been designed to clarify the process of leave of absence requests. The school is expected to comply with Government guidance by the DfE (Department for Education) and the LEA (Local Education Authority)

| OFFICE USE ONLY | |
|--------------------|----|
| Authorised | |
| YES | NO |
| Penalty Notice | |
| YES | NO |
| Contacted | |
| YES | NO |
| First Offence | |
| YES | NO |
| Marked on Register | |
| YES | NO |

| | | | | | |
|--|-------|-----------------------------------|-----|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Child's Name [1] | | Date of Birth | | Class | |
| Child's Name [2] | | Date of Birth | | Class | |
| Child's Name [3] | | Date of Birth | | Class | |
| Any other school age children | Name: | School: | | | |
| | Name: | School: | | | |
| Dates of travel | From: | | To: | | |
| Date expected back in school | | Number of days absent from school | | | |
| Does the absence overlap with the start or end of term? YES: <input type="checkbox"/> NO: <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | |
| The following is outlined within the DfE expectations and the School's Attendance Policy: | | | | | |
| Is the request due to exceptional circumstances: (please tick) | | | | YES | NO |
| | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

An **exceptional circumstance** could be:

A bereavement of a close family member; a family needs to be together because of a serious and significant traumatic event;

Visiting a seriously ill relative- end of life imminent;

A parent/carer is in the armed forces.

In the majority of these cases authorised absence will be given for the day. If the circumstances dictate that the family need to travel a significant distance, up to a further 2 days may be authorised.

Each request can only be judged on a case by case basis, you will receive a reply from the school in writing. There is no right of appeal.

Name of person submitting application:

Relationship to child/children:

Continued overleaf

Name of Parent 1:

Address of Parent 1:

Telephone Number of Parent 1:

Name of Parent 2:

Address of Parent 2 (if different to Parent 1):

Telephone Number of Parent 2:

Signature:

Date:

**Appendix 11
Attendance and Punctuality Posters**

**ATTENDANCE – Of the 365 days in a year, 190 are school days!
You child’s education is their future - don’t waste it!**

| | | | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 190 school days | 8 days absence | 10 days absence | 19 days absence | 38 days absence | 47 days absence |
| | 182 days of education | 180 days of education | 171 days of education | 161 days of education | 143 days of education |
| 100% | 96% | 95% | 90% | 80% | 75% |
| Excellent! | Good | Satisfactory | Cause for Concern | Serious Concern | |

175 holidays in the school year are so you can spend time with family, go on holidays, go shopping visits, attend appointments and so much more!

PUNCTUALITY – Come to School on Time Every Day!

Lost Minutes = Lost learning!

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| 5 minutes late every day = 3 days lost | 10 minutes late every day = 6.5 days lost | 15 minutes late every day = 10 days lost | 20 minutes late every day = 13 days lost | 25 minutes late every day = 19 days lost |
|---|--|---|---|---|