



Peak Tor Federation
Rowsley C of E
Primary School
&
Stanton-in-Peak
C of E Primary
School



Attendance Policy

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Current Subject Leader: Headteacher

Date of Review	Signature of Chair of Governors	Minute Number
19.07.17	D Gibbs	620/17
03.05.18		693/18
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1. Introduction and background

Peak Tor Federation recognises that regular school attendance is the key to enabling children to maximize the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realize their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community. We believe that positive behaviour and good attendance are central to raising standards and pupil attainment.

As set out in this policy, we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties.

This policy is written with the above statement in mind and this policy underpins our school ethos to:

- promote children's welfare and safeguarding;
- ensure every pupil has access to the full time education to which they are entitled;
- ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence or later arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

This policy is to be used in conjunction with the school's behaviour and complaint policy.

2. Legal framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

The Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

The register must record whether the pupil was:

- Present;
- Absent;
- Present at approval educational activity;
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

This policy has due regard to legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963

3. Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give parents/carers details on attendance in our newsletters
- Report to parents/carers annually on how their child's attendance by means of the annual school report.
- Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below 95%
- Include information about attendance on our school website

4. Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason. Good reasons are defined as:

- where the child is too ill to attend school*
- where medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time (parents should make every effort to make appointments out of school time)
- when the absence occurs on a day set aside for religious observance to which the parents/carers belong
- when there are extreme weather conditions and it is not safe or possible to travel to school
- when there has been a family bereavement (but this should be for a very limited period of time eg 1 or 2 days)
- where the pupil lives more than 3 miles from school with no suitable transport, up to a maximum of five days with the authorisation of the Headteacher
- where it is appropriate due to the needs of individual children with an identified SEND.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- absences which have never been properly explained
- shopping
- looking after other children
- birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school then we will work with that family to understand the root problem.

5. Persistent Absenteeism:

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss up to 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's education and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence and the reasons given thoroughly. You will be informed if your child's absence is nearing 90% you will be informed and invited in to school to discuss the matter. If the figure goes below 90% the matter can be referred to the Education Welfare Officer. This information may also be used when pupils' progress is tracked as absence affects attainment.

6. Absence Procedures:

- Class teachers record attendance on weekly registration sheet at the beginning of each session am and pm.
- Pupils arriving after 9 am will be recorded as arriving late and the reason given will be recorded
- Registers will close at 9.15 am
- Parents must contact the school office on the first morning of any absence before 9 am. We will contact you if we haven't heard from you.
- Pupils arriving after 9 am will need to be "signed in" in the red folder in the school office.
- School will monitor attendance and punctuality. If attendance falls below 90% and if a child is repeatedly late a letter will be sent by the Head Teacher.
- If poor attendance continues, or measures have not been taken to improve the situation, parents may be asked to attend an attendance panel held in school.

7. The Education Welfare Officer

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer from the Local Authority. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorized absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or the Local Authority. Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the EWO themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Education Authority.

8. Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher preparing for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons; it can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence. Good time keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

How we manage lateness:

- The school day starts at 9 am when the register is taken and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.
- After 9.15am the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Head Teacher to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

We will encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children and celebrate good class punctuality.

9. Requests for Leave of Absence:

Following changes made by the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 Headteachers are no longer able to authorise any leave of absence in term time, including holidays, apart from a small number of 'exceptional circumstances'. These regulations also state that holidays cannot be authorised retrospectively.

Parents who believe that their request meets the criteria for authorised leave of absence outlined above should make their request in writing on an official school absence request form (available from the school website or the school office) to the Headteacher. The Governing Body will consider the request made and

make their reply. Parents or carers may be issued with a Penalty Notice should leave be taken which is not authorised. If unpaid this could lead to prosecution under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

10. Roles and Responsibilities

We believe that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents, pupils and the wider school community.

The governing body has overall responsibility for:

- the implementation of the Attendance Policy and procedures
- ensuring that the attendance policy is reviewed yearly
- the handling of complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

The Head of School is responsible for:

- the day-to-day implementation and management of the Attendance Policy and procedures of the school.
- ensuring staff follow the Attendance Policy

All staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for modelling good attendance behaviour and implementing the agreed policy.

Parents are expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child during term-time, ensuring that their child attends school every day.

11. Using attendance data

Pupil's attendance will be monitored but the school business officer and Head teacher and data will be shared with the Local Authority and other agencies if a pupil's attendance is a cause for concern.

All parents will receive a yearly summary providing information on their child's attendance.