

The Mulberry Primary School



○ Learning and Achieving Together ○

Attendance Policy

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<i>Policy Status</i>	<i>Non-Statutory</i>
<i>Policy Originator</i>	<i>The Mulberry Primary School</i>
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The Mulberry Primary School
Attendance Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1** We expect all children on roll to attend every day that the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend and put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school. We will also work with parents and guardians to remind them of their statutory duty regarding attendance.
- 1.2** Under the *Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995* the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

2. Definitions

2.1 Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence. Evidence may be requested to support prolonged absence from school.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, day trips or holidays in term time that have not been agreed then absence will not be authorised.

2.2 Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Unexplained absences or no evidence provided to support absence if requested.
- The absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

3. If a child is absent

- 3.1** When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register, when the register is submitted the office staff will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian.
- 3.2** Parents should inform the school on the 1st day of each absence and provide evidence where appropriate to explain the absence.

3.2.1 A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence. For example, if a child has a medical appointment, a letter from the hospital or appointment card should be produced.

3.4 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the office staff or class teacher will notify the safeguarding and attendance officer. The safeguarding and attendance officer will then continue to attempt to contact the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child. If unsuccessful LA protocols for CME are followed.

4. *Requests for leave of absence*

4.1 The school expects that parents take their family holiday in the normal school holiday periods. School Holiday dates are advertised in the school newsletter, website and brochure. The school does not authorise holidays during school term time. If parents and guardians persist in taking a holiday with their child during school term time then the school will mark the absence as unauthorised and may request a Fixed Penalty Notice fine to be issued when the criteria for this has been met.

5. *Long-term absence*

5.1 When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.

5.2 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

6. *Repeated unauthorised absences*

6.1 The safeguarding and attendance officer will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem with the safeguarding and attendance officer and/or the Deputy Head Teacher. If the situation does not improve, the safeguarding and attendance officer will then refer to the EWO who will arrange a meeting with the parent/guardian in school and seek to ensure that they understand the seriousness of the situation.

6.2 A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more of schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Attendance is monitored thoroughly and Parent/carers are notified if their child is at risk of becoming a 'persistent absentee' and the possibility of a Fixed Penalty Notice Fine being issued to them.

6.3 The governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

Children Missing Education (CME)

The school has the responsibility for notifying the LA (EWS) of those students that are potentially CME (Children Missing Education).

Where children have been absent from school for 10 days, and the absence has not been authorised, school will have used a range of strategies within that time to ascertain the reason for absence;

- ✓ Telephone calls to all contact numbers on record.
- ✓ Asking class teacher/other staff/other parents.
- ✓ Visits by school staff.

In the event of no contact with the family being established by the above action and the whereabouts of the student remains unclear a referral should be made to EWS after 10 days unauthorised absence (UA).

For students subject to a Child Protection Plan, or who are Children in Care, this should be done after 5 days.

7. Lateness

The school day starts at 8.50am in KS2 and 8.55am in EYs and KS1 and we expect all children to be in school at that time. Registers are marked at 9.00am and any child not present then will be given a late mark. At 9.25am the registers will be closed. If a child arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site but will count as an unauthorised absence for the morning session. If a child has a persistent late record and unauthorised absences as a result of it, the Parent/Carer will be asked in to meet with the Deputy Head Teacher and/or safeguarding and attendance officer.

8. Rewards for good attendance

8.1 All the children who have 100% attendance in any one term will receive an excellence certificate for attendance, awarded at the last assembly of the term. Weekly class best attendance certificate, end of year trips and other rewards as appropriate in KS1. In KS2 children who have 100% attendance in a month receive a 100% Attendance sticker and 100% in any one term they receive a 100% Attendance Pencil.

8.2 There are special medals and rewards for any children who have 100% attendance for a whole year in KS1.

9. Attendance targets

The school sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the senior staff and governors. The attendance targets are shared with the LA School Improvement Advisor and are in line with government and OFSTED requirements. The targets are challenging yet realistic and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets.

10. Monitoring and review

10.1 It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance and they will request an annual report from the Headteacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

10.2 The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three

years.

- 10.3** Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will inform the safeguarding and attendance officer immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the Deputy Headteacher, who will contact the parents or guardian.
- 10.5** This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.